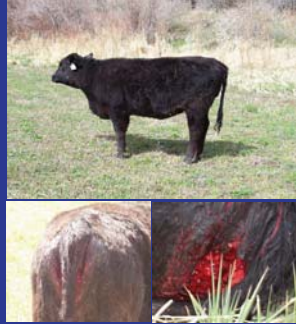


Who is paying for the wolves?

this message is from Montana ranchers



Bauer Ranch, Phillipsburg
7 confirmed wolf kills
18 missing
60 open animals
25 lbs. + weight loss
3 year cost \$88,500

Dear Readers:

Here are some photographs that ranchers have submitted for this ad which are verified wolf kills. These are not pretty by any means; however, they need to be shown. Many times the carnage is not visually recorded as we do not always have cameras with us when wolf kills are discovered. Ranchers have paid dearly for the reintroduction of wolves, both financially and emotionally, as you can see from these photos submitted by ranchers throughout Montana. Ranchers were never in favor of reintroducing the wolf on our public lands. We feared the wolf reintroduction plan would not only be detrimental to livestock and pets, but we were certain other wildlife populations would be seriously affected as well. That fear has proven to be well-founded. Our ranches are home to moose, elk, deer, bear, coyotes and a host of smaller animals. Montana ranchers pride themselves on preserving the natural habitat of these wildlife populations and enjoy seeing them as they roam across our lands. However, the reintroduced gray wolf has viciously decimated Montana's wildlife numbers. Young animals are no match for a stealthy wolf!

The facts of wolf reintroduction: The original recovery goal for wolves in the northern Rocky Mountain region consisting of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming was for a total population of 300 wolves and 30 breeding pair. That goal was attained in 2002 and has been exceeded every year since. At the end of 2007 there were approximately 1500 wolves and at the end of 2008 the estimate was 1645 wolves and 95 breeding pairs. This is more than five times the number of wolves called for in the reintroduction plan! A total of 102 wolf deaths were documented in 2007; 73 were related to livestock depredations, seven were killed illegally, and six were struck by vehicles or trains. Others died from a variety of causes common to all wildlife species, including poor health and old age. Fish, Wildlife, & Parks documented a minimum of 163 pups at the end of 2007. In 2008 there were 155 deaths with a minimum of 147 pups. Despite the death loss of these wolves, the wolf population is still very secure, is well above the recovery criteria, and continues to increase by a minimum of 18% every year. It is clear the northern Rocky Mountain's gray wolf population has exceeded all recovery goals.

The out-of-control explosion of wolf population growth has been devastating to wildlife and livestock as hungry wolves compete for food. For livestock producers, so far the confirmed death loss in 2008-2009 has been 130 head of cattle, 183 sheep, 13 goats, 2 guard dogs, 2 horses, and 8 llamas. These numbers may not seem alarming until you take into consideration that for every confirmed kill there are three or four more that are not confirmed for various reasons. Unfortunately, producers are only reimbursed 1/8 of the actual loss value. Ranchers support the delisting of the gray wolf so they may be managed properly to maintain an eco-friendly existence with other wildlife species and livestock.

"The Sieben Ranch at Wolf Creek has used guard dogs and herders for over 10 years as non-lethal deterrents to predators. Five guard dogs fighting against four wolves did not stop the savage killing of Duke. The wolves were not deterred by the guard dogs nor the presence of the herder. Statistics recorded by Wildlife Services and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks show a continued increase in the population of wolves throughout Montana. Consequently, there has also been increased predation by wolves on livestock and domestic pets. The presence of wolves also causes a very substantial monetary loss to livestock producers. Livestock stressed by the presence and harassment of wolves have a lower conception rate, abort their pregnancy, and show reduced weight gain. Wolves can be a part of the eco system but should not be allowed to destroy Montana. Since their reintroduction they have not only had a very serious affect upon livestock throughout western Montana, but they have had a very devastating affect on Montana's wildlife. If the wolf population is not controlled, not only will Montana's livestock producers lose, but Montana's wildlife will be decimated." John & Nina Baucus, Sieben Ranch, Wolf Creek

