

HB 4106 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources

Action Date: 02/15/18

Action: Do pass and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference

Vote: 8-1-0-0

Yeas: 8 - Barreto, Clem, Esquivel, McKeown, McLain, Smith DB, Sprenger, Witt

Nays: 1 - Salinas

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the State Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to submit a biennial report to the Legislative Assembly on the estimated net change in wolf population during the preceding two-year period, and to post the report on the ODFW website for public access. 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; review the biennial report prior to making an appropriation to the Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund; and 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:

- Lack of clarity on wolf population size over time
- The Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan
- Funding for both loss and prevention related to wolf depredation
- History and impact of wolf depredation compensation in Oregon

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. The Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund moneys provide 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 (ODFW), 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, signs, remote camera footage, or visual observations.

House Bill 4106 would require ODFW to submit a biennial report to the Legislative Assembly on the estimated net change in wolf population, and require the Legislative Assembly to identify the level of assistance sufficient to carry out essential features of programs related to wolf depredation.