



January 4, 2019

Governor Kate Brown
Office of the Governor
900 Court Street NE, Suite 254
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Re: Wolf Plan Stakeholder Process

CC: Nik Blosser, Jason Miner, Amira Streeter, Fish and Wildlife Commissioners

Dear Governor Brown,

On behalf of Cascadia Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, and Oregon Wild we are writing to express our opposition to the direction of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan stakeholder process and draft plan. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's current proposed resolutions to be reflected in the Plan update are not only weaker than previous drafts, but highlight the failure of this flawed stakeholder process to develop a plan that represents the values of Oregonians. After reviewing ODFW's latest draft, it is clear the agency's intention is to find ways to kill wolves faster, not prioritize conflict prevention through non-lethal measures. Barring a change in direction, our four organizations will be collectively and actively opposing the revised Plan as proposed by ODFW.

We believe that a sound stakeholder process – one that provides neutral oversight and guidance while encouraging meaningful discussion and collaborative brainstorming – would have provided an opportunity for a better outcome. Unfortunately, ODFW undermined this opportunity by rigidly controlling the process and leading us to a seemingly predetermined outcome while bouncing between participating as a stakeholder and controlling the facilitation process and direction. We made sincere recommendations to improve the Plan by increasing resources for proactive, effective methods to better protect livestock and the state's struggling wolf population. However, it has become abundantly clear that our good faith efforts to propose solutions and explore common ground in the stakeholder process have been for naught. Every amendment to the Plan we have suggested in this process has been rejected by ODFW. Therefore, we will be withdrawing from the facilitated stakeholder process.

The Wolf Plan review process began three years ago after ODFW prematurely removed state endangered species protections for wolves. From the outset, ODFW struggled to draft a plan that reflected the public's desire to appropriately balance the positive impacts of continued wolf recovery with mitigating the rare - but real - challenges to some livestock owners. The agency's increasingly controversial and unscientific draft proposals were opposed by all stakeholder groups. About a year ago, your office aided in the initiation of a new process so Oregonians would get the Plan they deserve - a plan based in science, one that is reflective of Oregon's conservation values, and one that prioritizes

using non-lethal measures as a way to reduce conflict. Ultimately, this approach would result in fewer dead livestock, fewer dead wolves, and less human conflict.

As has been the case for more than a decade, we participated in good faith – even while sharing our concern about this problematic ODFW-controlled process. We have been at the table for every stakeholder meeting, testified in front of the Fish and Wildlife Commission at each opportunity, engaged with independent scientists, developed and shared memorandums that detailed our position and recommended revisions, and finally, made serious attempts to negotiate with the other stakeholders and ODFW throughout this facilitated process. Unfortunately, your Department of Fish and Wildlife has again illustrated that they are unwilling to develop a plan that honors your expressed vision and the wishes of the Oregon people. It is evident that ODFW will disregard science under political pressure. Killing wolves should be at most an action of last resort. Sadly, this proposed plan stands as yet another example of the agency putting commercial interests ahead of Oregonians who value native wildlife.

Therefore, we are requesting that you communicate with ODFW leadership to craft a plan that aligns with the best available science and Oregon's values. More specifically, we ask that you communicate to ODFW that the \$1.17 million dollars you have allocated in your 2019-2021 budget for Wolf Plan implementation may not be used for killing wolves. Instead, over the next five years - the expected length of the new Wolf Plan – ODFW must focus on prioritizing meaningful, transparent, enforceable, and effective non-lethal measures and only allow wolves to be killed in active defense of livestock. With those measures in place and to mitigate concerns from the livestock industry, we ask that you direct 50% of the \$1.17 million to reform and drastically increase funds for an existing program that compensates livestock operators to fund non-lethal conflict prevention work and mitigate any potential economic impacts caused by wolves.

Oregonians deserve a science-based plan that leads to less conflict and killing. It wasn't that long ago, Oregon set a standard for the rest of the nation. Under previous provisions, Oregon's wolf population grew while livestock loss, wolf killing, and other conflict dramatically decreased. With your leadership it is an achievable vision. We look to you to get the Plan back on track.

Thank you. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Nick Cady
Cascadia Wildlands

Amaroq Weiss
Center for Biological Diversity

Suzanne Stone
Defenders of Wildlife

Sean Stevens
Oregon Wild