
HOUSE BILL 1258

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Representatives Kretz, Short, Manweller, and Schmick

Read first time 01/21/13. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to ensuring that all Washingtonians share in the
2 benefits of an expanding wolf population; adding a new section to
3 chapter 77.36 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the rich
6 habitat created by the land stewardship of Washington's private
7 landowners has created circumstances that allow the state to enjoy an
8 expanding gray wolf population. Unfortunately, however, this bounty
9 has been geographically limited to areas in eastern Washington and the
10 entire citizenship of the state has not been fully able to enjoy the
11 reestablishment of this majestic species.

12 (2) The legislature further finds that the department of fish and
13 wildlife can accelerate the pace by which all Washingtonians can enjoy
14 the ecological benefits of an intact food web with a healthy population
15 of apex predators by translocating gray wolves in areas of the state
16 where wolf numbers are plentiful to areas currently deprived of their
17 ecological contributions.

18 (3) The legislature further finds that an adult gray wolf needs a
19 minimum of fifty square miles to range on an annual basis; a size of

1 suitable habitat that can be provided in areas of the state west of the
2 crest of the Cascade mountains. In fact, the western part of
3 Washington is uniquely situated to support wolf ranges of this size
4 while still providing natural and existing man-made barriers to
5 migration from the translocation sites to the large population centers
6 of the Interstate 5 corridor.

7 (4) The legislature further finds that a robust wolf translocation
8 program will benefit both the species, in its efforts to repopulate
9 Washington, and the areas receiving the wolves through the increases in
10 ecological health brought by the species. Although the areas from
11 where the wolves are removed will experience a slight reduction in wolf
12 population and the benefits they bring, the legislature finds that the
13 remaining individuals will quickly fill this void through breeding and
14 the natural migration of the species from other political
15 jurisdictions.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 77.36 RCW
17 to read as follows:

18 (1) The department shall, in an effort to perpetuate the species
19 and minimize landowner conflicts, rely on the translocation of wolves
20 as the primary tool for managing wolf-related wildlife interactions in
21 the areas of the state where wolves are naturally occurring.

22 (2) A wolf may only be translocated from an area of the state where
23 it naturally occurred to an area of the state where conditions exist to
24 improve, maintain, or manage riparian or other ecosystem functions and
25 where a geographic barrier exists between the translocation area and
26 the rest of the state. Such areas include:

27 (a) Any island sized at least fifty square miles, due to the
28 natural water barrier to migration; and

29 (b) The Olympic Peninsula, due to Interstate 5 and highway 12
30 barriers to migration.

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