

Wolves prove resilient, but new proposal could curtail expansion

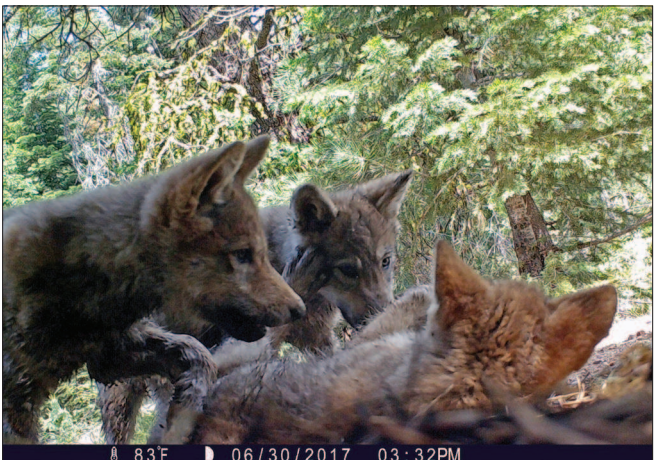
By **MATTHEW BROWN**
AND JOHN FLESHER
Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. — A proposal to strip gray wolves of their remaining federal protections could curtail their rapid expansion across vast swaths of the U.S. West and Great Lakes, yet the predators already are proving to be resilient in states where hunting and trapping occur.

Thursday’s Interior Department proposal to remove threatened and endangered species protections for wolves would end a decades-long restoration effort that saw a remarkable turnaround for an animal once nearly exterminated across the Lower 48 states. Now more than 6,000 gray wolves live in portions of nine states.

Authority over wolves would revert to state wildlife agencies with no obligation to maintain current numbers. Critics say that amounts to a death sentence for thousands of the animals, shrinking well-established populations and preventing wanderers from carving out new territory.

The track record suggests otherwise in parts of the



This June 30, 2017, remote camera image released by the U.S. Forest Service shows a female gray wolf and her mate with a pup born in 2017 in the wilds of Lassen National Forest in Northern California.

Northern Rockies, where wolf numbers have not noticeably flagged in the face of aggressive hunting and trapping.

When legal wolf harvests began in Montana and Idaho in 2009, wildlife advocates and some scientists argued their numbers would plummet.

Hunters and trappers have since killed almost 4,400 wolves in the two states, according to data from state wildlife agencies obtained by The Associated Press. About 1,500 more were killed by government wildlife agents

and property owners following attacks on livestock and similar conflicts.

But wolves are such prolific breeders that after each hunting season, their numbers bounced back the next spring. That continued even as wildlife regulators loosened trapping restrictions and allowed individual hunters and trappers to harvest multiple animals.

The wolf populations for the two states hovered at around 1,700 animals combined from 2009 through the beginning of 2016, the most

recent year with figures from both states.

“We’re almost a decade into hunting and trapping and we still have a population that is robust and well distributed. It can be done well,” said Bob Inman, a biologist with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Wildlife researcher Scott Creel at Montana State University said his examination of population data suggests sustained high harvest rates are pushing wolves near a “tipping point” that would drive the species into decline. State officials said they see no cause for concern and expect the population size to fluctuate.

Montana’s wolf numbers dipped from its 2013 peak over the last several years before increasing in 2017, the data show.

Meanwhile, packs from the Northern Rockies have spread into neighboring Oregon and Washington, where they had been absent for decades. A small number have also taken up residence in California.

Collette Adkins, a Minnesota-based senior attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity, acknowledged dropping federal protections would not drive wolves to extinction, despite earlier saying the proposal “was a death sentence for gray wolves across the country.”

But she said their recovery would “come to a screeching halt” as hunting and trapping are allowed in more states. That would put the species in a tenuous position in the Pacific Northwest and likely rule out its return to historic ranges, such as Colorado’s southern Rockies and the Adirondacks in the Northeast, she said.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife officials say their goal was to prevent extinction, not restore wolves everywhere they once roamed. State officials say even without federal protection, wolves won’t return to their imperiled status of the early 20th century because modern hunting regulations focus on managing animals, not exterminating them.

Oregon governor welcomes investigation into day care death

By **SARAH ZIMMERMAN**
Associated Press

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown said Thursday she would welcome an independent investigation of a baby’s death at an Oregon day care facility, responding to allegations from Republicans that the governor covered up the incident to save political face during her re-election campaign.

Republicans say Brown purposefully hid the fact that an infant died at a Lane County site that was previously cited for violating safety rules.

The death, which occurred in August, was only made public last week after an investigation by *The Oregonian*/Oregon Live.

The state’s Early Learning Division is responsible for reporting deaths at licensed child care centers in a timely manner under federal requirements.

