

JAY INSLEE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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September 4, 2020

Larry Carpenter, Chair
Fish and Wildlife Commission
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
PO Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504-3200

Dear Chair Carpenter:

On July 23, 2020, the Center for Biological Diversity appealed the Department of Fish and Wildlife's (DFW) decision to deny the Center's petition to amend WAC 220-440-040 and 220-440-080, relating to wolf management. Under RCW 34.05.330(3), the Governor may consider appeals from agency denials of petitions to amend existing administrative rules.

In their initial petition to amend DFW's rules and in their present appeal, the Center contends that DFW's current rules relating to wolf management fail to adequately prioritize non-lethal management of endangered wolves.

Pursuant to my authority in RCW 34.05.330(3)(b), I am directing that the agency initiate a new rulemaking relating to wolf management.

I acknowledge and appreciate the significant work that the Department and the Wolf Advisory Board have done to affirm of the importance of the livestock industry to the state, and to improve policies and outcomes in specific areas where there is chronic depredation and annual lethal removal.

However, based on experience in the Rocky Mountain states, the potential for future depredations and lethal control actions, under our existing framework, remains unacceptably high. We must move more quickly and decisively to institute practices that will avoid the repeated loss of wolves and livestock in our state.

While I cannot legally prescribe the specific policies that must be included in this new rule, I ask that DFW include clear and enforceable measures in the proposed rule to achieve the following management outcomes:

- Standardized definition and requirements for the use of range riders;
- Requirements for use of non-lethal deterrents most appropriate for specified situations (wolf population and range, size and location of livestock operation, terrain and habitat, history of depredation);

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- Action plans in areas of chronic depredation to end the need for annual lethal removal; and,
- Compliance measures where livestock operators do not implement the required non-lethal measures.

Given the significant work that has been done to date on this topic, I strongly believe new rules and policies could, and should, be adopted and in place prior to the grazing season next year.

Thank you for your work to preserve the health of Washington's endangered wolf population. I urge your continued leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee", with a stylized, cursive script.

Jay Inslee
Governor

Copy Furnished: Kelly Susewind, Director