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Photo by Elaine Thompson / The Associated Press

Ray Robertson, who is a volunteer for Conservation Northwest and a contractor for the U.S. Forest Service, sets up a remote camera June 18, which he hopes will photograph wolves near Twisp, Wash. Below, a map showing confirmed and possible wolf packs in Washington sits next to a magazine about wolves on Robertson's kitchen table.

Wolves in the West: Controversy unfolds

By Phuong Le
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEATTLE — The wolves came within howling distance of the house, but were gone by the time Kim Jacobs found dead lambs on her family's eastern Oregon ranch that spring morning.

While many conservationists welcome the return of gray wolves into the Pacific Northwest, Jacobs wants to shoot them if they harm her livestock. "A lot of (people) can't wrap their mind around what wolves are capable of," said the fourth-generation rancher from Baker City, Ore., whose family lost at least 26 sheep to wolves in 2009.

As gray wolves have moved into the valleys and forests of Oregon and Washington in recent years, the conflicts that marked wolf debates in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming are unfolding here.

Congress in April stripped federal endangered-species protections from wolves in Montana, Idaho and the eastern one-third of Washington and Oregon. Wolves are still on the federal list of endangered species in the western two-thirds of Washington and Oregon, but the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is reviewing whether that protection should continue. Public comments on that review are due Tuesday.

This summer, Washington wildlife officials are finalizing a draft wolf management plan that has been so heated that an advisory group can't agree on some of the basics. The state has gotten 65,000 comments, ranging from advocates who say wolves play a vital role in the ecosystem to hunters and ranchers who fear they will eat too many elk, deer and livestock.

Meanwhile, conservation groups are urging Oregon wildlife officials to stop killing wolves. Wildlife managers killed two wolves in May and said in June they may kill another to prevent more livestock losses.

"It's looking more like it's not conservation, it's looking like retribution," Oregon Wild's Rob Klavins said.

"Nobody envisioned a situation where we'll be killing 20 percent of the wolf pups in two weeks to assuage the loss of four cows."

He said about 55,000 livestock animals were killed by disease and other causes in 2010, compared to about a dozen cows killed by wolves.

"Wolves are endangered and we don't take this lightly, but we do need to move to lethal control when other measures don't work," Michelle Dennehy, a spokeswoman with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, said. The state has issued 24 permits allowing ranchers and others to shoot and kill wolves if they catch them in the act of biting or killing.

Wolves roamed the West before they were hunted, trapped for their fur and killed to virtual extinction in the lower 48 states decades ago. Since they were reintroduced into Idaho and Yellowstone National Park in the mid-1990s, the predators have thrived and an estimated 1,600 roam the Northern Rockies. Wolves have dispersed into Oregon and Washington from Idaho and British Columbia. There are about 17 confirmed wolves in Oregon and about two dozen in Washington.

"There is a sincere fear people have about wolves and I think it's because they don't understand the animals," Carter Niemeyer, a retired federal wolf trapper, said.

Wolves tend to avoid people and only a few human deaths have been attributed to wolves in North America in nearly 100 years, Niemeyer said. They're opportunistic predators that tend to feed on old, weak, sick or young prey.

"There's plenty of room for wolves. The issue is: are humans going to let them come back to the landscape?" Jasmine Minbashian, who manages the wolf program for Conservation Northwest, said.

A father and son from the Methow Valley in central Washington were charged in June with illegally killing at least two wolves and conspiring with another family member to smuggle a wolf pelt to Canada. A dipping agent alerted police in 2008 after blood leaked from a package. William White, Tom White and Erin White pleaded not guilty to numerous charges in federal court in Spokane last Wednesday.

William White and Tom White are accused of killing or attempting to trap and poison as many as five wolves near their Twisp home in 2008 and 2009. State biologists confirmed Washington's first wild wolf pack since the 1930s near Twisp in 2008, the Methow Valley's Lookout Pack.

"When you're trying to recover a population, every animal counts and we know that poaching has played a factor in recovering wolf populations in Washington state," Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's deputy chief of wildlife enforcement Mike Cenci said.

The pack which had numbered 10 in 2008 is now reduced to two males. The pack's breeding female wolf disappeared, and "it seems likely that she was poached last year," Scott Fitkin, a wildlife biologist with WDFW, said.

Normally around this time, pups would be moving from their den to a rendezvous site, but there's little evidence of a breeding pair or pups this year for the Lookout Pack, Fitkin said.

Still, one recent morning Ray Robertson hiked to a rendezvous site that the pack had used in 2009 hoping they may return there. He sets up remote cameras in the area as a contract employee with the U.S. Forest Service and a Conservation Northwest volunteer. Remote cameras had previously captured images of pups. Robertson hoped they would again as he attached two motion-sensor cameras to Douglas firs, aiming one at a clearing and another at a nearby trail.

Washington's draft wolf management plan calls for 15 breeding pairs for three consecutive years before the animals can be delisted in the state, which some hunters and ranchers say is too high while others say is too low.

"The number of wolves they call for in the plan far exceeds the prey and habitat base in Washington state," Washington Cattlemen's Association vice president Jack Field said. He and others support eight breeding pairs and a cap on the population.

In Oregon, wolves may be considered for statewide delisting once the population hits four breeding pairs in three consecutive years.

NEWS OF RECORD

Lottery

WASHINGTON / JULY 3

Daily Game 6-6-5
Keno 1-2-7-15-19-28-31-35-42-44-45-52-59-60-62-66-67-72-74-77
Match 4 1-14-17-24

OREGON / JULY 3

Lucky Lines 7-12-16-19-23-26-31
Pick 4
1 p.m. 2-5-1-6
4 p.m. 3-1-3-3
7 p.m. 4-2-0-4
10 p.m. 2-3-8-7

POLICE BLOTTER

Reckless Burning — Cowlitz County Sheriff's Office officers arrested Robert John Hamilton, 45, Longview, Saturday on suspicion of reckless burning in the first degree. Hamilton is suspected setting fire to a vehicle and trees with fireworks. He was also booked on a Snohomish County Warrant.

Burglary — Kelso police arrested Jon Christian Wilke, 50, Kelso, on suspicion of second-degree burglary Saturday. Wilke allegedly tried to leave the Three Rivers Mall Safeway in Kelso without paying for $47.75 worth of merchandise. Wilke had been trespassed from all Safeway stores and Three Rivers Mall property at the time of his arrest.

Drug crimes — Longview police arrested Toni Alyse Bertasso, 23, St. Helens, Ore., on suspicion of drug crimes and third-degree theft.

Robbery — Longview police arrested Jon William Stello, 33, Longview, Saturday on suspicion of first-degree robbery and drug crimes.

Assault — Longview police arrested Keale Keaisha Mawae, 21, Kalama, on suspicion of second-degree assault.

BURGLARIES

■ 3100 block of Cypress Street, Longview, Saturday.
■ 3300 block of 38th Avenue, Longview, Sunday.

THEFTS

■ Intersection of South Third Avenue and Maple Street, Kelso, Saturday.
■ 3000 block of Vandercook Way, Longview, metal grate stolen from Silver Star parking lot Saturday.
■ 100 block of Country Club Drive, Longview, purses and money stolen Saturday.

VEHICLE PROWL

■ 1900 block of East Kessler Boulevard, Longview, window broken and DVD player and iPhone charger stolen Saturday.

VANDALISM

■ 2200 block of 34th Avenue, Longview, gate lock broken Saturday.

AREA SERVICES

TUESDAY

Clouse — Robert G., 11 a.m., Little Falls Cemetery, Vader. Cattermole Funeral Home.
Puryear — William, 2 p.m., Steele Chapel at Longview Memorial Park & Crematory.

WEDNESDAY

Spiess — Beverly Ann, 11 a.m., Price-Helton Funeral Home, Auburn, Wash.

THURSDAY

Hoy — Beatrice, 2 p.m., Steele Chapel at Longview Memorial Park & Crematory.

SATURDAY

Campbell — Clayton Sinclair, 11 a.m., Longview Presbyterian Church. Columbia Funeral Service.
Mottet — Arthur Louis, Jr., 2-4 p.m., Red Lion, Hemlock Room, Kelso. Steele Chapel at Longview Memorial Park & Crematory.

OBITUARIES

Clayton S. 'Clay' Campbell

Clayton Sinclair Campbell, a longtime resident of Longview, died June 24, 2011, at St. John Medical Center.

He was born June 12, 1924, in Bemidji, Minn., to Foster and Helen (Sinclair) Campbell. He graduated in 1942 from Minnesota's Hibbing High School and entered the Army Air Corps.

Clay moved to the Northwest in 1955. He retired from the Longview Post Office after many years as a letter carrier. Clay was fun-loving, generous, and a loyal and constant friend.

