



State of Washington  
**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

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August 30, 2018

To: Steve Pozzanghera, Region 1 Director

From: Benjamin Maletzke, Statewide Wolf Specialist

Subject: Togo Wolf Pack Recommendation

The District 1 Wolf Team has reviewed the status of the Togo Pack in relation to the previous recommendation put forth on August 19, 2018 for a lethal removal action and the recent shooting incident most likely resulting in the injury to the adult male-collared wolf. The Togo Pack has demonstrated a chronic pattern of depredating on livestock despite the use of proactive and responsive non-lethal deterrent measures in place to protect livestock. Three depredations have occurred in the last 21 days with the latest being a calf that was injured by wolves on August 18. This pack also has a history of depredations that included two in November 2017 and one in May 2018 totaling six depredations within the previous 10 months. All six depredations meet the definition of confirmed wolf depredation outlined in the 2011 Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (page 91) and Table 1 outlined in the 2017 Wolf-Livestock Interaction Protocol (Attachment A). Further history regarding the six depredations and non-lethal deterrent measures can be found in the August 19, 2018 Togo Wolf Pack Recommendation (Attachment H).

The adult male-collared wolf in the Togo Pack has been associated with the majority of livestock depredations. The May 2018 depredation occurred while the breeding female would have been at the densite roughly 10 miles away. Additionally, one black adult wolf was witnessed leaving the depredation location and one black adult was the only wolf ever captured on camera at that location. Then a black adult wolf (presumably the male-collared wolf) was also captured on camera at the location of at least one of the depredation sites last November. After the adult male wolf was collared on June 2, 2018, the only black adult captured on camera has been the collared male, and he has been detected on cameras at or near the known depredation locations that occurred in August 2018. The collar data also puts this wolf in the immediate vicinity of these depredations on several occasions.

On August 23, 2018, a Ferry County livestock producer said he shot at an adult wolf in the Togo pack territory and a subsequent field investigation revealed that the male-collared wolf appeared to have a broken rear left leg below the knee joint (investigation into the shooting is ongoing). If the injury the male-collared wolf sustained heals, there is no evidence to suggest the behavior of killing livestock will change and may potentially increase due to a reduced ability to capture wild prey. During the time the male-collared wolf is injured and healing, it may be more difficult for the female to support the nutritional needs of the male-collared wolf and the two pups, potentially increasing the likelihood that she depredates on livestock.

The livestock are currently on a USFS allotment within the Togo Pack territory and are expected

to remain in the area until October, 2018. Livestock will then be moved to a private pasture that still resides within the pack territory and is the location where the two depredations occurred last November. Due to the overlap of the Togo Pack territory with the private pasture and pattern of reoccurring depredations, the livestock would remain vulnerable to depredation by the pack.

The 2011 WDFW - Wolf Conservation and Management Plan discusses the need to minimize mortality from lethal control in Chapter 12, Section 2.2 and cites Brainerd et al. (2008) recommendations to limit lethal control to solitary individuals or territorial pairs and suggests avoiding removal of wolves from reproductive packs until pups are six months old or the pack contains six or more members and when there are few neighboring packs and the population total is less than 75 wolves. The District 1 Team expects a greater than 50% chance that the pups would survive even with the loss of the male-collared wolf. The team discussed a similar situation with the female of the Smackout pack in 2014 where the breeding male was killed by a cougar while five pups were still in the den. In this instance, the breeding female was able to raise the pups by herself throughout the rest of the year. The Togo Pack resides in the Eastern Washington Recovery Area and is not on the periphery of wolf recovery. The last annual survey indicated a minimum count of 106 wolves in 18 known packs including 13 breeding pairs in the Eastern Washington Recovery Area (WDFW - Washington Gray Wolf Conservation and Management 2017 Annual Report). Additionally, the Eastern Washington Recovery Area is contiguous with and a part of a much larger metapopulation in northern Idaho and southern British Columbia. The Eastern Washington Recovery Area is well above the established recovery goals and the District 1 Team does not expect that the removal of the male-collared wolf, or the potential loss of the pups, would have a significant impact on the recovery of wolves in Washington or to the Eastern Washington Recovery Area.

The District 1 Team discussed the timing of the potential lethal removal action in regards to the timeframe and impact of that removal on recurrent depredations. Bradley et al. (2015) suggests that where lethal removal appeared to be most effective at changing pack behavior is if it is conducted within 7 – 14 days. Since the last depredation occurred on August 18<sup>th</sup>, the lethal action would be most effective if conducted in that timeframe. It is worth noting, that the exact mechanisms underpinning the result of Bradley et al. (2015) are not immediately clear. The study was based on an average impact where lethal removal was conducted on packs of various size from two adults to packs with more than two adults. It is reasonable to hypothesize that in the larger packs, containing more adults than just the breeding pair, there is less certainty of removing the offending wolf or wolves responsible for killing livestock as the timeframe increases from when the depredation occurred. In a pack of only two adults (i.e. the Togo Pack), it is more likely that any adult wolf removed is an offending individual and the timeframe of conducting the action in 14 days or less may not be as critical to change pack behavior. Harper et al. (2008) also found that removing adult males had the greatest impact on reducing the chances of recurrent depredations.

The 2017 Wolf-Livestock Interaction Protocol was developed through a long collaboration of diverse stakeholders that represented different values of citizens of Washington and has been a guide for WDFW in making lethal removal decisions. The criteria in the protocol sets guidelines of utilizing proactive non-lethal measures to deter wolves from depredating livestock. The proactive and responsive non-lethal deterrents utilized in the Togo Pack area have proven ineffective to stop recurrent depredations on livestock by wolves. In this circumstance, a pattern of reoccurring depredations has been well established and depredations are likely to continue without lethal action based on this previous behavior of the pack. Additionally, WDFW has been committed to adhering to the process and products of the Wolf Advisory Group; including the recommendations set forth in the protocol. This includes adhering to the depredation timeframe (three in 30-days or four depredations in a 10-month period) and criteria (producers must deploy at least two agreed upon proactive deterrents, at least one depredation must be a mortality, and

removal is being conducted in an area where wolf recovery is not a concern, etc.) required prior to a lethal removal action. Following the 2017 protocol provides certainty to all the stakeholders of when and if actions are necessary and promotes social tolerance for wolf recovery through consistency.

Based on all of the above information, discussion and deliberations the District 1 Wolf Team makes the following recommendation:

**The District 1 wolf team recommends that the original proposed lethal action on the Togo wolf pack be implemented by removing the adult male-collared wolf to influence and change wolf pack behavior in an effort to reduce the potential for recurrent wolf depredations on livestock while continuing to promote wolf recovery.**