

Agency: 477 Department of Fish and Wildlife
Decision Package Code/Title: AF Wolf Population Monitoring
Budget Period: 2011-13
Budget Level: PL - Performance Level

Recommendation Summary Text:

Wolves are re-colonizing Washington and WDFW has the primary responsibility for monitoring wolves in Washington. By radio-marking and tracking wolves, we will be able to help mitigate livestock damage by notifying livestock producers of wolf presence and implement pro-active, non-lethal management tools to minimize wolf-livestock conflicts. We will be able to determine when packs and territories become established and when we achieve recovery objectives for the species. WDFW requests authority to spend revenue from the endangered species license plate to monitor wolf population status and trends in Washington.

Fiscal Detail

Operating Expenditures	<u>FY 2012</u>	<u>FY 2013</u>	<u>Total</u>
104-1 State Wildlife Account-State	75,000	75,000	150,000
Total Cost	75,000	75,000	150,000
 Staffing	 <u>FY 2012</u>	 <u>FY 2013</u>	 <u>Annual Average</u>
FTEs	.8	.8	.8

Package Description:

WDFW has the primary responsibility for monitoring wolves in Washington. The Department is completing the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (Plan) which will serve as a guide to recover and manage wolves as they naturally disperse into the state and re-establish a sustainable breeding population. Gray wolves are a state-listed endangered species and are federally listed as endangered in the western 2/3 of the state. The delisting objective in the draft plan outlines that the state would need 15 successful breeding pairs for 3 consecutive years.

A comprehensive wolf population monitoring program is an essential part of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. Monitoring is expected to be most intense while the wolf population is listed and is necessary for us to understand wolf recovery and status, how wolves will disperse on the landscape, and how they will select and utilize habitat and prey resources.

The funding will be used to implement a program to monitor wolf population status and trends, including: monitor the locations of wolves and determine when packs and territories become established by capturing, radio marking, and tracking wolves; and determine demographic and population parameters of wolves. Gathering wolf population information specific to Washington will be important to confirm assumptions made in the Plan about home range size, habitat utilization, and prey selection using information primarily from adjacent states.

A comprehensive monitoring program will assist with understanding population status relative to the state recovery objective. In addition, by radio-marking and tracking wolves, we will also be able to notify adjacent private landowners of wolf presence and

implement pro-active, non-lethal management tools to minimize wolf-livestock interactions.

The implementation schedule is July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2014.

Name and Phone Number of Subject Matter Expert:
Rocky Beach, Wildlife Diversity Division Manager 360-902-2510

Narrative Justification and Impact Statement

What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?

The benefits are statewide, particularly for the eastern 2/3 of the state, from the Cascade Mountains east to the border with Idaho.

Performance Measure Detail

Activity: A040 Protect and Recover Threatened and Endangered Wildlife

Incremental Changes

No measures submitted for package

Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?

Goal 1: Conserve and protect native fish and wildlife.

Objective A:

Enhance conservation practices to improve protection and restoration of fish, wildlife and habitat.

Strategies

1. Promote compliance with natural resource laws.
4. Initiate new and enhance existing partnerships with conservation and other organizations to help conserve Washington's fish and wildlife.
5. Complete and implement the highest priority conservation actions.

Does this decision package provide essential support to one of the Governor's priorities?

This priority relates directly to Governor's priority of improving the quality of Washington's natural resources. The gray wolf is listed as an endangered species in Washington; monitoring and recovering this species would be a significant measure of success for this important indicator.

Does this decision package make key contributions to statewide results? Would it rate as a high priority in the Priorities of Government process?

The gray wolf is listed as endangered species in Washington; monitoring and recovering this species would be a significant measure of success for this important indicator.

This activity ranked 29 of 148 Activities in the 2011-13 POG Result Area "Protect Natural Resources and Cultural and Recreational Opportunities".

What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?

This decision package will reduce livestock conflicts and provide a viewable wildlife/ecotourism opportunity.

What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?

The Department explored alternatives of using existing staff resources to monitor re-colonizing wolves. Because of the broad geographic extent of areas that are being reoccupied by dispersing wolves, and the dedicated time it takes to trap and radio-collar wolves, it was not efficient or possible to utilize existing staff to achieve the desired success rates for monitoring newly establishing packs. It is expected that in 2012-13, Washington will see increased numbers of wolf packs become established in the northeastern, southeastern, and Cascades Mountains regions of the state.

What are the consequences of not funding this package?

This package would provide for an additional .6 FTE that would focus on monitoring re-colonizing wolves in the state. Without the funding package, the state would be more limited in the extent of monitoring newly establishing packs that could be conducted with existing staff resources. As a result, we would have fewer wolf packs that could be monitored to determine if we were achieving the recovery objectives for the species. Without radio-collars, it would be more difficult to address conflicts with livestock if they occur.

What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?

None.

What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?

None.

Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions

Revenue:

The revenue for the Orca license plate is collected by the Department of Licensing. The current fund balance for this account is sufficient to support this request.

Expenditures:

Salaries and Benefits:

.6 FTE at a level of F&W Bio 3 would focus on monitoring re-colonizing wolves in the state.

Goods and Services:

Standard costs are included for goods and services. In addition, includes additional field supplies necessary for program operations (radio telemetry equipment).

Travel:

Statewide travel for trapping and tracking wolves = \$7,000 / yr.

Infrastructure and support costs of 23.51% is included in goods and services totaling \$14,300 / yr. Administrative FTE's are included at 0.2/ yr.

Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?

All costs will be on going.

<u>Object Detail</u>	<u>FY 2012</u>	<u>FY 2013</u>	<u>Total</u>
A Salaries And Wages	33,300	33,300	66,600
B Employee Benefits	12,600	12,600	25,200
E Goods And Services	22,100	22,100	44,200

G	Travel	7,000	7,000	14,000
Total Objects		75,000	75,000	150,000