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**Rural Development, Agriculture, &  
Natural Resources Committee**

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**HB 2906**

**Brief Description:** Concerning the use of radio collars on gray wolves by the department of fish and wildlife.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kretz, Chapman, Lekanoff, Walsh, Schmick, Blake, Dent, Chandler, Orcutt, Springer, Pettigrew and Shewmake.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to prioritize the use of radio collars to monitor gray wolves.
- Directs the WDFW to collar at least two wolves in each wolf pack in conflict.
- Encourages the WDFW to collar at least one wolf in each pack that has been confirmed by the WDFW.

**Hearing Date:** 2/4/20

**Staff:** Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

**Background:**

Federal law lists the gray wolf as an endangered species for the portion of the state located west of Highways 97, 17, and 395 that run through Central Washington. The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) has authority to classify endangered and threatened species in Washington by rule, and has classified the gray wolf as an endangered species in the entirety of the state. The Commission adopted the Gray Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (Conservation and Management Plan) in December of 2011, which identifies target population objectives, management tools, reclassification criteria, an implementation plan, and a species monitoring plan. The Conservation and Management Plan defines a "pack" as: "a group of wolves, usually consisting of a male, female, and their offspring from one or more generations.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

For purposes of monitoring, a pack is defined as a group of two or more wolves traveling together in winter."

The Department of Fish and Wildlife publishes a wolf conservation and management report in the spring of each year. According to the most recent report, published April 5, 2019, there were 27 confirmed packs in the state as of December 31, 2018.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) must prioritize the use of radio collars to monitor wolves in Washington, and collar at least two wolves in every pack in conflict. The WDFW is encouraged to radio collar at least one wolf in every pack that has been confirmed by the WDFW. The WDFW must use radio collars that it already owns.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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