

APPLICATION FOR A NEW FEDERAL RECOVERY PERMIT

Text in bold corresponds to items identified on Form-3-200-55

A. IDENTIFY SPECIES AND ACTIVITY

A.1.a. Provide the common and scientific names of the species being requested for coverage in the permit and their status (endangered or threatened).

Gray wolf (*Canis lupus*): endangered

A.1.b. Provide the number, age, and sex of such species to the extent known.

Up to 10 percent of the wolf population in Michigan annually, including both male and female wolves but excluding young-of-year wolves prior to August 1 each year.

A.1.c. Identify the activity sought to be authorized for each species.

Activities:

We request authority to:

1. Conduct lethal control of wolves involved in confirmed depredation of livestock or other domestic animals, according to the following conditions:
 - a. Wolf depredation on lawfully present domestic animals must be verified by appropriately trained personnel.
 - b. Depredation is likely to be repeated.
 - c. The taking must occur within 1 mile of the depredation site.
 - d. Taking, wolf handling, and euthanizing must be carried out in a humane manner, and may include the use of foothold traps, snares, shooting, and/or lethal injection.
 - e. Traps and snares must be checked at least every 24 hours.
 - f. Young-of-year wolves trapped before August 1 must be released.
 - g. Lactating females trapped before July 1 must be released near the point of capture unless they have been involved with chronic depredation problems (i.e., three or more depredation events); in this case, lactating females may be captured and euthanized.
 - h. Lethal control efforts may not be implemented at livestock operations or on other private lands that fail to follow technical assistance guidelines in a timely manner.

- i. Lethal control may not be used when wolves kill dogs that are free-roaming on, hunting on, or training on public lands.
 - j. Disposal of wolf carcasses and parts will follow 50 CFR 17.21 and the: *Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Wildlife Division procedure: disposal of wildlife carcasses and parts* (enclosed).
 - k. If a depredation has not occurred in the current calendar year, lethal control may proceed only if: 1) verified depredation occurred at the site, or in the immediate vicinity, during the previous year; 2) there is strong evidence one or more members of the depredating pack has remained in the area since the verified depredation; 3) based on wolf behavior and other factors, the depredation is likely to be repeated; and 4) trapping is conducted in a location and in a manner to minimize the likelihood a wolf or wolves from a non-depredating pack is captured.
2. Conduct non-lethal, injurious harassment of wolves that pose a threat to livestock and other domestic animals, under the following circumstances:
 - a. a wolf attacks or closely approaches livestock or other domestic animals.
 - b. the harassment cannot be reasonably expected to cause permanent physical damage or death to a wolf.
3. Designate other agencies and tribal governments as State agents authorized to conduct activities outlined under Items 1 and 2, and designate organizations and private individuals as State agents authorized to conduct activities outlined under Item 2, according to the following conditions:
 - a. Designated State agents must understand and adhere to all conditions outlined under Items 1 and 2.
 - b. Prior to designation of organizations and private individuals as State agents, wolf depredation or other wolf-related threats to livestock or other domestic animals in areas relevant to the organizations or private individuals in question must be verified by appropriately trained personnel.
 - c. Organizations and private individuals designated at State agents must be trained in the safe and appropriate use of harassment techniques and equipment.
 - d. Organizations and private individuals designated at State agents must sign a User Agreement indicating they have been informed, trained and understand the safe and appropriate use of harassment equipment and techniques.

- e. Organizations and private individuals designated as State agents must report any use of harassment equipment or techniques within 24 hours of the action.
- f. Permittee must inform the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of any wolves taken by designated agents in accordance with the reporting requirements outlined below.

Reporting:

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will provide an annual permit report to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service East Lansing Field Office by January 31 each year. This report will include:

1. the date, location, age, sex, and general description of the physical condition of each wolf captured or injuriously harassed;
2. description of any medications administered to captured wolves;
3. the disposition of any wolves injured, killed, salvaged, held and transported;
4. the results of any blood analysis;
5. the results of efforts to address and resolve depredation issues; and
6. a summary that includes the following for each wolf injury or mortality that occurred:
 - a. the date and time of the taking;
 - b. the name of any persons involved in the takings;
 - c. the circumstances surrounding any taking, including the stimulus for the taking, and/or human activities involved;
 - d. the behavioral responses of any gray wolves taken; and
 - e. any actions taken to avoid or minimize taking.

