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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2107**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Kretz, Blake, Short, Dent, and Schmick)

AN ACT Relating to requiring the department of fish and wildlife to update the 2011 wolf conservation and management plan to ensure the establishment of a self-sustaining population of gray wolves while also ensuring social tolerance of wolf recovery; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department of fish and wildlife must engage in a process to amend the existing wolf conservation and management plan, as adopted in December 2011, to better address the wolf recovery rate and distribution of wolves since the initial adoption of the plan.

(2) In amending the wolf conservation and management plan, the department of fish and wildlife must use the most updated available science and coordinate with the existing wolf advisory group, including the utilization of a neutral third-party facilitated conflict resolution process for the group.

(3) The wolf conservation and management plan must be amended, consistent with this section, as the department of fish and wildlife best sees fit to manage the state's growing wolf population. However, the process must consider, at a minimum:

(a) Whether the most updated available science supports a change in the metric for identifying successful wolf recovery that is based on the number of wolf packs in the state and not on the number of breeding pairs;

(b) Additional options for the number of wolves and distribution of wolves necessary to no longer consider the species in danger of extinction within the state;

(c) Whether the most updated available science supports altering, reducing, or consolidating the existing wolf recovery zones;

(d) A determination of the reasonable prevention measures, taking into consideration recognized best practices and the most updated available science, expected of a livestock producer prior to consideration of compensation or the lethal removal of the depredating wolves;

(e) A review of barriers to the use of cooperative agreements and potential modifications to cooperative agreements designed to address any identified barriers;

(f) A review of the current conditions that warrant lethal management of individual wolves;

(g) The development of criteria for the use of lethal management tools to address repeated depredations by wolf packs, taking into consideration recognized best management practices and the most updated available science, so that the conditions under which lethal management will be authorized during the wolf recovery period is clear and unambiguous;

(h) The incorporation of recent data on wolf/ungulate interaction and the potential impacts to wild ungulate herds from recovering wolf populations; and

(i) Whether the current enforcement effort and statutory penalties are sufficient deterrents to reduce the incidences of wolf poaching, and if not, the development of recommendations for appropriate statutory penalties.

(4) Any amendments made to the wolf conservation and management plan developed under this section must be subjected to a scientific peer review process prior to being considered for adoption by the fish and wildlife commission.

(5) The amendments to the wolf conservation and management plan required under this section must be completed by June 30, 2017.

(6) This section expires June 30, 2018.

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