Targeted Predator Control

A guide for livestock producers on options available for targeted predator control

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to equip livestock producers with relevant knowledge and contacts so that they can correctly, and more efficiently, deal with offending predators themselves. It provides a section on understanding predator habits, a verification chart that assists in determining the offending predator who is responsible for attacks on livestock, a summary of regulations surrounding trapping and hunting, relevant training courses, explanations of sections from the Wildlife Act pertaining to livestock producers, as well as some partner contacts.

The idea of “controlling offending predators” includes any strategy involved in the removal of predators. It requires pre-planning and training, and should never be used as the only means of predator control. The term “Targeted predator control” should be understood as the lethal means by which offending predators are controlled. It should be approached with careful consideration, and only used after the preventative measures which you have pursued have not been successful. Livestock producers should always view predator conflict holistically, and realize that long-term solutions and prevention techniques will offer the most success, both for you, and ecologically. Avoid over-reacting to a livestock loss, as this often leads to irrational decision making and “quick fixes” that only will cause more damage and exacerbate the problem. If you are going to do your own control of offending predators, always check with your local Conservation Officer (C.O.) before taking any action. Establishing a relationship with your local C.O. is invaluable. For contact information, visit the Ministry of Environment website at http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cos/contacts.html

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[Logos of Canada, Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia, and British Columbia]
Acknowledgements:

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“Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the BC Ministry of Agriculture and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC, are pleased to participate in the production of this document. We are committed to working with our partners to address issues of importance to the agriculture and agri-food industry in British Columbia. Opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors, and not necessarily those of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the BC Ministry of Agriculture and the Investment Agriculture Foundation.”
Understanding Predators

Knowing basic information about the most common predators in B.C. is important for all livestock producers. This basic information can help in both the prevention of predation, as well as the identification of problem predators. Knowing even the fundamentals about predators’ behavioural habits and biology can help to minimize livestock-wild predator conflicts. There is much to be said about knowing predators’ breeding seasons and what time of year they are with their young. This knowledge can enable you to adjust your management in productive ways which can prevent conflict. Being able to identify different predators’ bite marks (canine spacing) as well as what type of tracks they leave can help you to better identify the offending predators when predation occurs.