"Our family has been ranching in Montana for over 140 years. Never before have we seen such savagery to defenseless animals as we have seen since the reintroduction of the gray wolf. To kill, a wolf will grab hold of the animal and hang on until there is enough blood hemorrhage underneath the skin that they die. We have also had a calf that they ate the hind end while he was still alive. We brought the pair home, but the calf died from its wounds and the mother died from stress. We realize that wolves are here to stay, but we need to be able to protect our property, our family, our pets and our livelihood. We would like to be able to say 20 years from now that we are on the 6th generation of ranchers in our family, but wolves can put any rancher out of business." McGowan Ranch, Drummond

"On the Helle Ranch of Dillon we raise both cattle & sheep and have done so for many years. We began to see losses shortly after wolves were released in 1996. We have seen many opportunistic killings by wolves. Many times they will kill an animal and not eat it. We have seen an increase of wildlife on our home pastures during the winter months due to the predation of their populations. This we feel is a very fair trade off as we share their mountain pastures in the summer. The use of our ranges have been severely reduced due to the wolves; it is very hard to manage our summer pastures and continue to be good stewards when our animals are chased from these areas. They, like everything else, just want to be safe. Ranchers do contribute greatly to the circle of industry and life in a very important manner. What it takes for us to supply our product to consumers is open spaces, clean air, water, sunshine and lots of hard work. Dealing with the wolves just makes it that much harder and more discouraging." John Helle, Helle Ranch, Dillon

"The Bauer Ranch in Phillipsburg was a pretty, peaceful place up until three years ago. It was home to content cows, deer, elk and other wildlife. That all ended when the wolves moved in. They have killed our livestock and wildlife in close proximity to our ranch headquarters. The picture of the wolf shown above was taken without a telephoto lens! These animals have gotten so bold they have absolutely no respect for humans. There is no place on our ranch that is safe anymore. As the wolves increase in numbers, we have also seen a steady increase in the loss of our calves and the decrease in our cow conception rate due to stress. We wish for the return of the peaceful days we once had!" -Robin Bauer, Bauer Ranch, Phillipsburg

"This spring at the Herman Ranch we had 7 confirmed kills on the calving ground and 60 first calf heifers aborted due to the stress from harassment of the wolves. So this spring alone the ranch has lost \$50,000.00 worth of cattle. And this is before we put our cattle out to summer pasture! I'm not looking forward to counting the losses when we bring them home this fall. The Montana Livestock Loss Reduction & Mitigation Board has paid us on the 7 confirmed kills, but we have a bigger loss on the unconfirmed cattle for which we are not being reimbursed. With the hits we are taking from the reintroduced wolf, how do we pay our bills? And who is going to bail out the ranchers from these losses when it was our own government that reintroduced the wolf in our backyards?" - John Herman, Herman Ranch, Niarada

"We raise both cattle and sheep. During the past year we have witnessed more "joy" killing by wolves - animals that were alive with their guts hanging out or torn up so bad in the hind quarters they had to be euthanized. We've lost two yearling steers weighing over 600 pounds. We've lost several ewes and over 25 lambs. These brutal attacks have brought lots of tears. I had to look at my ewes that had their guts torn out and lying on the ground still alive and tell them there was nothing I could do. We live only 100 yards off Highway 1. These attacks occurred within 1/4 mile of our house. We have elk on our property, and the wolves passed right through them to come down and kill our livestock; so NO, wolves don't just prey on wild game." - Leslie Boomer, Boomer Ranch, Drummond

"Wolves have attacked our sheep in Sweet Grass County, killing three and maiming one so badly that we had to put her down the following day. Wolf recovery people would like you to believe that wolves only prey on the old, weak, and crippled animals. These ewes were all under 3 years of age, their most productive, healthiest years. We as producers find it very discouraging and disheartening to be forced to euthanize our own livestock, all for a wolf recovery program that we didn't want nor seem to have any control over. Lambing is a family effort that takes hard work, long hours, and good management. We are working even harder since the attacks. Ultimately, all of this work will make NO difference when the wolves 'find' the sheep again! We also understand that there were so many livestock deaths to wolves last year that the recovery program has no more money to compensate the hard-working producer." - Tye, Rosi, Austin, and Ceder Cumin, Sweet Grass County

