# [***ANNUAL COUNT SHOWS WASHINGTON WOLF POPULATION IS ON THE RISE***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YR0-T8C1-JCBF-S39B-00000-00&context=1516831)

States News Service

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**Body**

The following information was ***released by Defenders of Wildlife***:

The wolf population in Washington has increased despite multiple lethal removals due to wolf-livestock conflict, according to the Washington Gray Wolf Conservation and Management Plan 2019 Annual Report, released by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. According to WDFW, there are an estimated 145 wolves and 26 packs in Washington, as counted in 2019. In 2018, wolves in Washington numbered 126 individuals and 27 packs.

Zo Hanley, Representative of Northwest programs for ***Defenders of Wildlife***, ***issued*** this statement:

"Washington has seen modest improvement in our wolf populations in recent years, but these numbers are not indicative of a sustainable population statewide. Last year nine wolves were lethally removed due to conflicts with livestock. Conflicts between wolves and livestock could have been lessened had the state and the U.S. Forest Service implemented non-lethal measures consistently and effectively during the past few grazing seasons.

"Wolves still face an uncertain future in Washington state, as progress has been slow for wolves dispersing to large amount of suitable habitat in the southern and western portions of the state. We look forward to working with agency staff, landowners and ranchers to create a future that is beneficial for both humans and predators."

Background

- WDFW confirmed 108 wolves and 21 packs on WDFW-managed lands (an 11% increase from 2018), and a less certain count of 37 wolves in 5 packs on the Confederated ***Tribes*** of the Colville Reservation.

- WDFW reported 10 breeding pairs in 2019, one less than the 2018 count.

- Two new packs were counted in 2019, and a new pack of three wolves (the Kettle Pack) is establishing in the Old Profanity Peak pack territory, where livestock conflicts have occurred in recent years. In 2018, a new wolf pack, the Diobsud Creek pack, was confirmed in the northwest part of the state (only one wolf was confirmed in this area during 2019).

- In 2019, 21 wolf mortalities were confirmed. Of these deaths, 9 were lethal removals in response to wolf-livestock conflicts; two were caught-in-the-act incidents; one was a perceived human threat and one is currently under investigation. In 2018, 12 wolf mortalities were recorded, including four from lethal removal. Fourteen confirmed cattle deaths were attributed to wolves in 2019, with 11 confirmed cattle injuries.

Defenders of Wildlife is dedicated to the protection of all native animals and plants in their natural communities. With over 1.8 million members and activists, Defenders of Wildlife is a leading advocate for innovative solutions to safeguard our wildlife heritage for generations to come. For more information, visit defenders.org/newsroom and follow us on Twitter @Defenders.

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