

# WDFW: One more kill will put Dirty Shirt wolves at risk

Ranchers would be offered permit to shoot two wolves

By DON JENKINS  
Capital Press

If a northeast Washington wolf pack kills anymore livestock, state wildlife managers will offer ranchers a permit to shoot two wolves, according to the Department of Fish and Wildlife's wolf policy coordinator, Donny Martorello.

The permit to kill would be limited to the producer's family and employees, who would not be allowed to hunt or bait wolves. The wolves would have to be seen near the cows. WDFW staff working with the producer also could shoot if they encounter wolves.

Martorello outlined the permit's conditions in an email Tuesday to WDFW's wolf advisory group.

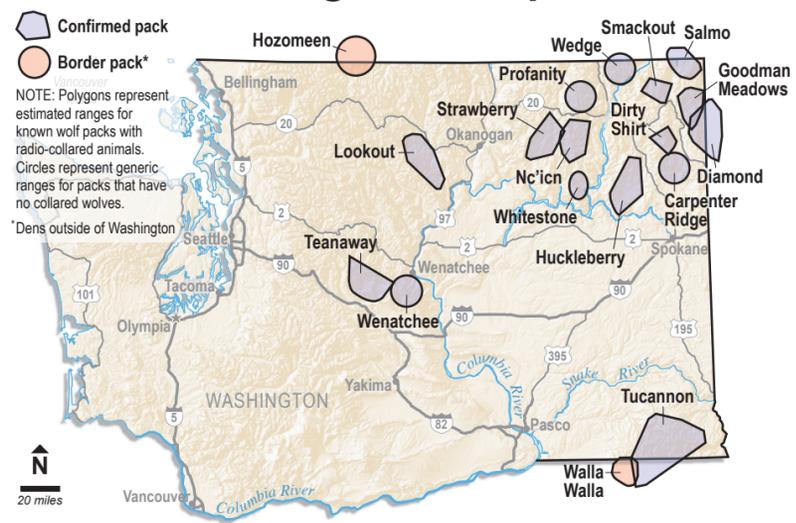
The Dirty Shirt pack, which has at least six members, killed three adult cows and a calf grazing on U.S. Forest Service land between July 5 and 10 in Stevens County, according to WDFW. There are two ranchers with cattle grazing in the area.

The Stevens County Cattlemen's Association has called for WDFW to lethally remove wolves in response to the depredations.

Washington Cattlemen's Association Executive Vice President Jack Field, a member of the wolf advisory group, said Wednesday that some ranchers may accept a permit to kill, but others may be wary of drawing unwanted attention from wolf advocates.

"It's certainly a tool, but it puts the requirement right on the back of the producer," he said.

## Known Washington wolf packs (As of March 6)



Source: Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Alan Kenaga/Capital Press

"It shouldn't be the responsibility of the livestock producer to manage problem wolves.

"It's just a tough, tough situation and at the end of the day, the Department of Fish and Wildlife is the responsible party," Field said. "Let's have the professionals come in and do this."

It's unclear what WDFW will do if depredations continue and producers decline a permit to take matters into their own hands. Efforts to reach Martorello for further comment were unsuccessful.

Defenders of Wildlife's Northwest director, Shawn Cantrell, who's also on the wolf advisory group, said WDFW should continue to seek out non-lethal means to prevent depredations. "We're really pleased with the approach the department has taken," he said.

Cantrell said that if another depredation occurs, he hopes the WDFW will pause to consider whether other non-lethal

measures can be tried before following through on offering a permit to shoot wolves.

The Dirty Shirt pack has one of the state's few known breeding pairs, Cantrell noted. "For us, that's a compelling reason to say, 'OK, let's make sure we have exhausted all the options,'" he said.

In his email, Martorello said WDFW was continuing to help producers protect livestock with range riders.

WDFW describes the ground as rugged, with steep canyons, brushy draws and forested areas.

The next step described by Martorello falls short of measures WDFW eventually took in 2012 and 2014 to stop other packs in Stevens County from attacking cattle and sheep.

Most recently, WDFW contracted last September with the USDA Wildlife Services to shoot a wolf in the Huckleberry pack.

