



Kelly Susewind
Director
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
PO Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504-3200
Delivered via electronic mail

14 September, 2022

Dear Director Susewind,

I am writing to you regarding a recent situation involving a lack of proper carcass sanitation at a dairy farm within the Stranger Pack wolf territory. Dead cattle were attracting members of the Stranger Pack to the operation and its vicinity, creating the need for conflict mitigation to prevent livestock depredations. In addition, a member of the Stanger Pack was shot under Caught in the Act regulations, and staff reported that dead animals and parts were present at the time of the incident on the private property involved.

I want to thank you and your staff for handling the situation from both an enforcement perspective (making clear that laws that prohibit the intentional attraction of carnivores will be enforced) and from a conflict mitigation perspective. Your conflict section manager made sufficient resources available to assist the livestock operation in cleaning up all potential attractants to reduce the likelihood that wolves will return to the property, and field staff have worked to implement the clean-up operation. It is clear from the latest monthly wolf update that your conflict staff also made efforts to prevent depredations of live dairy cattle on the property.

This incident, however raises larger issues that we would like to call to your attention and request your help to address. First, we would like to know that there will be consistent enforcement of [relevant RCWs](#) (and [here](#)), so would appreciate your communicating the importance of clear messaging from your enforcement staff to the public. The message needs to be that cleaning up carcasses and “bone” piles is mandatory after a first notice that they are in proximity to wolves or other carnivores. We suggest an internal policy memo to memorialize your direction.

Secondly, we can imagine that poor sanitation is, unfortunately, a relatively common situation. We are interested in exploring increased state funding for your agency to ensure DPCA-Ls can be used when needed for carcass disposal, as they were for the situation in Stranger. We also think that state funding for building carcass compost facilities and contracting with local disposal companies to assist producers in transporting dead livestock to these facilities would make it easier for farmers and ranchers to properly dispose of carcasses. We would like to work with your agency and the Department of Agriculture (with whom we are also in contact about these issues) to increase access to compost facilities to reduce attractants that create situations where



wolves and other carnivores might be killed, and people and their animals are unnecessarily put in conflict situations.

Finally, we want to support a proposal that your Wolf Policy Lead, Julia Smith, discussed with us to amend the Caught in the Act [WAC](#), to exclude situations where wolves are shot because they were drawn in by carcasses or bone piles that have not been properly managed. We would like to work with you, your staff and the Commission over the coming months to fix this unfortunate gap in the current regulation.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your continued dedication to wolf recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paula Swedeen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paula Swedeen, Ph.D.
Policy Director
Conservation Northwest

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