

**IDAHO FISH AND GAME**  
**HEADQUARTERS NEWS RELEASE**  
Boise, ID

**Date:** March 6, 2009

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### **Wolf Delisting Rule Announced**

Idaho Fish and Game officials welcomed the announcement Friday, March 6, that Interior Secretary Ken Salazar affirmed the decision to delist the gray wolf in the Northern Rocky Mountains.

"We applaud this effort," Fish and Game Director Cal Groen said. "This is good news for wolves, elk, rural communities and hunters. I believe this action will help defuse the animosity and anger associated with wolves when we can manage wolves in concert with our other big game species."

The Endangered Species Act was not meant to keep animals listed forever; it was designed to turn management back to the states, he said.

Friday's announcement doesn't include Wyoming, because that state's wolf management plan has not met the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Salazar said. Idaho and Montana have approved wolf management plans.

"I don't believe we should hold these two states hostage," Salazar said.

The Fish and Wildlife Service, which made the decision to delist gray wolves in Idaho and Montana in January, will send the delisting rule to the Federal Register for publication. The rule would take effect in mid to late April, 30 days after publication.

When delisting becomes official, Idaho would again take over managing wolves under state law adopted in 2008 and under a wolf population management plan also adopted last year.

"Our plan is to manage wolves as we do other big game," Groen said.

Fish and Game is ready to apply the same professional wildlife management practices to wolves as it has applied to all big game species, which all have recovered from low populations during the early 1900s, he said.

Wolves were all but extirpated in Idaho by the 1930s. They were declared endangered in 1974, and a federal recovery effort brought 35 wolves to central Idaho in 1995 and 1996. Wolf numbers have grown steadily since then, to a minimum of 846 today.

Fish and Game has supported recovery efforts. Based on the Legislature's 2002 Wolf Conservation Plan, Fish and Game biologists developed a wolf population management plan, adopted by the Idaho Fish and Game Commission in March 2008.

Fish and Game will propose wolf hunting seasons this fall, subject to Fish and Game Commission approval.

For information contact Fish and Game Deputy Director Jim Unsworth at 208-334-3700.