Becoming familiar with behavioural habits related to how your local predators patrol their territory, matched with learning how to identify their tracks, can help you to learn about where their territory is, and their travel patterns within that territory. This knowledge of who’s who on your farm can really help in identifying the culprit when a problem with predation occurs. If you have seen tracks on your property for years, and have gotten to know your local sow bear, or pack of wolves, and no damage has ever been caused, it is more likely that you will be able to pick out any new predators on your farm, and correctly identify which is responsible for predation should it suddenly start to occur on your farm or range.
| Predators of Interest |  |
|-----------------------|  |
| **Cougars** | ![Cougar] |
| • Paw size: 10 cm (l) by 8.89 cm (w) (front) |  |
| • Has a distinct 3 lobed center pad |  |
| • Upper canine width = 3.8 -- 5.7 cm |  |
| • Lower canine width = 2.6 -- 4.5 cm |  |
| • Canine diameter = 1.1 -- 1.3 cm |  |
| [http://www.srd.alberta.ca/ManagingPrograms/FishWildlifeOfficers/HumanWildlifeConflict/Cougars.aspx](http://www.srd.alberta.ca/ManagingPrograms/FishWildlifeOfficers/HumanWildlifeConflict/Cougars.aspx) |  |
| **Wolves** | ![Wolves] |
| • Paw size (front): 12 cm (l) by 10 cm (w) |  |
| • Front paws are about 1/5 larger than their hind feet. |  |
| • Upper canine = 4.5 -- 5.5 cm |  |
| • Lower canine = 3.0 -- 4.0 cm |  |
| • Canine diameter = 1.0 -- 1.6 cm |  |
| [http://www.elp.gov.bc.ca/cos/info/wildlife_human_interaction/docs/wolves.html#predators](http://www.elp.gov.bc.ca/cos/info/wildlife_human_interaction/docs/wolves.html#predators) |  |
| **Coyotes** | ![Coyote] |
| • Paw size (front): 6 cm by 6 cm (front) |  |
| • Coyote front paws are larger than their rear paws. |  |
| • Upper canine width = 2.0 -- 3.5 cm |  |
| • Lower canine width = 2.3 -- 2.8 cm |  |
| • Canine diameter = .4 -- .7 cm |  |
| [http://www.srd.alberta.ca/ManagingPrograms/FishWildlifeOfficers/HumanWildlifeConflict/Coyotes.aspx](http://www.srd.alberta.ca/ManagingPrograms/FishWildlifeOfficers/HumanWildlifeConflict/Coyotes.aspx) |  |
| **Bears (Grizzly and Black)** | ![Bears] |
| **Black Bear** | ![Black Bear] |
| • Paw size: front = 11.5 cm (l) by 9.5 (w); back = 18 cm (l) by 9 cm (w) |  |
| • Have the appearance of human feet |  |
| • Has wedge indent on the hind foot |  |
| • Upper canine width = 5.5 -- 6.5 cm |  |
| • Lower canine width = 4.5 -- 5.5 cm |  |
| • Canine diameter = 1.5 -- 1.9 cm |  |
| **Grizzly** | ![Grizzly] |
| • Paw size: front = 13 cm (l) by 14 cm (w); back = 25 cm (l) by 14 cm (w) |  |
| • Upper canine width = 5.5 -- 6.5 cm |  |
| • Lower canine width = 5.5 -- 6.5 cm |  |
| • Canine diameter = 2.1-- 2.6 cm |  |
| • Prints will usually leave claw marks |  |
| • Have the tendency to walk pigeon-towed |  |
| **Bears** | ![Bears] |
| **Front Grizzly Bear** | ![Front Grizzly Bear] |
| • Upper canine width = 4.5 -- 5.5 cm |  |
| • Lower canine width = 3.0 -- 4.0 cm |  |
| • Canine diameter = 1.0 -- 1.6 cm |  |
| **Front Black Bear** | ![Front Black Bear] |
| • Upper canine width = 4.5 -- 5.5 cm |  |
| • Lower canine width = 3.0 -- 4.0 cm |  |
| • Canine diameter = 1.0 -- 1.6 cm |  |
The previous page shows the paw prints of the five most common predators in British Columbia. This page shows other paw prints that could be used as a reference point when observing tracks. It is good to be able to identify other paw prints, even if these animals are not usually known to be problem predators, as sometimes they can become problematic.

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![Predator Tracks](image)

Tracks of grizzly bears tend to be larger than black bears.

The tracks left by a bobcat are the smallest when compared to the tracks left by a cougar or a lynx. Lynx and Cougar tracks will be similar in size, but the weight of a cougar makes a more defined mark in the ground.

Recommended Reading

Animal Tracks of British Columbia by Ian Sheldon and Tamara Hartson (Lone Pine Publishing).

Methods of Investigating Predation of Livestock by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Publications

Coyote Predation of Livestock by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Publications. (This guide can also be purchased the same way as the guide listed above. Agdex 684-19).

Domestic dog prints vary in size and shape. Because of this, it often makes it difficult to distinguish them from the prints of wolves, coyotes and foxes.
When there has been any livestock loss, it is critical to ensure that the livestock did not die from another cause. Biased views about what happened in these situations need to be avoided in order to best manage effective control and prevention. It is easy to blame predators, when in fact, internal parasites, ingestion of chemicals/poisons, poor farm management, or disease could very well be the cause of death. Animals that have died as a result of an accident or illness, and that have later been scavenged, may appear to have been killed by a predator. Stillborn animals which have been scavenged may, at first glance, also appear to have been killed from predation. In order to identify problem predators, it is important to be able to correctly verify what, if any, predator killed your livestock. If you suspect predation as the cause of death, a careful inspection of the carcass and surrounding area is necessary. Look for the following clues: predator hair on surrounding fences, digholes under fences, signs of a struggle, drag marks, trails of blood, and predator feces.

