Two wolves from Wedge Pack killed in Northeast Washington

Local News

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Posted on : September 26, 2012 at 5:29 am

OLYMPIA, Wash. - A marksman with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) killed two wolves in Northeast Washington today as part of an effort to eliminate a pack that has repeatedly preyed on livestock in a remote grazing area near the Canadian border

WDFW Director Phil Anderson said teams of marksmen and wildlife biologists returned to an area known as the Wedge late last week, but had not killed any wolves after several days of around-the-clock activity. Beginning Monday, the department called in a helicopter to aid the effort, and an airborne marksman shot the two wolves early Tuesday afternoon, about seven miles south of the Canadian border.Anderson had directed the pack’s removal last week in response to the wolves’ escalating pattern of predation on the livestock herd of the Diamond M Ranch of Stevens County. Since July, wolves are believed to have killed or injured at least 17 of the herd’s calves and cows, despite non-lethal efforts to minimize wolf conflict by the rancher and department staff.

The rate of attacks on Diamond M livestock increased even after the department killed a non-breeding member of the pack on August 7. Anderson said the wolves killed Tuesday were among six that were spotted about seven miles southeast of the ranch on the Diamond M grazing allotment. Another wolf was seen Tuesday morning at the Diamond M’s private livestock pasture.“We decided to eliminate the Wedge Pack only after non-lethal measures were unsuccessful, and after the removal of one pack member failed to alter its behavior,” Anderson said. “We are committed to the recovery and sustainability of the gray wolf in

Washington, and its numbers are increasing rapidly, but recovery won’t succeed if ranchers’ livelihoods are threatened by persistent wolf attacks on livestock.”The Wedge Pack is one of eight confirmed and four suspected packs in the state, most of which are in Pend Oreille, Stevens, Ferry counties.Anderson said a department wildlife veterinarian would perform necropsies on the wolves later this week. He said the animals’ hides and skulls eventually would be used for educational purposes.For more information see the Wedge Pack Lethal Removal Actions FAQ (http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/gray_ ... acks/wedge/index.html#faq)