



**OREGON
WILD**

Wolves – Misunderstood

Wolves & Humans

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- 2) Wolves are not a serious threat to the livestock industry.
- 3) Wolf recovery has positive economic benefits.
- 4) Wolves do affect game species. They do not wipe them out.
- 5) Wolves are a native species.
- 6) Hunting wolves does not reduce conflict.
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Wolves & Politics

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- 2) Wolves do not "kill for fun".
- 3) Wolves do not decimate game herds.
- 4) Wolves have not introduced new diseases in the west.

Oregon Wild & Wolves

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Wolves & Humans



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1) Wolves are not a threat to humans.

Wolves have the tools to kill animals much larger than humans and should be respected. However there have been a total of two deaths attributed to healthy wild wolves in North America since before 1900 (one of which is disputed). So, what should you do if you see a wolf? Grab your camera! 1, 2, 3, 40

In comparison - according to the Center for Disease Control - 108 people were killed by cows from 2003 to 2008 74.

2) Wolves are not a serious threat to the livestock industry.

Wolves are opportunists and, like us, sometimes eat livestock. However, they have a relatively small impact on the livestock industry. Volatile meat prices, increased land and fuel prices, disease, weather, domestic dogs, and even human thieves are much bigger threats 4, 60.

Northeast Oregon's Wallowa County is a case study for that very point. It is ground zero for the argument from wolf detractors that wolves will decimate Oregon's livestock industry. The county's livestock industry has been in a steady decades-long decline preceding wolf recovery 89. However, from 2009 to 2011 – while the wolf population grew from two to fourteen, livestock revenue jumped nearly 50% to nearly \$27million in a county with barely 7,000 citizens 88. Wolves were not the cause of the increase, but it's clear their effect on the industry is negligible. Though wolves may have some localized impacts on individual livestock operators, those can be significantly reduced with responsible husbandry. Additionally, in Oregon, ranchers are fully compensated by taxpayers for any losses.

Much like shark attacks, wolf depredations can make for startling photos and grisly stories, so the threat of wolves to livestock is often overblown. Studies have even indicated that in some circumstances wolves may actually *decrease* livestock losses by keeping smaller predators like coyotes in check 21. A study published in the journal of Ecological Economics found that wolf depredations account for less than 0.01% of the annual gross income of ranchers in Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana4..

- Since wolves returned to Oregon in the late 1990's, they have killed 61 domestic animals More than half that total were killed by a pair of young wolves that were in turn killed for the act. By comparison, in 2005 alone 700 sheep were killed by domestic dogs and 200 were killed by eagles in Oregon. 5
- In 2005, human thieves took 5 times as many livestock as wolves in MT, ID, and WY. 4
- In Minnesota, a state with nearly 100 times as many wolves as Oregon now has, they were responsible for 0.65% of cattle losses in 2005. 9
- A single Montana storm in the spring of 2009 killed 2,260 sheep and calves. In all of the preceding year, 188 were lost to wolves. 7, 8

In the year for which statistics are most recently available for Oregon (2010):

- Oregon was home to over 1.3 million cows. 71
- 55,000 died before they made it to the slaughterhouse. 60
- Over, 1,200 were stolen by human thieves Malheur County alone over a 3-year period. 73
- A single train accident in Klamath County killed two dozen cows in 2011. 75
- Less than two dozen have been killed by wolves in the last decade. 76



We sometimes hear that wolf losses are underrepresented or attributed to other predators. Here are some interesting cattle loss numbers from Idaho in 2005 (when the state had a wolf population more than 40 times that of Oregon's current number) taking that possibility into account.

- *All* non-human predators (including wolves, dogs, *AND* unknowns) – 1.0% ⁹
- Poisoning – 1.2% ⁹
- Injury – 6.2% ⁹
- Calving (not including calf losses) – 7.9% ⁹
- Respiratory, digestive, and other diseases – 37.0% ⁹
- Other & unknown *non*-predator – 46.7% ⁹

A May 2011 USDA cattle death report added more data proving that livestock death is only fractionally attributed to wolf kills. For example, of the nearly 4,000,000 cattle and calf deaths in the US in 2010, predators caused only 5% and of that, wolves caused a meager 0.2%. Moreover, of the \$2.4 billion value these deaths cost only 0.1% of that value came as a result of a wolf kill⁶⁰.