**Predation or Scavenging?**

Identifying how your livestock was killed is not an easy task. The presence of blood around the site of the carcass is the main factor which will lead you to determine if your livestock was killed by a predator, or if it was killed by another cause, then later scavenged. Bleeding can only occur before, or slightly after, death. If an animal was killed by a predator, the bites from the predator will have caused hemorrhaging and bruising to the targeted tissue and muscle underneath the skin. It is almost always necessary to skin livestock in order to see the puncture wounds, hemorrhaging, bruising, as well as crushed bones. Another clue which can help you to know the cause of death is the position of the carcass. Animals which have died from sickness will often be lying upright or on their side with their legs tucked underneath of their body. Animals that have been killed by predators will usually be found on their side with their legs extended.

**Predation or Stillborn?**

Telling the difference between a stillborn calf or lamb and one that has been targeted and killed by predators may seem obvious, but a stillborn which has been scavenged may, at first glance, also appear to have been attacked by predators. Look for the following to determine a newborn's cause of death:

1. Did the lamb or calf walk? The soft membrane covering the sole of the hoof wears off quickly when the lamb or calf begins to walk. If the membrane is still intact, it is likely that the lamb or calf was stillborn.
2. Did the newborn animal breathe? Evidence of milk in the stomach is also another clue which allows you to know that the lamb or calf was born alive.

If you have inspected your livestock and attack site, and have determined that your livestock has been injured or killed by a predator, it is important to follow the next steps. It is good practice to keep accurate records of livestock injuries and kills by predators, when they happen, and what type of predator was responsible for the attack.

**After an attack, follow these next steps:**

1. Protect the scene where the suspected predator attack or kill occurred. This includes covering the carcass, and protecting evidence such as predator tracks and blood stains.
2. Take good quality, close-up, photos of the evidence around the attack site such as bite marks on the animal, eaten areas of the animal, predator tracks, tail docking, crushed vertebrae and bones, hemorrhaging and bruising (in all cases, skinning is required in order to find bruising), and lacerations.
3. To prove predator kill for compensation that may be in place, or to gather necessary evidence for initiation of targeted predator control, you must find evidence of injuries on your livestock caused by the predator before death. Examples of this include bruising & hemorrhaging at puncture wounds or evidence of bleeding at the attack site. Again, in order to prove the above conditions, the animal must be skinned. If someone has witnessed predator harassment and or attacks on your livestock, document their statement, and ensure you have their contact information. If possible, always keep records and photos of every predator-livestock interaction.

4. If the animal is alive after the attack, take detailed photos and make sure it gets proper attention from you or from a vet. If it must be put down, follow procedures above.

5. Notify your local conservation officer through the 24 Hour R.A.P.P. Hotline (Report All Poachers and Polluters) at 1-877-952-7277 (RAPP) or #7277 on cellular. If you have determined that a predator was indeed responsible for the attack, it is then necessary to determine what animal killed your livestock. Determining the correct predator in an attack is crucial for the selective removal of the offending predator. Each predator has unique habits, killing techniques and feeding characteristics. The following page outlines these differences.

Photos

When taking pictures of prints, it is always good practice to place an object beside it. This helps in gaining perspective of the actual size of the prints.

Tail marks from a cougar can be seen in the snow.

