



*PROMOTING THE PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND  
RESTORATION OF NATURAL FOREST ECOSYSTEMS  
AND THEIR PROCESSES ON THE OLYMPIC  
PENINSULA, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE  
HABITAT, AND SURROUNDING ECOSYSTEMS*

February 21, 2019

The Honorable Brian Blake, Chair  
House Rural Development, Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee  
437A Legislative Building  
Washington State Legislature

The Honorable Mike Chapman, Bill Sponsor  
House Rural Development, Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee  
437A Legislative Building  
Washington State Legislature

*Electronic Communication*

**RE: HB 2097, A bill regarding gray wolf recovery in Washington State - Support with Amendments**

Representatives Blake and Chapman:

I am writing on behalf of the Olympic Forest Coalition, a grassroots organization of members living in communities located on the Olympic Peninsula. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2097, and your leadership to balance the needs of rural communities and the environment.

The Olympic Forest Coalition supports HB 2097, a bill regarding gray wolf recovery in Washington State, with the amendments proposed in the accompanying document. The document is a line in, line out mark-up compromise of the bill supported by our members and other conservation organizations. Our highest priority is to see the section on regional delisting removed from the original bill. If the bill is not amended in Committee, we hereby state our opposition. We will support passage of the bill only with the full commitment and understanding that the bill be amended before a floor vote.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

Lorna Smith  
Vice President  
Olympic Forest Coalition

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HOUSE BILL 2097

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State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Representatives Kretz, Chapman, Springer, Blake, Pettigrew, Dent, Schmick, Dye, Maycumber, Wilcox, and Corry

Read first time 02/19/19. Referred to Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to addressing statewide wolf recovery; amending  
2 RCW 16.76.020; adding a new section to chapter 77.36 RCW; and  
3 creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) It is the legislature's intent to  
6 support full recovery of gray wolves in Washington state in  
7 accordance with the department of fish and wildlife's 2011 wolf  
8 ~~recovery~~ conservation and management plan and state law. It  
is also the  
9 legislature's intent to support the livestock industry and rural  
10 lifestyles and ensure that state agencies and residents have the  
11 tools necessary to support coexistence with wolves.

12 (2) The wolf plan requires that the department of fish and  
13 wildlife conduct a review of the effectiveness of the plan's  
14 implementation every five years. The legislature finds that ~~because~~  
~~15 the regional recovery goals have been exceeded in the eastern~~  
16 ~~Washington recovery region, but not yet in other regions,~~ it is  
17 timely for the department of fish and wildlife to conduct a periodic  
18 status review of the endangered gray wolf population in accordance  
with WAC 220-610-110 sections 7 and 8 and  
19 recommend to the state fish and wildlife commission whether a change

20 in status is warranted, or not warranted.

1 (3) Furthermore, the legislature recognizes that ~~management~~  
2 solutions to ~~of~~  
3 wolf-livestock conflict ~~is~~ are key to both wolf recovery  
4 and public  
5 acceptance of wolves in rural areas and that as the wolf population  
6 grows, and even after it achieves recovery, stable and adequate  
7 funding for nonlethal wolf deterrence, outreach and education will  
8 be needed to support  
9 livestock producers and the livestock industry and minimize the need  
10 for lethal removal of wolves. As such, it is the intent of the  
11 legislature, regardless of the listing status of gray wolves, to  
12 continue to sufficiently fund nonlethal deterrents for minimizing  
13 depredation of livestock by wolves. Proactive deterrence and  
14 community collaboration, as set forth in RCW 16.76.020, are necessary  
15 to reduce conflict between wolves and livestock and will be important  
16 for maintaining the economic viability of the livestock industry, the  
17 state's wolf populations, and public acceptance of wolves in  
18 northeast Washington after wolves have recovered and have been  
19 delisted.

20 (4) Further, the legislature intends to expand funding and  
21 personnel resources in the department of fish and wildlife for  
22 similar nonlethal deterrent efforts to mitigate conflicts statewide,  
23 as wolves recover in the remainder of the state beyond northeast  
24 Washington.

~~25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The state department of fish and  
26 wildlife shall immediately review the listing status of the gray  
27 wolf, *Canis lupus*, as an endangered, threatened, or sensitive species  
28 under RCW 77.12.020, or the rules adopted under RCW 77.12.020. The  
29 review must determine if Washington's wolf population is no longer in  
30 danger of failing, declining, or no longer vulnerable to limited  
31 numbers, disease, predation, habitat loss or change, or exploitation,  
32 and must examine the relationship between wolf population levels in  
33 the eastern Washington recovery region and their role in wolf  
34 colonization in the remaining recovery regions. The review required  
35 in this section must be based solely on the numerical biological  
36 status and preponderance of scientific data available.~~

