

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

MEASURE: HB 4040 A
CARRIER: Sen. Hansell

Fiscal: No fiscal impact
Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 02/23/16
Action: Do Pass The A-Eng Bill.
Meeting Dates: 02/16, 02/18, 02/23

Vote:
Yeas: 3 - Edwards, Olsen, Whitsett
Nays: 2 - Dembrow, Prozanski

Prepared By: Beth Reiley, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Ratifies and establishes that decision by State Fish and Wildlife Commission to remove *Canis lupus* from state list of threatened or endangered species satisfies procedures for listing species as threatened or endangered. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Impact of legislation on legal challenges to State Fish and Wildlife Commission's (Commission) decision to remove *Canis lupus* from state list of threatened or endangered species
- Development of Oregon Wolf Plan
- Wolf populations in Oregon and region
- Instances of depredation
- Management options allowed within phases of Oregon Wolf Plan
- Science used by Commission in delisting decision

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

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 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 4040A would approve the decision to remove *Canis lupus* from the state list of threatened or endangered species and ratify that it satisfies the procedures for listing a species as threatened or endangered.