The weight of a cougar leaves a defined print in the ground.
The following chart outlines the characteristics, killing techniques and eating habits of the four main predators (coyotes, wolves, cougars and bears) in B.C. on sheep. This information is also transferable to goats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coyote</th>
<th>Wolf</th>
<th>Cougar</th>
<th>Bear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefers to attack lambs over sheep, but will also attack ewes. Will normally kill quickly and efficiently.</td>
<td>Prefer to attack adult sheep, but will kill lambs. If a lamb is attacked, the wolf will usually take whole lamb away.</td>
<td>Will bite the upper section of the neck/rear of skull. Claw marks can be seen on back/neck</td>
<td>Black Bears will bite head, neck, or hind quarter of sheep. Internal hemorrhaging and a crushed or severed spine may be evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normally hunts alone, and therefore, only 1-2 sheep will be killed. Usually hunt at night.</td>
<td>Messy kills involving a lot of tearing and bone crushing.</td>
<td>Bites to the neck appear as small pin holes.</td>
<td>Black Bears will often kill 2 or more sheep, and either consume the sheep, or drag them away. It is common for them to return to a carcass to feed. They will consume the majority of the animal over time, except for larger bones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will bite the throat behind the jaw and under the ears. They will maintain the grip to suffocate the sheep, or it will die of internal bleeding.</td>
<td>Will bite the hind quarter, throat or head.</td>
<td>Gut pile will look like it has been surgically removed. It will often be covered with debris, separate from carcass. The hide of the carcass may also appear to have been cut with a smooth edge.</td>
<td>Black Bears usually do not eat the hide of their prey. They will often roll the hide back from the carcass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External puncture wounds will be difficult to see, but will become more evident as the carcass ages and bloats.</td>
<td>Adult sheep will be consumed/dragged away. Can be consumed in one feeding.</td>
<td>Carcass will be dragged away prior to feeding. When cougars are finished eating, they will usually bury, or partially bury, their kill. The cougar will guard this carcass, and may stay with it for days, so be careful approaching the kill area.</td>
<td>Grizzly Bears will usually kill one or two sheep. They will often kill with multiple crushing bites. It is common for these bites to crush the skull or the spinal column of a sheep. The carcass will usually be consumed at the first feeding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcasses will be found close together. Coyotes will normally return to feed on a carcass. The carcasses will usually be found in areas with lots of cover (for easy escape for the coyote).</td>
<td>Will sometimes feed on the sheep while it is still alive. The animal will die of trauma or blood loss.</td>
<td>Parts of the carcass can sometimes be found in trees.</td>
<td>In cases where the Grizzly has killed more than one sheep, they often will bury the unconsumed remains of the other carcasses after they are done feeding. They will carry or drag their prey to cover. They will protect their kill until it is consumed, so be careful when approaching these areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coyote</td>
<td>Wolf</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscle tissue will show ragged edges and the rib cage will be chewed and splintered due to the coyote’s eating patterns. The breast bones, connecting cartilage and the softer portions of the rib cage will often be fully consumed.</td>
<td>If the pack kills an adult sheep, consumption is often extensive. Remains may be scattered over a large area. It is not uncommon for most of the bones to be consumed.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grizzlies will often make cleaner and quicker kills than black bears due to their strength and size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From July-September when the adult pair is teaching their pups how to hunt, an attack can kill or injure multiple animals. Often, the young pups demonstrate less efficient killing, and their attacks can look more like dog attacks.</td>
<td>Will most often kill along the forest-agriculture fringe.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following information is to be used as a quick predation verification guide for cattle producers. It is taken from a B.C. Cattlemen’s Association document called Mitigating Cattle Losses Caused by Wild Predators in British Columbia: A Field Guide for Ranchers (Prepared by Andy MacKay for the Wild Predator Loss, Control and Compensation Program). The complete document can be found on ARDCorp’s website (www.ardcorp.ca) in the “Documents” section on the Wild Predator Loss Prevention Pilot Project page.

It should be noted that bears are maulers, and they are not proficient at killing. Cattle may have injuries on numerous areas of their bodies. The first area that a bear will attack is the withers above the kidney region. This is caused by the bear trying to pull down the prey.

