

ODFW Commission begins review of Oregon's wolf management plan

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

Oregon's wolf management plan is up for public review as the ODFW Commission once again attempts to balance the restoration of an apex predator with the havoc they can cause in rural areas.

The commission will take comments on a draft conservation and management plan during an April 21 meeting in Klamath Falls, and will repeat the process May 19 in Portland. The commission eventually will adopt a five-year management plan; no date is set yet.

Russ Morgan, ODFW's wolf program manager, said the draft management plan builds on what wildlife biologists have learned over the years. When the first management plan was adopted in 2005, there were no documented wolves in Oregon. The first pups were discovered in 2008, and by the end of 2011 there were 29 confirmed wolves in Oregon. The state documented 64 wolves at the end of 2013, and a minimum of 112 by the end of 2016, including 11 packs and eight breeding pairs.

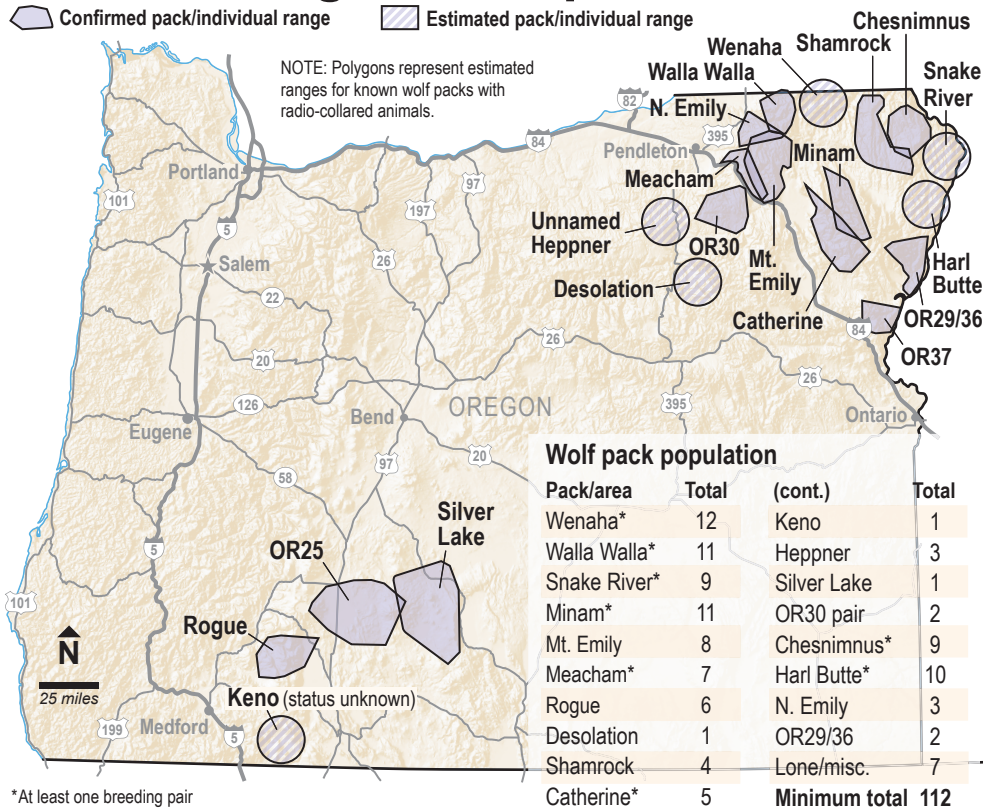
Morgan said the plan couples state data with "tons of research" that's been done on wolves in Oregon and elsewhere over the years.

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.

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



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 benchmark, "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 asso-

ciation'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."

Portland 'open for business' on self-driving vehicles

By ELLIOT NJUS
The Oregonian/OregonLive

PORTLAND — Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler declared the city "open for business" to companies developing autonomous vehicles.

Wheeler and Transportation Commissioner Dan Saltzman directed the Transportation Bureau to draft policies for autonomous vehicles that would give developers a path to apply for permits to test them within the city, including on open, public roads.

Wheeler, speaking before the Portland Business Alliance, said the framework would create a "fair and level playing field" for autonomous vehicle companies.

"We can't simply dismiss the idea that autonomous vehicles are going to be a big part of our transportation system," Wheeler said. "Instead of waiting for this new technology to come here and have us confront it, the responsible thing to do is to prepare for this future."

He said getting ahead of the issue would help Portland shape the technology to suit the needs of the city and its residents.