Definitions:

Depredation is defined as the injury or killing of livestock or other domestic animals.

Domestic animals include animals that have been selectively bred over many generations to enhance specific traits for their use by humans, including use as pets.

Injurious harassment includes, but is not limited to, the use of nonlethal ammunition such as rubber bullets or projectile bean bags.

Livestock include, but are not limited to, cattle, sheep, new world camelids, goats, bison, privately owned cervids, ratites, swine, equine, poultry, aquaculture, rabbits and herding or guard animals (e.g., llamas,

donkeys, and certain special-use breeds of dogs commonly used for guarding or herding livestock).

B. IDENTIFY LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY

B.1. Provide the name of the State, county, and specific location of the proposed activity site(s). Include a formal legal description, section/township/range information, county tax parcel number, local address, or any other identifying property designation that will precisely place the location of the proposed activity site(s).

State of Michigan.

B.2. If the specific study area is known at the time of application, attach a U.S. Geological Survey map of the study area in 7.5 minute quadrangle (1:24,000) scale, or other appropriately scaled map. If you plan to conduct surveys on a contract basis in the future, these maps can be provided once the specific area is known (the counties in which you will work must be provided at this time).

Not useful.

B.3. If your request is for aquatic species, identify the aquatic system (river/lake/stream name, river mile information, and drainage basin).

Not applicable.

C. DESCRIBE THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY

C.1. Provide a statement justifying the permit request, including the following: [A copy of a research or study proposal that provides this information can be attached in lieu of the information requested below.] Use additional sheets as necessary.

See below.

C.1.a. Describe in detail the purpose(s) and objective(s) of the project.

The purpose of the proposed activities is to enhance the survival and recovery of the gray wolf in Michigan by preventing or minimizing the development of negative public attitudes which can result in widespread adverse impacts to the population. The objectives of the proposed activities are to minimize depredation by wolves on domestic animals. By responding effectively to depredation concerns, we will be able to

minimize the development of intolerance and resentment for the wolf population. The proposed actions are therefore necessary to maintain public support and thereby ensure the long-term recovery of the species.

C.1.a.i. Include study design, sampling methodologies and equipment to be used.

See activities and conditions outlined under A.1.c. For a more thorough discussion of methodologies and equipment to be used, see:

Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division procedure: guidelines for management and lethal control of wolves following confirmed depredation events (enclosed).

C.1.a.ii. Identify any null hypothesis or other anticipated results from the project that will support the reasoning why the project is justified for enhancement of propagation or survival of the affected species.

During the past decade, the wolf population in Michigan has increased by approximately 500%. The combined population in Wisconsin and Michigan is seven to eight times larger than required by Federal delisting criteria. As the Michigan population has grown, the incidence of problems posed by wolves has increased. Of all the wolf-related depredation events confirmed since 1996, approximately 60 percent have occurred since 2003. Approximately 73 percent of wolf attacks on pet dogs confirmed since 1996 have occurred since 2002. The number of wolves habituated near human residences also has been growing. As wolves expand further into agricultural and residential areas, we expect the incidence of these conflicts to increase exponentially with population size.

As a result of increasing wolf problems, public support is eroding. Negative media reports are becoming more common and the frequency of complaints to our agency is increasing. Perhaps most significant, the number of illegal wolf killings has been on the rise. At least 10 of the 21 (48%) radiocollared-wolf mortalities which occurred in 2004 were due to illegal taking. In this way, mounting anti-wolf sentiments are having a direct effect on the wolf population, despite legal protection. Without the authority which would allow us to effectively deal with problem wolves, public support will continue to decline and the frequency of these illegal actions are certain to increase.

Without a permit, the options currently available to us are impractical or insufficient for effective management of the wolf population. Improvement of husbandry techniques is often unsuccessful at deterring livestock depredation. Relocation is no longer feasible in the Upper

Peninsula (UP) for several reasons: (1) relocated wolves often do not remain near release sites, and some return to their original territories; (2) given the widespread wolf distribution across the UP at this time, any relocated wolves would probably be killed by resident packs; (3) relocated wolves may continue to exhibit problem behavior; and (4) relocation gives the false impression that we are introducing additional wolves to the UP, which contributes to the decline in public support. We continue to provide monetary reimbursement for property loss due to wolf depredation, but most livestock producers do not see compensation as an acceptable solution. To foster tolerance within this group, we need the ability to prevent or minimize serial depredation.