Cougars will rarely attack adult cattle. When they do, however, they will attack the head or the back of the neck or throat. They almost never will attack down the spine.

Wolves generally attack the back half of the animal, biting, wounding, and bruising the flanks and hind quarters. The tail is often bitten off during an attack.

**FIELD PREDATION AIDS**

Fig. 17: Common attack areas on a cow. Colours indicate where you would expect to find bruising and bite marks on a carcass that has experienced predation by the predator indicated.
Main Wounds and Bruising Upper Front Half of Carcass
- Prey Dragged or Carried To Secure Location for Consumption
- Carcass Bones Left Intact
- Little to No Chase Involved

BEARS
- Biting in shoulder, neck area
- Hind legs consumed first
- Quick kill
- Prey covered with debris
- Grizzly bear habitat

GRIZZLY

BLACK
- Bite in neck or back vertebrae, barely noticeable on cow hide
- Bite to throat as small pin holes
- Gut pile surgically removed and covered with debris, separate from carcass
- Clean cut edges vs. tearing of the meat

COUGAR

Main Wounds and Bruising On Back Half of Carcass
- Prey consumed at kill site, not moved
- Carcass bones scattered over period of time
- Long chase, obvious signs of extended struggle
- Wounding, bruising to flanks and hindquarters
- Broken or missing tails from other animals in the herd
- Neck and rib meat may be eaten during first feeding

WOLF
- Cow and/or calves attacked
- Herd bunched, nervous and agitated
- General eating pattern
- Large bones chewed and broken, scattered around kill site over period of time
- Large amount of damage per bite

COYOTE
- Calves only attacked
- Mined holes through holes in the hide for meat consumption
- Smaller bones broken and chewed scattered around kill site over period of time.
- Internal organs usually eaten first

Fig. 18: Field Predation Chart. The chart is a simplified explanation used for quick field checks to determine the possible predator responsible when you are observing a carcass attack and kill site. It is not to be considered as all inclusive and is condensed to the obvious indicators that one might find. If some of these obvious signs are present, refer to the identified predator indicators as noted in this field guide.
While dogs are not wild predators, it is still important to know the damage they cause so that you do not confuse it with that of other problem animals, which would lead to indiscriminate and unjustified targeting or removal of predators.

- = information relevant for sheep (also transferable to goats)
- = information relevant for cattle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dogs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dogs will attack at any time of the day or night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs are non selective in their attacks. Their attacks will include extensive chasing and harassing, and will often last a long time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flock is nervous, confused, spooked, stressed, noisy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messy kills of sheep, often in excess of 2-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep carcasses will be scattered throughout pasture. Lambs that have been killed will often have a slashed, ripped appearance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wounds (bites and tears) can be found on live and dead sheep anywhere on the body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neck wounds will be superficial, or severe lacerations can be seen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin, muscle in flank, hindquarters and head will be ripped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clumps of wool may indicate an inefficient dog attack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packs of dogs may attack cows from the side or rear, which inflicts non-fatal wounds. Death results from being chased and harassed, especially in winter weather. Attacks on cows from dogs are uncommon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attacks on calves by dogs are also uncommon. They may attack one or two. Bites can be anywhere on head or body. Generally calves are not fed on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Droppings will not show any evidence of hair or bones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs will not feed on their prey.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CHARACTERISTICS OF MAJOR PREDATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wolf</th>
<th>Coyote</th>
<th>Dog</th>
<th>Bear</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of conflict</strong></td>
<td>Fringe of settlement, grazing leases, pastures and farmland along the forest-agricultural transition fringe.</td>
<td>Throughout Alberta.</td>
<td>Throughout agricultural areas; often near urban centres or residential subdivisions.</td>
<td>Grazing leases, pastures and farmland along the forest – agricultural transition fringe.</td>
<td>Mountains and foothills near agricultural area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attack behavior</strong></td>
<td>Cattle, horses: long chase, trails of blood and hair, bites on hindquarters, vulva and tail. May attack shoulders, flank, nose or head. Sheep: Severe bites on neck, hindquarters, head or flank. Disembowelment common.</td>
<td>Sheep: usually throat, top of neck or head. Occasionally attack hindquarters or flank. Calves: Newborn – flank bites on back. Older calves – hindquarters, tail, flank and back. Poultry: multiple kills when confined. Carry off individual unconfined poultry.</td>
<td>Prolonged harassment and mutilation ears, nose and shoulders, flank, hindquarters and tail.</td>
<td>Bite on top of neck, back or head. Shallow claw marks on face and shoulders. Wounded prey common.</td>
<td>Bites on top of neck damaging spine, teeth marks on upper neck, dep claw marks on neck and shoulders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feeding behavior</strong></td>
<td>Prefer viscera and hind limbs, preferential feeding not obvious in packs.</td>
<td>Feed on prey through upper flank, consume viscera and upper thigh first, leave hide in more or less one piece.</td>
<td>Feed lightly or not at all.</td>
<td>Drag prey to cover; prefer flesh over viscera. Skin and bones remain more or less intact. Grizzlies generally cover prey, black bears usually do not.</td>
<td>Drag prey to cover. Heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys eaten first, then meat. Cover remains of prey.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUMMARY

