

## **X. TIMELINE AND BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

This chapter focuses on the cost of wolf conservation and management in Oregon and suggests several potential funding sources. A secure funding source is necessary to implement the Commission-adopted Plan.

The states of Idaho and Montana both received federal funding assistance for wolf management and Plan development because they were part of the experimental release of gray wolves. In fiscal year 2003, Idaho received \$248,000 for Plan implementation and Montana received \$30,000 for Plan development. As federal ESA restrictions are loosened with the anticipated delisting of wolves, USFWS is expected to decrease its monetary support. ODFW developed a federal contract totaling \$456,000 to aid in development of the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. Approximately 75 percent of these funds were federal funds and 25 percent came from the state's General Fund.

The reintroduction of wolves into Idaho and Yellowstone National Park has led to the point where expanding populations are currently inhabiting Oregon. Wolves were reintroduced as a federally sponsored action to satisfy the federal ESA. The federal government has a stake in the outcome of Oregon's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan by creating another subpopulation of wolves outside of the Northern Rocky Mountain Recovery Area. Migration of wolves from Oregon back to Idaho will help ensure greater stability of the population. The federal government should share in the fiscal responsibility of wolf management in Oregon because the state is contributing to the success of the federal ESA. Oregon expects to have to spend an estimated \$400,000 to \$500,000 annually to manage this species.

### **A. Budget**

As of the 2009-2011 biennium, the total wolf management budget is \$419,204. The funding is split 50% Federal Funds and 50% Nongame Check-Off funds. In addition, the USFWS has awarded Oregon a grant of \$15,000 that was matched with \$15,000 Other Funds to implement preventative or non-lethal wolf measures. The Wolf Conservation and Management Plan was adopted in December 2005. The 5-year review took place in 2010 and will become the guiding document for wolf management in Oregon for the next 5 years.

In the 09-11 biennium, ODFW will fund a full time wolf biologist position using State Wildlife Grant (SWG) federal grant funds. The SWG funds are provided at a 50 percent federal to 50 percent state cost share. As wolf numbers have increased, ODFW will fund the budget for an additional full time NRS1 assistant wolf biologist position to be filled by October 1, 2010.

### **B. Potential Budget Items**

After Oregon's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan was reviewed and adopted by the Commission in 2005, ODFW began the implementation phase. The Plan focused on allowing wolves to increase to sufficient numbers where protection under the state ESA and at Phase I and II conditions no longer are required. Monitoring of wolf breeding pairs will be critical for obtaining data on breeding success and location, and for determining when conservation objectives have been met. Research will have to be undertaken when funds are available to address many basic questions

about the species and their impacts (see Chapter IX). As the number of breeding pairs increases, the costs associated with monitoring will increase. Costs are expected to increase over time if the recolonization of wolves into Oregon continues to be successful.

The potential line items associated with implementing the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan in 2010 are listed in Table X-1.

**Table X-1. Potential Line Item Costs Associated with Implementation of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan**

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
Field biologist (NRS 3)	Annual salary plus benefits.	\$99,590
Field biologist assistant(NRS 1)	Annual salary plus benefits. Would assist project manager with radio tracking and collaring.	\$56,540
Vehicle/mileage	Annual cost.	\$19,000
Radio collar, receivers, and related equipment	Cost per collar is \$400. Initial purchase of 10 collars.	\$6,000
GPS radio collar and related equipment	Cost per collar is \$3,000. Expected purchase of six collars.	\$18,000
Sampling equipment and lab fee	Annual cost for blood tests, etc.	\$4,000
Training	Annual cost and as needed.	\$1,500
Office supplies and equipment	Computer, printer, phone, etc.	\$10,000
Wildlife Services assistance	Annual cost.	\$125,000
Flight time (for capture and radio tracking)	Annual cost for 150 hours at \$250/hr.	\$37,500
Public information officer	Annual cost. Likely would be 0.25 – 0.50 FTE plus associated benefits, supplies and travel.	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Outreach materials	Annual costs for printing and design. Costs could decrease over time.	\$15,000
Research	Cost will depend on research topics, cooperators and state role.	\$250,000

Implementation will require two full-time employees with a travel and supply budget sufficient to monitor wolf breeding pairs. The NRS1 and NRS3 positions will be responsible for administering all aspects of wolf management including depredation management, monitoring and research activities. Both will serve as liaisons with the USFWS, Wildlife Services, county governments, tribal representatives, livestock producers and hunter groups. As the numbers of wolves increase, further evaluation of personnel costs will be completed. Wildlife Services will also incur costs. While the

actual cost is unknown, Wildlife Services estimates that annual expenses could total \$125,000 based on information from Idaho and Montana.<sup>42</sup>

## **C. Possible Funding Sources**

The Wolf Advisory Committee reviewed and discussed several possible sources for implementing Oregon's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. These included the federal government, state government, tribal governments and private organizations. A summary of each of these potential sources is listed below.