Clay Campbell

He was a member of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE), Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and the American Red Cross. He was a former officer in Toastmasters and a deacon at Longview Presbyterian Church. Clay loved his family. He enjoyed gardening, fishing, sports and pinochle. He loved music and the arts. He was a Babe Ruth coach and a cub master.

Clay is survived by his wife, Sharon Campbell at home; his former wife and the mother of his children Ruth Campbell of Kelso; a daughter, Kathleen Campbell of Castle Rock; three sons, Jeff Campbell of Martinez, Calif., and Tom Campbell and Dan Campbell, both of Portland; two stepsons and their spouses, Bart and Marge Andrews, and Bruce and Patty Andrews, all of Longview; a stepdaughter, Beth Webb of Longview; 14 grandchildren; and 17 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a daughter, Patty Mackey; and two brothers, Phil and Don.

A memorial service is planned for 11 a.m. July 9 at Longview Presbyterian Church with Pastor Harlan Gilliland officiating.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Community House on Broadway or the Longview Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 1613, Longview, WA 98632.

Arrangements are by Columbia Funeral Service.

Please sign the guest book at www.tdn.com/obits.

Deaths

Jensen — Larry Valjean, 78, Kelso, died Saturday at a local nursing home. Dahl McVicker Funeral Home.
Kotera — John A., 60, Castle Rock, died Saturday at home. Cascade Northwest Funeral Chapel at Green Hills Memorial Gardens and Crematory.

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NORTHWEST BRIEFS

Tacoma police seek help in 1999 disappearance

TACOMA — Twelve years after little Teekah Lewis disappeared on a family outing to a Tacoma bowling alley, police are seeking the public's help in identifying a car that sped out of the parking lot that night.

Tacoma Police Detective Lindsey Wade told the News Tribune that the car and its driver may be involved in the girl's disappearance.

She said the witness arriving at the bowling alley reported that a Pontiac Grand Am nearly hit her and fishtailed as it sped up away.

Teekah was just 2½ when she disappeared on Jan. 23, 1999.

Hiker missing after sliding over edge

LEAVENWORTH — A search is underway for a 21-year-old Tacoma woman who was hiking in the Asagard Pass area of Washington's Alpine Lakes Wilderness when she reportedly slid down a snow face and disappeared over an edge into a hole about five-feet wide.

Chelan County Sheriff's Lt. Maria Agnew said the woman's boyfriend went to her aid and heard her scream, but was unable to reach her. He saw a cut under the snow pack that led into a crevasse with water rushing under it, but no sign of the woman.

Agnew said a 911 call came in around 11:07 a.m. Sunday.

Asagard Pass is located in the Cascade Mountains. It is one of two routes to the Enchantments, a popular hiking destination.

She said Whidbey Island Naval Air Base has launched a helicopter to assist mountain rescuers. She said the rescue is considered highly technical because of the extreme terrain and location.

Stretch of Willamette River closed

EUGENE — High, fast water in the Willamette River has made passage under Oregon's Interstate 5 bridge so dangerous that the state is closing that stretch of the river for the summer.

The Register-Guard said a cool, wet spring prolonged mountain snowmelt that has kept the river flowing faster than usual.

There's also a bridge construction project that has placed temporary pilings where debris gets hung up, adding danger not only for inexperienced boaters but even for those who know the river.

The state Marine Board is closing the stretch from the old low-head concrete dam upstream of the bridge to downstream of the construction work.

The closure is being done at the request of Lane County sheriff's search and rescue, and the Eugene and Springfield fire departments.

Body found along Skagit River

MOUNT VERNON — Police say a Mount Vernon city parks employee found the body of a man along the Skagit River near Edgewater Park on Sunday morning.

Mount Vernon Lt. Jerry Dodd said the man has not been identified and an autopsy is scheduled for late this week.

The worker found the body around 11:34 a.m.

— The Associated Press

OBITUARY POLICY

The Daily News publishes obituaries of residents within its circulation area and of people with significant ties to the region.

Free obituaries are limited to two column inches and require a local connection. Paid obituaries are billed by the column inch or published copy. The first two inches are free; additional inches cost $18.50. Half-column photographs cost an additional $15.

All obituaries are edited to conform to Associated Press style.

The deadline for next-day publication is 2 p.m. weekdays only. Obituaries can be e-mailed to tnotes@tdn.com, mailed to Obituary Department, P.O. Box 189, Longview, WA 98632; faxed to 360-577-2538; or brought to The Daily News newsroom, 770 11th Ave., Longview.

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