Locate the attack and kill site.
Record:
- Vegetation – Woods, brush, open pasture
- Topography – Ravine, hilltop, stream bottom
- Distance from buildings

Note the position of the carcass.

Look for signs of a struggle.
Record:
- Broken vegetation
- Trampling
- Blood trails
- Tufts of hair

Note predator sign.
Record:
- Tracks
- Scat
- Hair

Examine the carcass for wounds.
Record and photograph:
- Signs of hemorrhage
- Blood on ground
- Stage of decomposition
- Location and description of external wounds (i.e., bites, claw marks, tooth punctures)
- Parts consumed

Skin normal attack sites or areas of carcass where wounds are evident (that is, throat, hind legs, neck).
Record:
- Size and description of subcutaneous bruises and wounds

Open the chest and abdomen.
Record:
- Damaged organs and massive blood clots

Cut along neck and back bone.
Record:
- Broken vertebrae
- Hemorrhage

Note and record the age of the animal.
Record:
- Examine footpads of newborn.
- Did the newborn breathe and nurse?
- Was it cleaned by the mother?

Check the carcass for general health.
Record abnormalities of:
- Coat condition
- Body fat
- Amount and kind of food in rumen
- Lungs
- Circulation
- General appearance
- Age

Note the condition of pasture.
Record:
- Overgrazing
- Poisonous plants

Note any irregularities in the rest of the herd.

Check for sources of poison.

Determine the cause of death.
- Predation
- Pseudo-predation
- Other causes

In case of predation, determine species responsible from:
- Predator ranges
- Habitat preference
- Domestic prey involved
- Attack behavior
- Feeding behavior
- Tracks, scat, hair
It is important to know the rules and regulations about what you are actually allowed to do when you take on targeted predator control yourself. Taking care of your predator problems yourself involves training and planning. The main ways in which you can manage problem predators yourself are through hunting and trapping. This page summarizes the steps needed in order to both hunt and trap, as well as some ways in which to access this training.

**Hunting**

To own or purchase a gun in Canada, you must get a Possession and Acquisition License (PAL). Before you apply for a PAL, you have to pass the Canadian Firearms Safety Course test. You can either take the course then proceed to take the test, or challenge the exam without taking the course. In addition to this, a Hunter Number Card is required in order to purchase a hunting license. In order to get a hunter number, you must pass the Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Education (CORE). If you have a PAL, have passed the CORE program, have obtained a B.C. Resident Hunter Number Card, and have purchased a hunting license, you can hunt in accordance with the rules in the Wildlife Act and Regulations.

