

Two More Wolf Poisonings Confirmed SEATTLE- Conservation and animal-protection groups announced today an increased reward of \$51, 100 for information leading to a conviction in the illegal poisoning deaths of six **wolves** in northeastern Washington earlier this year.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff initially found four dead **wolves** on Feb. 18. During searches of the area in the following month two more deaths were discovered. The department updated its report today by including these two additional deaths and confirming that all six **wolves** died from ingesting poison.

"Washington **wolves** are being attacked on all sides, and the state needs to pull out the stops to find these poachers and make sure they can't kill again," said Sophia Ressler, an attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity. "It's devastating that even more **wolves** are dead. We need to send a clear message that this is unacceptable and there are serious consequences for illegal poisonings." "This has been a devastating year for Washington's wolf population," said Samantha Bruegger, executive director of Washington Wildlife First. "**Wolves** have experienced poaching, kill-orders and multiple caught-in-the-act shootings. We should be leading the country in wolf conservation. Instead we are getting closer and closer by the day to following Idaho's horrific wolf policies."

"Putting poison out on the landscape for any unsuspecting creature to feed on is one of the most loathsome things a person can do," said Brooks Fahy, executive director of Predator Defense, a national nonprofit advocacy group. "It's not just about killing **wolves**. It's also about wanting them to suffer. Poisons also pose a serious threat to other wildlife and pets and are a public safety risk."

"Six poisoned **wolves** and no answers after eight months is a dark spot on Washington's wolf recovery efforts," said Jocelyn Leroux, Washington and Montana director with Western Watersheds Project. "Targeting a state endangered species through such cruel and archaic means is reprehensible. It's time that these poachers are found and brought to justice."

"If we want to recover **wolves** in Washington and change their listing status, we need to stop killing them by both legal and illegal means," said Chris Bachman of Kettle Range Conservation Group. "Every wolf killed is one less wolf that can disperse across the state and aid recovery. In addition to poaching, numerous **wolves** are killed each year by the Department of Fish and Wildlife and Tribes."

"It is bad enough that the department killed a wolf pup and other members of several packs. Now numerous **wolves** have been poisoned," said Rachel Bjork, president of the Northwest Animal Rights Network. "This is unacceptable. **Wolves** are an important part of the ecosystem and they deserve protection, not persecution."

The \$51, 100 reward is being offered in part by the Center for Biological Diversity, Kettle Range Conservation Group, Northwest Animal Rights Network, Predator Defense, Speak for **Wolves**, Washington Wildlife First and Western Watersheds Project.

Anyone who might have information regarding the incident can report it confidentially by calling the department's poaching hotline at (877) 933-9847, visiting the department's website and reporting a violation, or texting WDFWTIP to 847411.