Senate Engrossed

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-first Legislature
Second Regular Session
2014

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 1006

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING THE PROTECTION OF ARIZONA AND NEW MEXICO LANDOWNERS AND THE DIVERSION OF FUTURE MEXICAN WOLF INTRODUCTION EFFORTS TO REMOTE AREAS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

Whereas, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has issued a proposed rule under which the gray wolf (Canis lupus) will be removed from the list of endangered and threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) based on the large numbers of wolves across the species' range in North America; and

Whereas, the USFWS also intends to reclassify reintroduced wolves in the southwestern United States as a new wolf subspecies called the Mexican wolf (Canis lupus baileyi) and to list this new subspecies as endangered under the ESA; and

Whereas, the USFWS is also proposing to issue a revised experimental population rule under section 10(j) of the ESA that would cover the new Mexican wolf subspecies and facilitate the introduction of additional wolves into Arizona and New Mexico; and

Whereas, Congress enacted section 10(j) of the ESA to mitigate fears that reestablishing populations of endangered species would negatively impact landowners and other private parties, recognizing that flexible rules, developed in consultation with local governments and private citizens, could encourage recovery partners to actively assist in the establishment and hosting of endangered populations on their lands; and

Whereas, to the maximum extent practicable, section 10(j) rules are intended to represent an agreement between the USFWS, affected state and federal agencies and persons holding any interest in land that may be affected by the establishment of an experimental population; and

Whereas, the objective of 1982 Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan is the establishment of a viable, self-sustaining population of at least 100 Mexican wolves in the wild; and

Whereas, as of 2012, there are approximately 75 wolves in the wild in Arizona and New Mexico, 97 per cent of which were conceived and born in the wild as a direct result of previous wolf introduction efforts; and

Whereas, the reclassification and listing of the Mexican wolf and the adoption and implementation of the revised experimental population rule will allow additional wolves to be introduced within Arizona and New Mexico; and

Whereas, the introduction of wolves into Arizona and New Mexico has resulted in significant adverse impacts on private landowners and resource users, as well as hunting and other recreational activities, which are vital to our local and regional economy; and

Whereas, under its regulations, the USFWS must consult with appropriate state fish and wildlife agencies, local governmental entities, affected federal agencies and affected private landowners in developing and implementing experimental population rules; and

Whereas, in developing its experimental population rules for the Mexican wolf, the USFWS has failed to meaningfully consult with local governmental entities, whose citizens will be adversely affected by the introduction of wolves, and with private land and resource users who will be adversely impacted by the introduction of wolves; and

Whereas, the proposed listing and experimental population rules for the Mexican wolf indicate that the USFWS intends to expand the areas in which releases of captive-bred wolves will occur and to introduce additional wolves into that expanded area, creating even greater conflicts with private landowners and resource users.

Therefore

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Arizona, the House of Representatives concurring:

1. That the Members of the Legislature support focusing future Mexican wolf introduction efforts on remote areas within the northern Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range, which contains substantial habitat suitable for Mexican wolves and, in many places, is largely uninhabited.

2. That the Members of the Legislature support shifting the primary responsibility for the administration of the Mexican wolf introduction program in Arizona and New Mexico to the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.

3. That the Members of the Legislature do not support additional introductions of Mexican wolves in Arizona and New Mexico unless and until it has been determined that wolves cannot be introduced successfully in northern Mexico and the natural expansion of the existing wolf population in Arizona and New Mexico is not capable of achieving the 100-wolf population goal of the 1982 Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan.

4. That the Members of the Legislature believe that the 10(j) rule governing the management of Mexican wolves in Arizona and New Mexico should authorize private landowners and their agents, following reasonable notice and reporting requirements, to take Mexican wolves that enter private land, unless the landowner has entered into a management agreement with the USFWS allowing wolves to enter private land.

5. That the Members of the Legislature believe that the 10(j) rule governing the management of Mexican wolves in Arizona and New Mexico should authorize private landowners and their agents to take Mexican wolves that are killing, wounding, biting, chasing, threatening or harassing humans, pets or livestock on private land, subject to reasonable notice and reporting requirements.