Wheeler said companies wishing to test their vehicles in Portland, whether on closed courses or on public roads, would have to demonstrate that the vehicles are safe. Transportation Bureau staff said they likely would hew closely to guidelines released last year by the federal National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Leah Treat, the Transportation Bureau director, said the city would aim to craft policies that would reduce congestion, vehicle-miles traveled and pollution, largely by prioritizing shared fleets over privately owned vehicles.

"If we simply replace all of the cars on the road with driverless cars, we're not

going to be any better off today," she said.

Wheeler has previously expressed enthusiasm for embracing self-driving vehicles. He said in a March City Council meeting that he would like to see the city conduct a pilot focused on autonomous vehicles.

"We're all warming up for a race, but we don't know what the race is yet," he said at the earlier meeting. "We don't know what the trajectory of autonomous or linked vehicles will be, and we don't have a clear understanding on what that means in terms of infrastructure and policy. But we know it's coming."

In his former role as deputy director for the Transportation Bureau, Wheeler chief of staff Maurice Henderson coordinated the city's bid to win the U.S. Department of Transportation's Smart City Challenge, a competition for \$50 million to implement technologies that include autonomous and wirelessly connected vehicles. Columbus, Ohio, eventually won the competition.

Others on the City Council are skeptical. During the same council meeting, Commissioner Amanda Fritz questioned whether the city should embrace self-driving cars.

"I think we need to take a step back," she said. "I'm concerned about a future where people go from morning to night not talking to anybody. You call yourself an autonomous vehicle, you go by yourself to pick up the groceries that have been collected for you. ... Is this something that we want?"

Autonomous vehicles are already on the streets in some states that have explicitly legalized testing.

Legacy carmakers are making major pushes into self-driving technology, including testing on contained courses and road tests.

Corrections

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

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333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed major holidays

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East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday, Monday and Dec. 25, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Copyright © 2017, EO Media Group

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Single copy price:

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Couple of thunderstorms	Partly sunny	A stray afternoon shower	Mostly cloudy, a shower; cooler	Cloudy with spotty showers

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

58°	37°	61°	42°	69°	46°	60°	41°	55°	43°
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HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

64°	40°	67°	41°	69°	48°	66°	44°	60°	45°
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PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE

HIGH LOW

Yesterday 65° 36°

Normals 66° 40°

Records 88° (1934) 23° (1966)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"

Month to date 1.10"

Normal month to date 0.76"

Year to date 0.37"

Last year to date 4.15"

Normal year to date 4.72"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE

HIGH LOW

Yesterday 68° 36°

Normals 66° 40°

Records 90° (1934) 24° (1982)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace

Month to date 0.50"

Normal month to date 0.50"

Year to date 5.43"

Last year to date 2.98"

Normal year to date 3.61"

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 6:01 a.m.

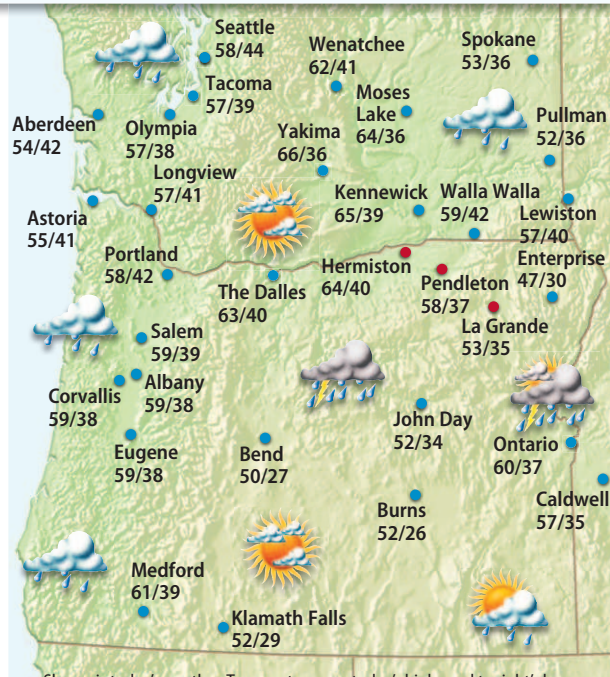
Sunset tonight 7:48 p.m.

Moonrise today 3:03 a.m.

Moonset today 1:15 p.m.

New First Full Last

Apr 26 May 2 May 10 May 18



REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: A couple of showers today; only during the morning in the south.

Eastern and Central Oregon: A shower and storm today; a storm in the south and upper Treasure Valley. Some sun near the Cascades.

Western Washington: Mostly cloudy today with a passing shower or two. Partly cloudy tonight.

Eastern Washington: Mostly cloudy today; a couple of showers.

Cascades: Showers around today; however, a little snow in the south.