Archery may be an alternative method to consider in locations where firearms are restricted. For those only using bows and no firearms, you only have to take the CORE training and get a hunting license. No one should consider using archery for predator control unless they are very competent archers, and have past archery hunting experience.

**Trapping**

In order to get a trapping license, you must complete a Trapper Education Program (TEP) which has been approved by the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Branch.

**Training Courses and License Applications for Hunting**

- **Possession and Acquisition License**
  A PAL needs to be renewed every 5 years. To download the application form, visit [http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/efp-pcaf/form-formulaire/num-nom/921-eng.htm](http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/efp-pcaf/form-formulaire/num-nom/921-eng.htm)

- **Canadian Firearms Safety Course and Test**
  For information about where and when the courses and tests are offered in B.C., contact British Columbia Firearms Office at 1-800-731-4000 ext. 9530.

- **Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Education**
  For information on availability of course dates and locations, contact the BC Wildlife Federation at 1-888-881-2293 or visit their web site at [www.bcwf.bc.ca](http://www.bcwf.bc.ca)

**Training Courses and License Information for Trapping**

- **Trapper Education Program**
  For information about the course, course locations and course availability, contact the BC Trappers Association at 250-962-5452 or visit their website at [http://www.bctrappers.bc.ca/index.html](http://www.bctrappers.bc.ca/index.html)

- **Trapping Licenses**
  Applications for trapping licenses are available at Service B.C. offices, Permit & Authorization Service Bureau, or electronically from [www.env.gov.bc.ca/pasb/applications.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/pasb/applications.html)
Working within the *Wildlife Act* and its Regulations

The *Wildlife Act* and its regulations determine what a land owner and livestock producer may do when considering implementing targeted predator control of an offending predator. Municipalities and Regional Districts, however, may also have bylaws that restrict hunting and the use of firearms. Do not consider initiating targeted predator control until you are certain you are conducting your activities legally.

This section of the document is intended to provide general information only. Where there is a discrepancy between this document and the *Wildlife Act* and its Regulations, the *Wildlife Act* and its Regulations are the final authority. Statutes and Regulations are subject to change from time to time, and it is the responsibility of an individual to be informed of the current law. Up-to-date versions of the *Wildlife Act* and its Regulations can be viewed for free at BCLaws.ca:


On behalf of the Province of British Columbia, the Conservation Officers Service of the Ministry of Environment is responsible for the enforcement of the *Wildlife Act*, its regulations, and the management of problem predators. It is important to remember that anytime you have a predator problem you should contact the Conservation Officers Service (COS). They may be able to assist you by delivering predator control service, or by directing you to other permitted professional Wildlife Control Specialists. COS can answer your questions about what you are allowed to do, and also provide advice for your specific circumstances. 24/7 toll free number is: 1-877-952-7277

As a land owner and livestock producer, there are a number of options available for you to consider if you are needing to take on targeted predator control action yourself.

These include:

(I) *Hunting the predator during a general open season or under a limited entry draw authorization.* This requires you to have all appropriate hunting licences and species tags, and to follow the regulations laid out in the “BC Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis.” Whenever possible, this is a good option to consider, as it allows you to draw on other properly qualified and licensed hunters to assist you in resolving your specific predator problem. It also provides you with the opportunity to do this on your private lands and on Crown lands, where and when the season for the specific identified predator is open. Joining your local BC Wildlife Federation affiliated Sportsmen Association and knowing your local Game Guide Outfitters can be very useful in assisting you with your problem predator issues.

