

A RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE STATE OF WASHINGTON TO STOP THE KILLING OF WOLVES FOR THE SAKE OF PROTECTING LIVESTOCK

WHEREAS the gray wolf, also known as the timber wolf, had been almost driven to the point of extinction in the State of Washington as well as on a national basis by the middle of the Twentieth Century; and

WHEREAS the gray wolf's original range previously covered much of what is now known as the United States of America; and

WHEREAS the original population of gray wolves inhabited this range for centuries before the arrival of mankind; and

WHEREAS the gray wolf population in both Washington State as well as in many other areas of the United States as a result of total protection and much effort and expense have been recovering slowly in limited wildland areas of the state and country under the protection of the Federal Endangered Species Act and the active efforts of state and federal fish and wildlife managers; and

WHEREAS almost all of this recovery has been undertaken on historic wolf range on public wildlands owned by all of the people of the United States through the federal and state governments for their mutual use and enjoyment; and

WHEREAS the reintroduction of the gray wolf has had the public benefit of restoring the ecological balance to these areas to the overall benefit of forests and streams through control of deer and elk populations; and

WHEREAS certain livestock ranchers have obtained taxpayer subsidized grazing rights at very favorable rates on many of these wildlands for the purpose of commercial livestock operations; and

WHEREAS the comingling of grazing and gray wolf denning and hunting areas is a recipe for potential conflict of the species with the potential loss to the ranchers involved; and

WHEREAS due to the potential for incidental livestock losses the State of Washington has established a cash compensation award program that reimburses ranchers for any livestock losses due to gray wolf depredation activities; and

WHEREAS the state's Gray Wolf Recovery and Management Plan allows the State Director of Fish and Wildlife to authorize the lethal removal of selected animals in those areas east of the Cascade Mountain Range where the gray wolf recovery status has been reclassified from Endangered to Protected; and

WHEREAS while the gray wolf population of the State of Washington is currently estimated to be only in the neighborhood of 126 animals of which another 21 have been killed since 2012 and 12 in 2018 alone, including four entire packs known as

- the Profanity Peak Pack,
- the Togo Pack,
- the Old Profanity Peak Territory (OPT) Pack (7 wolves), and
- the Smackout Pack, and;

WHEREAS these gray wolves have been killed by Washington Fish and Wildlife hunters as a result of complaints about livestock losses due to gray wolf activity, primarily from a single rancher who by himself is responsible for at least 17 wolves being killed; and

WHEREAS while many ranchers are cooperating with Fish and Wildlife management on the use of non-lethal methods to discourage the taking of domestic livestock, this individual rancher continues to refuse state compensation while he aggressively lobbies Washington State Fish and Wildlife for increased wolf elimination; and

WHEREAS this same rancher has both refused to take the state livestock loss compensation and has continued to push for continued lethal removal of wolves a result of which has been that a second pack, the OPT (Old Profanity Peak Territory) Pack, that formed around the few survivors of the Profanity Peak Pack's elimination; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 45th District Democrats support a permanent cessation to the current practice of the State of Washington and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife of facilitating and participating in the lethal removal of gray wolves for the purpose of controlling depredation of commercial livestock herds that are grazing on public or private lands within the limits of the State of Washington.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 45th District Democrats call upon all members of the Washington State House and Senate to jointly eliminate all funding of lethal gray wolf removal activities by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife resulting from livestock depredation by gray wolves on public or private lands as soon as possible and that cash compensation for the loss of any livestock due to such activities by gray wolves be made mandatory and not optional on the part of individuals suffering any such loss.

ADOPTED BY THE 45TH DISTRICT DEMOCRATS AT A REGULAR GENERAL MEETING THEREOF ON THE 4TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2019.

45TH DISTRICT DEMOCRATS
David Williams, Chair

