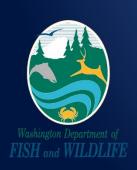
#### Agenda Item 11

#### **Wolf Conservation and Management**



Donny Martorello, Ph.D., Wolf Policy Lead, Wildlife Program

#### Outline

 Highlights on implementation of current wolf conservation and management plan

 Planning process for wolf conservation and management when wolves have successfully reached recovery objectives

### Legal Status



 Entire state listed as Endangered by WDFW

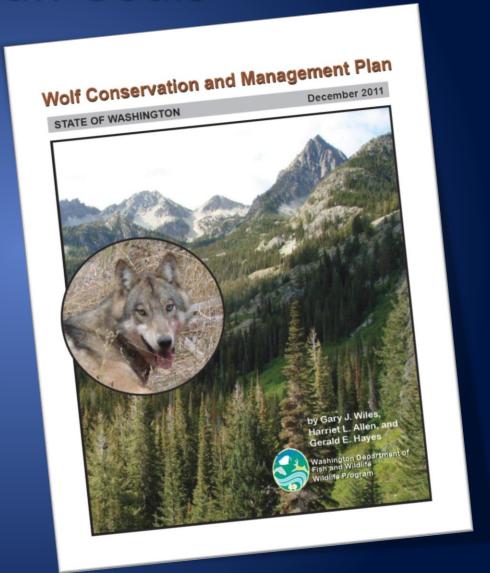
- Federally delisted in Eastern 1/3 WA in 2011
- Federally listed as Endangered in Western 2/3 WA

# Wolf Plan Development Process

- Initiated in 2007
- 17 citizen member Wolf Working Group
- Environmental Impact Statement
- 23 public meetings
- 65,000 comments
- Scientific peer review
- Blind peer review
- F&W Commission adopted in December 2011

### Wolf Plan Goals

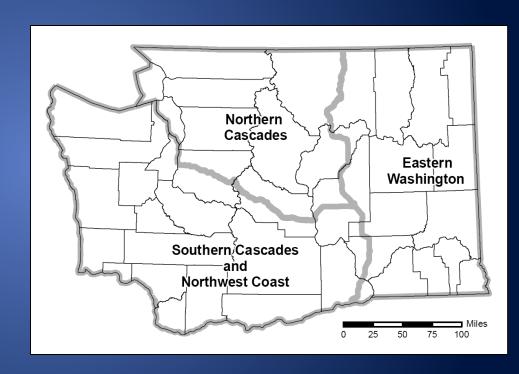
- Restore self-sustaining wolf populations
- Manage wolf-livestock conflicts
- Maintain healthy prey base
- Develop public understanding and promote coexistence



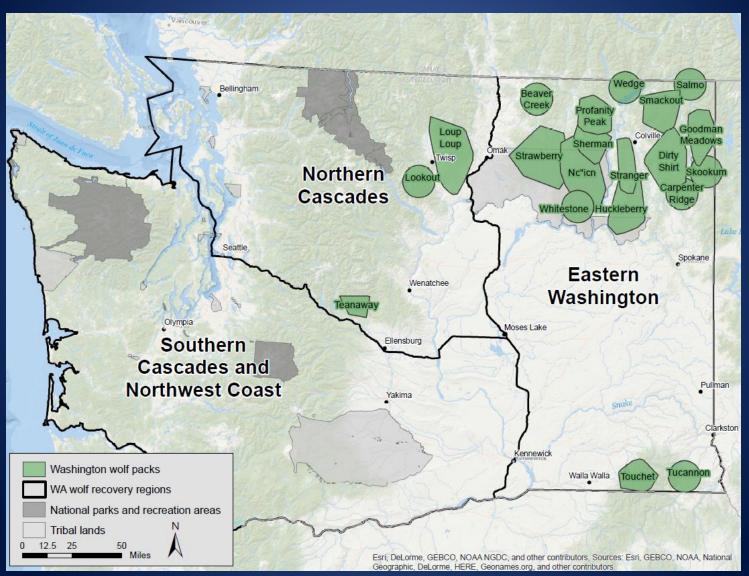
# Restore self-sustaining wolf populations

