

Montana's wolf and bear bills

These are the bills that could spell disaster for Montana's wolves, bears, pets and other wildlife.

- [HB 224](#), was heard in Senate Fish and Game Committee on Feb. 18 and could be voted on any day now. It has already passed the House. This bill allows wolf snaring--killing animals by slow strangulation. Snares are indiscriminate and can catch pets and other wildlife including federally protected eagles. Snaring bills are referred to as "dog killing bills" because many hunters, skiers and hikers recreate with their companion animals.
- [HB 225](#), was heard in Senate Fish and Game Committee on Feb. 18 and could be voted on any day now. It has already passed the House. This bill aims to extend wolf trapping season an additional 30 days. Not only would extending the season increase the number of wolves killed using these cruel and archaic devices, but it would also increase the likelihood of "non-target" animals getting caught—including pets and endangered or imperiled species like grizzly bears.
- [SB 98](#), passed out of the Senate on Feb. 15 and could soon be heard in the House Agriculture Committee. This bill extends the state law allowance for killing grizzly bears. Currently, it's illegal under state law to kill a grizzly, but there's an exception for cases where the bear is in the act of killing livestock. SB 98 expands that to cover cases where bears are merely threatening livestock. This only makes a functional difference if grizzlies are delisted again, since it remains illegal under federal law to kill a grizzly regardless of what exceptions might exist under state law. This bill introduces an element of subjectivity that will be impossible to disprove.
- [SB 267](#), could soon be heard in the Senate Fish and Game Committee. This bill authorizes reimbursement for wolf hunting and trapping, essentially bringing back a bounty system like the one that led to the eradication of wolves in the early 20th century.
- [HB 468](#), could soon be heard in the House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee. This bill allows cruel hound hunting of black bears, which puts hounds and bears at great risk of injuries and death and disturbs all wildlife when packs of hounds run through a wild area.
- [LC 3117](#), in the draft stage, establishes the intent of wolf hunting and trapping seasons to reduce Montana's wolf population to a minimum of 15 breeding pairs. This bill also allows the commission to authorize a single individual to kill an unlimited number of wolves and allows night hunting of wolves on private lands with the use of artificial light or night vision scopes.
- [LC3112](#), in the draft stage, is potentially the worst state bill on wolves in years. It would reclassify wolves as predators, meaning they could be shot-on-sight year-round, allowing an unprecedented level of killing.
- [LC 1915](#), in the draft stage, allows wolves to be hunted at night.
- [LC 1907](#), in the draft stage, increases number of wolves a single individual can kill. The current limit is five.