

HOUSE BILL NO. 150

INTRODUCED BY C. EDMUNDS

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING THE ISSUANCE OF ONE FREE WOLF LICENSE FOR EACH BIG GAME HUNTER; PROVIDING AN EXCEPTION; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, elk and moose populations began a downward trend that coincided with the reintroduction of wolves; and

WHEREAS, recent surveys by the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (DFWP) found there is generally a low tolerance for wolves on the landscape; and

WHEREAS, the wolf population continues to increase despite public harvest and government control actions; and

WHEREAS, the DFWP has stated that wolf populations need to be reduced; and

WHEREAS, this legislation is consistent with DFWP's objective to increase wolf harvest levels with the intent to reduce the abundance of wolves across Montana; and

WHEREAS, this legislation should provide additional relief to livestock producers and relief to big game populations that are performing poorly due to the effects of wolf predation; and

WHEREAS, this legislation does not create a scenario that would cause or warrant the relisting of wolves under the Endangered Species Act.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Free wolf license with purchase of big game license.** (1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), a resident or nonresident who obtains a hunting license for any game animal, as defined in 87-2-101, pursuant to this chapter may receive a free Class E-1 or Class E-2 wolf license.

(2) A person may receive only one free wolf license pursuant to this section in each license year.

(3) The department may not issue free wolf licenses pursuant to this section if the department determines the state's minimum wolf population is less than 200 wolves.

1            NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an  
2 integral part of Title 87, chapter 2, part 8, and the provisions of Title 87, chapter 2, part 8, apply to [section 1].

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4            NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

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