

NEWS RELEASE
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region
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For Immediate Release

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NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN WOLVES REMOVED
FROM ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST AS OF MARCH 28, 2008

Today, Friday, March 28, 2008, the northern Rocky Mountain gray wolf is officially removed from the federal list of endangered species. The States of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming will assume full management authority for the continued conservation of the gray wolf. This wolf population has exceeded its recovery goals for the past several years and is now thriving. Presently, there are more than 1,500 wolves and at least 100 breeding pairs in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. The Service and States will cooperatively monitor the wolf population for the next five years.

As part of the Service's delisting action, it designated the northern Rocky Mountain wolf Distinct Population Segment (DPS) as that area that includes all of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, the eastern third of Washington and Oregon, and a small corner of north-central Utah.

This action will not affect the status of any wolves outside of the northern Rocky Mountain wolf DPS. Wolves outside the boundaries of the Rocky Mountain DPS and Western Great Lakes DPS (where it was delisted in 2007) will remain listed as endangered. A dispersing wolf would attain the status of the area it is in. For example, if a wolf dispersed to Colorado, it would be considered endangered, whereas a wolf that moves into either DPS would be a delisted wolf and under the management of the States.

Once a species is delisted a State or Tribe has sole management responsibility. The Act includes many safeguards to ensure that the wolf population will remain recovered for the foreseeable future. For example, the Act mandates the Service to monitor the wolf population for at least 5 years after delisting. This helps to ensure the population remains above recovery levels and emerging threats do not jeopardize the wolf population. Annual reports and the Service's analysis of these reports will be posted on the Service website during that period. Should the wolf population again become threatened or endangered, it could be protected under the ESA again.

Gray wolves were previously listed as endangered in the lower 48 states, except in Minnesota, where they were listed as threatened. The wolf population in the Midwest was delisted in early 2007. With removal of the northern Rocky Mountain population of gray wolves delisted, the Service now oversees the only remaining gray wolf recovery program, the southwestern U.S. wolf population.

Wolves in national parks will remain under the management authority of the National Park Service. On national wildlife refuges, the individual refuge should be contacted, unless a prior arrangement has been made with the state fish and wildlife agency to allow wolf hunting on that refuge. On tribal lands the Tribes have management authority, and they should be contacted. On other lands, where wildlife is typically managed by the respective State fish and wildlife agency, (including federal lands such as those administered by the U.S. Forest Service or BLM) the states should be contacted.

For more information on northern Rocky Mountain gray wolves, visit www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/mammals/wolf/

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit **www.fws.gov**.

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