

SB 777 -1, -5 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

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Meeting Dates: 2/27, 3/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure modifies the Wolf Depredation Compensation Program by limiting it to individuals who suffer probable and confirmed losses or injury of livestock or working dogs, capping compensation at \$25,000 per animal, and establishing certain compensation rates based on specified multipliers applied to fair market value.

Fiscal impact: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

Revenue impact: No revenue impact

Detailed Summary:

Defines "area of known wolf activity" as any region identified by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife where wolf activity has been observed. Modifies the Wolf Depredation Compensation Program by removing compensation for missing livestock and limiting it to individuals who suffer probable and confirmed losses or injuries to livestock or working dogs caused by wolves. Modifies compensation rates by establishing a maximum compensation cap of \$25,000 per animal, as well as the following multipliers:

- A multiplier of seven times the fair market value of cow calves and yearlings, sheep and goats.
- A multiplier of three times the fair market value of cows.
- The fair market value of horses, other livestock, and working dogs.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Establishment of the Wolf Depredation Compensation Program in 2011 (HB 3560)
- Lethal take
- Non-lethal activities and mitigation taken by ranchers
- Justification for maximum compensation of \$25,000 per animal
- Establishing fair market value
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) wolf management and challenges
- ODFW probable or confirmed loss determination
- Canadian, Wyoming and Oregon wolves comparison
- Moose population
- Increased pack sizes
- Reduction of ranch revenue
- Current market values of cows and calves
- Effects of stress on herds
- Multipliers in Wyoming and Colorado

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 amendment increases the required minimum proportion of allocated grant program funds to be used by counties for financial assistance provided to persons who implement livestock management or nonlethal wolf deterrence techniques designed to discourage wolf depredation of livestock from 30% to 50%. The amendment decreases the multiplier for cow calves and yearlings, sheep and goats from seven to five times the fair market value and increases the multiplier for cows from three to five times their fair market value.

-5 amendment increases the required minimum proportion of allocated grant program funds to be used by counties for financial assistance provided to persons who implement livestock management techniques or nonlethal wolf deterrence techniques designed to discourage wolf depredation of livestock from 30% to 50%. The amendment **allows counties to determine the multiplier** applied to compensation rates subject to the following caps:

- A multiplier of five times the fair market value of cow calves and yearlings, sheep and goats.
- A multiplier of three times the fair market value of cows.
- The fair market value of horses, other livestock, and working dogs
- Not exceeding \$25,000 total

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) designates an area of known wolf activity based on where an individual or groups of wolves have been documented repeatedly over a period of time, using actual location and data points to establish resident wolf activity. In 2023 ODFW reported 178 recorded wolves in Oregon. Currently, ODFW investigates loss or injury of livestock that is thought to be caused by wolves. Determination categories for loss or injury include Confirmed, Probable, Unknown and Not Wolf.

House Bill 3560 (passed 2011) directed the Oregon Department of Agriculture to establish and implement a Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant Program, using moneys in the Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund to provide grants for counties to implement wolf depredation compensation programs.