

mental health data on ranch families living with wolves. Now, while ranchers are mentally prepared to see the animals they raise sold, slaughtered, and consumed by the public, they are not mentally prepared to see individual animals (their life's work) destroyed by wolves. The Mexican wolf is under full ESA protection and one can not harass or kill a wolf. In addition, a federal judge has even prohibited the removal of livestock depredating wolves, contrary to what was agreed on prior to Mexican wolves being released.

It turns out that living with wolves is hardest on children, especially those who have seen beloved animals or family pets killed by wolves - remember wolves kill more than just livestock. Similar mental health data has been collected in India and Africa where people and their livestock are also subjected to high levels of predation. Here in the West, some ranch members have even been diagnosed with post-traumatic-stress-like symptoms.

To counter all the recent negative publicity over wolf-killed livestock and pets, pro-wolf advocates, including Defenders of Wildlife, have embarked on a major P-R campaign trying to sell the public on the use of non-lethal methods to control wolves. According to pro-wolf advocates, ranchers have only themselves to blame for any wolf-related livestock losses, and if those ranchers would only change their management practices "wolves and people can peacefully coexist." Unfortunately this is simply another pack of lies—pun intended.

At the 2005 wolf conflict symposium that I mention earlier, the federal government presented data on the effectiveness of various methods on non-lethal wolf control. It was reported that some techniques work for only a week or less, while others may be effective for as long as a year, depending on the individual wolf pack—apparently some wolf packs are quick learners, while others are not—regardless, in the end all non-lethal methods eventually fail and the wolves resume killing livestock.

There are two, and only two proven ways to end wolf-livestock depredations. Eliminate the wolves, or eliminate the livestock producers. Everything else is simply smoke and mirrors designed to deceive a gullible public.



Without ranchers to maintain mule deer habitat and to keep wolf numbers down, it is clear that future generations will see fewer and fewer mule deer, and that hunting opportunities will continue to decline across the West.

As I, and others, have documented, one of the real reasons pro-wolf advocates want large numbers of wolves in every western state is to eliminate livestock grazing. All you need to do to verify this fact is to visit the websites of the various groups that have repeatedly sued to put wolves back under full ESA protection, groups such as the Western Watersheds Project, or the U.S. Humane Society. These organizations, and others, view both ranching and hunting as evils to be eliminated at all cost, and by any means, including lying.

To summarize, there are wolf-related livestock death losses for which ranchers have never been fully compensated, plus there are both calf and cow weight losses for which no rancher has ever been reimbursed. In addition, wolf-related stress and diseases spread by wolves can result in more open cows and fewer calves, further reducing ranch income, and again for which no compensation has ever been forthcoming. Moreover, these and other indirect losses can be

much greater than actual wolf-caused death losses. Does this seem fair to you? How would you like the government to reach into your pocket and remove an additional \$10,000 or more-- each and every year?

Without ranchers to maintain mule deer habitat and to keep wolf numbers down, it is clear that future generations will see fewer and fewer mule deer, and that hunting opportunities will decline. In addition, it is critical to note that, as I and others predicted before wolves were released, sport hunting and trapping in Idaho and Montana have not had a major impact on wolf numbers in those states. Only actual predator control can significantly reduce wolf numbers, and ranchers, along with hunters, are the only people, who openly support and practice predator control. Furthermore, the same groups that have habitually sued to keep wolves under federal protection, have also repeatedly tried to eliminate Wildlife Services, the federal agency responsible for all predator control, not just wolves. To date, however, livestock producers have had the political wherewithal to prevent that from happening. If it were not for ranchers, all federal predator control would have ended long ago. So, have you thanked a rancher lately? If not, we all should!