

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SJM 8023

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation, January 28, 2008

**Brief Description:** Requesting resources to manage gray wolf depredation in Washington.

**Sponsors:** Senator Morton.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation:1/21/08, 1/28/08 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Hatfield, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Rockefeller, Spanel, Stevens and Swecker.

**Staff:** Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

**Background:** Gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) are the largest wild member of the dog family. According to information from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), wolves range in size from 40 to 175 pounds. Gray wolves are typically gray in color, but can range from black to white. Wolves have a social structure, normally living in packs of two to 12 animals. Dispersal wolves may cover large geographic areas as lone animals, seeking to join other packs or start their own.

The FWS listed the gray wolf as an endangered species in 1974, and the Washington State Department of Game declared the wolf endangered in 1980. Because the species is listed as federally endangered, the FWS serves as the lead agency for wolf management.

The FWS, United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services (WS), and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) have established guidelines to coordinate their response to reports of gray wolf activity in Washington State. In general, the FWS, WS, DFW, and tribal personnel will collaborate to monitor wolves, and each entity can investigate and verify wolf reports. However, WS serves as the investigating entity for reports of wolf conflicts with domestic animals or livestock.

**Summary of Bill:** Requests that the federal government prioritize and provide increased resources for landowner assistance and timely federal investigation of wolf depredation reports in Washington.

Additionally, A series of findings concerning wolf management and activity in Washington.

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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.*

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Wolves are responsible for an increasing amount of livestock damage in Washington. The federal government will be primarily responsible for funding wolf programs as long as the wolf is a listed species. This memorial could help Washington maintain federal funding for wolf management, even after the wolf is delisted in part of Washington.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: John Stuhlmiller, Washington Farm Bureau; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association.