

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Northern Rocky Mountain
Recovery Program Update
2007**

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NORTHERN ROCKIES FUNDING

Funding for Wolf Management in Federal Fiscal Years 2007 (Oct. 1, 2006-Sept. 30, 2007) and FY 08 (Oct. 1, 2007-Sept. 30, 2008).

Total Federal Funding- Wolf recovery has been almost entirely funded by federal appropriations and private donations. Wolf recovery in the NRM from 1973 through 2007 cost approximately \$27,273,000 (rounded to nearest \$1,000, with no adjustments for inflation and not including USDA Wildlife Services (WS) costs for investigating reports of suspected wolf damage and problem wolf control beyond the \$100,000/year provided by the USFWS to WS from 1992-2004). If wolf management continues at its current intensity it will cost federal taxpayers about \$3,372,000 in FY08.

USFWS Funding- In FY07, funding for wolf management was similar to FY06 levels. Region 6 of the USFWS (which includes Montana and Wyoming) received about \$2,036,000. Funding for R-1 of the USFWS [Idaho] was \$99,000 for administrative support. Most of the USFWS funding was transferred to Montana, Idaho, and the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT). The USFWS spent \$240,000 for wolf management in Wyoming in FY07 and that included \$50,000 to support a cooperative WY WS/USFWS position in Cody, WY. R-6 funding [\$140,000] also supported overall program coordination, rulemaking, assisting the Department of Justice, and administrative support in Helena, MT. FY08 funding for the USFWS appears similar to FY07 levels.

State and Tribal Funding- In FY07, the USFWS transferred \$641,000 (a Congressional earmark of \$318,000 and \$323,000 from USFWS base funding) to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks for wolf monitoring, management, control, and outreach. In FY07 Idaho received \$720,000 in Congressional earmarks and the NPT received \$295,000. The Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation and IDFG used \$99,000 to compensate livestock producers in Idaho for missing livestock and to make up the remaining 50% for probable livestock depredations that are only reimbursed at a 50% value by the private compensation program in Idaho. In FY08 administration of wolf funding to the States and Tribes was delegated to R-6.

National Park Funding- Yellowstone National Park maintained their NPS-funded wolf monitoring and research program at the \$167,000 level in FY07 and FY08. All their field research projects remain funded by private donations (\$250,000/yr). Teton National Park spent \$45,000 for salaries and telemetry flights and \$20,000 in private donations was used to purchase Argos GPS collars for cooperative wolf-related research in and near Grand Teton National Park. The USFWS in Wyoming funded and conducted the wolf capture associated with that project.

USDA Wildlife Services Funding- In FY07 WS maintained a \$100,000 Congressional directive for responding to complaints of wolf damage as well as a \$1,300,000 directive for Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming to investigate and address predator damage, including that by wolves. The \$1,300,000 Congressional earmark for WS was reduced by \$300,000 in the FY08 Dept. of Agriculture budget. In FY07 WS in Idaho spent approximately \$387,000 of appropriated and cooperative funds responding to complaints of reported wolf damage, conducting control and

management actions (salary and benefits, vehicles, and travel) and for other wolf-related costs (equipment and supply purchases, coordination and meeting attendance, etc.). Montana WS spent approximately \$183,000 and \$222,000 was spent in Wyoming for wolf-related field activities, but those estimates do not cover attending meetings and administrative costs associated with wolf management. In total WS spent at least \$792,000 in FY07 on wolf-related issues in the northern Rocky Mountains.