Furthermore, it's not inevitable that wolves will kill livestock. There are lots of things responsible livestock managers can do to protect their livestock that don't involve bullets ²². Behind many of the exaggerated and horrific stories of livestock losses trotted out by the anti-wolf folks is an untold story of poor animal husbandry. Oregon's first wolf depredation in over 60 years were by a pair of young wolves who had been enticed to a flock of sheep being kept next to a 2-acre open carcass pit where ranchers had been throwing their dead cattle for years.

3) Wolf recovery has positive economic benefits.

Wildlife watching in the US generated \$122.6 billion in 2006¹⁰. A study by the University of Montana in that same year found that wolves had a positive economic impact of over \$35 million in the greater Yellowstone area¹¹. In Idaho, wolf-watching tours have been credited with buoying some businesses through the recession. In Minnesota, wolf-driven tourism and howling trips have been a staple of the Northwoods economy for years. It's no surprise that some of Oregon's first and most vocal wolf supporters have been those with ties to the tourism industry. The positive impact of wolves in Oregon is just now beginning to get noticed ^{92, 93}

Not only do healthy wolf populations increase tourism dollars, they may also reduce costs for taxpayers. Federal, state, and local governments spends millions of dollars restoring damaged streams and watersheds. Wolves have a positive impact on the landscape and do the work for free (see below). Trying to limit wolf populations is often expensive. In the US, tax dollars fund Wildlife Services to kill wildlife. The controversial agency was created during World War I to increase beef production and still kills wolves at the request of the livestock industry⁷⁸. In Canada's Yukon, expensive efforts to reduce the population have largely failed⁶¹.



4) Wolves do affect game species. They do not wipe them out.

For survival, wolves eat many of the same species that humans also like to hunt. The presence of predators changes the behavior of prey animals often making them more difficult to hunt. However, it's not in their best interest for wolves to wipe out their own prey. It didn't happen in the millennia before humans began managing wildlife, and it isn't happening now ^{58, 59}.

Many hunters complain that hunting with wolves on the landscape is hard. That may be true, but it doesn't mean wolves are decimating game herds. Having predators on the landscape does mean that prey animals are more alert and wary – and, sometimes less abundant than they were without their natural predators. They also spend less time congregating in open and riparian areas, which is beneficial to a host of other plants and animals (see below) ^{12, 13}.

According to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, elk numbers have increased over the last 25 years in every state with wolves – including Oregon ¹⁴. The fall 2009 edition of the Bugle states that over the last 15 years while Montana's wolf population has grown from 48 to 497, elk numbers have increased from 94,000 to 150,000. Meanwhile, the success rate of elk hunters increased from 16.7% to 21.5% ^{23, 14!}

Wolves are opportunistic and therefore much more likely to harvest the weakest animals and in turn increase the overall fitness of prey species. Trophy human hunters on the other hand are more likely to kill the biggest, fittest animals ¹⁷.

Wildlife populations are dynamic and affected by many different factors. Arguments that wolves are decimating elk or other game animals almost always focus on cherry-picked data from individual areas where elk numbers have decreased. Even in those areas where elk have declined, many researchers are skeptical that wolves are the primary cause ^{56, 58, 59}. In others, it has been demonstrated that ungulate numbers were previously at or near historic highs. One thing is clear - when looking at the full landscape, elk are doing just fine with wolves ¹⁴. That certainly holds true in Oregon's wolf country where elk remain so abundant that they are actively hazed to reduce damage to agriculture ^{77, 79}.

5) Wolves are a native species.

Until we started exterminating them, wolves were the widest ranging non-human land mammal on the planet. In North America that range was continuous from above the Arctic Circle to southern Mexico and included the entire state of Oregon ¹⁵. After being extirpated from most of the lower 48 United States, wolves gained protection under the Endangered Species Act. Under those protections, wolves naturally began to expand their range. To speed their recovery, wolves were reintroduced in some places by the same government that had once sponsored their extermination. Those populations are now intermingling.

