



Minutes Deschutes County Wolf Depredation and Financial Assistance Committee

Meeting #11: Monday, September 15, 2025, 5:30 p.m.
Deschutes Services Building, Allen Room, 1300 NW Wall Street, Bend

This meeting was conducted in person and by video. It was video recorded and can be accessed on the committee website: [Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Committee | Deschutes County Oregon.](#)

I. Introductions / Call to Order

This meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Commissioner Phil Chang. Present in person: Phil Chang, Deschutes County Commissioner, committee member; Jen Patterson, Deschutes County Strategic Initiatives Manager; Nick Lelack, County Administrator; Sarahlee Lawrence; Steve Pappa, committee member; Ethan O'Brien, committee member; Aaron Bott, Wolf Biologist, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW); Brian Thomas, USDA, Wildlife Services, NW District Manager; Scott Duggan, OSU-Cascades, Livestock Extension Agent; and Matt Alex, USDA, Assistance District Supervisor. Present via Zoom: Johnny Leason, committee member.

II. Approval of April 21, 2025, Minutes

Ethan O'Brien moved to approve the minutes. Steve Pappa seconded the motion. Minutes approved unanimously.

III. Update from Committee Chair, Commissioner Chang

Phil Chang announced the departure of two committee members. Donna Harris finished out her term and the County posted a recruitment announcement and appointed a new member. Sally Compton, Executive Director for Think Wild, was appointed to fill the position of Supporter of Wolf Conservation and Coexistence with Wolves.

Gordon Jones resigned his position due to personal conflicts with federal and state policy decisions regarding wolf management.

IV. Vacant Committee Position – Business Representative

Chang reviewed the process for filling the vacant seat for Business Representative. For this particular position the committee selects the nomination for the Board of County Commissioners to confirm the appointment. Jen Patterson reviewed the meeting notes from September 2023 and read back the categories for recruitment of business representative that were considered during the original round. Johnny Leason may know one or two people who may be interested and he will reach out to them. Aaron Bott has had several people inquire how they may be able to serve on the committee, he could refer them to the committee. Steve Pappa recommended reaching out to tourism organizations like Tour Bend to see if they have recommendations. Ethan O'Brien recommends not pigeonholing potential applicants into specific categories. Nick Lelack indicated that the best practice is to keep an open recruitment process and then the committee can make the selection from all interested applicants. Lelack suggested that the County's PIO could draft a Media Release that can be distributed by all committee members, partner agencies, and media contacts. Chang stated it would be ideal to have the position filled by December and if need be, the committee could hold a virtual meeting with just an

agenda item for application review. The committee agreed to open the recruitment process now and have all interested parties submit statements of interest to Patterson by October 17. If there are more than four applicants Patterson will send the statements to the committee via email and each committee member will rank the candidates. The top four will be asked to attend the November Wolf Committee meeting to meet the members. Following the November meeting the committee members will email Patterson their rankings and the top candidate will be nominated for BOCC appointment consideration.

V. Update on Carcass Removal Program and 2025 Grant Funds Balance

Jen Patterson updated the committee on the carcass removal program. The program is up and running and with a voucher program in place with Solid Waste. Vouchers have been distributed to ODFW, USDA, and OSU-Cascades. Patterson has received one invoice from Solid Waste and there were two carcasses disposed of to date. Pappa and O'Brien requested vouchers which Patterson will send.

The preventative measure grant fund balance has about \$5,000 remaining to be spent or returned to ODA by January 31, 2026. A correction later in the meeting confirmed the balance is about \$4,000 after the Fox Lights purchased for ODFW use.

Scott Duggan asked how someone could request Wildlife Services assistance with carcass removal. Patterson will connect Duggan and David Andrews with Wildlife Services.

Pappa suggested reaching out to the producers who received grant funds earlier this year to see if they would like to request additional funding. The committee would like past grant recipients interested in additional funds to provide a short report detailing how they have utilized previous grant funds, what is the status of wolf activity on the landscape, and how additional funding will go toward continued non-lethal preventative measures. The committee prefers additional grant requests not to exceed \$2,500.