"We've lost 4 times more livestock in two years with wolves than we have in 10 years with coyotes, bears, fox and lions. Predators such as coyotes and bears consume their kills; the wolves have yet to eat what has been killed on our ranch. "I have run guard dogs for 13 years and they have been 95% effective towards predators. When the wolves came in 2007, my guard dogs came home and wouldn't leave our yard. (I know why now looking at the photos). I want people to understand that wolves change everything, from killing our stock to extreme changes in your animals behavior. I feel our tax dollars are going DIRECTLY towards the destruction of our own livestock with the wolf reintroduction program." Tonya Martin, Martin Ranch, Two Dot

"Hansen Livestock is a family owned, fourth-generation sheep and cattle ranch. We have been using all non-lethal methods available in an attempt to keep the wolves away from our sheep. Lately, due to the growing wolf population, they seem to be more aggressive. The wolf kills started in the spring of 2004 and are increasing every year as the wolf population grows. In many cases it seems the wolf just kills for the fun of it. We run cows and calves on forest and BLM lands during the summer months and we always come up few head short every fall. Unless something is done to control the wolf population, they will continue to increase at an alarming rate. It will be hard for the Montana rancher to stay in business because of the wolf predation on livestock and the resulting financial burden. Wildlife have also changed their habits to try and survive wolf attacks. Instead of living in their natural habitat elk, deer, and other herbivores are congregating in large numbers for protection, thus impacting private property of land owners. At this rate the wolf harvest of wildlife will result in the near total elimination of the animals we have all learned to admire." Paul Hansen, Hansen Livestock, Dillon

"There are many more ranchers across the state that are suffering losses and hardship due to the uncontrolled population of wolves. What you see is only a fraction of the devastation. The ranchers do feel empathy for the wolves, "they are just another one of nature's creatures." But they need to be managed in a way that is safe for their population, other wildlife, and our own. If you would like to help, please support the delisting. If you would like to make a contribution, please contact the Montana Cattlemen - they need funds to help compensate ranchers." Jim & Kim Baker, Baker Land & Cattle, Hot Springs



Baker Land & Cattle, Hot Springs
This calf and 3 others were confirmed wolf kills last summer
12 animals missing- 40 dry cows
50 lbs. per calf weight loss
Total cost \$25,000 +



Martin Ranch, Two Dot
3 separate kill dates
22 confirmed wolf kills
30+ unconfirmed kills
\$500 vet bills, 66 open ewes
3 year total \$28,000



Cumin Ranch, Big Timber
4 confirmed wolf kills



Kertulla Ranch, Avon
3 confirmed wolf kills
34 missing calves
2 ranch dogs
Since 1995 lost \$30,000 +



Herman Ranch, Niarada
7 confirmed wolf kills
20 missing calves
60 aborted 1st calf heifers
50 lbs. lost weight
\$50,000



Boomer Ranch, Drummond
11 confirmed wolf kills
(2 steers, 9 sheep)
25+ missing lambs
Total cost 2008-2009 \$40,000



Hansen Livestock, Dillon
38 confirmed wolf kills
35 sheep, 2 calves, 1 yearling steer
20 head of sheep wounded and 1 yearling steer.
1 guard dog seriously injured



Sieben Ranch, Wolf Creek
4 confirmed wolf kills
2 dogs



King Ranch, Lonepine
1 confirmed wolf kill
2 missing, 2 dry cows
Left summer range 2 weeks early
\$4,500 +



Blacktail Mountain Ranch, Kila
2 confirmed kills
2 dry cows
25 lbs. weight loss
Total \$5000



Helle Ranch, Dillon
24 confirmed wolf kills
250 missing
4 guard dogs and 2 stock dogs killed
\$1000+ vet bills
Range that is not utilized due to wolves
\$120,000 since 1996



McGowan Ranch, Drummond
6 confirmed wolf kills
100 missing calves
45 lbs. per calf weight loss
\$150,000 in the last 3 years



Svenson Ranch, Reed Point
31 confirmed wolf kills,
13 missing ewes & lambs
100+ head dry ewes
\$78,000 +



**PLEASE SUPPORT
DELISTING!**

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