Non-federal Funding For Wolves- Only the salary of a Yellowstone National Park biologist and administrative support is provided by the NPS. The Yellowstone Foundation secured commitments for private donations at \$250,000/year for 10 years for wolf and wolf-related research in Yellowstone National Park. Grand Teton National Park was given \$20,000 in private funding in FY07 for wolf-related research. The private TESF continued to fund the salary and benefits of an experienced wolf field biologist in Bozeman, Montana [valued at \$60,000/yr]. That biologist is a MFWP volunteer, and logistic and field support and direct supervision are provided by the MFWP (costing about \$20,000/yr in federal transfer funding). That employee helps MFWP to monitor wolves and resolve conflicts between wolves and private landowners in southwest Montana. Defenders of Wildlife continues to provide a compensation program for livestock confirmed [100%] or probably [50%] killed by wolves. In 2007 \$204,635 was paid, with expenditures of more than \$854,000 from 1987 through December 2007 (\$287,724 in MT; \$254,612 in ID; and \$311,775 in WY; www.defenders.org/wolfcompensation). Defenders also provided about \$81,000 for nonlethal wolf control measures. Universities in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming and elsewhere also provided substantial funding and support for their graduate students that are conducting numerous wolf and wolf-related research projects. In addition, some livestock producers on both private land and public land grazing allotments have had to absorb the increased expenses and costs related to grazing livestock near wolves. Those costs are not quantifiable but are likely several times higher than annual compensation payments. They include some proportion of livestock damage from causes that couldn't be determined and missing livestock (Oakleaf et al. 2003).

FY08 Budget- In FY07 Congress appropriations language contained directed wolf funding to Montana, Idaho, and the Nez Perce Tribe. In FY08 those earmarks were eliminated, but were instead included in the R-6 USFWS base funding. However, Congress directed an additional \$243,000 for wolf monitoring in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming in the FY08 budget. That funding will be divided evenly among the States.

NORTHERN ROCKIES PLANNING LEGAL ISSUES, and FEDERAL PERSONNEL

Delisting of the Gray Wolf

Wolves, once common throughout North America, became protected under the ESA in 1974, because human persecution nearly eliminated them from the contiguous United States. After the 1930's there were virtually no wolves left in the Northern Rocky Mountains [NRM]. The ESA prohibited people from harming wolves and mandated that all federal actions seek to conserve and not jeopardize wolves. Ultimately, 3 distinct wolf recovery programs, Midwest, NRM, and

Southwest, were initiated. The Midwest wolf population was delisted on February 8, 2007 but efforts to recover wolves in the Southwest continue. In the NRM, 2007 marked the seventh consecutive year that 30 or more breeding pairs and over 300 wolves were documented in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. The population of about 1,500 wolves in about 105 breeding pairs has fully achieved its biological recovery objectives.

The USFWS proposed delisting of the NRM wolf population on February 8, 2007 (72 FR 6106) because it determined that the population was recovered and State management plans guaranteed that wolves would not become threatened again if the ESA protections were removed. The ESA contains several checks and balances to ensure that any decision to delist a species is scientifically sound and will not result in a species being relisted. The ESA requires that all decisions be based on the best scientific data available. The USFWS must examine all of the factors that might cause a species to become threatened and to determine that they are not likely to cause the species to become threatened again. Regulating the level of human-caused mortality was the primary factor that had to be resolved before delisting wolves could be proposed. The ESA requires that USFWS determine that regulations, other than the ESA, will prevent unchecked human-caused mortality from once again driving wolves toward extinction.

Wildlife mortality is typically regulated by State fish and wildlife management agencies. The USFWS requested that Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming develop state wolf management plans to show how their states would conserve wolves. In addition, the USFWS believed that state wolf plans would help the public to understand the consequences of delisting and would provide a

Federal Funding for Wolf Management in FY2007 and FY2008 (*estimated) [\$1,000's]