~~37 (2) If the review required under subsection (1) of this section  
38 finds that the gray wolf is no longer in danger of failing,  
39 declining, or no longer vulnerable to limited numbers, disease,  
40 predation, habitat loss or change, or exploitation, the state fish~~

~~38 and wildlife commission shall consider whether a change in listing  
39 status is warranted either:~~

1 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (a) Statewide; or~~

2 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (b) In any area of the state where the gray wolf was removed from~~  
3 ~~the federal list of endangered and threatened wildlife, maintained by~~  
4 ~~the secretary of the United States department of the interior under~~  
5 ~~the federal endangered species act, prior to June 30, 2014.~~

6 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (3) The action in subsection (2) of this section may only occur~~  
7 ~~if it does not impede recolonization and recovery in the rest of the~~  
8 ~~state.~~

9 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (4) The state fish and wildlife commission's consideration of the~~  
10 ~~listing status of gray wolves as required by this section must be~~  
11 ~~completed by June 30, 2020.~~

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 77.36  
13 RCW to read as follows:

14 The department shall increase staff resources in Okanogan,  
15 Pend Oreille, Ferry and  
16 Stevens counties for response to wolf-livestock conflict on an  
17 ongoing basis and for coordination with livestock producers on the  
18 continued implementation of proactive nonlethal deterrents. Such staff  
19 shall be experienced in the selection and deployment of nonlethal  
20 deterrents and shall be experienced in community involvement and  
21 outreach.

18 **Sec. 4.** RCW 16.76.020 and 2017 c 257 s 3 are each amended to  
19 read as follows:

20 (1) The northeast Washington wolf-livestock management grant is  
21 created within the department. Funds from the grant program must be  
22 used only for the deployment of nonlethal deterrence resources in any  
23 Washington county east of the crest of the Cascade mountain range  
24 that shares a border with Canada, including human presence, and  
25 locally owned and deliberately located equipment and tools.

26 (2)(a) A four-member advisory board is established to advise the  
27 department on the expenditure of the northeast Washington wolf-  
28 livestock management grant funds. Advisory board members must be  
29 knowledgeable about wolf depredation issues, and have a special  
30 interest in the use of nonlethal wolf management techniques. Board  
31 members are unpaid, are not state employees, and are not eligible for  
32 reimbursement for subsistence, lodging, or travel expenses incurred  
33 in the performance of their duties as board members. The director  
34 must appoint each member to the board for a term of two years. Board  
35 members may be reappointed for subsequent two-year terms. The

36 following board members must be appointed by the director in  
37 consultation with each applicable conservation district and the  
38 legislators in the legislative district encompassing each county:

1 (i) One Ferry county conservation district board member or staff  
2 member;

3 (ii) One Stevens county conservation district board member or  
4 staff member;

5 (iii) One Pend Oreille conservation district board member or  
6 staff member; and

7 (iv) One Okanogan conservation district board member or staff  
8 member.

9 (b) If no board member or staff member qualifies under this  
10 section, the director must appoint a resident of the applicable  
11 county to serve on the board.

12 (c) Board members may not:

13 (i) Directly benefit, in whole or in part, from any contract  
14 entered into or grant awarded under this section; or

15 (ii) Directly accept any compensation, gratuity, or reward in  
16 connection with such a contract from any other person with a  
17 beneficial interest in the contract.

18 (3) The board must help direct funding for the deployment of  
19 nonlethal deterrence resources, including human presence, and locally  
20 owned and deliberately located equipment and tools. Funds may only be  
21 distributed to nonprofit community-based collaborative organizations  
22 that have advisory boards that include personnel from relevant  
23 agencies including, but not limited to, the United States forest  
24 service and the Washington department of fish and wildlife(~~(, or to~~  
25 ~~individuals that are willing to receive technical assistance from the~~  
26 ~~same agencies)~~).

39

New Section:

A new section is added to RCW 79A.25.280 to read as follows

- (1) A new grant fund is created under the auspices of the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office to provide outreach, training and demonstrations on how communities, recreationists, farmers and ranchers can live, work and recreate safely and knowledgeably with wolves through understanding of wolf behavior and appropriate human non-lethal responses as wolves repopulate Washington State

throughout the recovery regions identified in the Washington Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.

- (2) Grants shall be made available for non-profit organizations lawfully operating in the State of Washington with proven experience in outreach, training and deployment of nonlethal livestock-predator conflict avoidance measures. Grants shall be available for projects, research or activities, guided by best available science, in any Washington County where wolves are currently present, or are predicted to be present in the next five years, according to the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.
  
- (3) A six-member advisory committee is created to establish eligibility criteria review of grant applications, identify and rank the projects eligible for funding and advise the RCO Director of the results. Advisory committee members must have knowledge of wolf ecology and biology, familiarity with the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan, and have experience and understanding in training and deployment of nonlethal wolf livestock conflict avoidance techniques based on best available science.



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