



# Protecting Livestock, Saving Wolves WOLF COEXISTENCE PARTNERSHIP

Home on the range in the Northern Rockies, where wildlife roams and livestock grazes, wolves, like other carnivores, sometimes prey on cattle and sheep. When they do, they are often killed to protect against future livestock losses.

This lethal “predator control” approach to addressing conflict is the leading cause of wolf deaths in the Northern Rockies. Defenders of Wildlife is dedicated to ending the vicious cycle of livestock loss and wolf removal.

In 1998, as wolves were successfully resettling in the northern Rockies, Defenders introduced a proactive conservation program to focus solely on conflict prevention. We have worked closely with ranchers; federal, state and tribal agency biologists and resource managers; researchers; and community and conservation groups to develop, field-test, promote, implement and share the costs of nonlethal wolf deterrents and best management practices for livestock in



wolf country (see chart below). Sheep and cattle growers are actively involved in this pioneering work through Defenders’ Livestock Producer Advisory Council, formed in 2004.

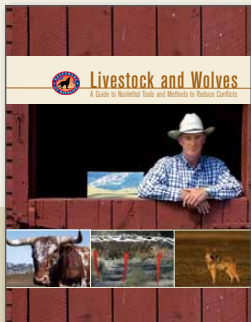
Through the summer of 2009, Defenders has invested a total of \$331,800 in nearly 100 proactive projects, successfully bridging the gap between conservation and ranching interests in the Northern Rockies.

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**“Our goal is near-zero losses of livestock and wolves using a combination of collaboration, common sense and cost-effective methods and tools.”**



–Suzanne Stone

Northern Rockies Representative, Defenders of Wildlife



With support and input from our Livestock Producer Advisory Council and many other partners, Defenders produced *Livestock and Wolves: A Guide to Nonlethal Tools and Methods to Reduce Conflicts*. This proactive how-to manual published in 2008 is widely used by livestock producers and wolf managers throughout the Northern Rockies.


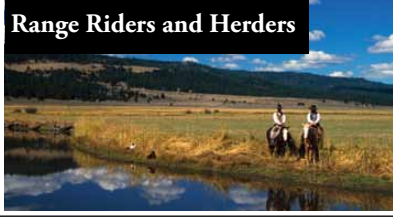



## PROACTIVE METHODS AND TOOLS

METHOD/TOOL	DESCRIPTION	APPLICATION
 <p><b>Fencing</b></p>	Wire mesh, electric strands, panels or a combination of materials used to form an enclosure high and secure enough to keep wolves out.	Installed permanently by small livestock operations as a night corral or to protect small pastures. Erected temporarily by larger operations with grazing animals constantly on the move.
 <p><b>Fladry</b></p>	Rope strung with red or orange flags at fixed intervals, a barrier that scares wolves away from livestock pastures. Known as “turbofladry” when electrified line is added to boost effectiveness.	Used in situations that call for an inexpensive, highly portable, easy-to-install way to keep wolves away from livestock. Defenders is one of the few organizations helping livestock producers purchase and install this nonlethal deterrent.

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For more information: [www.defenders.org/proactive](http://www.defenders.org/proactive)

PROACTIVE METHODS AND TOOLS Continued

METHOD/TOOL	DESCRIPTION	APPLICATION
 <p><b>Livestock Guarding Dogs</b></p>	Great Pyrenees, Anatolian shepherds, Akbash and other rugged canines specially bred to protect flocks from predators. Used for centuries by shepherds around the world.	Trained to live with livestock year-round, they warn of approaching predators. Typically more than one dog is used and herders or range riders are present to respond to the alarm sounded by the barking dogs.
 <p><b>Range Riders and Herders</b></p>	A much-needed human presence on the open range to watch out for wolves and actively protect herds and flocks.	Deployed to closely monitor herds and flocks and the surrounding terrain for signs of wolves, to scare off wolves when they do appear, and to remove sick or dead livestock that may attract wolves.
 <p><b>RAG Box</b></p>	Short for radio-activated guard (RAG) system, an alarm that consists of a receiver, loudspeakers, strobe lights and a battery-operated computer housed in a metal box.	Placed on or near a fence and set to blare and flash when it picks up the signal from an approaching radio-collared wolf, scaring the animal away.
 <p><b>Nonlethal Ammunition</b></p>	Ammunition shot from a gun to scare an animal with a loud noise (cracker shell) or a nonlethal hit (rubber bullet, beanbag shell). Designed to deter rather than harm.	Fired to discourage wolves from approaching livestock by negatively reinforcing the behavior.
 <p><b>Alternative Grazing Strategies</b></p>	Permanently or temporarily moving livestock to a grazing site in an area where encounters with wolves are less likely, or providing hay to keep cattle feeding in a safe area.	Offered as an option in situations where other proactive measures cannot be implemented quickly or effectively enough to prevent livestock losses—when wolves are denning in a grazing area, for example.

GUARD DOGS © BRAD DEVRIES/DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE; RANGE RIDERS © DESIGN PICS INC/ALAMY; RAG BOX © JESSE TIMBERLAKE/DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE; NON-LETHAL AMMO © THE ENQUIRER/MICHAEL E. KEATING; ALTERNATIVE GRAZING © SUZANNE ASHA STONE/DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

## A Model Project: SAVING PACK AND FLOCK IN IDAHO'S WOOD RIVER VALLEY

Talk about a fox in the henhouse, how about a pack of wolves in the middle of a major sheep-grazing “highway?” That was the situation in 2007 when wolves moved into the Wood River Valley, a perfect place for wolves in the scenic Sawtooth Mountains of south-central Idaho. More than 12,000 sheep pass through this 116-square-mile area in the critical summer grazing months—just about the time wolf pups are big enough to travel and packs are beginning to expand their territories well beyond the den.

When sheep were moving through the denning area in the summer of 2007, the newly settled Phantom Hill pack preyed on several and was slated for extermination—until Defenders stepped in. Defenders met with livestock producers, state and federal agency representatives and county commissioners and convinced them to try nonlethal deter-

rents and give the pack a second chance.

The following grazing season (June to October, 2008) at the request of the livestock producers, a four-person field crew hired by Defenders worked with sheep herders to keep livestock and wolves safely apart. The crew drew on a full complement of proactive methods and tools: livestock guard dogs to alert sheep and flock attendants, tracking devices to monitor the movements of the pack, noisemakers and spotlights to scare wolves away, and temporary electrified fladry corrals to protect sheep at night.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game provided up-to-date information on wolf activity from their aerial monitoring flights, and the U.S. Forest Service kept us abreast of sheep movements on its land.

With the full cooperation of all the partners involved, the Wood River Valley project—one of the most comprehensive tests of the proactive

approach ever attempted on the ground—was a great success. Only a handful of sheep and no wolves were killed. The project has been repeated in subsequent years with similar results.

Defenders plans to continue its cooperative proactive efforts in the Wood River Valley and expand into other areas as needed.



A herder installs turbofladry to create a temporary night corral for sheep in the Wood River Valley.

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