

Stockton, Marissa

From: Stockton, Marissa
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 10:47 AM
Subject: My testimony for today's House FWP Committee hearing on SB 397. Please distribute to members.

From: Norman Bishop [nabishop@q.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 7:30 AM
To: Stockwell, Hope
Subject: My testimony for today's House FWP Committee hearing on SB 397. Please distribute to members.

Mr. chairman and representatives, thank you for the opportunity to comment. I'm Norman Bishop. I hunted antelope, deer, elk, and moose in Wyoming from 1980 to 1997, and elk in Montana later. My job in Yellowstone National Park from 1985 to 1997 was to educate the public about wolves and their restoration. From 1997 when I retired, to 2005, I led field courses on wolf ecology for the Yellowstone Association Institute; participants were some of the hundreds of thousands of visitors who visit the park annually to see wolves. I am now a board member of the Wolf Recovery Foundation, and an advisory board member of Living With Wolves.

By passing Senate Bill 397, we would disregard the positive value of wolves as keystone predators and sanitarians, and would promote killing ever more wolves in an apparent attempt to generate more already-over-objective elk for human hunters. That's tragic and counterproductive, because wolves can perform essential ecosystem services in Montana's wild country, as they did for 800,000 years before we arrived.

In 1992, Mark R. Johnson, DVM, wrote: "In large undeveloped areas...wild canids may actually play a positive role in the disease ecology of brucellosis. By ingesting Brucella-infected material, especially during calving season, and excreting less bacteria than they eat, canids would reduce the amount of abortion or calving material capable of infecting other bison or elk."

(1992. The disease ecology of brucellosis and tuberculosis in potential relationship to Yellowstone wolf populations. Pp. 5-69 to 5-92 in Varley, John D. and Wayne G. Brewster, eds. Wolves for Yellowstone? Volume IV Research and Analysis. National Park Service, Yellowstone National Park).

In his 2012 book, Where Elk Roam, Bruce L. Smith, PhD wrote: "Both bison and elk have a higher seroprevalence of Brucella when concentrated than when they are free-ranging... In recent years, livestock in northwest Wyoming and southeast Idaho have been infected with brucellosis from elk. Vaccination of elk doesn't work. The obvious solution to lowering the risk of transmission is to quit concentrating elk and bison..."

-And if we aren't worried about Brucellosis, here's what Smith writes about CWD. "CWD (Chronic Wasting Disease) in wild cervids (deer, elk, and moose) is relentlessly increasing--its geographic distribution is expanding and its prevalence trending up." After finding CWD in deer in 2002, Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources sought complete eradication of CWD from their white-tailed deer population by killing thousands of them. Through 2006, they spent \$27 million to control CWD. "The report from a CWD workshop in Madison, Wisconsin, identified one additional element that could limit amplification of CWD: predators. It stated, 'The absence of predators may allow sick animals a longer period in which to spread CWD.'

A Colorado study showed that mountain lion predation did not stop the spread of CWD. "However, mountain lions are solitary ambush predators; packs of gray wolves chase and single out disadvantaged prey, what David Mech and other

wolf biologists have called the 'sanitation effect' of predation. Wild et al wrote, "We suggest that as CWD distribution and wolf range overlap in the future, wolf predation may suppress disease emergence or limit prevalence."

(The study Smith refers to here is: Wild, M.A., N.T. Hobbs, M.S. Graham, and M.W. Miller. 2011. "The role of predation in disease control: A comparison of selective and non-selective removal of prion diseases in deer." *Journal of Wildlife Diseases* 47(1):78-93.).

Our choices seem clear to me: by passing SB 397 we may prevent wolves from functioning effectively as native predators - and then deal with the effects of their absence, or we can reject SB 397 and take advantage of the huge benefit to wild ecosystems of conserving wolves at an ecologically functional level.

Does the chairman or any representative have any questions? Thank you.

Norman A. Bishop
4898 Itana Circle
Bozeman, MT 59715

Stockton, Marissa

From: Stockton, Marissa
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 10:28 AM
Subject: Vote NO on SB 397

From: Norman Bishop [<mailto:nabishop@q.com>]
Sent: Sunday, April 07, 2013 5:49 PM
To: Stockwell, Hope
Subject: Vote NO on SB 397

Please pass these comments to the members of the House Fish and Wildlife Committee. Thank you.

SB 397 would declare open season on wolves any time an elk unit was perceived to be in need of restrictive harvest for any number of reasons. This is preposterous. Only today, in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle, an article noted that the BLM may ask ranchers to reduce grazing on public lands due to **drought**. Counties affected are Beaverhead, Madison, Jefferson, Gallatin, Lewis and Clark, Broadwater, Silver Bow, and Park. The U.S. Drought Monitor says southwest Montana faces climate conditions ranging from abnormally dry to severe drought.

Arthur Middleton (2012) conducted his Ph.D. research on elk and wolves in the Sunlight Basin area of Wyoming. He concluded that a reduction of elk forage quality in summer due to rising temperatures, combined with higher grizzly predation pressure (41% of calves killed by grizzlies) is responsible for a reduction in migratory elk herds in this area. Over the past 20 years, greater Yellowstone has experienced an increase in July temperatures of 8 degrees F. This has led to an earlier and shorter green-up of grasses, an important food source for elk. If a nursing female is unable to obtain sufficient nutrition to both sustain her calf and put on fat stores, she is less likely to calve the next year. Indeed, Middleton observed a low pregnancy rate among lactating females.

-So SB 397's solution is to kill **wolves**?

In 1884, Montana set a bounty on wolves; in the next three years, 10,261 wolves were bountied. In 1887, the bounty was repealed by a legislature dominated by mining interests. By 1893, desperate stockmen were reporting losses that were mathematical impossibilities. The effect of this exaggeration was contagious. The Montana sheep industry, which up to this time had lost more animals to bears and mountain lions than to wolves, began to blame its every downward economic trend on the wolf. Men in a speculative business like cattle ranching singled out one **scapegoat** for their financial losses.

Let's not go back 120 years. Pick another scapegoat. Vote **NO** on SB 397.

Norman A. Bishop
4898 Itana Circle
Bozeman, MT 59715