# Restore self-sustaining wolf populations Recovery Objectives

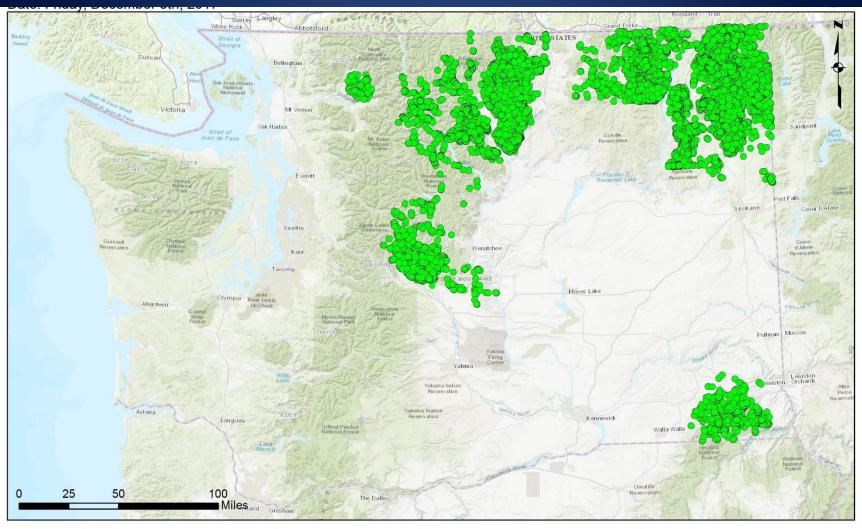
- Delist at 15 successful breeding pairs for 3 consecutive years
- Or 18 successful breeding pairs for 1 year
- Distributed among 3 recovery regions



# Washington's Known Wolf Packs As of December 31, 2016



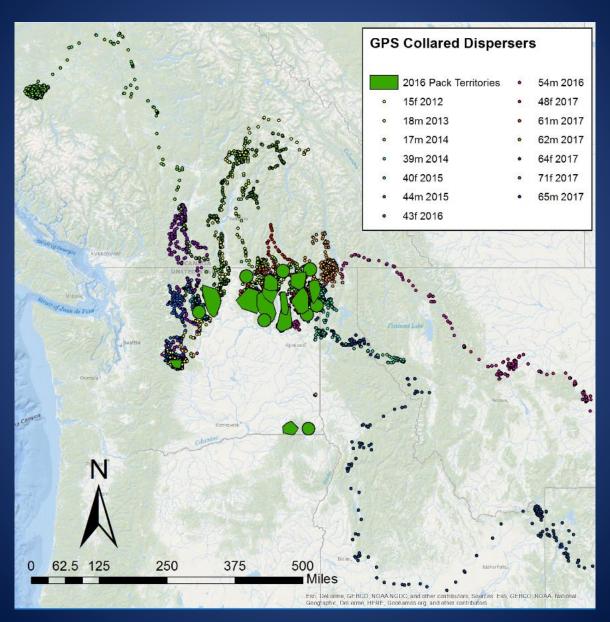
#### Locations of GPS collared wolves 2008-2017



Disclaimer: This map represents the most complete dataset currently available of wolf telemetry locations in Washington State. Locations outside of Washington's jursidiction (e.g., tribal lands) are not displayed. A coarse attempt was made to remove locations pre- and post-deployment that resulted in removing 1,051 locations (73,031 originally, 71,980 filtered).

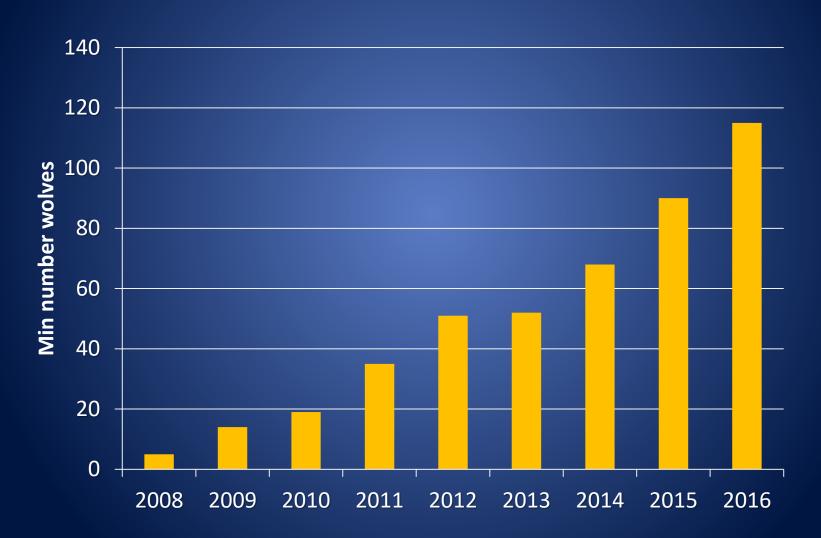
Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, Mapmylndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

