

HF1331 - 0 - Wolf Population Survey Required

Chief Author: **Isaac Schultz**  
 Committee: **Environment And Natural Resources Finance And Policy**  
 Date Completed: **3/3/2025 10:20:22 PM**  
 Agency: **Natural Resources Dept**

| State Fiscal Impact       | Yes | No |
|---------------------------|-----|----|
| Expenditures              | X   |    |
| Fee/Departmental Earnings |     | X  |
| Tax Revenue               |     | X  |
| Information Technology    |     | X  |
| Local Fiscal Impact       |     | X  |

This table shows direct impact to state government only. Local government impact, if any, is discussed in the narrative. Reductions shown in the parentheses.

| State Cost (Savings)<br>Dollars in Thousands | Biennium |              |              | Biennium   |            |
|--|----------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|
|  | FY2025   | FY2026       | FY2027       | FY2028     | FY2029     |
| General Fund                                 | -        | 1,486        | 418          | 418        | 418        |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>-</b> | <b>1,486</b> | <b>418</b>   | <b>418</b> | <b>418</b> |
| <b>Biennial Total</b>                        |          |              | <b>1,904</b> |            | <b>836</b> |

| Full Time Equivalent Positions (FTE) | Biennium |          |          | Biennium |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                                      | FY2025   | FY2026   | FY2027   | FY2028   | FY2029   |
| General Fund                         | -        | -        | -        | -        | -        |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> |

**LBO Analyst's Comment**

I have reviewed this fiscal note for reasonableness of content and consistency with the LBO's Uniform Standards and Procedures.

**LBO Signature:** Jim Carlson      **Date:** 3/3/2025 10:20:22 PM  
**Phone:** 651-284-6540      **Email:** jim.carlson@lbo.mn.gov

**State Cost (Savings) Calculation Details**

This table shows direct impact to state government only. Local government impact, if any, is discussed in the narrative. Reductions are shown in parentheses.

\*Transfers In/Out and Absorbed Costs are only displayed when reported.

| <b>State Cost (Savings) = 1-2</b>                        |   | <b>Biennium</b> |              |              | <b>Biennium</b> |            |
|--|---|-----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| Dollars in Thousands                                     |   | FY2025          | FY2026       | FY2027       | FY2028          | FY2029     |
| General Fund   | - | 1,486           | 418          | 418          | 418             | 418        |
| <b>Total</b>   |   | <b>-</b>        | <b>1,486</b> | <b>418</b>   | <b>418</b>      | <b>418</b> |
| <b>Biennial Total</b>                                    |   |                 |              | <b>1,904</b> |                 | <b>836</b> |
| <b>1 - Expenditures, Absorbed Costs*, Transfers Out*</b> |   |                 |              |              |                 |            |
| General Fund   | - | 1,486           | 418          | 418          | 418             | 418        |
| <b>Total</b>   |   | <b>-</b>        | <b>1,486</b> | <b>418</b>   | <b>418</b>      | <b>418</b> |
| <b>Biennial Total</b>                                    |   |                 |              | <b>1,904</b> |                 | <b>836</b> |
| <b>2 - Revenues, Transfers In*</b>                       |   |                 |              |              |                 |            |
| General Fund   | - | -               | -            | -            | -               | -          |
| <b>Total</b>   |   | <b>-</b>        | <b>-</b>     | <b>-</b>     | <b>-</b>        | <b>-</b>   |
| <b>Biennial Total</b>                                    |   |                 |              | <b>-</b>     |                 | <b>-</b>   |

**Bill Description**

This bill proposes to require a wolf population survey to cover the entire state.

**Assumptions**

The DNR considers current population estimates to be representative of the entire state, though this doesn't imply that wolves are actively searched for across the whole state every year. Five-year wolf range surveys identify the regions where wolf packs reside, and it is within these areas that we collar and monitor the packs to estimate their population. While some wolves may venture outside of these designated areas, this does not impact the overall population estimates. We believe that the current methods provide a statewide survey of wolves, and increased effort may be unnecessary.

However, we interpret the language in this bill to require new effort in the form of a wolf population survey with activity in all counties in Minnesota. A volunteer-driven initiative utilizing trail cameras, similar to the Snapshot Wisconsin model would be used to gather population information in every county.

Staff time required to implement the program would be 4 FTE in the first year, due to the high efforts needed to prepare and distribute equipment around the state, in addition to outreach and volunteer coordination. We estimate 1.5 FTE for ongoing program administration needs.

Materials and supplies needed include 5,000 cameras and supporting equipment such as chargers, memory cards, and other necessary items.

These efforts would also result in higher than normal annual travel costs, with site visits to each camera location needed for setup, takedown, maintenance, etc.

Data management needs are estimated at \$100,000 per year for processing, storage, and handling of large amounts of image and video data.

The DNR would also create and implement a new public-facing dashboard to publish results and data from population surveys.

**Expenditure and/or Revenue Formula**

**Summary of estimated expenditures (\$ in thousands)**

|   | FY26           | Ongoing      |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| 1.5 FTE to administer program           | 248            | 248          |
| 2.5 FTE to deploy equipment             | 413            |              |
| Cameras and other equipment             | 500            | 5            |
| Travel                                  | 25             | 25           |
| Data management                         | 100            | 100          |
| Dashboard implementation and management | 200            | 40           |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>\$1,486</b> | <b>\$418</b> |

**Long-Term Fiscal Considerations**

Costs would be ongoing.

**Local Fiscal Impact**

N/A

**References/Sources**

Minnesota's wolf plan: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/wolves/wolf-plan.html>

Annual Wolf Population Survey results: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/wolves/index.html>

Snapshot Wisconsin: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/research/projects/snapshot>

**Agency Contact:** Linda Kelly (651) 259-5238

**Agency Fiscal Note Coordinator Signature:** Tyler Teggatz

**Phone:** 651-259-5304

**Date:** 3/3/2025 10:57:34 AM

**Email:** tyler.teggatz@state.mn.us