

July ##, 2022

Delivered by Western Landowners Alliance via email

RE: Non-lethal predator risk management Technical and Financial Assistance through NRCS Conservation Delivery Programs

To NRCS Western Region State Conservationists:

We, the undersigned livestock producers operating on western working lands that serve as habitat for large predators, are writing to express our interest in and need for technical and financial assistance to support producer-implemented natural resource and livestock management practices and systems aimed at managing the risks associated with livestock-predator interaction. Conflict that occurs between agriculture production and certain species of wildlife, such as wolves and grizzlies, can be addressed through the Four C's -- a systems-based framework for conflict reduction that supports both livestock production and wildlife conservation, summarized below. We believe that NRCS conservation delivery programs offer a pathway for producer adoption of conflict prevention (non-lethal) practices, as part of this framework.

Through extensive dialogue amongst stakeholders that are rooted in the realities of stewarding rural lands and communities, the Conflict Reduction Consortium developed the Four C's framework. The framework addresses the ecological, economic and social needs of diverse communities dealing with livestock-predator conflict by means of compensation, conflict prevention (non-lethal), control (lethal) and collaboration.

We request increased availability of voluntary conservation mechanisms to support non-lethal predator management through NRCS-administered Farm Bill programs, such as EQIP and CSP. We support the adoption of an Interim Practice Standard that would provide for further implementation and evaluation of range riding and carcass management, along with temporary, semi-permanent and permanent fencing approaches. All these techniques have demonstrated utility for conflict management across broad geographic conditions. The interim availability of financial and technical assistance would allow for further review and modification by NRCS based on the technical merit of these strategies.

Landowner-implemented conflict prevention supported through NRCS conservation programs is complementary to and distinct from the role of other state and federal agencies, which provide agency-implemented conflict prevention through technical and operational assistance. To date, the Wolf Livestock Demonstration Grant Program (Tester Fund), with ever increasing demands, is the only federal funding source that, in some states, supports landowner-implemented conflict prevention.

Western working lands provide a broad suite of ecosystem services. The sustained provisioning of these landscapes in the context of today's world, which supports an increasing number of

predator species, is dependent upon economically-viable and socially-accepted management approaches that improve ecological function. As landowners and managers collectively operating across ## states, we look forward to the opportunity to work with our local NRCS field offices to continue to steward land, livestock and wildlife on the West's working wild landscapes.

Sincerely,

(Name, Ranch, State, Additional affiliations)

Breanna Owens, Cobblestone Ranch, California, Western Landowners Alliance

Cat Urbigkit, Paradise Sheep Company, Wyoming, Sublette County Predator Board Member

Cc: FPAC...

Astor Boozer, Regional Conservationist, West

Danielle Flynn, National Biologist

Thad Heater, Conservation Outcomes Team

Chris Hamilton, Biologist, West Tech Center

DRAFT FOR SIGNATURE