#### Washington's Known Dispersals

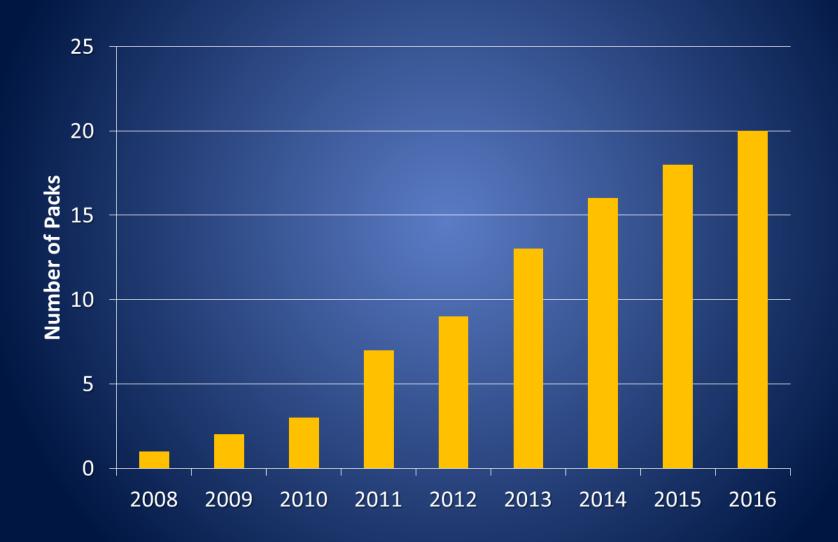


#### Trend in Minimum Number of Wolves

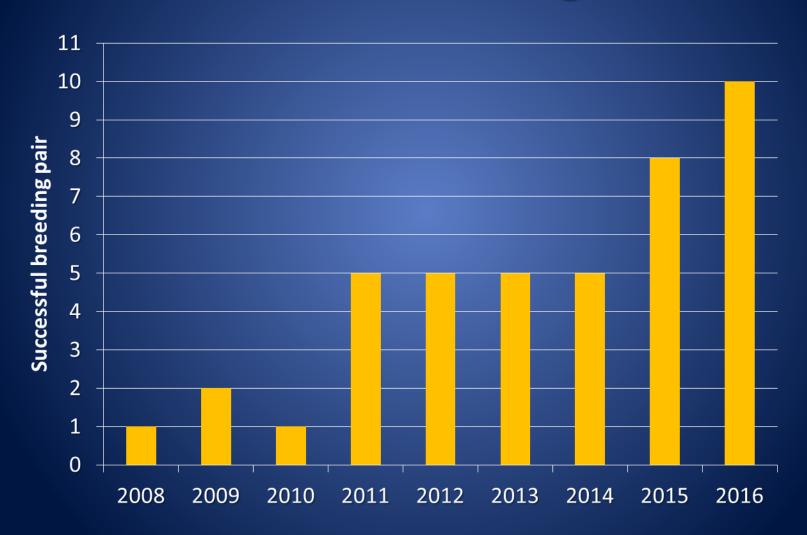
(~30% average annual growth rate)



