
HOUSE BILL 2097

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Representatives Kretz, Chapman, Springer, Blake, Pettigrew, Dent, Schmick, Dye, Maycumber, Wilcox, and Corry

Read first time 02/19/19. Referred to Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to addressing statewide wolf recovery; amending
2 RCW 16.76.020; adding a new section to chapter 77.36 RCW; and
3 creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) It is the legislature's intent to
6 support full recovery of gray wolves in Washington state in
7 accordance with the department of fish and wildlife's 2011 wolf
8 recovery and management plan and state law. It is also the
9 legislature's intent to support the livestock industry and rural
10 lifestyles and ensure that state agencies and residents have the
11 tools necessary to support coexistence with wolves.

12 (2) The wolf plan requires that the department of fish and
13 wildlife conduct a review of the effectiveness of the plan's
14 implementation every five years. The legislature finds that because
15 the regional recovery goals have been exceeded in the eastern
16 Washington recovery region, but not yet in other regions, it is
17 timely for the department of fish and wildlife to conduct a periodic
18 status review in accordance with WAC 220-610-110 sections 7 and 8 and
19 recommend to the state fish and wildlife commission whether a change
20 in status is warranted.

1 (3) Furthermore, the legislature recognizes that management of
2 wolf-livestock conflict is key to both wolf recovery and public
3 acceptance of wolves in rural areas and that as the wolf population
4 grows, and even after it achieves recovery, stable and adequate
5 funding for nonlethal wolf deterrence will be needed to support
6 livestock producers and the livestock industry and minimize the need
7 for lethal removal of wolves. As such, it is the intent of the
8 legislature, regardless of the listing status of gray wolves, to
9 continue to sufficiently fund nonlethal deterrents for minimizing
10 depredation of livestock by wolves. Proactive deterrence and
11 community collaboration, as set forth in RCW 16.76.020, are necessary
12 to reduce conflict between wolves and livestock and will be important
13 for maintaining the economic viability of the livestock industry, the
14 state's wolf populations, and public acceptance of wolves in
15 northeast Washington after wolves have recovered and have been
16 delisted.

17 (4) Further, the legislature intends to expand funding and
18 personnel resources in the department of fish and wildlife for
19 similar nonlethal deterrent efforts to mitigate conflicts statewide,
20 as wolves recover in the remainder of the state beyond northeast
21 Washington.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The state department of fish and
23 wildlife shall immediately review the listing status of the gray
24 wolf, *Canis lupus*, as an endangered, threatened, or sensitive species
25 under RCW 77.12.020, or the rules adopted under RCW 77.12.020. The
26 review must determine if Washington's wolf population is no longer in
27 danger of failing, declining, or no longer vulnerable to limited
28 numbers, disease, predation, habitat loss or change, or exploitation,
29 and must examine the relationship between wolf population levels in
30 the eastern Washington recovery region and their role in wolf
31 colonization in the remaining recovery regions. The review required
32 in this section must be based solely on the numerical biological
33 status and preponderance of scientific data available.

34 (2) If the review required under subsection (1) of this section
35 finds that the gray wolf is no longer in danger of failing,
36 declining, or no longer vulnerable to limited numbers, disease,
37 predation, habitat loss or change, or exploitation, the state fish
38 and wildlife commission shall consider whether a change in listing
39 status is warranted either:

1 (a) Statewide; or

2 (b) In any area of the state where the gray wolf was removed from
3 the federal list of endangered and threatened wildlife, maintained by
4 the secretary of the United States department of the interior under
5 the federal endangered species act, prior to June 30, 2014.

6 (3) The action in subsection (2) of this section may only occur
7 if it does not impede recolonization and recovery in the rest of the
8 state.

9 (4) The state fish and wildlife commission's consideration of the
10 listing status of gray wolves as required by this section must be
11 completed by June 30, 2020.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 77.36
13 RCW to read as follows:

14 The department shall increase staff resources in Ferry and
15 Stevens counties for response to wolf-livestock conflict on an
16 ongoing basis and for coordination with livestock producers on the
17 continued implementation of proactive nonlethal deterrents.

18 **Sec. 4.** RCW 16.76.020 and 2017 c 257 s 3 are each amended to
19 read as follows:

20 (1) The northeast Washington wolf-livestock management grant is
21 created within the department. Funds from the grant program must be
22 used only for the deployment of nonlethal deterrence resources in any
23 Washington county east of the crest of the Cascade mountain range
24 that shares a border with Canada, including human presence, and
25 locally owned and deliberately located equipment and tools.

26 (2)(a) A four-member advisory board is established to advise the
27 department on the expenditure of the northeast Washington wolf-
28 livestock management grant funds. Advisory board members must be
29 knowledgeable about wolf depredation issues, and have a special
30 interest in the use of nonlethal wolf management techniques. Board
31 members are unpaid, are not state employees, and are not eligible for
32 reimbursement for subsistence, lodging, or travel expenses incurred
33 in the performance of their duties as board members. The director
34 must appoint each member to the board for a term of two years. Board
35 members may be reappointed for subsequent two-year terms. The
36 following board members must be appointed by the director in
37 consultation with each applicable conservation district and the
38 legislators in the legislative district encompassing each county:

1 (i) One Ferry county conservation district board member or staff
2 member;

3 (ii) One Stevens county conservation district board member or
4 staff member;

5 (iii) One Pend Oreille conservation district board member or
6 staff member; and

7 (iv) One Okanogan conservation district board member or staff
8 member.

9 (b) If no board member or staff member qualifies under this
10 section, the director must appoint a resident of the applicable
11 county to serve on the board.

12 (c) Board members may not:

13 (i) Directly benefit, in whole or in part, from any contract
14 entered into or grant awarded under this section; or

15 (ii) Directly accept any compensation, gratuity, or reward in
16 connection with such a contract from any other person with a
17 beneficial interest in the contract.

18 (3) The board must help direct funding for the deployment of
19 nonlethal deterrence resources, including human presence, and locally
20 owned and deliberately located equipment and tools. Funds may only be
21 distributed to nonprofit community-based collaborative organizations
22 that have advisory boards that include personnel from relevant
23 agencies including, but not limited to, the United States forest
24 service and the Washington department of fish and wildlife (~~(, or to~~
25 ~~individuals that are willing to receive technical assistance from the~~
26 ~~same agencies)~~).

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