# Cranberry harvest hinges on fall rain

For now, berries are enjoying the sun

By DON JENKINS  
Capital Press

LONG BEACH, Wash. — A cranberry crop ripening in the sun could be Washington's best in years, but growers are anxious for rain to resume before bogs need to be flooded for the harvest.

"It'll be a major concern by the middle of September," Long Beach Peninsula cranberry farmer Steve Gray said. "There better be a rain."

Cranberries illustrate that there's an upside and downside to the unusually hot and dry weather this summer in Western Washington.

Clouds usually hold yields along Washington's southwest coast below other cranberry producing states, such as Wisconsin, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Oregon.

Washington's cranberry bogs in 2014 yielded 975 pounds per acre, while Wisconsin yielded 2,395 pounds, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Oregon's harvest average 1,628 pounds per acre.

Washington State University research scientist Kim Patten, stationed in Long Beach, called recent harvests "embarrassingly low."

This year, however, Washington cranberries were set up for high yields by an excellent pollination season as bees were active during a warm and dry late spring and early summer, Patten said.

"This will be the best year, theoretically, we'll have in my



Don Jenkins/Capital Press

Washington State University research scientist Kim Patten stands July 28 in a cranberry field tinged reddish-brown by the heat at the WSU cranberry research center in Long Beach.

Cranberry growers hope fall rains will supply enough water to flood bogs for the harvest.

lifetime," he said "If we could get weather like this every year, we wouldn't give Wisconsin a run for their money, but at least we could make a living."

The downside, so far, has been the potential for heat damage. At WSU's cranberry research bogs, an irrigation valve malfunctioned on a hot day, and some vines died, turning a reddish-brown in an otherwise green field.

"You see a lot of heat-stress damage out there (on peninsula bogs). Not every farm, but more than I'd like to see," Patten said.

A bigger concern is how much rain the region will receive by the time the harvest begins in late September.

# Outlook murky for port productivity proposals

Key provision left out of pending federal legislation

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
Capital Press

Key port productivity language has been removed from legislation pending before Congress, casting doubt on the outlook for other bills intended to prevent shipping slowdowns.

Initially proposed as the standalone "Port Transparency Bill" — S. 1298 — the legislation was recently folded into a broader transportation funding package the Senate is expected to vote on imminently.

Under the original language, the bill would have required ports to submit monthly productivity reports during labor negotiations between terminal operators and the longshoremen's union.

The goal was to document whether longshoremen were engaging in work slowdowns, as they were accused of doing during recent labor talks on the West Coast.



Elaine Thompson/Associated Press

Loaded container trucks line up at a gate at the Port of Seattle in this file photo from on Feb. 17. Port productivity language was removed from legislation pending before Congress, casting doubt on the outlook for other bills intended to prevent shipping slowdowns.

Agricultural shippers reported sustaining millions of dollars in losses due to port congestion, which they blamed in part on the longshoremen's alleged tactics.

While other aspects of the Port Transparency Bill were included in the latest version of the transportation funding legislation, provisions requiring monthly reports during labor negotiations were left out.

Two more stringent bills geared toward preventing port slowdowns have also been proposed in Congress, but the failure of the productivity tracking

proposal raises questions about their chances of success.

"If the most modest of the three bills encountered such opposition, can these bills pass?" asked Peter Friedmann, executive director of the Agricultural Transportation Coalition, which represents farm exporters.

Another bill introduced in the Senate, the Preventing Labor Union Slowdowns Act — S. 1630 — would prohibit slowdowns under the National Labor Relations Act.

The third bill, the Protecting

Orderly and Responsible Transit Shipments Act — S. 1519 — would give state governors the authority under the Taft-Hartley Act to order unions back to work in the event of a slowdown or strike, if the U.S. president doesn't take action.

These proposals face a tough road ahead, but the National Retail Federation and other groups that depend on ports will continue pushing for reform, said Jonathan Gold, vice president of supply chain and customs policy for the organization.

"We think something needs to change when it comes to these labor negotiations," he said. "These issues are not going away on the congestion."

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union pointed out that it was joined by the U.S. Maritime Alliance, which represents East Coast terminal operators, and U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez in objecting to the proposals.

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