



January 22, 2025

Phillip Davis
Davis Cattle Co. Inc.
19 Warm Lake Highway
Cascade, ID. 83611

Dear Phillip Davis,

This letter is in response to your comment left on the Federal Register for Docket No. APHIS-2024-0053, "A Survey of Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods." We thank you kindly for your thoughtful comment. Please see below for our responses:

For Wildlife Services to effectively perform its tasks under the Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation and Prevention Grants, and meet the goals set forth in this grant program, it is critical that Wildlife Services work with the individual applicant states, their livestock producer stakeholders to gather producer feedback on investigation strategies to create a predictable, transparent, and clear set of investigatory and procedural standards. To accomplish this task Wildlife Services must gather the opinions of stakeholders through either this survey or another. I urge APHIS to gather the opinions of livestock producer stakeholders and grant program partner states to both improve the effectiveness of the Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation and Prevention Grant program and rectify the ongoing unpredictability of this program...The group of individuals APHIS seeks information from must be expanded to receive useful, valid data regarding livestock producer perceptions of nonlethal control measures.

- Congress appropriated funding to USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services (WS) specifically for the implementation and further development of nonlethal methods for reducing livestock-predator conflict (referred to as the Nonlethal Initiative). It does not support any WS livestock loss investigations or compensation-related efforts. Therefore, the scope of our study is specific to evaluating the WS Nonlethal Initiative programs and narrows our sample to only those livestock producers who received nonlethal predator damage management assistance from WS with the congressionally appropriated funding.

APHIS would be more likely to receive valuable, reliable opinion data if this survey is distributed to livestock trade associations, animal damage control districts, state wildlife management agencies, state departments of agriculture, and beyond for further distribution to livestock producers... I encourage APHIS to expand the scope of the individuals it seeks opinions from, and recommend a broad range of questions designed to gather the personal stories of individuals who have used Wildlife Services.

- While surveying other stakeholder groups could provide beneficial insight into the topic, it is beyond the scope of the present study. This study represents an evaluation of a Congressionally funded management initiative carried out by WS.

Thank you again for the thoughtful feedback.

Sincerely,

Megan M. Cross, PhD
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