Though some minor differences exist in wolves across their range in North America, the wolves reintroduced to the Western United States shared contiguous range with those extirpated from Oregon. After the wolf hunts of 2009, evidence was gathered that conclusively showed wolves currently inhabiting the West were no bigger than those that lived here before their extirpation ²⁴.

Wolves evolved alongside all the other plants and animals with which they shared the landscape. Their removal was detrimental to many of those species, and their return has had positive impacts (see below) ^{12, 13, 21}.



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6) Hunting wolves does not reduce conflict

Agencies and wildlife managers that rely upon active management often promote wolf hunts as a way to reduce wolf-livestock conflict, protect prey animals, and increase social tolerance. However, research has begun to show that hunting wolves disrupts pack structure and instead often increases such conflicts ^{37, 54, 55}.

For wolves, pack structure typically constitutes an unrelated breeding pair, their offspring, and close relatives, but intense harvest may increase adoption of unrelated individuals into packs ⁶⁵. When older wolves are killed, packs structures are often disrupted. Territories become less defined and younger wolves may be left to fend for themselves too soon. Without the guidance of more experienced wary adult wolves, they may not learn to avoid livestock and humans. Full-sized packs with a natural distribution of age groups, and intact social systems will not resort to killing livestock as often as packs that have been hunted, nor will they kill as many wild elk or deer ³⁷.

Disruption of social organization and management based only on numbers has important consequences. If the “cultural knowledge” of where to hunt and/or the ability of a pack to effectively hunt is destroyed by loss of key pack members, social systems may destabilize and the remaining pack member may be more prone to conflict with humans and livestock⁶⁶. Smaller wolf packs – typical in the Western US - may be particularly susceptible to such impacts as odds are higher that any adult killed is a breeder making social disruption much more likely⁶⁴.

There is little evidence to back up the specious claim that allowing wolf hunts increases human social tolerance of the species ⁹¹. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence to suggest otherwise ⁵⁷. Old prejudices die hard, and it’s difficult to demonstrate that the wolf hunts that took place after wolf delisting have increased social tolerance amongst those opposed to wolf recovery.

7) Wolves are already heavily managed.

Even when they were listed as an endangered species, wolves were heavily managed. In fact most wolf deaths in the west are caused by humans.

According to a 2009 presentation in Oregon by the Wolf Recovery Coordinator for the US Fish & Wildlife Service, more than one-fourth of the Western wolf population dies each year. Only 3% die of natural causes. 3% are accidentally killed by humans. Of the remaining 20%, half are killed by authority of the government and half are killed by poachers. That means that one out of every five wolves in the west was killed each year – On purpose – By humans – while they were protected as an endangered species.

That was *before* Montana and Idaho began their sport wolf hunts. Idaho has the stated goal of reducing their wolf population by half, and in 2001 passed a law calling for the eradication of wolves “by any means necessary” ⁴¹. After wolves were delisted in 2011, Idaho and Montana reported allowing the legal killing of 544 wolves which represented nearly one-third of the known population in the west ^{80, 81}. Current proposals for future hunts would allow even more killing including in Wyoming where – if approved – most of the state would allow wolves to be killed on sight by any means.



In Oregon, the first few wolves to return were killed by cars and poachers. In August of 2009, with a population of around a dozen wolves, the state authorized the killing of 2 of young wolves in response to their repeated depredation of lambs. Oregon has killed 4 wolves at the request of the livestock industry. However, the state is currently not allowed to kill wolves as a judge has indicated they were likely breaking the law in doing so ⁸².

Going back a little further in history, wolves were extirpated from almost the entire lower 48 United States including Oregon. As current Oregon State Senator Whitsett likes to remind wolf advocates, the first meeting of the Oregon State legislature was called in part to “eradicate marauding wolves” (he thinks that was a good idea then, and an even better idea now) ¹⁶.