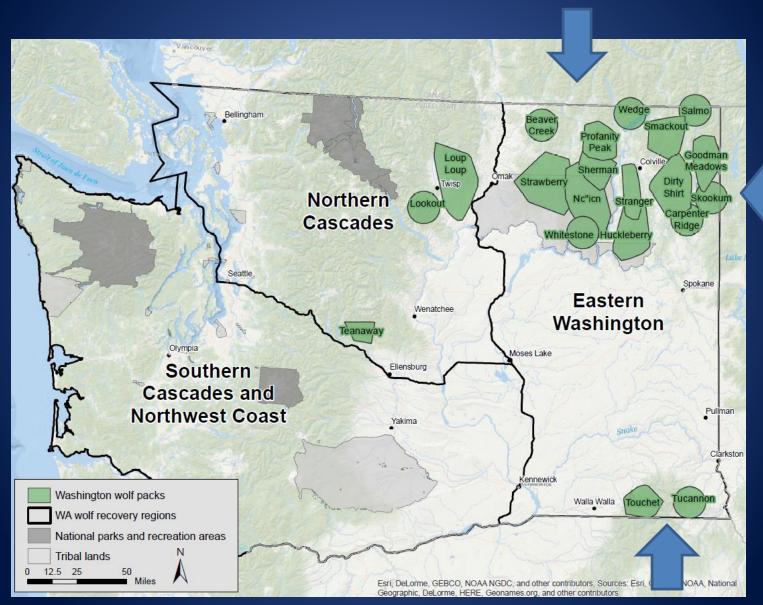
### Trend in Number of Wolf Packs



# Trend in Number of Successful Breeding Pairs

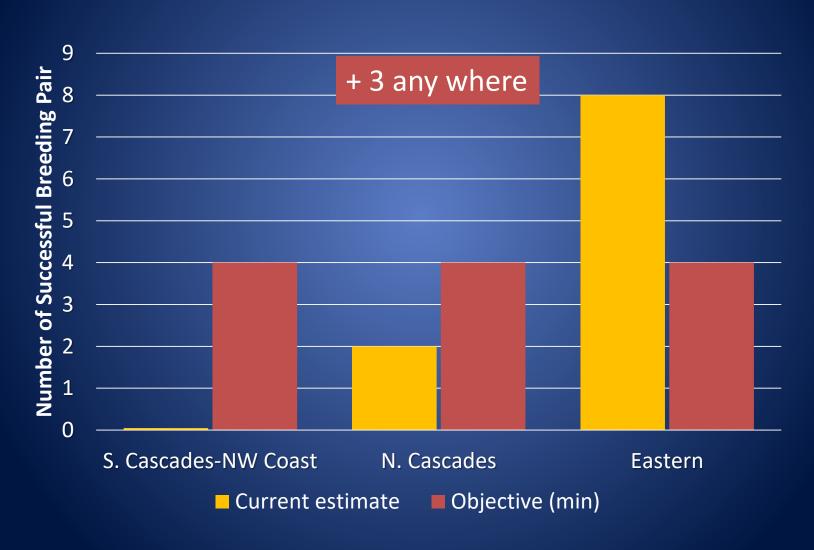


#### Recovery pattern – East to West



### Successful Breeding Pairs

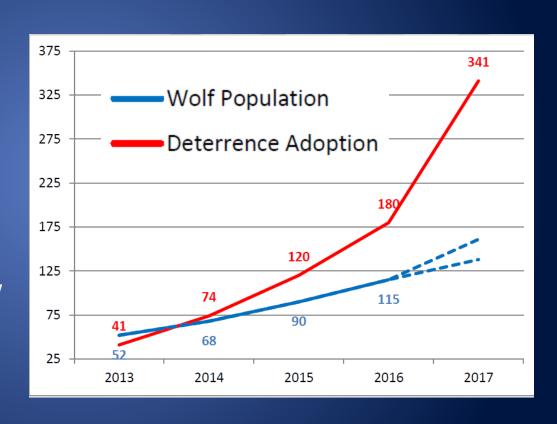
by Recovery Zone (as of Mar 2017)



# Manage Wolf-Livestock Conflict

# Manage Wolf-Livestock Conflict Use of proactive non-lethal deterrence measures

- Damage Prevention
   Cooperative Agreements
- Contracted range riders
- Informal (checklist of tools, collaboration, etc)
- Assistance while communities adjust to new large carnivore
- Community vitality and financial sustainability



# Manage Wolf-Livestock Conflict Compensation for livestock damages by wolves

- Direct injury or death
- Indirect
  - Greater than normal losses
  - Reduced pregnancy rates
  - Reduced weight gain
- Livestock Review Board
- \$101,291 paid in six years (does not represent all damages)



