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**Natural Resources, Ecology &  
Parks Committee**

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**HB 1831**

**Brief Description:** Providing compensation for loss of livestock caused by wildlife.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kretz, Blake, Grant, Buri, Holmquist, B. Sullivan, Orcutt, Serben, McCune, Sump, Cox, Walsh, Clements, Roach, Linville, Newhouse, Haler and Pearson.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Expands the wildlife damage crop compensation program to include damage done to livestock by predatory wildlife.

**Hearing Date:** 2/22/05

**Staff:** Jason Callahan (786-7117).

**Background:**

The owners of a commercial agricultural or horticultural crops may apply to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for payment of damages caused by the browsing of wild deer or elk. Payments are limited to the value of the crop, but are generally capped at \$10,000 per claim. Claims valued over \$10,000 must be filed with the Office of Risk Management, which will forward a recommendation on the claim to the Legislature. Only landowners that open his or her land to public hunting are eligible for compensation caused by deer or elk damage.

It is the responsibility of the WDFW to examine and assess the damage upon notification from the claimant, although the WDFW and the claimant can agree to have the damage assessed by a third party. The owner of the damaged crops must report the loss within 10 days of discovery. Any damage payments accepted by the owner represents the exclusive remedy against the state for wildlife-caused damages.

**Summary of Bill:**

The wildlife damage crop compensation program is expanded to include damage done to livestock by predatory wildlife. The term "livestock" includes cattle, horses, goats, rabbits, alpacas, and swine. The owner of the livestock may receive the fair market value of an animal that is killed by wildlife, or that is injured to such a degree that the commercial value of the animal is diminished. The fair market value is to be determined by the director of the WDFW, upon recommendation of the Department of Agriculture.

In order to qualify for a claim, the owner of the killed or injured livestock must notify the WDFW within 72 hours of discovering the attack on his or her animal. The owner of the livestock is not required to open his or her land for public hunting in order to be eligible for compensation.

The funding limitations, exclusive remedy provisions, and other administrative functions of the crop damage compensation program also apply to claims for livestock loss.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.