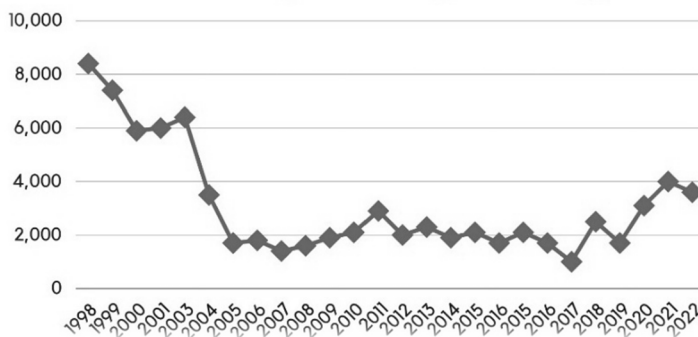




EAGLE DEPREDATION ON SHEEP

Sheep Ranchers across Wyoming lose sheep to many predators such as coyotes, bears, wolves, mountain lions, ravens, and eagles. Bald and Golden Eagles both kill lambs and sheep and caused the loss of 3600 heads in WY last year (USDA NASS Report 2023). Eagle depredation on sheep is on the rise in recent years.

Golden Eagle Depredations on Sheep in Wyoming



What to do if you encounter eagle depredation?

Over the last 5 years, more than a dozen sheep ranchers across Wyoming have participated in an eagle trapping effort led by eagle falconers from the IEAA (International Eagle Austringers Association). This program has resulted in the trapping of dozens of eagles. Twenty-four of these eagles were permanently removed for falconry, while most of the remaining eagles were relocated far from the ranch where they were captured. Trapping and relocation of eagles provides some relief to the rancher and the returning eagles are less likely to predate on lambs, resulting in reduced depredation of lambs.

Falconers assist the ranchers in getting the permits, and trap and relocate the eagles. To learn more about this program, please contact us or your USDA Wildlife Services contact.

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Indicators of Eagle Depredation

There are several indicators of depredation on a lamb kill by eagles. The first (talon punctures and subcutaneous hemorrhaging) is the best indicator of eagle predation, the closest to "proof" and an indicator which can stand on its own. All the others are clues that can strengthen a case for eagle predation and indicate what happened. USDA officials make the final determination.

Other clues include:

- Eagle feces, feathers, or castings around lamb kill.
- Plucking of wool.
- Ribs with eagle beak marks.
- Tongue eaten.



** Note: Puncture wound and bruising indicating injuries while the lamb was still alive.*