

## Montana pays record amount for livestock killed by predators

January 11, 2020



BOZEMAN (AP) — The state of Montana has made more payments to ranchers for livestock killed by predators in 2019 than any previous year.

The Montana Livestock Loss Board has paid ranchers more than \$247,000, The Bozeman Daily Chronicle reported Thursday.

The claims were made on more than 360 animals killed by mountain lions, grizzly bears or wolves. Officials said 2019 was the third consecutive year a new record was set for the payouts.

Madison County had the most losses with 44 animals killed, officials said.

The number of losses to grizzly bears almost doubled the losses to wolves, board Executive Director George Edwards said.

The number of confirmed livestock deaths is rising, and Edwards predicted the trend will continue.

The Montana Legislature approved an increase in funding for the Livestock Loss Board from \$200,000 to \$300,000 in 2019.

The statistics tracked by the loss board since 2008 include the county location and type of animal killed and the predator responsible, but that only provides a snapshot of the state's losses, Edwards said.

Livestock killed by one of the three listed predators must be inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be eligible for market rate payouts, Edwards said.

Some ranchers do not file claims, he said.