# Manage Wolf-Livestock Conflict Wolf-livestock interaction protocol

- Co-development with staff and citizen based Wolf Advisory Group
- Conflict transformation process
- Cohesion on issues
- Consistency and clarity for public

#### WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wolf-livestock interaction protocol Revision date June 1, 2017

This protocol was jointly developed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW or Department) and its Wolf Advisory Group to guide the Department's efforts to reduce conflicts between wolves and livestock. The Wolf Advisory Group has expressed a strong value to reducing the likelihood of the loss of both wolves and livestock from adverse interactions. The protocol prescribes a variety of proactive measures livestock producers can take to reduce the probability of wolf-livestock conflicts and establishes a framework for WDFW's response when conflicts between wolves and livestock do occur.

The protocol draws on a diversity of perspectives expressed by people throughout the state for protecting wildlife populations as a public resource and livestock. These values include achieving a sustained recovered wolf population, supporting rural ways of life, and maintaining livestock production as part of the state's cultural and economic heritage. This protocol also serves to increase the transparency and accountability of the Department's activities and management actions related to

Gray wolves are listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 in the Section 1. Background and purpose of protocol western two-thirds of Washington, but are federally delisted in the eastern-third of the state (Fig. 1). Under Washington State rule, gray wolves as endangered statewide. Under the Federal listing status, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the lead agency for managing wolves in the western twothirds of Washington, and WDFW has full management authority for wolves in the eastern third.



Figure 1. Federal classification of gray wolves in Washington State, 2017.

# Maintain Healthy Prey Base

#### Maintain Healthy Prey Base

Population objectives, management priorities, and monitoring

- Game management plan
- Elk herd plans
- Mule and white-tailed deer plans
- Game status and trend reports
- Game harvest reports



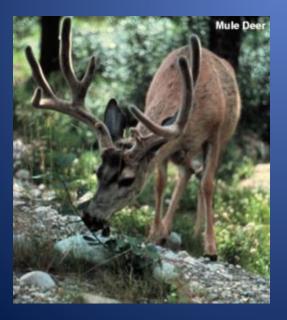
### Maintain Healthy Prey Base

#### Population assessments

- Annual surveys
- Ungulate status in Washington (2015)

Ungulate assessment

(2016)



#### Research studies

- Impacts of wolves on mule deer and white-tailed deer in northeastern WA (UW)
- Impacts of wolf recovery on the predator and prey community in NE Washington (UW)
- Cooperative predator-prey project (UW-WDFW)

# Develop Public Understanding and Promote Coexistence

### Develop Public Understanding and Promote Coexistence

- Wolf Internal Group (Why?)
- Wolf advisory group
- Interagency wolf committee
- Livestock review board
- Annual & monthly wolf reports
- Agency communications with public
- Website, online tools, and outreach materials
- Presentations to the public and small group meetings
- Collaboration with local government



### **Key Points**

- Continue implementing wolf plan
- Continue collaborative stakeholder processes
- Wolf population growth is expected to continue
- Modeling suggests may reach recovery objectives by 2021



Planning process for wolf conservation and management when wolves have successfully reached recovery objectives

#### **Desired Process**

- Engage wide and diverse cross section of Washingtonians
- Inclusive of diversity of perspectives, cultures, and world views
- Community involvement
- Sufficient resources and time for good process, yet timely when wolves successfully reach recovery objectives
- Integrated SEPA and conflict transformation processes

# Integrated Process

Post delisting
Wolf Conservation
and Management
Plan

#### **SEPA**

- Scoping
- Science review
- Draft alternatives
- Public input
- Finalize alternatives
- DEIS
- Public input
- FEIS

# **Conflict Transformation**

- Relationships based
- Inclusive & diverse
- Go slow to go fast
- Mutual learning
- Co-develop process
- Build it, own it
- Creative solutions
- Cohesion on issues

#### **Next Steps**

- Continued engagement with Fish and Wildlife Commission, WAG, and public
- Process considerations, design, desired outcomes
- Develop timeline
- Initiate integrated SEPA-Conflict Transformation process



#### Questions

#### Website

http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/gray\_wolf/

#### <u>Contact</u>

**Donny Martorello** 

Wolf Policy Lead

Donny.Martorello@dfw.wa.gov

(360) 902-2521 (office)

(360) 790-5682 (cell)