



## Greater Yellowstone Coalition

P.O. Box 1874 • Bozeman, Montana 59771-9987

April 5, 2011

Dear Chairman Brenden and members of the Senate Fish & Game Committee,

Tomorrow, your committee will consider HB 363 which changes the way wolf management is funded. We ask that you oppose HB 363.

HB 363 locks Montana into an expensive and intensive wolf management program by directing license dollars be spent on radio collaring wolves and for lethal control of wolves that attack livestock. Wolf hunting license fees should not be used for these purposes as it will only serve to further polarize sportsmen regarding wolf conservation and management.

New techniques for monitoring the wolf population are being developed which will be less expensive and less labor intensive than collaring wolves. As currently written, HB 363 would not allow these techniques to be used.

While conflicts between wolves and livestock must be addressed, wolf management is about more than conflicts with agriculture. Funds are needed to maintain FWP's on-the-ground wolf specialists who handle conflicts, monitor the wolf population, understand the predator-prey dynamics of a given landscape and determine the necessary actions to manage wolves in balance with other wildlife. Managing conflicts with livestock also involves more than lethal control; FWP provides technical assistance to landowners interested in implementing techniques to reduce and prevent conflicts before they result in livestock losses.

Finally, hunters and anglers should not be the only ones paying for wolf management. Non-hunters from around the world value wolves; yet because they do not buy hunting or fishing licenses, they do not contribute to the conservation and management of the species. We need to find a better solution to funding the management of wildlife species, like wolves, that have a broader constituency than sportsmen and women. Until that solution is found, we should continue using federal appropriations, general fund dollars and license fees to fund the full spectrum of management actions as determined by Montana's wolf management plan.

Please vote no on HB 363.

Sincerely,  
Barb Cestero, Montana Director

Distributed by George Golie on behalf of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition