

## VIII. EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Because of the intense interest in wolves and the implementation of this Plan, an annual report will be written that summarizes all the activities and results of wolf conservation and management in Oregon. This chapter focuses on methods to monitor, evaluate and report the effectiveness of the implementation of the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. The first report will be written the year following adoption of this updated Plan in 2010. The annual report will be made available to the Commission, elected officials and any others who request it to keep them informed about Oregon's results. Upon request, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission and Oregon Legislature shall be briefed and updated regarding the Plan's implementation.

The Commission will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation every five years, similar to other conservation Plans, with the second review expected in 2015.<sup>40</sup> Two events could trigger an evaluation before 2015: a change of the wolf's status at the federal level or statutory changes to the Oregon ESA. Either event could lead to changes in state or federal law that may have an effect on Oregon's conservation and management of wolves. The completion of any formal evaluation could result in a decision by the Commission to enter into rulemaking and amend the Plan.

The ultimate goal of this Plan is to conserve wolves and minimize conflict with existing activities. In order to achieve that balance, measurements of positive outcomes for wolves and negative outcomes for others must be identified, compiled and compared to a standard. Tracking the status and trend of various measurements against a standard will indicate whether the implementation of the Plan is meeting its goals. Much is left to be learned about wolf conservation and management in Oregon. This is why an adaptive management approach will be used and why measurable objectives must be part of the feedback mechanism.

Oregon has a national reputation for measuring outcomes of social, economic, and environmental conditions via the Oregon Benchmarks. While there are no benchmarks that specifically measure endangered species conservation, it is essential to identify measurable conditions and set desirable outcomes to measure the effectiveness of this Plan. While benchmarks measure results, not effort, monitoring those results can help determine whether to modify program objectives or management practices. The Commission may consider forming a committee to evaluate the effectiveness of wolf conservation and management in Oregon. An evaluation would include measuring how well each portion of the Plan has been implemented. This evaluation will depend on the measurable objectives that have been set to measure achievement of wolf conservation and conflict avoidance.

Measures that track progress toward meeting the Plan's objectives have been incorporated to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation and to identify the need for adaptive management. As described in the monitoring section of Chapter III, efforts will continue to conduct a wolf census that monitors wolf population and distribution of wolves in Oregon. These efforts will provide an understanding of progress toward wolf population and distribution objectives. In addition, other measures of the effects of wolves will be monitored. For instance, the ungulate census that ODFW regularly conducts should be evaluated to determine whether wolves are impacting ungulate population numbers. Wolf-human interaction will be tracked in part by recording the number of

---

<sup>40</sup> The Oregon ESA requires the Commission to review the status of listed species at least once every five years. ORS 496.176(8).

wolf sightings and conflicts. Similarly, conflicts with livestock and the resulting management actions taken will be recorded. These measurements will aid in evaluating where the Plan is succeeding and where improvement is needed as implementation progresses.

## **A. Strategies for Evaluation and Reporting**

### **Objective**

- Document and report the annual activities related to wolf conservation and management, and evaluate program effectiveness toward meeting the Plan's goals and strategies and maintaining consistency with state and federal laws.

### **Strategies**

- Annually develop and distribute a report that describes the activities related to implementation of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.
- Every five years, the Commission will undertake an effort to formally assess the effectiveness of the Plan's implementation.
- Develop measures to track progress toward meeting the objectives of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.