

# Hunter bad-mouthed over wolf kill

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By Eric Barker of the Tribune

## Man receives phone calls, e-mails, business threats

Robert Millage's phone wouldn't stop ringing Wednesday and his e-mail in-box was choked with messages.

Most of the people contacting Millage are not happy with him, and they are not shy about letting him know. He's been called a wolf murderer and every dirty name in the book.

"I have a thick skin and a good sense of humor. What am I going to do, yell back at them?" he said. "I obeyed the law and did what (Idaho Department of) Fish and Game wanted us to do. I can sleep well."

On Tuesday, Millage, of Kamiah, became one of the first hunters in Idaho to legally kill a wolf. He was featured in several news stories that quickly went around the globe via the World Wide Web. Before long, some people opposed to wolf hunting posted Millage's contact information on Web sites like Craigslist and Facebook. He received about 50 phone calls and hundreds of e-mails.

Millage alerted local law enforcement officials and asked them to keep an eye on his business and home, but other than that, he's taking the unwelcome attention well.

"People are loons," he said. "If they want to call up and have a discussion, I'm all about having a discussion. But they call me a fat redneck and a wolf killer and compare me to Michael Vick."

Some have suggested his business as a real estate agent will suffer. Millage doesn't think so.

"Maybe I'll lose two customers and gain a hundred out of it," he said.

On Tuesday the first wolf hunting season in several decades opened in Idaho. The move came months after gray wolves were removed from Endangered Species Act protection. The hunts are controversial and being challenged in federal court where environmental and animal rights groups have asked for an injunction. Judge Donald Molloy has yet to issue a decision, and the hunts will continue until he does.

So far three wolves have been killed in Idaho, two in the Lolo Zone and one in the Sawtooth Zone.

More than 11,000 hunters purchased Idaho wolf tags. According to state regulations, as many as 220 wolves could be shot this fall.

Millage said it's okay if people disagree with wolf hunting. But he doesn't think they should harass hunters for participating in legal hunting seasons.

"It doesn't seem very American, if something doesn't conform to your ideas and points of view, to threaten them," he said. "It's been a long day, but it's been entertaining."

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