

**II. ECONOMICS OF WOLF REINTRODUCTION.** The economic effect of wolves is striking.

**1. The annual net benefit of wolf restoration to the county's surrounding Yellowstone** was estimated in 2005 to be \$35.5 million. Visitations to Yellowstone during 2005 was 2,835,651, but by 2017, park visits had risen 145% to 4,116,525. An estimate of the proportional increase in annual economic impact, adjusted for 23% inflation over the period, is \$65.5 million annually. More recently, that figure has risen to \$81 million. Furthermore, wolf watchers help spread these economic benefits over time, as they visit outside the peak summer season and stay longer than most Yellowstone visitors.

Wolf Recovery in Yellowstone: Park Visitor Attitudes, Expenditures, and Economic Impacts. <http://www.georgewright.org/251duffield.pdf>

Greater Yellowstone Wildlife Related Activity Valuation Study. [https://www.wildlivelihoods.com/\\_files/ugd/94fbf7\\_e3af2ba3eff94781a02fc73fc8bbe38b.pdf](https://www.wildlivelihoods.com/_files/ugd/94fbf7_e3af2ba3eff94781a02fc73fc8bbe38b.pdf)

Shopping for Wolves: Using Nonmarket Valuation to Inform Conservation Decisions. <https://headwaterseconomics.org/public-lands/papl-duffield/>

**2. Each year livestock losses to wolves accounted for < 0.01%** of the annual gross income from livestock operations in the Northern Rocky Mountain region. Thus, wolf depredation is a small economic cost to the industry, although it may be a significant cost to affected producers as these costs are not equitably distributed across the industry.. However, these costs are unevenly distributed and localized, with some producers suffering greater losses than others.

Livestock depredation by wolves and the ranching economy in the Northwestern U.S. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0921800909001347?via%3Dihub>

Assessing factors related to wolf depredation of cattle in fenced pastures in Montana and Idaho. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.2193/0091-7648%282005%2933%5B1256%3AAFRTWD%5D2.0.CO%3B2>

Photo: Jos Bakker, Humane Society of the United States.



### **III. LIVESTOCK and WOLVES.**

#### **A. LIVESTOCK LOSSES**

Livestock losses from wolves are rare in every region in which they live:

According to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), livestock producers in Idaho lose nearly 94 times more cattle and sheep to causes like disease, respiratory problems, and bad weather (“maladies,” collectively) than to wolves. And in Montana, livestock producers lose 97 times more cattle and sheep to maladies than to wolves.

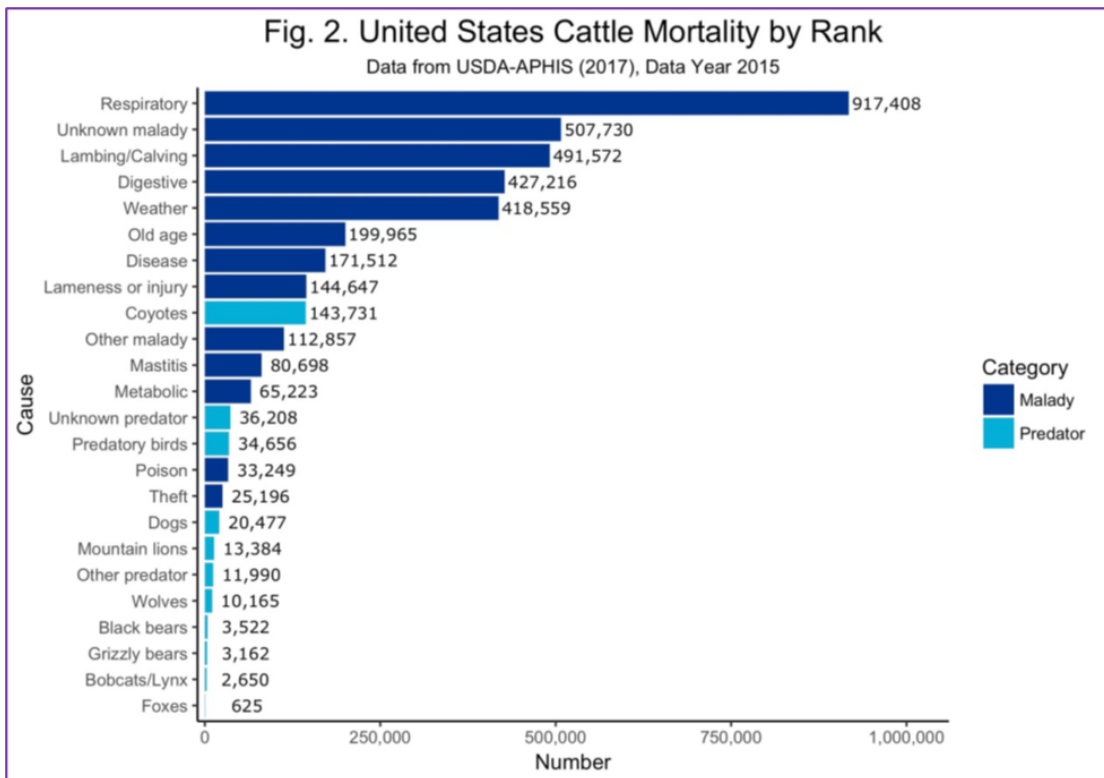
**Montana:** The wolf population has decreased slightly and may be stabilizing at about 1,160 wolves. Wildlife Services (WS) confirmed the loss of 96 livestock to wolves during 2021, including 67 cattle and 29 sheep; and 3 livestock guard dogs. Thirty-nine wolves were killed in response to depredation or to reduce the potential for further depredation and 273 wolves were taken during the 2021-22 hunting/trapping season. For perspective, at the start of 2021 there were a total of 2.45 million cattle and 200,000 sheep in Montana.

**Wyoming:** An estimated 338 wolves in  $\geq 41$  packs (including  $\geq 23$  breeding pairs) inhabited Wyoming statewide on December 31, 2022. Wolves were

confirmed to have killed or injured 97 head of livestock (46 cattle, 46 sheep, and 5 horses) statewide in Wyoming in 2022 (Wyoming Game and Fish 2022).

Twenty-one wolves were lethally and legally removed by agencies or the public in an effort to reduce livestock losses to wolves and 31 wolves were taken during the 2022 wolf hunting season. For perspective at the start of 2022 there were 1.23 million cattle and 330,000 sheep.

**Idaho:** USDA-Wildlife Services reports indicate that 84 cattle and 192 sheep were killed by wolves in Idaho in 2022. Idaho’s wolf Population in 2022 is estimated at 1,337. In 2022, 413 wolves were taken during the hunting/trapping season and 38 were removed by Wildlife Services for livestock conflict (IDFG 2023). For perspective, at the start of 2022 there were a total of 2.49 million cattle and 230,000 sheep in the state.



Government data confirm that wolves have a negligible effect on U.S. cattle & sheep industries [https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/HSUS-Wolf-Livestock-6.Mar\\_.19Final.pdf](https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/HSUS-Wolf-Livestock-6.Mar_.19Final.pdf)

