

RESOLUTION NO. 25-200

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SISKIYOU PROCLAIMING A LOCAL EMERGENCY DUE TO THE PRESENCE AND IMPACT OF GRAY WOLVES IN SISKIYOU COUNTY

**WHEREAS**, the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors recognizes the importance of wildlife conservation and balanced environmental stewardship; and

**WHEREAS**, the return and continued expansion of the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) into Northern California has resulted in significant adverse impacts on rural communities and livestock producers, including hundreds of confirmed depredations in Siskiyou and neighboring counties; and

**WHEREAS**, across Northern California, there have been documented incidents of wolves preying on cattle near homes, highways, and public rest areas, raising growing concerns about public safety in rural communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Siskiyou County Wolf Liaison continues to monitor and investigate wolf depredations within the county, with 104 confirmed or probable cases recorded since 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, between January and October 2025, the Wolf Liaison investigated 35 cattle deaths, of which 21 were confirmed or probable wolf depredations; and

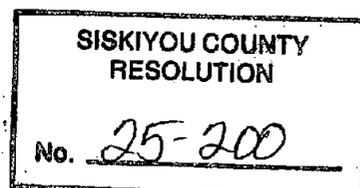
**WHEREAS**, these figures are considered a substantial undercount, as not all cattle losses are reported, some livestock go missing or are difficult to locate due to Siskiyou County's rugged terrain, and in some cases the cause of death cannot be determined; and

**WHEREAS**, the Wolf Liaison confirmed that in 2025, the alpha female of the Whaleback Pack, which dens in Siskiyou County, produced ten pups, demonstrating rapid population growth and indicating that wolf-related impacts on livestock and ranching operations are likely to increase in scope and intensity in the coming years; and

**WHEREAS**, the continued presence of gray wolves in and around Siskiyou County, combined with documented depredations, wolf pack population growth, and escalating livestock conflicts, poses an ongoing threat to livestock and to public safety as cattle return to winter range, and also presents a significant human health and safety concern for livestock producers, who experience emotional trauma, unsustainable work hours spent protecting their herds, and substantial economic loss resulting from repeated wolf depredation; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to these direct harms, wolves cause indirect economic impacts, including disrupted grazing patterns, reduced weight gain, and lower reproductive success, creating substantial challenges for local ranching operations and requiring ranchers to alter their operations to avoid wolf activity, which further increases costs and compounds existing economic losses; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2025, four Siskiyou County ranchers relocated their cattle from summer rangeland near Butte Creek to winter rangeland six weeks early to avoid potential depredation incidents, a move that cost the ranchers tens of thousands of dollars; and



**WHEREAS**, some ranchers operate under conservation easements where cattle grazing is an essential component of the land management plan, and the inability to graze due to wolf activity places these landowners at risk of violating contractual obligations while simultaneously increasing fire danger due to the buildup of unmanaged vegetation; and

**WHEREAS**, these combined direct and indirect impacts threaten the long-term viability of ranching in Siskiyou County, a cornerstone of the local agricultural economy, and create broader economic consequences throughout the county, which already faces unemployment and poverty rates higher than the state and federal averages; and

**WHEREAS**, the increase in gray wolf populations in the region has led to higher predation on big game species such as deer and elk, contributing to localized declines that may disrupt ecological balance and reduce hunting opportunities for local residents and visiting hunters, an important source of cultural and economic value for rural communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the legal protections afforded to the gray wolf under both state and federal law have created a significant imbalance, whereby rural residents, livestock producers, and recreationists have little to no recourse to protect property, livelihoods, or safety without risking criminal or civil penalties; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2025, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, with authorization from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, lawfully lethally removed wolves from Sierra Valley after documenting repeated confirmed livestock depredations, substantial economic loss to local producers, and the failure of available non-lethal deterrents; and

**WHEREAS**, current California law provides legal avenues for the lethal removal of specific apex predators, including black bears and mountain lions, when such animals pose an imminent threat to public safety or have been confirmed to have killed livestock; similar authority should likewise be extended to allow the lawful removal of gray wolves that demonstrate hazardous, habituated behavior or that are confirmed to be habitual livestock-killers; and

**WHEREAS**, empowering locally elected officials, specifically county sheriffs, to assess and respond to specific wildlife threats provides a responsible, accountable, and community-based approach to managing these risks; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors hereby declares a Local State of Emergency due to the public safety risks, the significant economic losses, and the adverse human health and safety impacts on livestock producers resulting from the increasing presence and ongoing depredation activity of gray wolves in and around Siskiyou County; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board respectfully requests that the California Fish and Game Commission, in coordination with the Governor of California and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, initiate immediate regulatory changes recognizing that the Siskiyou County Sheriff and the Siskiyou County Wolf Liaison possess the authority to investigate suspected wolf depredations, document and confirm livestock kills, and provide an official determination that a specific, identified wolf is a habituated livestock depredator; and that such determinations shall be formally considered in authorizing the removal of that animal under clear, lawful, and transparent procedures; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board respectfully requests that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in coordination with the President, initiate immediate regulatory changes formally recognizing that the Siskiyou County Sheriff and the Siskiyou County Wolf Liaison possess the authority to investigate suspected wolf depredations, document and confirm livestock kills, and make an official determination that a specific, identified gray wolf is a habituated livestock depredator and public safety threat; and that such determinations shall be directly considered in authorizing the removal of that animal under clearly defined, lawful procedures; and

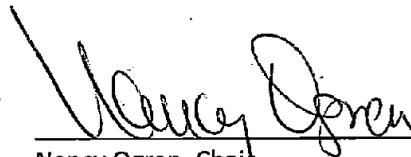
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution is not a call for widespread lethal control, but a request for the establishment of reasonable, focused tools that allow rural communities to respond to legitimate threats in a responsible and lawful manner; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Siskiyou requests the immediate intervention from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to address this rapidly escalating emergency, including: providing funding for the Siskiyou County Wolf Liaison position; improving information sharing and collaboration with cooperating agencies, providing daily GPS cluster data on both private and public lands used for livestock production; providing wolf collar radio-telemetry frequencies directly to the Wolf Liaison to better track and locate wolves and inform livestock producers of wolf locations so they can take protective measures; ending prolonged blackout periods on wolf location data once cattle enter mountain rangeland; ensuring prompt review of depredation reports with timely compensation to affected ranchers; and providing sustained financial support for county staff and ongoing wolf-related mitigation and response; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Clerk of the Board is directed to agendize the Board's review of the need for continuing this local emergency at least once every 60 days until the Board otherwise takes action to terminate this local emergency.

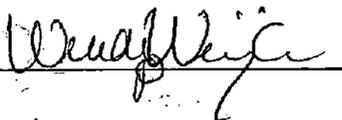
**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors at a regular meeting of said Board, held on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2025, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Valenzuela, Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None



Nancy Ogren, Chair  
Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:  
LAURA BYNUM, COUNTY CLERK

By  Deputy