

June 10th, 2025

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee

Dear Chair Cole, Chair Collins, Ranking Member DeLauro, and Vice Chair Murray:

We are writing to express our strong support for USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services and the essential role they play in supporting ranches managing carnivore-livestock conflicts across the western United States.

Our organizations work closely with ranchers and livestock producers across the West. Over the last decade, we have seen the increasing challenges producers face from predators including wolves, coyotes, mountain lions, and bears. These large carnivores often come into direct conflict with livestock operations, threatening the livelihoods of ranching families and the economic viability of rural communities.

Wildlife Services is a critical partner in addressing these challenges. Their integrated approach includes both lethal and non-lethal management tools, which are essential in adapting to the evolving nature of wildlife-livestock conflicts and supporting landscapes shared by people and wildlife. Their deployment of non-lethal methods — such as Fladry, range riders, scare devices, and technical guidance — can help prevent depredations before they occur, reducing the need for reactive responses, while their ability to strategically and humanely remove depredating carnivores is also crucial in supporting ranchers on working landscapes.

Wildlife Services works closely in collaboration with livestock producers and state wildlife agencies to develop localized, effective strategies. This kind of cooperation is vital in the West, where public and private lands intermingle, and solutions require trust, flexibility, and access to all available management tools.

In our experience, Wildlife Services professionals bring not only technical expertise but a deep understanding of the working landscape. They work with ranchers, provide timely responses to incidents, and help livestock producers navigate complex wildlife management issues. Their expertise brings a sense of support and partnership that is increasingly rare.

As predator populations continue to grow and expand, the role of Wildlife Services will only grow in importance. Maintaining and expanding their capacity is essential to supporting wildlife and keeping ranchers in business.

We urge you to increase funding for USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services and the critical work they do across the western U.S. Their balanced, collaborative approach is a model for wildlife conflict resolution and a cornerstone of profitable livestock operations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Arizona Cattle Growers' Association
California Rangeland Conservation Coalition
Colorado Cattlemen's Association
Colorado Wool Growers Association
Idaho Cattle Association

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation
Idaho Wool Growers Association
Madison Valley Ranchlands Group
New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association
New Mexico Wool Growers,
Oregon Cattlemen's Association
Oregon Sheep Growers Association
Western Landowners Alliance
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association

cc: Brooke Rollins, Secretary, USDA; Michael Watson, Administrator, USDA APHIS; Jessica Fantinato, Deputy Administrator, Wildlife Services; Abbey Fretz, Deputy Administrator, Legislative and Public Affairs