

Wolf draft plan does not allow a general hunting season

WOLF from Page 1

Oregon classifies wolves as a "special status game animal." The draft plan allows ODFW to authorize hunters and trappers to kill wolves in two specific "controlled take" situations: Chronic livestock depredation in a localized area, and declines in wild ungulate populations, principally deer and elk. The draft plan does not allow a general hunting season, a prohibition that would hold for five years after the plan is adopted.

"I can't predict what will happen to wolf management years and years out, but during this planning cycle, absolutely not," Morgan said of a possible sport hunting season on wolves.

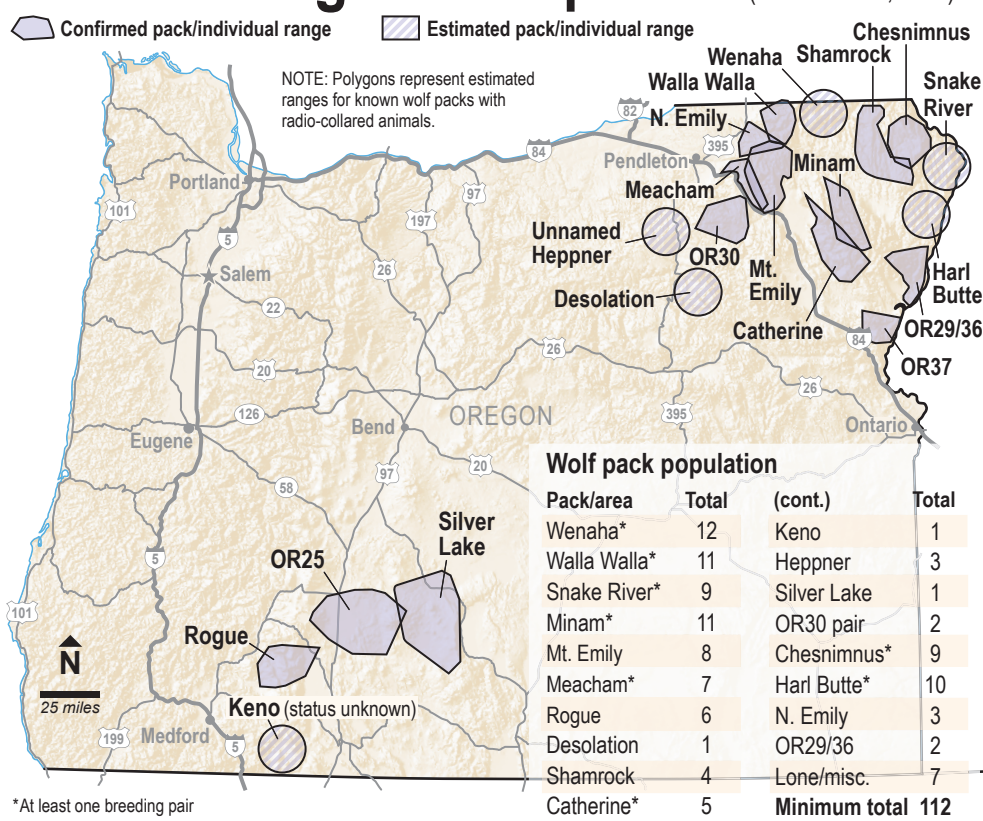
Livestock producers and wildlife activists don't like aspects of the draft plan.

The Oregon Farm Bureau and Oregon Cattlemen's Association said it makes it harder for ranchers to protect their animals because it increases the number of confirmed attacks required before allowing lethal control of wolves.

The draft plan requires three confirmed depredations or one confirmed and four "probable" attacks within a 12 month period. The previous standard was two confirmed depredations or one confirmed and three attempted attacks, with no time period set.

The groups also believe ODFW should continue collaring wolves, and should set a population cap for wolves in Oregon. Without a bench-

Known Oregon wolf packs (As of Dec. 31, 2016)



Source: Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Alan Kenaga/Capital Press

mark, "we will not be able to tell when wolves have reached their natural carrying capacity" in the state, the Farm Bureau said in a statement.

Cattlemen also want local biologists to make the call on lethal control of wolves, not department administrators in Salem. Todd Nash, the association's wolf policy chair, said ranchers' views aren't reflected in the draft plan.

"It doesn't look like we were even in the room, and that's really disappointing," he said.

Some activists, however,

believe ODFW is moving too quickly to relax conservation safeguards, including the decision in 2015 to take wolves off the state endangered species list. Among other things, they point to the annual wolf count figures released this past week as proof the population is fragile. The minimum count of 112 wolves at the end of 2016 was only two more than in 2015, after years of sharp growth. Even ODFW described the population gain as "weak."

The department said a

combination of factors probably contributed to the modest increase. At least seven wolves were killed in 2016, including four members of the Imnaha Pack shot by ODFW for repeated livestock attacks. Blood samples taken from captured wolves indicated many animals were exposed to recent or severe parvovirus infections, which can take a toll on pups. Finally, bad winter weather hampered efforts to count wolves. Wildlife officials stress the annual population figure is

a minimum number, and believe the state has considerably more wolves.

Nonetheless, Nick Cady, legal director for the Eugene-based group Cascadia Wildlands, said wolves aren't the "exponentially growing and undefeatable species" that opponents sometimes describe.