8) Wolves and humans can coexist.

Mollie Beattie, the first woman to head the US Fish & Wildlife Service said, “What a country chooses to save is what a country chooses to say about itself”. Though humans have little to fear from wolves, the biggest, and perhaps only, threat to wolf recovery comes from humans. Some have said that all wolves need to survive are a sustainable prey base and for people not to shoot them.

We’ve altered the landscape enough such that wolves can’t thrive everywhere they once roamed. However, living with wolves and wildlife is part of living near the big wild places of the rural west. There are many examples around the country and world of enlightened and responsible ranchers, farmers, hunters, and others peacefully coexisting with wolves and the natural world ^{22, 25, 42, 43}.

Affordable, effective solutions exist that can significantly reduce conflicts between the livestock industry and wolves. These solutions include basic husbandry and fencing along with many other methods. They have been successful in reducing depredations and unnecessary wolf-human conflict when implemented correctly ^{67, 68, 69, 70}. Many such programs – including in Oregon – have been funded by contributions from conservation groups including Oregon Wild.



Wolves & Politics

1) Oregon has a wolf management plan.

Anticipating the eventual return and federal delisting of wolves, the State of Oregon wisely completed a wolf conservation and management plan in 2005. The plan came out of a collaborative process that involved many stakeholders, including conservation groups, ranchers, scientists, and others including the general public (of which over 70% were in favor of wolf recovery) ^{18, 26}. When the wolf plan was reviewed in 2010, over 20,000 public comments were submitted, and over 90% of them were in favor of stronger protections for wolves (ODFW, public record).

The plan is imperfect and includes ambiguity that has been abused. It represents a social and political compromise and includes major compromises from conservationists and others. When Washington State contemplated a wolf plan that doubled Oregon's low recovery goals, it was lambasted by an independent scientific panel as being woefully inadequate. Even so, both plans are much better than those of states like Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. In the early stages of wolf recovery, the plan prioritizes conservation and puts an emphasis on public education.

Oregon Wild supported the wolf plan – most of which has been approved by the state—and has actively worked to defend, clarify and strengthen it ²⁷. However, the plan was immediately opposed by the Oregon Cattlemen's Association (OCA). Due to opposition by anti-wolf interests like the OCA, some parts of the plan were not approved.

Though Oregon Wild still supports the spirit of the wolf plan, they and other organizations have raised concerns that its implementation has violated the spirit of the plan and the letter of the law. Education and public outreach has taken a back seat to assuaging anti-wolf interests in the livestock industry and bending to political pressure to kill wolves. In the fall of 2011, conservation groups including Oregon Wild challenged the agency in court. A judge agreed the case had merit and suspended the state's wolf killing authority ⁸².

2) Oregon's wolf plan allowed the state to kill “problem wolves”.

In 2009, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife made it brutally clear that Oregon's wolf management plan gives the agency more than enough tools to protect livestock industry interests.

The first loss of livestock to wolves since wolves returned to Oregon occurred during the spring of 2009. After successfully deterring the wolves using non-lethal methods during the summer, the young wolves returned in August. In response, the state of Oregon authorized a kill order for the pair of wolves. Those wolves (which represented nearly 20% of the states known population at the time) were killed by Federal officials on September 5, 2009 ¹⁹. Though conservationists did not celebrate the killing, it was generally not opposed as the state demonstrated it had prioritized and verified the non-lethal measures employed to prevent the conflict ⁸³.



At the request of the livestock industry, and under tremendous political pressure, the agency has issued further kill orders. In some cases the state has carried out the orders. In other cases their legality was successfully challenged in court. In the fall of 2011, after issuing yet more kill orders that would have likely led to the examination of an entire pack, conservationists challenged the legality of the state's wolf killing program. A judge agreed that ODFW was likely violating the law and suspended the state's wolf killing authority until the case is fully considered ⁸².

3) Oregon's wolves are not currently protected as a federally endangered species.

