

Media Avoids Backyard Wolf Kills

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Longtime resident Jim Branson was born and raised in the Lowman, Idaho area. Branson a retired engineering manager and trained observer is quite an adventurer and historian, he writes a blog www.southforksafari.blogspot.com in which he offers a visual tour and historic account of the Lowman area.

Branson has watched elk herds decline as wolf numbers have increased. He says valley residents are worried about their safety. "It is about time we stood up, now that wolves are killing elk in our yards, it's only a matter of time before a child at play runs into a pack of wolves in their own back yard."

Branson, who has provided photos of elk kills at the homes of two local residences continues, "The local papers like Idaho World in Idaho City, simply refuse to print things like this stating they are a "family paper read by children and could not publish such gruesome detail". I just don't know how covering something up like this serves the people. I held a pretty good relationship with some TV folks and held several meetings with them. They published only the most minor comments on their show."

"When the wolves are able to kill elk with ease, the pack grows quickly and soon some must go somewhere else. We had one pack in Ten Mile Creek that had 22 members. But adjacent areas are held by neighboring packs, already dug in and willing to fight. So maybe wolves will move to lower elevations and present more enjoyment to the flatlanders by killing their pets and livestock. The Eagle story offered a glimmer of hope."

"I have talked with elderly women who are afraid to walk from their house to the garage in the dark because of the wolf presence. The hunting season on wolves last year seemed to reduce the problem for the folks in Lowman. There were some eight packs that could come into the Lowman valley and kill right in the yards of the residents. Generally the wolves take down the elk and start eating it when it is still alive. The sounds are horrible and just imagine if this is your front yard and the grandkids are watching. I don't believe the residents are going to put up with it in the future whether there is a legal hunt or not."

"Look how incensed the whole of the USA got with Michael Vick for fighting and killing a few dogs. I love dogs and wolves are essentially dogs. Why would the people who profess to be wolf lovers want to bring on such pain and misery to the wolves by purposefully having them starve and fight with each other? Just because they can't see the wolves suffering and dying doesn't mean that isn't happening quite routinely."

"Having the elk eaten alive surely can't bring a lot of entertainment value to most folks. If you were a rancher and you treated your cows that way, somebody would have you locked up. If somebody grows drugs or something else on their property that adversely affects others, there is plenty of governing laws to take action against the property owner. Something needs done about this ever increasing problem before innocent people become the victims!"

