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U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
DELISTING HEARING FOR WOLVES  
IN THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES STATES

May 18, 2011, 7:30 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*

A PUBLIC MEETING FOR THE  
DELISTING OF GRAY WOLVES  
TAKEN AT: NORTHERN GREAT LAKES VISITOR CENTER  
29270 COUNTY HWY. G  
ASHLAND, WISCONSIN 54806

wednesday, May 18, 2011  
7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*

SUSAN EDWARDS COURT REPORTING  
5569 N Gade Road  
Mercer, WI 54547  
Phone: (715) 476-3484  
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APPEARANCES:

MS. LISA MANDELL, Hearing Officer, Regional Coordinator -  
Endangered Species Permits/Grants, U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
Service, 1 Federal Drive, ES, Ft. Snelling MN 55111.

MR. TONY SULLINS, Minnesota Ecological Services Field  
Office, Fish and Wildlife Service.

MR. LAURA REGAN, Endangered Species Delisting  
Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1 Federal  
Drive, ES, Ft. Snelling MN 55111.

MR. JOEL TRICK, Wisconsin Ecological Services Field  
Office, Fish and Wildlife Service.

MS. CHRISTIE DELORIA, Michigan Ecological Services Field  
Office, Fish and Wildlife Service.

MR. TIM MITCHELL, Endangered Species Biologist, U.S. Fish  
and Wildlife Service, 1 Federal Drive, ES, Ft. Snelling  
MN 55111.

MS. GEORGIA PARHAM, External Affairs Specialist, U.S.  
Fish and Wildlife Service, 1 Federal Drive, ES, Ft.  
Snelling MN 55111.

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SPEAKERS PRESENTING PUBLIC COMMENTS:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt

3 MR. JASON SUCKOW, USDA Wildlife Service, APHIS  
4 MR. JOHN GOZDZIALSKI, Regional Director, DNR  
5 MR. CHUCK MATYSKA, Pres. Wisconsin Wildlife Federation  
6 MR. ALLAN BROWN, Wisconsin Conservation Congress  
7 MS. JAN CONLEY, resident of Northwest Wisconsin  
8 MR. CHRISTOPHER LAFARGE, resident of Northern Wisconsin  
9 MR. DAVE CONLEY, resident of Douglas County, Wisconsin  
10 MS. AMY WILSON, resident of Northern Wisconsin  
11 MR. AL CLEMENS, resident of Ironwood, Michigan  
12 MR. JOHN KOSKI, resident of Bessemer, Michigan  
13 MR. LAURA GROSKOPL, resident of Lincoln County, Wisconsin  
14 MR. PHIL LUPA, resident of Bayfield County, Wisconsin  
15 MS. SUE NEUHAUSER, resident of Northern Wisconsin  
16 MR. RALEIGH FOX, resident of Bayfield County, Wisconsin  
17 MR. CORY WHITE, resident of Wisconsin  
18 MR. MIKE SOGGE, Wisconsin Bearhunters Association  
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1 (Wednesday, May 18, 2011, 7:30 p.m.,  
2 Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center.)  
3 MS. LISA MANDELL: It is now 7:30 and  
4 time for the formal hearing to begin.

Page 3

5                   Good evening. On behalf of the U.S.  
6                   Fish and wildlife Service, I welcome you to this  
7                   public hearing. The purpose of this hearing is  
8                   to receive comments from the public and other  
9                   interested parties on the Fish and wildlife  
10                  Service's proposal to delist the western Great  
11                  Lakes Distinct Population Segment of the gray  
12                  wolf.

13                  My name is Lisa Mandell. I am a staff  
14                  biologist in the Fish and wildlife Service's  
15                  Endangered Species Program in the regional  
16                  office, Twin Cities, Minnesota. I will serve as  
17                  the presiding official for this hearing.

18                  Susan Edwards-Schellgell will be the  
19                  court reporter who will prepare the written  
20                  record of all statements made during this  
21                  hearing. The transcript of the hearing will be  
22                  posted on the website of the Midwest Region of  
23                  the Fish and wildlife Service and also on  
24                  regulations.gov in a few weeks. The address for  
25                  the website is available in the materials out in

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1                  the lobby.

2                  I will have no further involvement with  
3                  this proposal after tonight, so I am an impartial  
4                  participant in this hearing; however, there are  
5                  other Fish and wildlife Service representatives  
6                  with us this evening. They are assisting with

7 the hearing, and many of them also will be  
8 involved in reviewing the comments and helping  
9 the service come to its final decision on the  
10 proposal.

