

SB 471 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Action Date: 04/03/23

Action: Without recommendation as to passage and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Girod, Golden, Prozanski, Smith DB, Taylor

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 1/23, 4/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates \$800,000 General Fund moneys to the Oregon Department of Agriculture for deposit in the Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund (Fund). Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2023.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Role of this Fund in a broader wolf-livestock coexistence strategy
- Reintroduction of wolves in Oregon and impacts on ranchers
- Adequacy of the compensation
- Examples of nonlethal tools provided by county programs

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2011, the Legislative Assembly enacted House Bill 3560, which directed the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to establish and implement a wolf depredation compensation and financial assistance grant program. The program provides grants to assist counties with implementing wolf depredation prevention programs, and to compensate ranchers when wolf depredation occurs. The grant program sources its funding from the Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund.

According to the "2021 Annual Wolf Report" prepared by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the minimum known count of wolves in Oregon at the end of 2021 was 175 wolves. ODFW received 90 requests from livestock producers to investigate dead or injured livestock suspected to be caused by wolf depredation. Of those investigations, 49 were confirmed as wolf depredation, compared to 31 in 2020, 16 in 2019, and 28 in 2018.

Senate Bill 471 would appropriate \$800,000 to ODA for deposit in the Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund.