

**Audubon Society of Portland ~ Big Wildlife ~ Cascadia Wildlands ~ Center for Biological Diversity
Gifford Pinchot Task Force ~ Hells Canyon Preservation Council ~ KS Wild
Lane County Audubon Society ~ National Wolfwatcher Coalition ~ Natural Resources Defense Council
Northeast Oregon Ecosystems ~ Northern Idaho Wolf Alliance ~ Northwest Environmental Advocates
Oregon Natural Desert Association ~ Oregon Wild ~ Predator Defense
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council ~ Western Environmental Law Center
Western Wildlife Conservancy ~ Wolf Education & Research Center ~ Wolf Recovery Foundation**

February 3, 2012

Governor John Kitzhaber
160 State Capital
900 Court Street
Salem, Oregon 97301-4047

Governor Kitzhaber,

On behalf of our 21 organizations and thousands of members throughout Oregon, we write to urge you to strongly and clearly oppose any legislation that would circumvent the state Endangered Species Act, or weaken other safeguards for fish and wildlife in the upcoming session.

Oregonians treasure our state's native wildlife, and strongly support the protection of endangered species. With the state facing a major budget crisis and a myriad of other serious problems, it is inappropriate to use a short legislative session to rush through such controversial measures.

This is particularly true of HB 4158, a measure that would declare a state "emergency" over Oregon's fragile recovering population of 29 endangered gray wolves in order to circumvent the state Endangered Species Act and allow the animals to be shot.

Legislatively carving out exemptions to allow the state to kill endangered species at the request of special interests opposed to fish and wildlife conservation would set a dangerous precedent that concerns us all. Such legislation could open a Pandora's box of copy-cat measures to exempt other state endangered species from the legal protections in order to satisfy demands from logging, mining, grazing, or development interests.

Governor Kitzhaber, time and time again, Oregonians have spoken out in favor of the conservation and protection of fish and wildlife in our state. We urge you again to strongly oppose anti-wildlife legislation in the upcoming session and focus instead on positive collaborative solutions that ensure healthy abundant populations of native fish and wildlife for future generations.

Very sincerely,



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Cc: State Legislative Leaders