
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 1337

Brief Description: Conditioning the classification of the gray wolf by the fish and wildlife commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Kretz, Blake and Short.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires all state listings of the gray wolf as endangered or threatened to be limited to areas of the state where the gray wolf is also listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Hearing Date: 2/5/13

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) has the authority to identify species that are seriously threatened with extinction and designate those species as endangered. Such a species classification must be requested by the director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (RCW 77.12.020).

The Commission may only list a species as endangered, threatened, or sensitive solely on the basis of the biological status of the species being considered. This decision must be based on the preponderance of scientific data. Species may be classified when populations are in danger of failing, declining, or are vulnerable (WAC 232-12-297).

Once listed, the Commission must also rely on the preponderance of available scientific data when making delisting or reclassification decisions. A species may be delisted from endangered, threatened, or sensitive only when populations are no longer in danger of failing, declining, or

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are no longer vulnerable (WAC 232-12-297).

The listing of a species by the Commission requires the creation of a management plan for the species. The management plan must identify target population objectives, reclassification criteria, an implementation plan, public education, and a species monitoring plan (WAC 232-12-297).

The gray wolf is listed as an endangered species under Washington law for the entirety of the State (WAC 232-12-014) and a managed plan for their recovery was adopted by the Commission in 2011. The gray wolf currently is listed as an endangered species under Federal law only in most of those parts of the State located west of Highway 97 in central Washington.

Summary of Bill:

The Commission is required to amend the current administrative rule that lists gray wolves as endangered across all of Washington. All listings of the gray wolf as endangered or threatened must be limited to areas of the State where the gray wolf is also listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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