



February 22, 2012

President Edward Ray
Oregon State University
600 Kerr Administration Building
Corvallis, Oregon 97331

Dear President Ray:

It has been brought to our attention that the Oregon State University, through contract with USDA Wildlife Services lethal predator control program, is responsible for setting dangerous and inhumane snares at the OSU Sheep Farm. The devices are set improperly because they are in violation of federal directives established by Wildlife Services, and because they pose a present threat to neighboring residents, their children and their pets.

Two animals have been found, within a month's time of this letter, hopelessly entangled in a fence line while trying to escape the snares cinched down on their legs. One of the animals, a raccoon, was still alive, hanging from the fence. The other animal, a coyote, was found dead similarly entangled with a snare cinched down on one back leg. The other back leg had no foot, apparently because of a former trapping incident wherein the animal chewed it's foot off to escape. The coyote was found January 29, 2011, and the raccoon on February 2, of this year.

In June of 2011 a fawn was found dead along the fence line, strangled by the neck. Exposure, dehydration, starvation and exhaustion from struggling contributed to and caused these animals' inhumane deaths. Animals left in traps over a period of time as these animals were, also attract predators, which is the very thing the University is trying to prevent.

Neck snares set along the same fence line have caught one family's dog on three separate occasions. Miraculously, he was released unharmed each time when his barking attracted his owners' attention. Had the dog struggled which causes the snare to tighten, or had the owners not been home to immediately go and release him, their pet would have died a painful and prolonged death from strangulation.

While the owners should not have allowed the dog to wander, pets and children have a way of going outside their backyards and exploring, and snares are indiscriminate.

These incidents we have shared with you demonstrate the cruel, indiscriminate and random nature of setting trapping devices, and the potential liability they pose to the University.

According to staff at the Sheep Farm, Wildlife Services set the traps through a contractual agreement. The manner in which the traps were set violates several important Wildlife Services Directives and Oregon law, including but not limited to the following violations:

1. Snares and leg hold traps were not set to minimize chances of capturing non-target species.
2. Non-target animals were not released alive.
3. Target animals were not dispatched immediately, were not removed from capture devices and immediately dispatched and properly disposed of.
4. Warning signs were not posted.
5. No efforts were taken to notify or obtain approval of adjacent landowners.
6. Caution was not taken so that captured animals would not be conspicuous.
7. The snares were not checked within the 7-day interval required by Oregon law, as determined by the condition of the bodies of the coyote and the fawn.

Please use this link to Wildlife Services Directive 2.450 Traps and Trapping Devices and Directive 2.210 Compliance with Federal, State and Local Laws and Regulations, Oregon Furbearer and Trapping Regulations, and a list of 93 incidents of individuals who have been victims of Wildlife Services noncompliant activities.

http://www.predatordefense.org/features/snares_OSU.htm#media

The violations on the Sheep Farm put people, pets, non-target wildlife and endangered species at risk. Private homes are located within a few hundred feet of where the animals were found. Several dogs and cats, pets of neighbors to the facility, are currently missing and have never been found. It is not unlikely that they suffered and perished in snares, as have countless other animals. A child could be seriously injured and even killed by a strangling snare.

It is likely that more snares, other dangerous types of body gripping devices and possibly M-44 sodium cyanide poison devices are being used on the 240 acre Sheep Farm, causing untold suffering to animals and presenting increased risk to the community. It is inexcusable that no notification has been made to neighboring property owners regarding the use of these devices, that warning signs have not been prominently posted.

In view of the urgent danger and lack of compliance with proper trapping directives, we are calling on OSU to immediately suspend the use of all trapping devices, poisons and other lethal control actions on the Sheep Farm, and any other OSU properties which contract with Wildlife Services or use similar means to control

unwanted animals. We ask for an independent investigation into these violations and all practices in use to deter animal damage, and that the contract between OSU and Wildlife Services be suspended until the investigation is complete and the results are available for public review.

This is an opportunity for OSU to begin researching and using some of the many proven alternatives to lethal control, such as guard dogs, llamas, New Zealand fencing systems, fladry, hot wire fencing, confining of lambs at night, taste aversion, and most importantly human presence during periods of high risk. We call on the University to be a leader in and teacher of humane and progressive forms of livestock protection, and to discontinue using outdated, random, inhumane and indiscriminate forms of lethal control, which pose great risk to the public.

Thank you for your attention to this serious issue. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brooks Fahy". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Brooks Fahy
Executive Director