



October 5, 2011

Governor Kitzhaber
160 State Capitol
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Dear Governor Kitzhaber,

On behalf of our thousands of members across Oregon, we are writing today to inform you of our intent to pursue a court challenge against the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) for their ongoing practice of killing Oregon's endangered gray wolves. The refusal of ODFW's leadership to modify these practices (or even respond to requests for meetings to discuss the issue) leaves wildlife conservation organizations with no alternative.

As you know, under Phase I of the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan, ODFW is required to emphasize non-lethal management techniques for avoiding conflict with livestock operations. The killing of endangered Oregon wolves is only to be used as a last resort. Indeed, while the plan states "...lethal control actions may be employed..." in response to livestock losses, nothing in the plan *requires* ODFW to kill endangered wolves.

Unfortunately, ODFW has established the practice of habitually killing wolves in response to demands by the livestock industry, particularly in the last 12 months. Under ODFW's management, the population of endangered gray wolves in Oregon has decreased from 21 to 14 (12, if the order to kill two of the remaining four wolves in the Imnaha Pack is carried out) in the last year. The most recent kill order, which came in response to intense political pressure from the livestock industry, has generated public outrage all across Oregon. Clearly, ODFW has lost its way in regards to its mission of wildlife conservation.

We do not take up this legal challenge lightly. We are well aware of the political pressure the livestock industry is applying to ODFW and the Oregon legislature, and their desire to further undermine both the Oregon wolf plan and wildlife protection laws. However, ODFW's current management practices appear to be geared more towards satisfying a handful of radical anti-wildlife organizations than in actually honoring their mission. Given the agency's unwillingness to even meet with conservationists, it appears legal action is the only tool the Oregon public has left to protect endangered gray wolves in the state.

Our organizations request that you direct ODFW to immediately suspend the kill order for the alpha male and yearling pup of the Imnaha Pack while this legal challenge works its way through the courts. We remain open to dialogue with ODFW, and with your staff, in regards to resolving this conflict.

Sincerely,

Josh Laughlin
Campaign Director
Cascadia Wildlands

Noah Greenwald
Endangered Species Program Director
Center for Biological Diversity

Steve Pedery
Conservation Director
Oregon Wild