

Chair Edwards, and Committee members

My name is Todd Nash, and I currently serve as the Wolf Committee Chairman for the Oregon Cattlemen's Association.

I'm writing you in support of HB 4040. This is a bill intended to support, and solidify the decision made by the ODFW Commission on November 9, 2015. We hope, that with this legislation, we can see an end to the law suits that have plagued wolves since their introduction in 1995. Federal legislation (in 2011) has been a huge part of the success, which has allowed states to manage wolves.

In Oregon's case 2/3 of the state wolves are still federally listed. US fish and wildlife have publicly stated the need to delist the rest of the State. But litigation has created and will continue to create, detrimental roadblocks that prevent the intended management protocols listed in the Wolf Plan. Representatives Newhouse of Washington State, and Greg Walden of Oregon, have drafted legislation to delist the remaining portions of both Washington and Oregon, in an effort to give back better local control over this very polarizing issue.

Understand that most ranchers never wanted wolves here to begin with, so it is a major compromise to come to the table and find middle ground. The Oregon Wolf Plan is that middle ground, but its vulnerability has been shown; law suits. The first one of which was in 2011, when the Imnaha pack had proven itself to be chronic depredators of livestock. An injunction was filed, and no wolves could be killed in the state of Oregon, because of the rules under the state endangered species act. The local families that lived alongside that pack watched, as many more cattle were killed, and nothing in our power could be done to legally remove these wolves.

We are asking you to pass this legislation, so that the Oregon Wolf Plan might function the way it was intended, and without interference from law suits. It is my hope that we get to a uniting place where wolf recovery can feel like a success for all Oregonians.

Please understand, that by having wolves in Oregon, we as producers, will certainly have livestock killed and injured. We will live with the uncertainty of sending herding dogs into a patch of timber, not knowing if a wolf might be there. It was once commonplace to send our kids and grandkids out with the family dog for protection, unfortunately that dog now has become an attraction for wolves. We are a long way from where we want to be, in regard to control of wolves, but HB 4040 is a good step toward that goal.

Thank you for consideration.

Todd Nash
Wolf committee Chairman Oregon Cattlemen's Association