

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LASSEN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, PROVIDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE FOR COMPENSATING CALIFORNIANS FOR DAMAGES AND LOSSES CAUSED BY THE GRAY WOLF IN CALIFORNIA

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2014, the California Fish and Wildlife Commission voted to approve listing the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) in California (State) as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA); and

WHEREAS, on May 4, 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS) issued its Federal/State Coordination Plan For Gray Wolf Activity in California. Wherein CDFW is the lead agency for investigating and determining if livestock (e.g., cattle, sheep, goats, horses, mules, llamas, alpacas, and donkeys), livestock guarding and herding dogs, or other depredations on domestic animals by a wolf or wolves; and

WHEREAS, in December 2016, CDFW issued Part I and Part II of its Conservation Plan for Gray Wolves in California (the "Plan"). The Plan identifies legal, scientific, and funding "management limitations" that affect CDFW's ability to begin to manage nongame animals effectively such as wolves. Such limitations include legal considerations and Federal/State endangered species protections, lack of scientific information, limited funding, lack of staffing, and the need for specific statutory authority to provide mechanisms for resolving depredation by wolves on livestock; and

WHEREAS, in addition to depredation by wolves on livestock as a food-source, the Plan identifies that it is known that wolves attack and kill domestic dogs, including dogs used for livestock protection and herding, and companion dogs and hunting dogs; and

WHEREAS, those management limitations continue to exist statewide. CDFW has been provided limited legal, scientific and funding authority by the State for adequately managing wolves. CDFW does not have statutory authority or resources to prevent or stop CESA protected wolves from preying on, damaging and killing livestock for food, as confirmed by CDFW's livestock depredation investigations reports (investigations); and

WHEREAS, as reported by CDFW in July 2020, there is known and unknown wolf activity in the State. Known wolves past and present include satellite collared wolves in the Shasta Pack and Lassen Pack, and dispersing wolves such as OR-54, OR-59, OR-44, OR-25, OR-7, and other uncollared dispersing wolves that have been periodically detected in northeastern California via trail cameras, DNA, handheld cameras and visual observation by CDFW, and CDFW investigations; and

WHEREAS, the majority of CDFW satellite collared and monitored CESA gray wolf activity is within Lassen County and Plumas County. That activity is in a CDFW designated "wolf pack territory" where investigations have confirmed actual, probable and possible wolf depredations of livestock; and

WHEREAS, the State of California has not enacted a compensation program to pay Californian's for their losses caused by a CESA protected gray wolf; and

WHEREAS, in July 2020, the CDFW released its draft components of a compensation program to pay livestock producers for damages and losses caused by CESA protected wolves and submitted that compensation program to the Lassen County Board of Supervisors for review and comment; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Lassen is hereby providing its comment and recommendations to the State of California as follows:

- 1) A compensation program to pay Californians and visitors to the State for damages and losses caused by or related to gray wolf attacks should also include a compensation program to pay for damages and losses caused by mountain lions and bears.
- 2) When a depredation investigation has determined that a gray wolf, mountain lion or bear has likely caused the death or severe injury of a pet, working-animal or livestock, the State should fully compensate that animal's owner for their loss:
  - a. Full compensation should be composed of two parts: (1) an amount of direct compensation to pay for the owner's direct loss of the animal and (2) an amount of indirect compensation to the owner for other costs or the probable indirect effects of the predation.
    - i. The amount of direct compensation to the owner shall not be less than 100% of the fair market value to replace the animal at the time of loss.
    - ii. Fair market value of calves, lambs and other nursing age livestock shall be defined as the market value of said livestock at its projected weaning weight.
    - iii. An amount of indirect compensation shall also be paid to the owner in addition to direct compensation. Indirect compensation is a multiplier or percentage increase in compensation that is intended to account for other predator related damages, as suggested by current research on predator impacts and losses.
    - iv. Damage and losses caused by a gray wolf, mountain lion or bear shall entitle the owner to receive direct and indirect compensation regardless of the depredation location in the State, and irrespective to wolf pack territorial boundaries, wolf travel patterns, or "pay for presence" compensation.
    - v. "Probable" wolf kills should be eligible for direct compensation in addition to "confirmed" wolf kills.
- 3) Where a gray wolf pack territory overlaps a livestock grazing range, pasture, allotment, or other livestock production area, a "pay for presence" loss compensation program should immediately be implemented to cover indirect losses being incurred by agricultural businesses, as suggested by current research.
  - a. Agricultural businesses electing to participate in a "pay for presence" program shall also be eligible to receive direct compensation and indirect compensation when a depredation investigation has determined that gray wolf, mountain lion or bear has caused or partially contributed to the death of their pet, working-animals or livestock.
  - b. Independent third parties should verify size of pack territory; territory should be generous.
  - c. Pay for presence compensation should be calculated on a sliding scale relative to pack population and other factors over time.

- 4) Independent third parties and other government agency representatives, other than those working for the Department of Fish and Wildlife, should be granted authority to conduct depredation investigations and render opinions of an animal's cause of death.
- 5) Depredation investigators should err on the side of the kill being caused by a predator. Livestock deemed as "probable" depredation by a qualified investigator should qualify for full value compensation.
- 6) Loss Compensation should be retro-active to the first documented loss in California; November 18, 2015, Livestock Depredation Investigation ID: Siskiyou-01
- 7) Any loss compensation program should be established and implemented by a State agency other than the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is respectfully requested that the California Legislature and the Governor of the State of California should promptly enact legislation and a budget appropriation to implement these recommendations herein for implementing the Conservation Plan for Gray Wolves in California and repaying Californians and visitors to the State for their losses and damages.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the county of Lassen, State of California, held on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of November 2020 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

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CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LASSEN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ATTEST:  
JULIE BUSTAMANTE  
Clerk of the Board

BY:  
MICHELE YDERRAGA, Deputy Clerk of the Board

I, MICHELE YDERRAGA, Deputy Clerk of the Board of the Board of Supervisors, County of Lassen, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the said Board of Supervisors at a regular meeting thereof held on the \_\_\_\_ day of November 2020.

Deputy Clerk of the County of Lassen  
Board of Supervisors