11 These people are Tony Sullins, the  
12 supervisor of the Twin Cities, Minnesota  
13 Ecological Field Service Office who presided over  
14 the first part of this meeting. Laura Ragan, the  
15 Endangered Species Delisting Coordinator for the  
16 region and the primary author of the proposal  
17 from our Twin Cities, Minnesota Regional Office.  
18 Joel Trick, biologist at the Wisconsin Ecological  
19 Services Field Office. Christie Deloria,  
20 biologist at the Michigan Ecological Services  
21 Field Office. Tim Mitchell, Endangered Species  
22 biologist at the regional office in the Twin  
23 Cities, and Georgia Parham, External Affairs  
24 Specialist at the regional office in the Twin  
25 Cities.

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1 At this time I would also like to  
2 introduce the congressional staff for their  
3 presence. We have Marjorie Bunce from Senator  
4 Herb Kohl's office. Scott Holstad from Senator  
5 Ron Johnson's office, and Mary Willett from  
6 Representative Sean Duffy's office. Thank you.

7 This is a public hearing under Section 4  
8 of the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973.

9 Notice of the proposal to remove the gray wolf in  
10 the western Great Lakes area of the United States  
11 from the List of Endangered and Threatened  
12 wildlife and the 60-day public comment period was  
13 published in the Federal Register on May 5, 2011.

14 Convening public hearings is one of the  
15 methods the Fish and Wildlife Service is using to  
16 solicit data and comments on this proposal. No  
17 final decision has been made regarding this  
18 proposal, nor will any decision be made at this  
19 hearing. Public comments on this proposal must  
20 be received no later than July 5, 2011.

21 After review and consideration of the  
22 existing administrative record, your comments,  
23 your interpretations of existing data, and all  
24 other information gathered during this comment  
25 period, the Fish and Wildlife Service will make

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1 its final decision on the proposal. Information  
2 that you provide in your comments this evening  
3 will become part of the administrative record and  
4 will be considered by the Fish and Wildlife  
5 Service in its decision-making process.

6 I want to direct your attention to the  
7 tables in the lobby area. One table is the  
8 registration table where you will need to take a  
9 numbered note card if you wish to present oral  
10 comments tonight. After I give any government

11 officials a chance to provide their comments, I  
12 will begin calling you by number to present your  
13 comments at the microphone.

14 The second table has a variety of  
15 written information about the proposal, about  
16 wolves, and about the Endangered Species Act.  
17 Please take a copy of anything that's of interest  
18 to you. And I especially want to point out the  
19 blue comment form on that literature table, which  
20 you can use to turn in written comments tonight  
21 or later by mail. The comment forms are on the  
22 table with the other literature, and next to  
23 those forms will be a box where you can drop off  
24 your written comments tonight if you wish to  
25 leave them.

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1 when I call your number to present your  
2 comments, please come to the microphone, which  
3 will be over at the end of this aisle, and state  
4 your full name, spell it, identify any  
5 organization you represent, and give your state  
6 of residence. If you have a written copy of your  
7 comments, you may give it to the court reporter  
8 who is sitting at the front here, or you could  
9 give it to me, and it will be entered into the  
10 record as a written comment.

11 Oral statements will be limited to five  
12 minutes so that all who wish to make oral

13           comments will have the opportunity to do so. If  
14           you stray from the issue, exceed your time limit,  
15           engage in personal insults, or make other  
16           inappropriate remarks, I will ask you to promptly  
17           wrap up your comments.

18                         At the end of the evening, there may be  
19           time to provide another opportunity for speakers  
20           to finish their comments if they weren't able to  
21           do so in the previously allotted time. To  
22           maximize the opportunities of others to express  
23           their comments, I would ask that you refrain from  
24           commenting on issues beyond the scope of the Fish  
25           and wildlife service's wolf delisting proposal.

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1                         This is an informal hearing and,  
2           therefore, you will not be questioned or cross  
3           examined in connection with your comments. This  
4           hearing is solely intended to obtain your  
5           comments so the Fish and wildlife Service can  
6           consider them when making their final decision on  
7           the proposal. Therefore, Fish and wildlife  
8           Service officials will not respond to questions  
9           or engage in any discussion of the proposal  
10          during the hearing. The presentation and  
11          question-and-answer session earlier this evening  
12          were intended for questions and discussions, so  
13          we will be devoting this portion of the evening  
14          to receiving your comments.