Fiscal Year	FY 2007	FY2008*
<i>USFWS-Region 6</i>	\$2,036	\$2,269
State of Montana [USWS Base Funding]	(\$ 641)	(\$ 641)
USFWS in Wyoming	(\$ 240)	(\$ 240)
Idaho Office of Species Conservation	(\$ 720)	(\$ 720)
Nez Perce Tribe	(\$ 295)	(\$ 285)
USFWS Administration & Coordination R-6	(\$ 140)	(\$ 140)
Additional Congressional Earmark	\$ 0	(\$ 243)
<i>USFWS-Region 1</i>	\$ 99	\$ 99
SUBTOTAL	\$2,135	\$2,368
USDA Wildlife Services	\$ +792	\$ +792
National Park Service- Yellowstone	\$ 167	\$ 167
National Park Service- Grand Teton	\$ 45	\$ 45
TOTAL	\$3,139	\$3,372
* estimated		

solid administrative foundation for the final decision. The USFWS provided various degrees of funding and assistance to the states while they developed their wolf management plans. State laws, as well as state management plans, must be consistent with long-term conservation of the wolf population. The Service determined that Montana and Idaho's plans were adequate in 2004 but determined Wyoming's regulatory framework was not adequate. On April 13, 2007, the Wind River Tribe approved a wolf management plan for their tribal lands in northwestern Wyoming. The USFWS determined it adequately addressed the ESA criteria shortly thereafter. The links for the state wolf plans for Montana, Idaho and Wyoming and the Wind River Tribe are available at <http://westerngraywolf.fws.gov>.

In February 2007, the Wyoming Governor signed legislation (Wyoming House Bill 231) that allowed for development of a revised Wyoming wolf management plan. A new wolf management plan was approved by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission on November 16, 2007. It addressed all the USFWS concerns about Wyoming's 2003 plan and on December 15, 2007 the USFWS Director determined it met the requirements of Endangered Species Act, contingent on the sunset provisions of the Wyoming law being satisfied so Wyoming's wolf management plan could be fully implemented.

The delisting proposal was open for public comment for a total of 90 days and 8 public hearings were held. The proposed delisting rule received over 283,000 public comments. A final rule regarding wolf delisting in the NRM DPS is expected to be published on or before February 28, 2008. The delisting rule would become legally effective 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

If the wolf population is delisted, the ESA requires a mandatory, minimum 5-year post-delisting federal oversight period. That period, during which the USFWS reviews the implementation of State management plans and wolf population status, provides a safety-net to ensure that the species is able to sustain itself without ESA protection. If wolves became threatened again, the USFWS could relist them by emergency order.

The Experimental Population Rule

The USFWS's February 7, 2005 10j regulation expanded the authority of States and Native American Tribes with USFWS-approved post-delisting wolf management plans to manage gray wolves in the experimental population areas of CID and GYA. Gray wolves were reintroduced in parts of the NRM as nonessential experimental populations under the ESA in 1995 and 1996. This designation allowed Federal, State and Tribal agencies and private citizens more flexibility in managing wolves. The rule also allowed the States and Tribes with FWS-approved wolf management plans to lead wolf management in their States. This regulation would only apply in Wyoming after its wolf management plan that was fully authorized by the 2007 Wyoming State law. That is likely to occur in early March 2008.

On July 6, 2007 the USFWS proposed that the 2005 nonessential experimental population regulation be modified (72 FR 36942). The modification would allow States and Tribes with

Service-approved post-delisting wolf management plans to develop science-based proposals to lethally remove wolves shown to be seriously affecting ungulate herds. In addition it would allow anyone on private land or public land to shoot a wolf that was attacking their dog or stock animals. The proposed rule change received over 262,000 public comments. The rule was finalized on February 28, 2008 (73 FR 4720) and will become legally effective on February 27, 2008.

Litigation

The January 28, 2008 modification to the 2005 nonessential experimental population rule is being litigated by a coalition of an individual and seven environmental/animal rights groups (U.S. District Court for Montana, Missoula CV 08-14-M-DWM). Any decision (likely to be published on or before February 28, 2008) on establishing a NRM Distinct Population Segment for the gray wolf and removing it from the list of threatened and endangered Species will also certainly be litigated.

