



## Southwest Wolf Compensation Guidelines

In 1987, Defenders of Wildlife created a fund to compensate ranchers in the U.S. Northern Rockies for verified livestock losses to wolves, and in 1996 the compensation fund was formally extended to cover losses in the Southwestern U.S. In the fall of 2000, The Bailey Wildlife Foundation made a generous contribution to Defenders wolf and grizzly bear compensation trusts and they were renamed to acknowledge this significant contribution. As of September 2008, Defenders of

Wildlife has voluntarily contributed more than \$1,128,000 in compensation for livestock losses to wolves nationwide, and \$106,142 in the Southwest. Our philosophy is to work in cooperation with livestock owners and other stakeholders to find mutually beneficial methods for wolf and human co-existence.

In the Southwest, landowners, grazing permittees or their representatives in and adjacent to the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area have been broadly alerted to the presence of wolves in their region. Traditional lethal control programs provide only short-term results with respect to livestock protection, because other wolves often move into empty territories. Nonlethal deterrents and proactive livestock husbandry methods offer longer term help to reduce depredations and the conflicts that often result from livestock and wolf losses. Regional livestock owners who utilize “best management” methods are eligible to submit requests for compensation through Defenders’ program. These methods include, but are not limited to, increased human presence, herders or range riders, electric or predator-resistant fencing, livestock guard dogs, and electronic alarm systems. Please contact Defenders for a copy of *Livestock and Wolves: A Guide to Nonlethal Methods and Strategies to Reduce Conflicts* or visit [www.defenders.org/reducingconflicts](http://www.defenders.org/reducingconflicts). As of September 2008, Defenders has contributed more than \$835,000 in preventative approaches and assistance to livestock owners since the establishment of The Bailey Wildlife Foundation Proactive Carnivore Conservation Fund in 1998.

### Process

If livestock owners suspect they have incurred a loss due to wolves, the first step is to protect the evidence. Agency experts suggest covering the remains when possible and keeping it undisturbed by other animals. The second step is to contact a local USDA Wildlife Services (or appropriate state or tribal) field representative who will conduct an investigation of the incident and provide a depredation report to the producer. The report should provide a reasonable and complete record of evidence based on the USDA Wildlife Services’ Criteria for Classification of Reported Depredation Incidents. If the investigation report verifies that wolves were the cause of the livestock death or injury, the livestock owner can seek compensation from Defenders of Wildlife by submitting the following information:

- 1) A completed copy of the standard investigation report form for confirmed and/or probable losses due to wolf predation.
- 2) Copies of sales receipts or market reports that identify the value of the livestock loss or copies of receipts for veterinarian services and/or supplies for treating injured animals.
- 3) Complete contact information for the livestock owner including phone number, mailing address and best time to contact in case we have any questions.

Reports should be sent to:

Defenders of Wildlife  
110 S. Church Avenue, Suite 4292  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
Phone: (520) 623-9653 • Fax: (520) 623-0447 • E-mail address: [ksinclair@defenders.org](mailto:ksinclair@defenders.org)

Defenders will reimburse livestock owners for verified wolf-caused losses of livestock at 100% of the fair market value for confirmed losses (up to \$3000 per animal) and 50% of the fair market value for probable

losses (up to \$1500 per animal). Reimbursable losses include both wounded and dead livestock. A reimbursement payment is normally received within 6 weeks.

## **Duration of Compensation Program**

Defenders' wolf compensation program is available while wolves are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Once wolves are delisted from federal protection, Defenders will cease to pay compensation in those regions. States may seek to adopt their own compensation programs and Defenders will assist in setting up these programs if requested. However, Defenders will continue helping livestock producers with proactive, nonlethal methods, deterrents and strategies for reducing or avoiding livestock losses to wolves and other native carnivores.

## **Eligibility**

It is our intent to offer this compensation to help reduce wolf-related economic losses for individual ranchers and farmers while promoting wolf conservation. To best serve these goals, Defenders adheres to eligibility and documentation guidelines for compensation of wolf-related livestock losses. After an initial loss, the livestock owner will need to adopt reasonable, nonlethal deterrents to reduce losses to wolves in order to be eligible for future compensation. These methods include but are not limited to: removal of dead or dying livestock that attract carnivores; increased human supervision of livestock such as herders or range riders; electric or predator-resistant fencing; livestock guard dogs; predator deterrent lighting, or electronic alarm systems. Livestock owners who demonstrate reasonable use of nonlethal methods will remain eligible for compensation. When possible, we will assist with appropriate nonlethal deterrents to help livestock owners reduce future conflicts with wolves. For more information on these deterrents, please contact Defenders for a copy of *Livestock and Wolves: A Guide to Nonlethal Methods and Strategies to Reduce Conflicts* or visit [www.defenders.org/reducingconflicts](http://www.defenders.org/reducingconflicts). The following requirements must be met to be eligible for compensation from Defenders:

- 1) The livestock involved were legally present on the land where the depredation occurred.
- 2) Claims are received by Defenders of Wildlife within six months of the date of the investigation.
- 3) The loss is determined by USDA Wildlife Services or another authorized agency equivalent as a "confirmed" or "probable" loss (see USDA Wildlife Services Criteria for Classification of Reported Depredation Incidents).
- 4) There is no evidence of long-term, unmanaged presence of dead or dying livestock in the immediate area that may have attracted the wolves and increased the likelihood of the depredation.
- 5) Reasonable nonlethal methods to prevent livestock losses to wolves are being utilized.
- 6) The livestock covered under these guidelines include sheep, cattle, horses, mules, goats, llamas, donkeys, pigs, chickens, geese, turkeys, active livestock herding dogs and livestock guarding dogs.
- 7) The livestock loss is not being compensated by a private insurance policy or compensation process other than that offered by Defenders of Wildlife.

## **Livestock Producers Advisory Council**

Defenders has established a livestock producer advisory council to help us evaluate and adapt these programs to meet changing needs while providing meaningful assistance in the best interest of wolves and residents in the region. These ranchers represent cattle and sheep producers who have experience raising and managing livestock in wolf occupied areas. The Council also evaluates and provides guidance for livestock investigation claims that do not meet the requirements of this program. Our current council members are listed online at [www.defenders.org/livestockcouncil](http://www.defenders.org/livestockcouncil).