Brown confirmed that she was informed about the death when it occurred. Her office said in an email that the Early Learning Division did not post the death because it was subject to an ongoing investigation, which is the agency’s current practice.

Brown, who oversees the Early Learning Division, acknowledged flaws within the office, specifically with its Child Care Safety Portal, which is used to share complaints against licensed child care facilities.

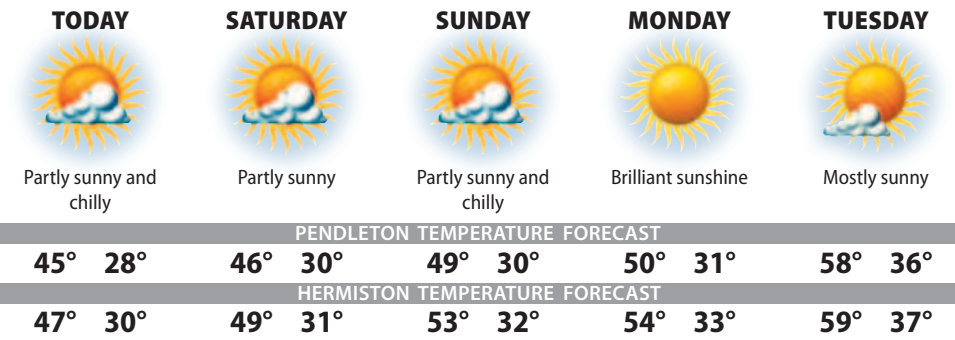
Brown added that her office is working to make sure that agencies are doing a better job and ensure that regulations are stronger.

House Republican Leader Rep. Carl Wilson called for the Oregon Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney’s Office to open a formal investigation into the death of the child.

“Thousands of young parents entrust the care of their children to day care providers, expecting their infants, toddlers and preschoolers to be in good hands at state-regulated centers,” said Wilson, a Grants Pass Republican. “Withholding this kind of information is completely unacceptable.”

Brown said she would be fine with an investigation and denied the incident was part of a political cover-up. She added that her office is responding to a trove of public records requests surrounding the death.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



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.

St. Anthony Provider Spotlight

JD Ward, DO. OB/GYN is now accepting new patients.

Obstetrics and Gynecology

Education: Boise State University, Western University of Health Science

Board Certification: Board Certified American, Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Insurance Accepted: Most major insurances, Medicare, Medicaid

Special Services: Obstetrics

CHI St. Anthony Hospital

3001 St. Anthony Way Pendleton, OR 97801

JD Ward, DO. OB/GYN

Call for your appointment today 541.966.0535

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.SAHPENDLETON.ORG

EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed major holidays

EastOregonian.com

To subscribe, call 1-800-522-0255
or go online to EastOregonian.com
and click on 'Subscribe'

East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday,
Monday and postal holidays, 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 © 2019, EO Media Group

Subscriber services:

For mail delivery, online access, vacation stops
or delivery concerns call 1-800-522-0255 ext. 1

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	Local home delivery	Savings (cover price)
EZPay	\$13/month	60 percent
52 weeks	\$173.67	41 percent
26 weeks	\$91.86	38 percent
13 weeks	\$47.77	36 percent

*EZ Pay = one-year rate with a monthly credit
or debit card/check charge

Single copy price:
\$1.50 Tuesday through Saturday

Circulation Manager:
Bonny Tuller, 541-966-0828

ADVERTISING

Regional Publisher and Revenue Director:

• Christopher Rush
541-278-2669 • crush@eomediagroup.com

Advertising Services:

• Angela Treadwell
541-966-0827 • atreadwell@eastoregonian.com

• Grace Bubar
541-276-2214 • gbubar@eastoregonian.com

Multimedia Consultants:

• Jeanne Jewett
541-564-4531 • jjewett@eastoregonian.com

• Audra Workman
541-564-4538 • aworkman@eastoregonian.com

Business Office Coordinator

• Dayle Stinson
541-278-2670 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

Classified & Legal Advertising

1-800-962-2819 or 541-278-2678
classifieds@eastoregonian.com or legals@eastoregonian.com

NEWS

• To submit news tips and press releases:
call 541-966-0818 or email news@eastoregonian.com

• To submit community events, calendar items and Your EO News:
email community@eastoregonian.com or call Tammy Malgesini
at 541-564-4539 or Renee Struthers at 541-966-0818.

• To submit engagements, weddings and anniversaries:
email rstruthers@eastoregonian.com or visit eastoregonian.com/community/announcements

• To submit sports or outdoors information or tips:
541-966-0838 • sports@eastoregonian.com

Business Office Manager:

541-966-0822

COMMERCIAL PRINTING

Production Manager: Mike Jensen
541-215-0824 • mjensen@eastoregonian.com