Wolves in most of the Western United States – including Eastern Oregon - were stripped of their protections by legislation attached as a rider to a must pass budget bill in 2011. That left management up to individual states – which is why our state's management plan is so important. Without federal protections, wolf-reduction efforts in Idaho and Montana began almost immediately. Within hours of delisting, Oregon issued kill orders for two wolves.

Any wolves in Western Oregon retain their protections. Though the wolf known as Journey (OR-7) and his sibling OR-3 have spent time in the western portion of the state, none of Oregon's ²⁹ confirmed wolves are known to be in that area.

All wolves in Oregon remain listed as an endangered species under *state* law. In 2011, anti-wolf politicians tried unsuccessfully to strip wolves of even those minimal state protections and, in 2012, the Oregon Cattlemen's Association and their political allies attempted to create an exception to those basic protections for wolves and set a dangerous precedent for all native wildlife ⁹⁰.

The Bush administration tried and failed several times to illegally delist wolves from the Endangered Species Act. In 2009, the Obama administration renewed the illegal Bush delisting proposal but left protections for Wyoming wolves. That delisting was also found to be illegal ^{28, 44, 45}. It wasn't until 2011 when Senator John Tester sponsored a budget rider to circumvent the Endangered Species Act that wolves in Eastern Oregon lost their *federal* protections.

4) Anti-wolf interests are actively trying to undermine Oregon's wolf management plan.

Immediately following the first depredation of livestock by wolves in the spring of 2009, the Oregon Cattleman's Association (OCA) and Farm Bureau lobbied in Salem to change the wolf management plan to say that:

“a person may ‘take’ a wolf seen ‘attacking, biting, molesting, chasing, or harassing livestock, herding and guarding animals, working and sporting dogs, and family pets’”.

That may sound reasonable, but it amounts to allowing ordinary citizens to shoot any wolves they determine to be a threat. It also means prosecuting poachers would be nearly impossible. Taking into account the violently negative attitudes of a minority of folks, the history of wolves in Oregon and America, and the current number of wolves in our state, this is inappropriate ²⁹.

The OCA and the Farm Bureau were unsuccessful in their initial bid to have their arguments heard on the statehouse floor so the effort wasn't widely known. Since that time however, the OCA and their political allies have introduced legislation in every subsequent session to make it easier to kill wolves and weaken protections for endangered native wildlife.



5) Oregon has a taxpayer-supported wolf compensation program.

The original wolf conservation and management plan included a compensation program to reimburse livestock operators for losses to wolves ²⁶. Even so, the program was killed twice in the state legislature by the OCA as part of their opposition to the entire wolf plan. However, when a national conservation group suspended their program in 2011, the livestock lobby group convinced the state legislature and two conservation groups to publicly support a new compensation program.

The plan provides funds for preventative measures and compensates livestock owners who lose livestock to wolves despite those measures. Though private entities can contribute, so far the program has come entirely at taxpayer expense.

Oregon Wild participated in the negotiations but was unable to support the final program. The organization opposed the plan for a number of reasons including that it provides perverse incentives for bad husbandry, pays for missing livestock that may have been lost to any number of causes, pays for unattended livestock lost on public lands, is controlled by biased panels, and does nothing to reduce the demand to kill wolves ⁸⁶.

In addition to grazing on public lands, the livestock industry is already heavily subsidized ⁸⁷, and in 2011 the state passed an additional tax credit for livestock operators running their livestock in wolf country.

6) Current wolf recovery numbers are too low and the result of political compromise.

For the Northern Rocky Mountains region, which includes Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and the eastern portions of Washington and Oregon, the recovery goal that could have led to the delisting of wolves was 300 ^{38, 28}.

This goal of 300 wolves was set in 1987 and is severely outdated. Even at that time, it was the product of a political compromise. The field of predator ecology remains a very young one. If the past 200 years have taught us anything, it is that the management of endangered species like wolves should be guided by the best available current science – not emotions or political and social compromise.

The most current science suggests that *minimum* recovery numbers should be closer to 2,000 to 2,500 wolves, and that historically, there could have been as many as 380,000 wolves spread across the western United States and into Mexico ¹⁵. Furthermore, for the long-term survival of the species, it is critical that social structures be left intact, connectivity between habitat is restored & maintained, and that genetic exchange can continue to occur across the landscape ²⁸. In peer-reviewed articles, Oregon Scientists have asserted the state has enough habitat to support nearly 1,500 wolves ⁸⁴.

By comparison, the state of Minnesota alone is home to an estimated 3,000 wolves and the state has a *minimum* population goal of 1,600 wolves ⁹⁴.



Wolves & Other Animals

1) Wolves have a positive impact on the landscape.

Wolves are a native species. As a wide-ranging keystone species, wolves have a disproportionate effect on the rest of the ecosystem. By protecting wolves, we in turn protect all of the living things with which they share the landscape including – necessarily - their prey.

Where wolf populations have recovered, peer-reviewed science has overwhelmingly showed them to have had a positive impact on the landscape. Nowhere has that been demonstrated more clearly than in Yellowstone National Park where human interference has been limited, and wolf populations have naturally leveled off. There they have had a positive impact on everything from aspen, frogs, and songbirds to beavers, raptors, and beetles. Even soil conditions have changed. Admittedly, it's been a bit tougher to be a coyote ^{12, 13, 21, 62.}

Research around the world demonstrates that the absence of wolves and other top predators can create significant negative impacts often caused by a resulting overabundance of herbivores and smaller predators ^{63, 85.}

Another study done in Yellowstone shows that before wolves were killed out, about one in every six aspen trees grew to reach the canopy. When wolves were absent, perhaps one in 300 made it.

2) Wolves do not “kill for fun”.

Unlike humans, wolves do not kill for sport from a safe distance. However, like humans, wolves do often harvest more food than they can eat in one sitting.

It's difficult to ascribe motives to animal behavior, but scientists call this “surplus killing”. It happens occasionally when wolves prey on domestic animals and extremely rarely with wild prey. To understand why this happens, it's important to remember that wolves are opportunists. Wolves need to eat meat to survive and they can not depend on the grocery store for a reliable next meal if they fail in the hunt. Opportunities for meat are unpredictable and often dangerous. When those opportunities present themselves, it is wise for a wolf to take full advantage.

According to scientists, the higher rate for domestic livestock is the result of an opportunistic predator taking advantage of slower, less savvy, often penned-up animals that are often poorly looked after – all making them more vulnerable.

Wild prey tends to do a better job of avoiding and deterring wolves. They are more aware, they defend themselves and each other better, and usually know enough to run away. A partially-eaten wolf-killed elk (or sheep) carcass isn't necessarily a pretty sight, but it's not evidence of a wasteful wolf. If left alone, chances are the wolf will be back, and in the meantime, the wolf has provided lots of food to ravens, eagles, badgers, chickadees, beetles, and all the other scavengers that benefit from a kill ^{31, 46, 47.}



3) Wolves do not decimate game herds.

Wolves eat meat. Landscapes overpopulated with deer and elk may see a decrease in those numbers, and prey species will change their behavior in the presence of wolves. But wolves and their prey have been working it out for millennia. All of that may make hunting more of a challenge, but it's not in a wolf's best interest to wipe out their own prey and it doesn't happen.

You could be excused for calling it "balance", but because nature is ever-changing, scientists use a less romantic – but perhaps more accurate term - "dynamic equilibrium". See number 4 from the first section for more ^{14, 23, 47, 56, 58, 59, 85}.

4) Wolves have not introduced new diseases in the west

Wolves, like all animals, carry diseases. Of particular note to many is the Hydatid Tapeworm which anti-wildlife interests have attempted to highlight as one of their more recent scare tactics. The parasite is nothing new and is at most a very small threat to humans that can be avoided by the most basic of precautions (don't eat wildlife scat and wash your hands after touching it). This tapeworm is native to the west, carried by many species and can be found worldwide ^{20, 32, 33, 34}. Throughout the world, most human cases occur in indigenous people with close contact with infected dogs - not wolves ³². Don't eat or play with wolf (or other animal) poop and you'll probably be fine.



