

FRED A. RISSER

Wisconsin State Senate



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Contact:
Senator Fred Risser
608-266-1627

Risser Bill Will Prohibit the use of Dogs in Wolf Hunting

(MADISON)—State Senator Fred Risser (D-Madison) is proposing legislation that would prohibit the use of dogs in the wolf hunt. Wisconsin is one of seven states that allow wolf hunting but the only state that allows dogs to be used in the hunt.

Act 169, which permits a wolf hunting season in the state, took effect last April after wolves were federally delisted as an endangered species, but did not regulate how dogs were allowed to be used in the hunt. The lack of regulation resulted in a lawsuit against the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Board by a number of animal welfare advocates who argued that the unregulated involvement of dogs in the wolf hunt would lead to vicious fights between the two animals.

Dane County Circuit Court Judge Peter C. Anderson issued an injunction against the use of dogs throughout the 2012-2013 winter wolf hunt, pending resolution with the DNR. The injunction was lifted this January and the issue of regulation was remanded to the Natural Resources Board. The Board created minor regulations following the lawsuit that have been criticized as inadequate and unenforceable. At their meeting last week, the Board resolved against creating any new regulations at this time.

“If hunting wolves is going to be permitted in Wisconsin, we must strive to make the hunt as responsible and humane as possible,” says Risser. “The Natural Resources Board has failed to issue meaningful regulations regarding this issue and the best option is to prohibit dogs in this hunt. Using dogs in the hunt will provoke ferocious encounters with wolves and is wholly inhumane. It is nothing more than state-sanctioned dog fighting.”

Among those who support prohibiting dogs in the wolf hunt are the Wisconsin Federated Humane Societies, Inc., Wisconsin Mainstream Hunters, The Sierra Club, the Wisconsin Humane Society, and the Northwood Alliance.

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