For these reasons, the authority to use harassment and lethal control is absolutely necessary to manage and conserve wolves in Michigan. The ability to respond effectively to problems would minimize the development of negative public attitudes and better ensure the persistence of the population as a whole.

For a more thorough discussion of how the proposed activities will enhance the survival and recovery of the species, see:

Federal Register. April 1, 2003. Final rule to reclassify and remove the Gray wolf from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife in portion of the coterminous United States; establishment of two special regulations for threatened gray wolves. 50 CFR Part 17 Volume 68, No. 62, pages 15804–15875.

C.1.a.iii. Include planned disposition of specimens upon completion of project.

The disposition of specimens will be determined according to 50 CFR 17.21 and the: *Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Wildlife Division procedure: disposal of wildlife carcasses and parts* (enclosed).

C.1.b. Describe how the proposal will help recover each species.

See C.1.a and C.1.a.ii.

C.1.b.i. If there is an approved recovery plan, identify the recovery tasks by number and name, if applicable.

Not applicable.

C.1.b.ii. Identify, or provide copies of any previous or similar research conducted on this species.

For a description of depredation management conducted in Michigan under the former 4(d) rule, see:

Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division procedure: guidelines for management and lethal control of wolves following confirmed depredation events (enclosed).

For a description of depredation management conducted under Section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Federal Endangered Species Act, see:

Subpermit 05-05 under PRT-697830 (enclosed).

C.1.b.iii. If this information exists, explain how the project will answer questions not answered by earlier research.

Not applicable.

C.1.b.iv. Explain how you will coordinate your efforts with past and ongoing research studies.

Lethal control and harassment will be conducted using methods similar to those authorized and used under the former 4(d) rule and by Subpermit 05-05 under PRT-697830.

C.1.c. Can this project result in the injury, death, or removal from the wild of any individuals of the species?

Yes.

C.1.c.i. If yes, describe all that apply (i.e., injury, death, removal from the wild).

Injury and death could occur due to the proposed actions. Live animals would not be removed from the wild.

C.1.c.ii. For each species, please state the maximum number of individuals that would be injured, killed, or removed from the wild: [If applicable, please identify, based on a reasonable expectation, the number of individuals likely to be injured or killed per activity.]

We request authority to take as much as 10 percent of the population annually in response to confirmed depredation events. Based on the 2004–2005 winter survey data, the Michigan wolf population is estimated to consist of a minimum of 405 wolves. At the requested level of take and the current population size, as many as 40 wolves could be removed from the population annually. However, the actual number of wolves taken

annually would probably not exceed 20 during the next few years. As the population grows and depredation events occur more frequently, this number will probably increase.

C.1.c.iii. Please state what will be done to minimize the possibility of injury to or death of individuals.

1. Wolf depredation on lawfully present domestic animals must be verified by appropriately trained personnel. All personnel making field evaluations to determine whether an incident constitutes a verified wolf depredation event will have undergone the depredation training provided by MDNR Wildlife Division.
2. The evaluation of whether depredation is likely to occur again will be based on a field review, past history of depredations in the area, known pack locations and movement patterns, and consultation with MDNR Management Unit Supervisors or their designees.
3. Traps and snares must be checked at least every 24 hours.
4. Snares should be set for nonlethal capture (to avoid entanglement of the captured animal).
5. Young-of-year wolves trapped before August 1 must be released.
6. Lactating females trapped before July 1 must be released near the point of capture unless they have been involved with chronic depredation problems (i.e., three or more depredation events); in this case, lactating females may be captured and euthanized.
7. Lethal control efforts may not be implemented at livestock operations or on other private lands that fail to follow technical assistance guidelines in a timely manner.
8. Lethal control may not be used when wolves kill dogs that are free-roaming on, hunting on, or training on public lands.
9. On farms that suffer their first loss, lethal control efforts will usually be stopped after two wolves have been captured.
10. Technical assistance will be provided to the extent practical to help address animal husbandry practices that may be contributing to wolf depredation. We will work with partners to develop and distribute materials detailing appropriate management practices to be used on farms where wolves occur in the vicinity. All technical assistance advised or given to producers prior to or after a depredation incident will be recorded.
11. Permittees will follow the most current accepted wolf-capture and handling protocols to ensure the risk of incidental injury or death is minimized to the fullest extent.
12. All wolf trappers will be properly trained in chemical immobilization, trapping, medical treatment, and other wolf handling procedures.
13. Organizations and private individuals designated as State agents will be trained in the safe and appropriate use of harassment equipment and techniques.