(II) *Trapping during an open season for the species of your specific problem predator.* You will need a BC Trapping licence and need to follow the regulations laid out in the “BC Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis.” You may only trap on private property, unless you hold a registered trap line on the Crown land where you intend to trap, or you have written permission from the holder of that trapline. If there is no registered tranpline on the Crown land where you want to trap, you may be able to secure a permit or authorization from the Regional Manager of Fish, Wildlife and Habitat of the Ministry of Natural Resource Operations. Establishing a positive relationship with your local trap line
Working within the *Wildlife Act* and its Regulations

holder can go a long way in assisting you with resolving your problem predator issues. Your local trapper can often be the key person to help you resolve your livestock predation issues during the open trapping season.

(III) *Section 26 (2) of the Wildlife Act.* Under this section, a person who owns property may hunt or trap wildlife (your problem predator) that is on that person’s property and is a menace to a domestic animal or bird. This can be done outside of an open hunting and trapping season.

To use this opportunity, you must have a trapping licence if you intend to use traps, and only the owner of the property can do the hunting, shooting or trapping. Anyone considering this option needs to understand the interconnecting pieces of the *Wildlife Act* and is advised to first contact the Conservation Officer Service before any action is taken. If you do conduct predator control on your own property under Section 26 (2) of the *Wildlife Act*, be aware that Section 75 (1) requires you to promptly report to an officer what wildlife you have killed and the location of that killed predator. Should you fail to report as required, you will have committed an offence.

(IV) *Wildlife Permit/Authorization.* Depending on your specific circumstances, you may be able to receive a permit authorizing you to conduct targeted predator control on your land or Crown land from the Regional Manager of Fish, Wildlife and Habitat of the Ministry of Natural Resource Operations. To apply for a permit, contact this toll free number: 1-866-433-7272.

To find out more information, go to: [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/pasb/applications.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/pasb/applications.html) or phone your local regional Fish, Wildlife and Habitat office. Their phone numbers are on the map pages in the “Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis” which are available at local sporting goods outlets, Service BC offices, and on line at: [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/wildlife/hunting](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/wildlife/hunting)

**Note:** For both of the last two options, you need to be aware that the ownership of wildlife (the mitigated predator) remains with the Province. This means that you will not be allowed to retain any predator animal you hunt or trap, or keep any of its parts. You may be required to deliver the animal, or parts of the animal, to the Ministry.

**Always Think Safety First**

Investigating predator livestock interactions and implementing targeted predator control often take place in isolated areas. These areas are often far removed from emergency help. You will likely be in proximity to livestock that have been injured or are badly frightened by predators. This is another situation which contributes to increased safety risks. There are also risks associated with the potential proximity of dangerous predators in the immediate area. Conducting verifications of killed livestock and implementing targeted predator control involves the use of various tools and equipment (such as knives, axes, winches, off road vehicles, firearms and traps, etc.) that require specific training skills and careful use. Make a plan with high consideration being given to your own personal safety. Always have readily available a first aid kit and other necessary safety equipment; work in teams of 2 or more; ensure others know where you are, how to find you, and when to expect your return; have someone that will respond and check on you if you do not meet specific check-in or return times.
**Information For Finding Partners**

At first, managing predator control may seem too overwhelming a task to tackle yourself. There are various clubs, associations and programs that can provide you with training to develop relevant skills that will assist you with targeted predator control. These clubs and associations not only can help you to develop skills, but can help you to build connections with other highly skilled individuals who may be able to help you out more effectively than you could do on your own.

**Guide Outfitters**
This website offers a directory of B.C. Guide Outfitters.

http://www.goabc.org/

**British Columbia Trappers Association**
http://www.bctrappers.bc.ca/

**BC Wildlife Federation**
The BC Wildlife Federation website lists the affiliated clubs nearest to you.

http://www.bcwf.net/index.php

**BC Wildlife Federation Outdoor Passport Program**
New Program offered by the BC Wildlife Federation. It is a program which involves and could potentially benefit both land owners and outdoor recreationalists. This is another program which can help livestock producers mitigate wildlife issues.

http://www.bcwf.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=410&Itemid=738
References


Conservation Officer Al Lay. *Investigation and Evaluation of Predator Kills and Attacks.*


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