### **1. Federal Grant:**

Description: Development of Oregon's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan was funded by the federal State Wildlife Grant (SWG) program. Congress created the SWG program in 2001 to provide funding to assist states in addressing unmet wildlife conservation programs for priority species with the greatest conservation need. Wolves currently are classified as endangered on Oregon's ESA. Congress made federal funding available on a 75 percent federal to 25 percent state match ratio. Oregon's 25 percent match funds came from the Wildlife Diversity income tax check-off funds.

Currently, implementation of the Plan is primarily funded by annual SWG grants. However, in 2010, \$15,000 of hunter license or tag fees have been used as state matching funds for the implementation of the Wolf-Livestock Demonstration Project. This federal grant is expected to continue annually for five more years.

In addition in 2010, Oregon received another one-time federal grant for \$10,000 (no match required) to assist with dealing with wolf depredation.

Other federal grants potentially could be available now or in the future for wolf conservation.

Is a statute change necessary? No.

Potential for success: The SWG program was intended to provide funds for wildlife species without a funding source for management. Wolves migrating into Oregon meet all federal criteria for SWG funding. However, now that the Plan is implemented the match requirement has increased to 50 percent of the total project cost. Oregon's allocation for the SWG program is limited.

### **2. Special Federal Appropriation:**

Description: A special Congressional appropriation to allocate funds for wolf conservation and management in Oregon could be approved. The states of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming have banded together to request a Congressional appropriation for managing both wolves and grizzly bears under state jurisdiction. All three states have large tracts of undisturbed

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<sup>42</sup> Personal communication with Dave Williams, State Director, Wildlife Services.

mountainous habitat for wolves and grizzly bears to occupy while minimizing potential conflicts. Idaho, Montana and Wyoming have requested \$1,531,500, \$1,095,000 and \$715,000 respectively for wolf management in FY 05.

Is a statute change necessary? No.

Potential for success: Several state and nationally led agriculture organizations are asking Congress to appropriate funds for Oregon to manage wolves once the animals are delisted from the federal ESA. If federal funding were awarded, approval to spend those funds consistent with the federal and state mandates would be sought through the Legislature and Governor's Office.

### **3. Oregon Legislative Appropriation:**

Description: Before the start of each legislative session, all state agencies develop budget proposals for any new programs or additions to existing programs. Funding a Wolf Conservation and Management Plan could be an agency-initiated or Governor's Office proposal. The proposal could suggest a range of alternatives including the use of state income taxes (General Fund), recreational license and tag fees (Other Funds), donations to the Wildlife Diversity Program and/or Federal Funds. The use of matching federal funds must meet the federal funding requirements. Hunters have expressed concern regarding the use of ODFW's recreational license and tag fees to pay for the development and implementation of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan because it diverts funding from other game programs and gray wolves are not a species that can be hunted.

The Legislature also can identify a funding source through the Ways and Means process. A variety of funding sources could be used, including the General Fund, Other Funds, donations and/or Federal Funds.

Is a statute change necessary? No.

Potential for success: The Legislature would hold public hearings on any potential funding plan for the implementation of a Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. If there were broad support for funding the Plan, the Legislature could direct funds in that manner. However, any appropriation from the General Fund would compete with appropriations to education, law enforcement and health care, and is not likely to succeed. Current income tax revenue estimates indicate Oregon will face up to a \$2.5 billion shortfall in income tax revenues during the 2011-2013 biennium.

### **4. Sales Tax on Goods or Services:**

Description: A portion of a sales tax could be dedicated to the funding of the Wildlife Diversity program. The state of Missouri has dedicated a portion of their sales tax to fund their Wildlife Diversity Program. This funding mechanism could be legislatively driven or approved by the voters.

Is a statute change necessary? Yes.

Potential for success: Oregonians historically have rejected any attempt to approve a sales tax, making implementation of this funding mechanism unlikely. In addition, there are many competing needs for funding that could reduce use of this source.