State of Wyoming et al. v. United States Department of the Interior et al., United States District Court for the district of Wyoming, Civil Action No 06-245J. This case involves the USFWS's rejection of Wyoming's petition to establish a NRM DPS for wolves and delist them (71 FR 43410). That case is ongoing but it is widely anticipated that in March 2008, Wyoming will certify that all its claims in that case have been satisfied after the USFWS addresses all the mandatory factors detailed in the 2007 Wyoming wolf law. The last factor that needs to be resolved is the publishing a final NRM wolf delisting rule by Feb 28th, 2008 and the Wyoming Governor thereby certifying all Wyoming's legal claims have been resolved.

State of Wyoming, et al. vs. United States Department of the Interior, et al., United States District Court for the district of Wyoming, Civil Action No. 04CV01123J. This case involved the USFWS not approving the Wyoming state wolf management plan. The case was expanded by interveners to include alleged failure to properly manage wolves in Wyoming and failure to conduct additional NEPA compliance. The Wyoming District Court ruled in the USFWS favor based on procedural grounds in 2005. Wyoming appealed that case to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver Colorado, and it upheld the lower court decision. As a result of those court decisions Wyoming formally petitioned the Service to establish and delist a NRM DPS for the gray wolf.

USFWS Wolf Personnel

MFWP began managing wolves in northwestern Montana in early 2004, under a cooperative agreement with the Service, after the USFWS wolf biologist [Tom Meier] for that area left. In June 2005, the USFWS and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks [MFWP] signed a cooperative agreement transferring the decision making authority for all wolf management activities in Montana, including the experimental populations in southern Montana, and the remaining USFWS wolf biologist position for Montana [Joe Fontaine] was eliminated. In January 2006, the Governor of Idaho signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Secretary of the Interior giving Idaho Department of Fish and Game the decision making authority for all wolf

management activities in Idaho. The USFWS biologist that had been conducting that work retired [Carter Niemeyer]. Since that time all wolf management in Montana and Idaho has been conducted with federal funding but by the State wildlife agencies who hired staff to assume those duties. The Nez Perce Tribe continued to assist with wolf monitoring in Idaho under a cooperative agreement with Idaho. The USFWS still manages wolves in Wyoming but, depending on if delisting is delayed by litigation, Wyoming Game and Fish may decide to assume all those duties under a cooperative agreement with the USFWS just as the other States have done. The USFWS field efforts in Wyoming will remain in place to assist with any transition to full Wyoming Game and Fish management at least through October 1, 2008.

Amelia Orton-Palmer was designated as the USFWS assistant wolf recovery coordinator to help analyze public comments and prepare and finalize the federal wolf rules proposed in 2007. The USFWS wolf program staff are currently Ed Bangs, the Wolf Recovery Coordinator in Helena, Montana; Mike Jimenez the Project Leader for Wolf Recovery in Wyoming who is stationed in Jackson, Wyoming; and Amelia Orton-Palmer who is stationed in the USFWS Regional Office in Denver Colorado.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Central Idaho wolf recovery area	CID
Defenders of Wildlife	DOW
Distinct Population Segment	DPS
Endangered Species Act	ESA
Glacier National Park	GNP
Grand Teton National Park	GTNP
Greater Yellowstone wolf recovery area	GYA
Idaho Department of Fish and Game	IDFG
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	MFWP
Montana State University	MSU
Nez Perce Tribe	NPT
Northwest Montana Wolf Recovery Area	NWMT
Northern Rocky Mountains	NRM
Predator Conservation Alliance	PCA
Turner Endangered Species Fund	TESF
University of Montana	UM
USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services	WS
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	USFWS
U.S. Forest Service	USFS
U.S. National Park Service	NPS
Wyoming Game and Fish Department	WYGF
Yellowstone Center for Resources	YCR
Yellowstone National Park	YNP

CONTACTS

For further information or to report wolf sightings, please contact:

Please remember wolf management in Montana and Idaho is conducted by MFWP and IDFG and they should be the first point of contact in each state for everything except law enforcement-

