



B.C. Kills 237 Wolves While Matter Before the Courts

April 28, 2021 - Victoria, B.C.

Pacific Wild has learned that the B.C. government killed 237 wolves during the winter of 2021 as part of the province's continued war on wolves – despite the matter of the lawfulness of the cull being before the courts.

“This government's recent behavior toward our wildlife shows a flagrant disregard for the role our courts have to play in ensuring the lawfulness and accountability of government's actions and decisions,” says Laurie McConnell, spokesperson for Pacific Wild.

Pacific Wild filed court documents in 2020 alleging the government's wolf cull program was inherently unlawful due to it being contrary to wildlife regulations and contrary to federal aviation laws. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, court dates have not been available.

“Our ability to have this matter heard in a timely fashion has been hampered by COVID-19 and difficulties in getting a hearing date,” says Rebeka Breder, lawyer for Pacific Wild. “We have literally made hundreds of calls to the court registry over a period of several months in attempts to get a hearing date. Our judicial system is failing our wildlife.”

Bureaucrats used the delays and re-wrote sections of regulations under the Wildlife Act in an attempt to continue otherwise alleged unlawful activities – all before the courts could hear the matter or intervene. The result was another 237 wolves killed in 2021, while the judicial system was paralyzed, and people were restricted in their abilities to campaign, travel, and monitor government activities.

“Pacific Wild has not withdrawn its petition to have this matter heard by the courts, despite the recent regulatory amendments,” says Breder. “We maintain, despite new regulations, that the wolf cull is unlawful. Pacific Wild has asked the courts to review the matter in its entirety, and we fully intend to proceed to a hearing.”

Background:

Since 2015, the B.C. government has spent over three million dollars to eliminate wolves from large parts of the province of B.C. through trapping and aerial snipers. They have killed over 1000 wolves between 2015 and now 2021 in what was proposed as a limited five-year program, which has now stretched into its seventh year.

The wolf cull program takes place in two parts. First, alpha males are chased with a helicopter and shot with a net gun. Once netted, these pack leaders are fitted with a radio collar. They are then tracked until they betray the pack's location and have become known as the “Judas wolves”. Once a Judas wolf reveals a pack's location, civilian aerial snipers are sent in via helicopter to shoot as many wolves as possible from above. Additionally, on-the-ground den raiding activities are also routine practice, with civilian hunters killing wolf pups and mothers. The government continues to conduct its lethal practices under the guise of caribou protection.

A new study published in the Journal of Biology and Conservation found the government-sponsored kill program has had no detectable effect on reversing the decline of endangered caribou populations. The true cause of caribou decline is habitat loss due to industrial activities, primarily old growth logging and road building in sensitive caribou herd areas with many new cutblocks slated for logging in 2021



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About Pacific Wild:

Pacific Wild protects wildlife and their habitat in the Great Bear Rainforest of British Columbia through impactful communications, wildlife monitoring, and community-led initiatives that shed light on the natural world. One of the organization's premier campaigns aims to stop the wolf cull and to resist ongoing efforts to escalate the persecution of wolves across the province.