Northern California: Partly sunny today; a snow shower in the interior mountains in the morning.

REGIONAL CITIES

Today Fri.

Hi Lo W Hi Lo W

Astoria 55 41 sh 66 50 pc

Baker City 52 29 t 59 32 pc

Bend 50 27 pc 58 37 s

Brookings 56 43 pc 63 48 s

Burns 52 26 c 57 36 s

Enterprise 47 30 sh 55 32 pc

Eugene 59 38 sh 68 45 pc

Heppner 54 33 sh 61 40 s

Hermiston 64 40 pc 67 41 s

John Day 52 34 t 60 42 s

Klamath Falls 52 29 pc 63 37 s

La Grande 53 35 t 61 38 pc

Meacham 50 32 t 58 35 pc

Medford 61 39 pc 73 47 s

Newport 53 41 sh 64 49 pc

North Bend 57 43 sh 68 50 pc

Ontario 60 37 c 64 38 pc

Pasco 65 38 pc 67 40 pc

Pendleton 58 37 t 61 42 pc

Portland 58 42 sh 70 50 pc

Redmond 54 26 pc 62 36 s

Salem 59 39 sh 69 47 pc

Spokane 53 36 sh 57 38 pc

Ukiah 49 30 t 58 35 s

Vancouver 58 41 sh 68 51 pc

Walla Walla 59 42 t 65 45 pc

Yakima 66 36 sh 67 41 s

WORLD CITIES

Today Fri.

Hi Lo W Hi Lo W

Beijing 72 47 c 72 41 s

Hong Kong 86 76 t 84 67 t

Jerusalem 75 56 s 84 62 s

London 58 46 c 64 46 pc

Mexico City 75 50 pc 76 51 pc

Moscow 38 23 pc 43 32 c

Paris 55 34 pc 62 45 s

Rome 61 40 pc 62 39 s

Seoul 62 43 pc 65 43 pc

Sydney 75 60 pc 74 63 c

Tokyo 65 55 pc 65 56 pc

WINDS

(in mph) Today FRI

Boardman W 10-20 NE 4-8

Pendleton W 10-20 N 4-8

UV INDEX TODAY

0 2 4 5 3 1

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.

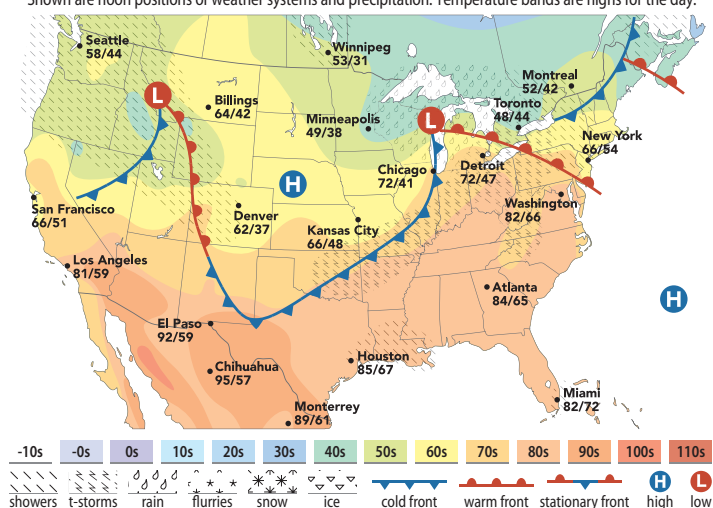
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 96° in Pecos, Texas Low 18° in Plush, Ore.

NATIONAL CITIES

Today Fri.

Hi Lo W Hi Lo W

Albuquerque 78 47 pc 71 41 s

Atlanta 84 65 s 86 64 pc

Atlantic City 68 57 c 71 54 t

Baltimore 80 60 pc 81 53 pc

Billings 64 42 pc 51 39 sh

Birmingham 88 65 s 88 65 pc

Boise 55 36 c 61 40 pc

Boston 59 46 c 51 45 r

Charleston, SC 83 64 pc 86 66 s

Chicago, WV 82 60 pc 71 48 r

Chicago 72 41 sh 57 41 pc

Cleveland 78 51 t 59 44 pc

Dallas 83 68 c 84 54 pc

Denver 62 37 sh 48 32 r

Detroit 72 47 t 58 41 pc

El Paso 92 59 s 90 56 s

Fairbanks 42 18 s 46 23 s

Fargo 55 37 r 62 37 pc

Honolulu 84 71 sh 83 72 r

Houston 85 67 pc 86 69 pc

Indianapolis 78 49 t 62 44 c

Jacksonville 84 57 s 88 60 s

Kansas City 66 48 c 58 43 s