14. Organizations and private individuals designated at State agents must sign a User Agreement indicating they have been informed, trained and understand the safe and appropriate use of harassment equipment and techniques.

C.1.c.iv. If the proposed activity would cause the death of individuals from the wild or remove individuals from the wild, describe your attempts to obtain the wildlife or plant specimens currently held in captivity/nurseries/museums, or produced in captivity. You must demonstrate conclusively that existing specimens are unavailable or your study objectives require new/additional specimens. [Provide the identity and phone number of each contact made in this regard.]

The purpose of the proposed action is to further wolf recovery and ensure population persistence through the removal of individual, wild wolves showing problem behavior. This purpose cannot be achieved through acquisition of captive specimens.

C.1.d.i. State whether full funding will be available for the completion of the proposed activity. [If you do not hold a contract at this time, but foresee receiving one, you may apply for a permit contingent upon receiving the contract(s).]

Full funding, from State and Federal sources, will be available for conducting the proposed activities.

C.1.e. If live wildlife or plants to be covered by the permit are to be held in captivity: [C.1.e.i–C.1.e.vii]

Not applicable.

D. IDENTIFY THE PERSONS WHO WILL CONDUCT THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY:

D.1. Provide the full name of all individuals, including first name, middle initial, and last name, who you propose will work under this permit.

Rebecca A. Humphries, Director
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

William E. Moritz, Chief
Wildlife Division, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Alan H. Marble, Chief
Law Enforcement Division, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Wildlife Division and Law Enforcement Division personnel working under the supervision of the persons named above.

Agents of the State designated according to the conditions outlined under A.1.c.

D.1.a. If more than one activity is included in the permit application, indicate which activity(ies) will be completed by each individual.

Organizations and private individuals designated as agents of the State may conduct only those activities described under A.1.c Item 2.

All other individuals working under the permit will potentially conduct all activities outlined under A.1.c.

D.1.b. For each listed individual, please also provide a copy of each person's resume and/or curriculum vitae, plus specific information on previous professional experience working with the species affected by the permit request. Information should include: the approximate number of hours of focused activity with each species in occupied habitat; approximate number of each species the applicant has worked with at each site (e.g., how many pair of birds at a specific site); names, dates, and location of areas surveyed; and experience with similar species. Please provide the names and phone numbers of at least two references who can verify experience with the species (reference letters are always appreciated).

Curricula vitae and other specific information on the persons named under D.1 will be made available upon specific request from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

References:

Mr. Craig Czarnecki, Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2651 Coolidge Road, Suite 101
East Lansing, MI 48823
517-351-8470

Mr. Mike DeCapita
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2651 Coolidge Road, Suite 101
East Lansing, MI 48823
517-351-6274

E. IDENTIFY THE LOCATION OF THE AFFECTED SPECIES:

E.1.a–c. For each species indicate whether, at the time of the application, the organism was: still in the wild; had been removed from the wild (provide State, county, and specific location of removal); and was born in captivity or artificially propagated (provide State, county, specific location, and name of the institution where born or propagated).

All wolves relevant to this permit application are in the wild.

E.2. If you are applying for a permit for the collection of plants from the wild, list the lands from which you plan to collect the plants. [E.2.a–c]

Not applicable.

F. IDENTIFY OTHER PERMITS REQUIRED

F.1. List any additional valid permits currently held or other permits needed for the proposed activities (i.e., permission to work on Federal lands, Federal bird banding permit, Corps of Engineers permits, Environmental Protection Agency NPDES permits, State, county or local permits, etc).

No additional permits are needed.

F.2. Attach a copy of permit or provide agency name, permit number (if any), effective date, and duration.

Not applicable.

F.3. Provide information on any pending applications for the above permits and the reasons why the permits have not been issued.

Not applicable.