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Helena, MT:	(406) 444-3242
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Kalispell, MT:	(406) 751-4586
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Dillon, MT:	(406) 683-2287
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Bozeman, MT:	(406) 994-6371
MFWP, TESH Volunteer, Bozeman, MT	(406) 556-8514
Nez Perce Tribal Wolf Program, McCall ID:	(208) 634-1061
Idaho Fish and Game, Boise, ID	(208) 334-2920
Idaho Fish and Game, Salmon, ID	(208) 756-2271
Idaho Fish and Game, Nampa, ID	(208) 465-8465
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Helena MT:	(406) 449-5225
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson, WY:	(307) 330-5631
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Boise ID:	(208) 378-5639
Yellowstone Center for Resources, YNP WY:	(307) 344-2243

To report livestock depredations:

USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services, Montana:	(406) 657-6464
USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services, Wyoming:	(307) 261-5336
USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services, Idaho:	(208) 378-5077
USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services toll free:	(866) 487-3297

To report discovery of a dead wolf or information regarding the illegal killing of a wolf:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent, Billings, MT:	(406) 247-7355
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent, Missoula, MT:	(406) 329-3000
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent, Casper, WY:	(307) 261-6365
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent, Lander, WY:	(307) 332-7607
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent, Cody, WY:	(307) 527-7604
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent, Boise, ID:	(208) 378-5333
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent, Idaho Falls, ID	(208) 523-0855
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent, Spokane, WA	(509) 928-6050

WEBSITES

USFWS Rocky Mountain weekly and annual wolf updates:
<http://westerngraywolf.fws.gov/>

USFWS Midwestern gray wolf recovery, national wolf reclassification proposal:
<http://midwest.fws.gov/wolf/>

USFWS Endangered Species Program:
<http://endangered.fws.gov/>

USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services:
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/>

National Wildlife Research Center:
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/nwrc/>

Nez Perce Tribe Wildlife Program and 2001 progress report:
http://www.nezperce.org/Programs/wildlife_program.htm

Turner Endangered Species Fund:
<http://www.tesf.org/>

Yellowstone Park Foundation:
<http://www.ypf.org/>

Yellowstone Wolf Tracker:
<http://www.wolftracker.com/>

Yellowstone National Park wolf pack data:
<http://www.nps.gov/yell/nature/animals/wolf/wolfup.html>

Wolf Restoration to Yellowstone:
<http://www.nps.gov/yell/nature/animals/wolf/wolfrest.html>

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks wolf management planning:
<http://www.fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/tande/wolf/wolf.html>

Montana State University wolf-ungulate research:
<http://www.homepage.montana.edu/~rgarrott/wolfungulate/index.htm>

Idaho Fish and Game:
<http://www.state.id.us/fishgame/>

Idaho Office of Species Conservation:
<http://www.state.id.us/species/>

Wyoming Game and Fish Department:
<http://gf.state.wy.us/>

Wyoming agricultural statistics:
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/wy/>

Idaho agricultural statistics:
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/id/>

Montana agricultural statistics:
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/mt/>

National agricultural statistics:
<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/nassr/livestock/>

Defenders of Wildlife wolf compensation trust:
<http://www.defenders.org/wolfcomp.html>

International Wolf Center:
<http://www.wolf.org/>

Wolf Recovery Foundation:
<http://forwolves.org/>

Wolf news reports:
<http://www.forwolves.org/ralph/wolfrpt.html>

National Wildlife Federation wolf information:
<http://www.nwf.org/wildlife/graywolf/>

Montana Stockgrowers' Association
<http://www.mtbeef.org/index.htm>

National Geographic wolf information:
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/tv/specials/wolf/intro.html>

Wolf Education and Research Center:
<http://www.wolfcenter.org/>

People Against Wolves:
<http://home.centurytel.net/PAW/home.htm>

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