Aaron Bott said wolf activity has been very quiet in Deschutes County since January. All the producers who received Deschutes County grant funds also received Crook County grant funds. ODFW has been working closely with those producers and there haven't been any recent wolf conflicts. Bott recapped that most wolf conflicts happen around calving season. Calving season begins in the fall and conflicts tend to spike around late winter.

Chang said it would make the most sense to get the remaining grant dollars out to producers ahead of the potential winter conflict time. The committee discussed the timeline for considering additional grant fund requests and would like to review the requests during the November meeting.

Pappa mentioned that he has heard from at least one producer the impact wolf conflict is having on lower fertility rates on cows. Bott has heard that it is on producers' minds but has not heard of specific cases. Pappa is working with one producer (through his veterinary practice) who is experiencing this issue. Bott said it sounds like it's in the area of the Paulina pack. There are two wolves in the Paulina pack who are radio collared and they have not been tracked north of Paulina Lake.

Duggan has a new publication from OSU that delves into the fertility impact on livestock when there is wolf conflict. Duggan will send to Patterson to distribute to the group.

Chang reviewed the new legislative bill pertaining to wolf depredation reimbursement. SB 777 added a multiplier for depredation; any confirmed depredation can be reimbursed up to five times the depredation rates (set by county Wolf Committees) and the missing and injured category has been removed. Additionally, it requires that at least 50% of the grant funds are designated to preventative measures.

The committee would like to add to next meeting's agenda an item to review and possibly update the rate sheet that the committee established in 2023.

VI. Grant Application and Producer Outreach Process for 2026 Grant Cycle

Patterson reviewed the application process. ODA typically sets an application deadline by the end of February. Last year the committee discussed county grant asks for sponsored programs (i.e. carcass removal funds) during the January meeting and held a Zoom meeting in February to review last minute grant applications that were received from producers who were experiencing wolf conflicts in December and January. The committee finalized the grant application requests in February and Patterson submitted the applications to ODA by the end of February.

O'Brien asked Bott if there have been additional depredations outside of the ones that have been reported to the committee and if there are any producers who have had conflict that haven't worked with the committee in the past. Bott confirmed that there are no further known conflicts or depredations.

Bott gave a summary of the wolf population in and around Deschutes County and stressed that there could always be unknown wolves on the landscape that they are not aware of. There are three known packs in and around the county but are not known depredators. The Metolius Pack, the Upper Deschutes Pack, and the Paulina Pack. The Upper Deschutes Pack does not have a collar. One of the Metolius Pack has a collar but is not currently sending a GPS signal. It has a radio frequency collar. One of the Metolius Pack's breeding males was poached in March; a breeding male wolf from another pack migrated to join the Metolius Pack after March. Upper Deschutes pack has a full litter of pups and the Paulina pack has a litter of pups as well.

Pappa suggests not expanding the outreach to the general public as Bott is tune with wolf activity in the area from his work and relationships with partner agencies.

Patterson suggested posting a grant deadline and application link on the Wolf Committee page and alerting previous grant recipients to check the Wolf Committee page for information about the grant program. The committee is in agreement of this process and setting a grant application deadline of December 31, 2025, for the 2026 grant cycle.

Chang asked Bott if there are livestock producers in the Sisters/Lower Bridge zone who haven't had contact with the committee. Bott said that he has not heard of any new producers affected by wolf activity and all wolf activity is funneled to him.

The committee discussed whether to redact information on grant applications for meeting packets. O'Brien suggests redacting standard information as a standard practice. Pappa suggests including a line that acknowledges privacy, when appropriate, for grant applications.

VII. Public Comments

No public comments.

VIII. Next Steps

Next two meetings will take place in November and January, Patterson will send around doodle polls for the next two meetings to determine specific meeting dates and times. Next meeting topics will include interviewing top candidates for the vacant Business Representative position, review and distribution of remaining 2025 grant funds, and review and potentially update depredation rate sheet.

IX. Wrap up and Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager,
Deschutes County Administrative Services