

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Upper Columbia FWO
11103 E Montgomery Drive
Spokane, Washington 99206
Phone: 509/891-6839
Fax: 509/891-6748
<http://www.fws.gov/easternwashington>

News Release



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Contact: Tom Buckley, 509-893-8029
Joan Jewett, 503-231-6211

Idaho requests recovery permit to manage endangered wolves north of Interstate 90 *30 day comment period opens*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), in response to a request by the State of Idaho, proposes to issue a 10(a)(1)(A) Recovery Permit to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) to manage gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) in the Idaho Panhandle north of Interstate-90, where wolves are protected under the Endangered Species Act as endangered.

Idaho officials are requesting a permit to lethally take (harass by survey, capture, handle, collar, take blood samples, relocate, sacrifice, and release) the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) in conjunction with wolf management activities in the State of Idaho north of Interstate 90, for the purpose of enhancing its survival.

If issued, the permit would authorize IDFG to: (a) conduct monitoring of wolf populations and (b) coordinate non-lethal and lethal control actions to reduce wolf conflicts with livestock and dogs. These actions are currently coordinated by the Service.

Publication of this notice of receipt of a permit application in the Federal Register today opens a 30-day public comment period. Comments on this permit application must be received on or before February 9, 2006. Written data or comments should be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chief, Endangered Species, Ecological Services, 911 NE. 11th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97232-4181 (fax: 503-231-6243). Please refer to the IDFG Wolf Permit number, TE-114934, when submitting comments. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the official administrative record and may be made available to the public.

IDFG's application and other information relevant to wolf permits are available for review, subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, by any party who submits a request for a copy of such documents to the address above or calls 503-231-2063. These documents can also be found at: <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/ecoservices/endangered/recovery/GrayWolfManagement.htm>.

Idaho currently has a Service-approved wolf management plan. A Memorandum of Agreement was signed between the Department of the Interior and the State of Idaho on January 5, 2006, to transfer management of wolves in the experimental, non-essential population, which occurs south of I-90. That population of wolves is protected under the Endangered Species Act as a threatened species.

On March 9, 1978, the Service published a rule that listed the gray wolf as endangered throughout the conterminous 48 States and Mexico (43 FR 9607), except for Minnesota, where they were reclassified as threatened. On November 22, 1994, the Service designated areas in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming as nonessential experimental populations (55 FR 60252, 59 FR 60266) in order to initiate gray wolf reintroduction projects in central Idaho (south of I-90) and the Greater Yellowstone Area. In 1995 and 1996, wolves were reintroduced from Canada to central Idaho and the Greater Yellowstone Area. Wolves north of I-90 have remained listed as endangered.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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