

78th Oregon Legislative Assembly - 2016 Regular Session
STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources

MEASURE: HB 4040 A
CARRIER: Rep. Barreto

Fiscal: No fiscal impact
Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 02/09/16

Action: Do Pass With Amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Meeting Dates: 02/04, 02/09

Vote:

Yeas: 8 - Barreto, Esquivel, Frederick, Krieger, McKeown, McLain, Whitsett, Witt
Nays: 1 - Gorsek

Prepared By: Dan Roper, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Ratifies and approves decision by State Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) to remove *Canis lupus* from state list of threatened or endangered species. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Concerns about wolves from ranching and livestock community
- Management of wolves by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Status of wolves throughout Rocky Mountain states
- Oregon's wolf population growing by 20 to 30 percent each year
- Appropriateness of legislative action to affirm Commission's decision and concern over setting precedent

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Replaces measure.

BACKGROUND:

Gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) were reintroduced in the continental United States in the mid-1990s with the capture of wolves in Canada and their release in central Idaho and Yellowstone National Park. Since that time, wolves have migrated into northeastern Oregon, as well as Jackson, Klamath and Lake counties. The first documented wolf pups born in Oregon occurred in 2008. The 2014 minimum Oregon population was 81 wolves, which included 10 known packs and several known wolf pairs.

The gray wolf is currently listed as an endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) west of Highways 395/78/95, and any take of wolves in this area is regulated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Wolves were federally de-listed on May 5, 2011 in areas east of those highways.

The gray wolf was listed under the Oregon ESA until November 10, 2015 when the State Fish and Wildlife Commission voted 4-2 to delist. Currently, the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (Wolf Plan) provides protections for the gray wolf and management is determined by plan phases based on the number of wolves and their distribution across the state. Wolves in eastern Oregon are managed under Phase 2 rules, while wolves in western Oregon are managed under Phase 1 rules. Phase 1 rules provide ESA-like protections until the area of the state has four breeding pairs of wolves for three consecutive years. In 2016, wildlife officials will begin a required review of the plan.

HB 4040 A would ratify and approve the decision to remove *Canis lupus* from the state list of threatened or endangered species.