

## **[Still time to comment on Washington's draft wolf management plan](#)**

### **Local News**

Posted by: David Haviland

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) will continue to accept public comments for another month on a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for a state wolf conservation and management plan.

Released Oct. 5, the draft plan is the preferred alternative among four presented in a draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The DEIS was prepared under requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), and is available on the WDFW website at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/gray\\_wolf/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/gray_wolf/). Desk copies of the DEIS also are available at WDFW regional offices and public libraries. Those unable to view or download the DEIS from WDFW's website can request paper or compact-disc copies by calling (360) 902-2515.

Comments can be submitted through 5 p.m., Friday, Jan. 8, electronically at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/gray\\_wolf/mgmt\\_plan.html](http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/gray_wolf/mgmt_plan.html), by FAX to (360) 902-2946, or by U.S. Mail to: WDFW SEPA Desk, 600 Capitol Way N. Olympia, WA 98501-1091.

Meanwhile, audio files of comments made at public meetings on the DEIS and plan are available on the WDFW website at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/gray\\_wolf/meeting\\_schedule.html](http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/gray_wolf/meeting_schedule.html) you may also email the Fish and Wildlife Commission at [commission@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:commission@dfw.wa.gov). Twelve public review meetings were held in October and November, and were attended by a total of 1,157 people. The draft plan has been under development by WDFW staff since early 2007, with the help of a 17-member citizen advisory group. The draft plan has been reviewed by wolf experts and other scientists and is currently undergoing a blind academic peer review. Following the public and scientific review process, a final wolf conservation and management plan will be prepared for presentation to the Fish and Wildlife Commission for consideration late next year.

There are no federal or state plans to reintroduce wolves into Washington.

The gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) was removed from the state by the 1930s through hunting and trapping programs, and remains federally protected under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the western two-thirds of Washington, and throughout Washington under state law (RCW77.15.120). Washington's first breeding wolf pack in at least 70 years was found in western Okanogan County in July 2008, and a second breeding pack was confirmed in Pend Oreille County last July.