

# Governor Inslee Orders Rulemaking to Protect Washington's Wolves

*Governor grants appeal from wildlife advocates asking him to reverse October decision by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission denying rulemaking petition*

OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES, January 13, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Governor Jay Inslee today [ordered](#) the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission to develop rules to regulate when the state can use taxpayer funds to kill wolves in response to livestock conflicts.



Inslee's order comes in response to the [appeal](#) by [Washington Wildlife First](#), the Center for Biological Diversity, and nine other wildlife advocacy organizations of the October 28, 2023 decision by the Commission to deny the group's rulemaking petition seeking greater accountability, transparency, and clarity concerning decisions made to kill state endangered gray wolves.

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Today is a significant victory, both for Washington's wolves and for our campaign to ensure that WDFW makes management decisions based on the best-available science.”

*Claire Loeb Davis*

Gov. Inslee's decision requires the Commission to start a formal rulemaking process, which will include developing a proposed rule and presenting it to the public for an opportunity to comment.

“Today is a significant victory, both for Washington's wolves and for our campaign to ensure that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife makes management

decisions based on the best-available science rather than in response to demands by entrenched special interests,” said Claire Loeb Davis, founder and president of Washington Wildlife First. “We thank Governor Inslee for his courage and vision in once more taking a stand for Washington's wolves.”

Washington taxpayers have footed the bill to kill 43 endangered wolves to date, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars for sharpshooters to kill wolves from helicopters. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) killed 75% of these wolves due to conflicts with livestock belonging to a single family (1). Even though only 25% of the public supports the practice (2), 75% of these wolves were killed due to conflicts with cattle grazing in public forests (1).



One of Washington's wolves looks at a trail camera. Photo by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Today's decision marks the second time that Governor Inslee has directed the Commission to initiate rulemaking to curb wolf mortality. He granted a similar appeal in 2020, but the Commission ultimately voted against adopting a wolf management rule in 2022 after a prolonged process that failed to produce a meaningful proposal.

"The Governor is the democratically elected representative of the people of Washington, who overwhelmingly support wolf recovery, and the Commission should treat his order with respect," Davis said. "We urge the Commission and the Department to take the Governor's instructions seriously this time around and engage in a meaningful rulemaking process, rather than wasting time by just going through the motions again."

The petition and appeal were filed by Washington Wildlife First, the Center for Biological Diversity, Western Watersheds Project, WildEarth Guardians, Northwest Animal Rights Network, Coexisting with Cougars in Klickitat County, Cascadia Wildlands, Animal Wellness Action, Center for a Humane Economy, Kettle Range Conservation Group, and the Endangered Species Coalition.

(1) Washington Wildlife First has compiled an annotated list of the wolves and wolf packs destroyed by WDFW, detailing the connections to the single livestock producing family and specifying which lethal removal actions were taken as a result of conflicts between wolves and livestock grazing on public land: <https://wawildlifefirst.org/wolves-killed-by-wdfw/>

(2) Washington Wildlife First commissioned the Public Policy Institute to perform an independent poll of Washington voters in 2022: <https://wawildlifefirst.org/washington-wildlife-first-poll/>

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