

Many in West fear wolf reintroduction

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Some 900 wolves roam Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado thanks to a federal program that reintroduced and protected the wolf in the West.

Many farmers and ranchers in the West think the wolves are decimating elk herds and devouring cattle and sheep and some fear the wolf might prey on children, The Los Angeles Times reported Tuesday.

As a result, there have been hundreds of wolves that have been illegally shot and recently there has been a rash of poisonings that killed not only wolves, but dozens of ranch dogs and family pets that ate the pesticide-laced meatballs left along trails, according to Idaho wildlife officials.

Wildlife officials in Idaho say the state's elk population has been stable for years and that wolves might kill about 1 percent of the Idaho elk, but that hunters may not see as many elk because wolves are driving them into areas less accessible to humans.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service says wolves are accountable for 0.4 percent of U.S. sheep kills by predators and that domestic dogs are responsible for nearly 20 times more sheep kills than wolves.

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