

## Summary

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**Meeting date:** December 11-12, 2015  
**Agenda item:** Meeting with Francine Madden – Briefing  
**Presenter(s):** Donny Martorello, Ph.D., Wolf Policy Lead  
Francine Madden, Human Wildlife Conflict Collaboration

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### **Background summary:**

Gray wolves have been recolonizing Washington State since 2008, when the first pack was discovered in north-central Washington. Presently, there are 17 known packs in Washington. With the presence of wolves, the Department has also experienced new management needs and challenges. The Fish and Wildlife Commission adopted the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan in December 2011 to help guide the Department through these management needs and challenges. The Plan identifies four goals:

- 1) Restore a self-sustaining wolf population across a significant portion of their range,
- 2) Manage wolf-livestock conflict in a way that minimizes livestock losses,
- 3) Maintain healthy and robust ungulate populations in a way that provides ample prey as well as harvest opportunities, and
- 4) Develop public understanding of the conservation and management needs of wolves, thereby promoting coexistence.

Since 2008, the Department has documented a reasonable level of progress toward each of the goals, with the exception of goal four - developing public understanding of wolf management and promoting coexistence. The social issues surrounding wolf conservation and management are the most challenging. As such, the Department initiated the Wolf Advisory Group, a nine-member citizen group, in 2012 to advise the Department on implementing the policies associated with the Plan. After operating for nearly two years with WAG, the Department continued to see a decrease in trust in WDFW by stakeholders and growing social-political tensions.

This level of social-political conflict is not unique to wolf management in Washington. Every state in the Great Lakes and North Rocky Mountains Distinct Population Segments has experienced (and continues to experience) similar social-political conflicts, manifesting in various state and federal bills, congressional actions, referendums, and litigation.

Recognizing the significance of the social-political conflict and the slow progress towards the fourth goal of the Plan by 2014, the Department reached out externally to the Human Wildlife Conflict Collaboration for expertise on transforming the social-political conflict in wildlife management. Francine Madden, with the Human-Wildlife Conflict Collaboration, will discuss the nature of deep rooted, complex, and dynamic conflict in conservation issues. She will share tools for analysis, explore the breadth and depth of stakeholder needs and values, and discuss the current process of transforming deep rooted conflict into opportunities for positive change.

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### **Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:**

N/A

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### **Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

N/A

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### **Action requested:**

N/A

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**Draft motion language:**

N/A

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**Justification for Commission action:**

N/A

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**Communications Plan:**

N/A