HB 4106   STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources

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Sub-Referral To:	Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Meeting Dates:	2/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the State Department of Fish and Wildlife to submit biennial report to the Legislative Assembly on estimated net change in wolf population during the preceding two-year period. Requires Legislative Assembly to identify the amount of state funding necessary to provide counties with assistance sufficient to carry out essential features of county programs related to wolf depredation and financial assistance. Requires Legislative Assembly to review biennial report prior to making appropriation to the Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund. Requires Legislative Assembly to establish, to the extent practicable, a fund appropriation amount greater than the identified necessary funding amount, that also reflects the estimated wolf population change.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2011, the Legislative Assembly enacted House Bill 3560, which directed the Oregon Department of Agriculture to establish a wolf compensation and financial assistance grant program. Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund moneys provided grant funds to assist counties with implementation of county wolf depredation compensation programs. The programs compensate individuals for loss due to wolf depredation, or for implementation of livestock management or nonlethal wolf deterrence techniques designed to discourage wolf depredation of livestock.

According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the agency currently conducts minimum wolf population counts to track wolf population dynamics. ODFW annually documents evidence of individual wolves through the use of methods such as tracks, sign, remote camera footage, or visual observations. Minimum counts refer to the challenge of documenting every wolf, and the likelihood that the real number of wolves is higher.