## **5. Private Funding:**

Description: Donations or a privately funded grant could be dedicated to funding a wolf management program. This type of funding mechanism would work best if a trust fund or wolf conservation foundation were developed to provide ODFW with an annual budget based on the interest generated from an endowment. Such a trust or foundation would need to maintain a balance of \$4-5 million to be self-sufficient and generate about \$270,000 in interest payments annually. Another possible scenario is a trust fund managed by the state to fund a Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. This scenario would require legislative authorization to spend the designated funds. ODFW will continue to examine other potential sources of funding to assist in managing wolves including private donations, grants from foundations, assistance from non-governmental organizations, and funding partnerships with other interested entities.

Is a statute change necessary? No. Donations to fund agency programs are accepted generally under a long-term contract with the funding entity.

Potential for success: A private outside group would have to conduct a campaign to collect necessary revenue for funding a self-sustaining wolf conservation and management Plan.

## **6. Initiative Petition:**

Description: Another option to fund a Wolf Conservation and Management Plan would be to explore the initiative petition process. This process would be driven by a group outside of ODFW. State agencies and employees are prohibited from using official positions or state resources to support or oppose any ballot measure. However, ODFW can provide information upon request, provided the information is presented in an objective and neutral manner. The initiative would identify the proposed funding source (i.e., the Lottery Fund or General Fund).

The last major natural resource initiative petition process in Oregon was the passage of Ballot Measure 66 in 1998 to fund fish and wildlife enforcement, salmon enhancement, and parks operations by dedicating a portion of Oregon Lottery revenues to natural resources. Contained within Ballot Measure 66 was a statutory and Oregon Constitution change that dedicated a funding source and described the type of expenditure appropriated.

Is a statute change necessary? Probably.

Potential for success: The effort to dedicate Ballot Measure 66 dollars took five years to reach a point at which a vote could take place. Thus, an initiative petition would require multiple years to be put on a ballot and may or may not succeed in generating revenue.

## **7. User Fees/Other Approaches:**

Description: A fee charged to the user of a particular service is a user fee. The price hunters and anglers pay for a hunting or fishing license is a user fee. The fee is used to fund the management of wildlife in the state. License fee revenues could be used to fund wolf management, but as indicated earlier, there is not much support for this among members of the hunting community. Another type of user fee could be a parking permit at a viewing area to see wolves or some type of “ecotourism” fee where interested parties could have the opportunity to view wolves.

Is a statute change necessary? Possibly.

Potential for success: The ODFW Sauvie Island Wildlife Area currently has a parking fee charge dedicated to law enforcement of the parking program. Developing a user fee system would take several years to develop the support base of businesses, groups and individuals to agree a fee dedicated to wolf management is appropriate. A private outside group may have more success to conduct a support based fee program for funding wolf management in Oregon.

## **8. Other Available Public Funding Sources:**

Other potential funding sources that have not been used in Oregon in the past for natural resource programs include a property tax, corporate income tax, motor fuel tax, cigarette tax, alcohol excise tax, and luxury excise tax. Other approaches that might be explored include wolf stamps, license plates, and a tax check-off. More research would be needed to assess whether any of these funding options would be acceptable to the public.

## **D. Volunteers**

One option to offset the cost of staff assigned to implement the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan is to use volunteers. ODFW has an extensive history of encouraging the use of volunteers to accomplish fish and wildlife management tasks. Volunteers could be used to conduct howling surveys, collect den site information and assist with public education efforts. The use of volunteers also can serve as an in-kind contribution for federal funding match requirements. ODFW would work through agency volunteer coordinators to train and record the contributions of volunteers.

## **E. Tribal Operations Funding**

Tribal wildlife managers with responsibilities to protect and manage treaty-reserved wildlife resources in the state of Oregon may prioritize tribal wildlife operation funds as necessary to meet wolf management needs in their areas of interest and influence. Tribal staff trained in wolf identification and handling are available to provide support as needed to state and federal managers responding to wolf activities within the tribe’s aboriginal territories and will take the lead on addressing on-reservation wolf management needs. Tribal wildlife managers will work with other

tribal, state and federal managers, and non-governmental organizations to secure additional funding to support full implementation of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.

## **F. Other Contracts**

Another possible source of funds for wolf management and research could be universities, wildlife cooperatives and professional wildlife societies. These organizations have access to foundations for grants to conduct research and improve the understanding of wolf-related social science issues. The use of graduate students sponsored by universities potentially could be used to collect data for improving wolf management techniques. ODFW staff would work with the organizations and apply for funding assistance.

ODFW has made use of the Oregon State University intern program. Two student interns were hired for the summer in 2008 and one in 2010. The interns are employees of the University and the employment time lasts 10-12 weeks. Cost to the agency is generally very low.