

WOLF DELISTING TESTIMONY
HB 4040

My name is Stephen Kafoury, and I represent the Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society. We are the professional and scientific society of wildlife biologists. Our role at the legislature is to present and advocate for science-based decision making.

Our members have been closely following the development and implementation of the Oregon Wolf Plan. This plan was created by a political process whereby competing interests came up with a compromise solution to a complex issue, and was passed by the legislature. As a scientific society, we do not engage in issues that are resolved by political processes. We do offer our best scientific analysis of decisions and policies, but not their wisdom.

It is our opinion that once the plan was completed, and administered by ODF&W, it has been effectively managed and the agency has made science-based decisions.

In our view, the process of listing or de-listing of species should be based on the best available scientific information. The sole issue should be whether the species is in danger or extinction or not. This is not a political issue, and should not be the topic of legislation. The social, economical, and other issues surrounding management once a species has been listed, or could be de-listed, are political, the legislature is the proper venue for these decisions.

We therefore oppose HB 2040. Even though it merely endorses a decision that was previously made by an administrative agency using scientific methods, it establishes a potential precedent whereby legislative action can place or remove a species from the ESA.