"One hard winter and there's no growth," he said.

Cady said wolf recovery faces numerous hurdles. Anti-predator bills pop up in the Legislature on a regular basis and ODFW is deferential to hunting interests that provide budget money through license sales, he said. The state appears headed to a wolf management approach that allows hunting while doing "basic level monitoring so they don't go extinct, which I think wolves are not ready for."

Cascadia Wildlands opposes killing wolves if deer and elk populations drop. Cady said proper habitat is a greater factor in ungulate populations than wolves. The group also opposes draft plan provisions that allow USDA Wildlife Services to conduct livestock depredation investigations. Cady said the agency is too quick to blame wolves for every attack.

Wildlife Services came under intense criticism this spring when it killed an Oregon wolf with an M-44 cyanide poison trap set to kill coyotes. Soon after, a dog in Idaho died and a teenage boy was injured when they

encountered an M-44. Wildlife Service subsequently announced it would not use the devices in six Eastern Oregon counties where the majority of the state's wolves live.

"Given their track record, they shouldn't be involved in predator management in Oregon in any capacity," Cady said.

Past wolf hearings have become displays of the state's urban-rural divide. Wildlife activists from Portland and Eugene, and from out of state, tend to celebrate the presence of wolves restored to the landscape. Cattle ranchers and other rural residents tend to testify about the expense of defensive measures and the grisly results of livestock attacks.

As the draft wolf plan authors put it, "people with the most positive attitudes about wolves have been those with the least experience with them. People who live in areas with wolves have more negative attitudes toward wolves than the general public, and negative attitudes are further amplified by wolf predation of livestock."

"In Oregon, it is expected that an increasing and expanding population of wolves will result in more, not less, conflict in the future," the plan concludes.

The plan says the impact of wolves on deer and elk is mixed, and is complicated by the presence and feeding habits of cougars, bears, coyotes and bobcats.

PROUD TO SUPPORT Members & Families of FFA

Albany - Eugene - Roseburg - Woodburn - Cornelius - Oregon City - Gresham - The Dalles
White City - Redmond - Klamath Falls, OR Yakima - East Wenatchee - Auburn - Mount Vernon, WA

www.CoastalFarm.com



BUSY 2017 FOR WASHINGTON FFA HIGHLIGHTED BY MANY EVENTS

State leadership conference participants at Grand Mound, Wash.

It's been a busy winter and spring for Washington's FFA members and will culminate in the upcoming 87th State FFA Convention May 11-13 in Pullman. The statewide organization will host 3,300-plus members, advisors, parents and guests again this year.

Earlier this year the Washington FFA had its "Farmers & Ranchers — Growing Leaders" license plate kickoff at the Governor's Mansion in Olympia. The event featured a live and silent auction, as well as remarks from Rep. Brad Klippert, the sponsor of the bill; Chris Reydal, state superintendent of public instruction; and Gov. Jay Inslee. More than 30 elected officials, as well as about 170 other supporters, attended the event.

Washington FFA was also recognized through resolutions on the floor of both the House and Senate as well as a proclamation by Gov. Inslee.

Other highlights were the 212° and 360° Leadership Conferences. These conferences are an activity of the National FFA Organization made possible by title sponsor Syngenta. Some 300 Washington FFA members from 34 FFA chapters attended the event Feb. 11-12 in Grand Mound, Wash.

212° — the temperature at which water boils — focuses on taking students to the boiling point of leadership. At 211° water is extremely hot, but just one more degree gets us to the next level. The two-day 212° Leadership Conference is focused on student development and helps FFA members become aware of their passions and virtues. FFA members attended sessions on discovering their passions, making positive decisions, setting goals and taking steps towards self-improvement.

360° takes students full circle in terms of chapter leadership. The two-day 360° conference is focused on the importance of vision and how to become a visionary leader. Students spent their time in sessions understanding the importance of vision, conducting a chapter needs assessment, crafting a vision plan for their local FFA chapter and developing a strategy to implement their vision.

Gov. Jay Inslee introduces the new FFA license plate.

THIS MOMENT

87th WASHINGTON FFA CONVENTION & EXPO

The state convention will be May 11-13 in Pullman, Wash.

This school year, more than 8,000 students across the nation participated in a 212° or 360° Leadership Conference. The National FFA Organization provides leadership, personal growth and career success training through agricultural education to 649,355 student members who belong to one of 7,859 local FFA chapters throughout the U.S., Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

www.riverbrooktrucking.com

- Local & Nationwide
- Farm Equipment
- Heavy Equipment

888-393-1819

12333 Silver Falls Hwy SE
Aumsville, OR 97325
Phone: (503) 769-2205

Proud Sponsor of FFA

THE TRACTOR STORE

(541) 342-5464

5450 W. 11th, Eugene, OR

503-873-6498

877-FOR-IOKA

www.iokamarketing.com
Silverton, Oregon

Proud Supporter of FFA

www.stutzman-environmental.com

P.O. Box 307 • Canby, OR 97013

888-877-7665

Feed Store Quality

Farmgate Prices

541-668-7658

By Fox Hollow Ranch
HighDesertHay.com

Learning to do, Doing to Learn Earning to Live, Living to Serve.