

Oregon House of Representatives  
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee  
HB 2182

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to predator management.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. The State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall study developing a predator management plan for the State of Oregon and shall present the results of the study in a report to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to the environment and natural resources, in the manner provided in ORS 192.245, on or before September 15, 2016.

SECTION 2. Section 1 of this 2015 Act is repealed on January 2, 2017.

I am Stan Steele representing the Oregon Outdoor Council. I will be presenting the preliminary findings of the Predator Policy Workgroup to Chair Witt and Committee members.

The Predator Policy Workgroup was established by this committee under the leadership of Chair Witt to explore the merits of establishing a state wide predator policy and management mechanisms that best implement the seven co-equals goals of wildlife management as described in ORS 496.012 Wildlife Policy.

Wildlife Policy ORS 496.012

It is the policy of the State of Oregon that wildlife shall be managed to prevent serious depletion of any indigenous species and to provide the optimum recreational and aesthetic benefits for present and future generations of the citizens of this state. In furtherance of this policy, the State Fish and Wildlife Commission shall represent the public interest of the State of Oregon and implement the following coequal goals of wildlife management:

- (1) To maintain all species of wildlife at optimum levels.
- (2) To develop and manage the lands and waters of this state in a manner that will enhance the production and public enjoyment of wildlife.
- (3) To permit an orderly and equitable utilization of available wildlife.
- (4) To develop and maintain public access to the lands and waters of the state and the wildlife resources thereon.
- (5) To regulate wildlife populations and the public enjoyment of wildlife in a manner that is compatible with primary uses of the lands and waters of the state.
- (6) To provide optimum recreational benefits.
- (7) To make decisions that affect wildlife resources of the state for the benefit of the wildlife resources and to make decisions that allow for the best social, economic and recreational utilization of wildlife resources by all user groups.

HB 2182 was drafted in response to a growing dissatisfaction among a significant number of fish and wildlife stakeholders regarding the level of active predator management activities being conducted by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Many hunters and anglers feel that while the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is intensely managing hunter and angler opportunities that those same opportunities were being restricted by what they perceived as rapidly growing and undermanaged avian and terrestrial predator populations.

The Subgroup is composed of knowledgeable individuals representing a broad spectrum of stakeholders with often divergent values and views on predator management. Early in the process it was identified by all participants that controversy will always be a component of any and all attempts to design and implement predator management policies and programs.

Within the context of that central point an open and collaborative discussion emerged within the subgroup that found consensus on several key points:

- To fulfill its statutory responsibility, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife must holistically and, in concert, manage all fish and wildlife populations, including predator species
- That all fish and wildlife must be managed in such a manner that protects, preserves and provides optimal recreational opportunities including consumptive use
- That predator management actions must be based on the best available science
- That predator management actions need to be implemented when the best available science determines that predation is a significant limiting factor in fish and wildlife populations not meeting management goals and objectives
- The long term goal is to manage predator numbers at a level that allows for increased fish and wildlife harvest while maintaining viable predator populations

HB 2182, if passed, will be the cornerstone for building a scientifically defensible, economically feasible and socially acceptable statewide predator management policy that ensures that all Oregonians have healthy fish and wildlife populations for hunting, fishing and viewing.

The product of the subgroup is an excellent example of what a diverse group of people can accomplish when working together collaboratively on very difficult and controversial issues. The subgroup wants to personally thank legislative staff and the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee for facilitating this very worthwhile project. I agree with Amanda that this group, like hers, has also has developed a level of trust and communication not often seen on such controversial issues and most have agreed to continue working for the Greater Good if deemed necessary.

Stan Steele,  
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Predator Policy Subgroup