Oregon Wild & Wolves

1) Oregon Wild supports wolf recovery in Oregon.

Oregon Wild works to protect our state's wildlands, wildlife, and waters as an enduring legacy for future generations. As part of that mission, Oregon Wild supports healthy populations of all native species from elk and salmon to wolves and spotted owls. Advocating for wolves and other native wildlife has been part of Oregon Wild's work since our first days in 1974.

2) Oregon Wild supports the spirit of the Oregon Wolf Plan.

Oregon Wild took part in the genesis and development of Oregon's wolf conservation and management plan alongside thousands of our supporters, other conservation groups, ranchers, farmers, scientists, hunters, and more. The plan is imperfect and was a compromise, but we have argued it should be given a chance to work and certainly should not be weakened. Ever since we testified on it in December of 2004⁴⁸, Oregon Wild has worked to ensure the plan is enacted, fully funded, and properly carried out²⁷. When it has been necessary, we have stood up and defended the plan from those who seek to weaken it³⁵.

In 2010, when ODFW and Wildlife Services violated the wolf conservation plan - as well as state and federal laws - we took them to court and insisted they follow the rules. The lawsuit resulted in Wildlife Services voluntarily suspending its wolf hunt^{36, 49, 50}. When the state began bending to political pressure by ignoring major portions of the wolf plan that prioritize conservation and education and instead focused on assuaging anti-wolf interests and killing wolves at the request of the livestock industry, we challenged the state's wolf killing program. In 2011, a judge agreed ODFW was violating its own laws and suspended its authority to kill endangered wolves⁸².

3) What happens in other states matters in Oregon.

Wolves are wide-ranging animals. With less than 30 known animals in the state, Oregon is still dependent on healthy wolf populations in neighboring states to repopulate and mix with Oregon's. For long-term recovery of wolves, populations need to be interconnected and healthy^{51, 52}. When wolves are mismanaged in neighboring states, it seriously jeopardizes recovery here.

What happens in Oregon also matters in other states. California's first wolf made headlines when he crossed the border from Oregon, and at least one pack spends time in both Washington and Oregon. 70% of Oregonians supported wolf recovery in 2005²⁶, and that number has likely increased (ODFW public record). Though our wolf recovery plan is far from perfect, it is much better than those in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. By supporting a plan at least as strong as Oregon's we can show that wolves and humans can coexist.



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4) Oregon Wild is not opposed to hunting.

Oregon Wild traces its origins to 1974 when a group of conservationists including 3 elk hunters and a former logger gathered around a campfire and decided something needed to be done to protect the places they loved. Our conservation work and advocacy for native species benefits all outdoor enthusiasts who rely upon healthy intact ecosystems from hunters and hikers to photographers and fishermen. Many of our members, supporters, staff, and board members count hunting and fishing among their pursuits.

We maintain that wolves are an endangered species in Oregon and endangered species should not be hunted. Oregon Wild believes conservation efforts should be directed first and foremost to those native species that are endangered, under threat, misunderstood, or face active opposition. Where active management of wildlife is needed, it should be focused towards restoring functional, intact ecosystems. As the regretful former wolf hunter, Aldo Leopold once said, "the key to intelligent tinkering is to first keep all the parts".

5) Oregon Wild is not “getting rich” by advocating for wolves.

We need funds to do the work we do, but Oregon Wild’s mission isn’t to make money; it’s to keep our state a great place to live, work, and raise a family. Most of our money comes from individual members who support our work. That money is used for everything from keeping the lights on to paying very modest staff salaries, leading hikes, and advocating for the state’s wildlands, wildlife, and waters.

We do highlight campaigns so people know what they are funding - and that includes our wildlife work. Like most non-profits, Oregon Wild publishes our finances in our annual report. We run a lean operation, and no one is getting rich at Oregon Wild.

We plan to continue to grow our capacity to advocate for wildlife. So, if you care about healthy populations of native wildlife like wolves in Oregon, and want to keep our state a great place to live, work, and raise a family, your financial support is greatly appreciated and goes a long way.



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