15                   If you have questions about the proposal  
16                   or about the Endangered Species Act, I encourage  
17                   you to take advantage of the materials at the  
18                   information table and on our website. You may  
19                   want to read them and then submit written  
20                   comments later.

21                   There may be opportunities to ask  
22                   questions to individual Fish and wildlife Service  
23                   staff after the hearing closes, or during a  
24                   recess if we take one, but I emphasize that this  
25                   hearing is intended to receive public input, not

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1                   to respond to it. The Fish and wildlife  
2                   Service's response to the issues and questions  
3                   raised during the comment period, including those  
4                   that come up at this hearing, will be published  
5                   as part of the final decision for the proposal.  
6                   That publication will likely occur in late 2011.

7                   Again, your comments are being recorded  
8                   by the court reporter to assist the Fish and  
9                   wildlife Service in reviewing them and preserve  
10                  them for the record. Please keep in mind,  
11                  however, that the reporter will only be recording  
12                  statements made into the microphones. Comments  
13                  from the audience and other statements made away  
14                  from the microphone, or made to the audience,  
15                  will not become part of the record and will not  
16                  be considered by the Fish and wildlife Service

17 when making the final decision on the proposal.  
18 All oral comments must be made into the  
19 microphone and directed to the front of the room.

20 In addition to, or instead of, providing  
21 oral comments tonight, you may submit comments in  
22 writing. Written comments may be submitted  
23 tonight to me, to the staff at the registration  
24 table, or sent in later. Instructions for  
25 submitting written comments after the hearing are

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1 available in the proposal and on the service's  
2 website. Oral comments will not be accepted  
3 outside of a public hearing setting. As I have  
4 mentioned, written comments must be received by  
5 July 5, 2011. They will be given the same  
6 serious consideration as oral comments presented  
7 during this hearing.

8 We will conclude the hearing at 9:00  
9 p.m. If we have covered all of those who wish to  
10 speak before 9:00 p.m., we will recess the  
11 hearing, that is go off the record, until either  
12 additional persons indicate that they wish to  
13 speak or until 9:00 p.m. approaches. At that  
14 time we will reconvene the hearing and go back on  
15 record to receive additional comments or to  
16 officially close the hearing.

17 We will now open the floor for your  
18 comments. After I call your number, please come

19 to the microphone. Again, state your name, spell  
20 it, identify who you represent, give your state  
21 of residence and begin your comments. Please  
22 speak clearly so the court reporter can record  
23 your comments accurately.

24 I remind you that tonight's hearing is  
25 designated to gather public comment and

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1 especially additional data and information  
2 regarding the proposal in order to help the Fish  
3 and wildlife Service make the best possible  
4 decision under the Endangered Species Act. To  
5 better serve that purpose, I ask you to remain  
6 respectful of the speakers, of other members of  
7 the audience, and of the government officials  
8 that are here tonight.

9 Now we will begin with our first  
10 speaker, and for the first order of business,  
11 we're going to call any federal officials that  
12 wish to make a comment. If you will come down by  
13 Christie.

14 MR. JASON SUCKOW: Jason Suckow, I  
15 represent USDA APHIS wildlife Services.

16 MS. LISA MANDELL: Please spell your  
17 last name.

18 MR. JASON SUCKOW: S-u-c-k-o-w. I  
19 reside in Wisconsin, and I am speaking on behalf  
20 of USDA wildlife Services, and I am speaking on

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21           behalf of William H. Clay, who is the Deputy  
22           Administrator of APHIS wildlife Services.

23                     The U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
24           Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service  
25           (APHIS), wildlife Services (WS) is pleased to

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1           have the opportunity to review and provide  
2           comments on the proposed rule to revise the List  
3           of Endangered and Threatened wildlife relevant to  
4           the gray wolf in the Eastern United States and  
5           the initiation of status reviews for the gray  
6           wolf and the eastern wolf. WS concurs with the  
7           proposal to delist the Western Great Lakes  
8           Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of gray wolves.

9                     WS, in cooperation with federal, state,  
10          tribal, and private entities, has assisted with  
11          addressing wolf conflicts throughout the region  
12          since 1975. APHIS partners with state wildlife  
13          agencies, numerous Native American tribes, and  
14          the U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and  
15          Wildlife Service to conduct wolf damage  
16          management programs, include the investigation of  
17          injured and dead livestock, the capture and  
18          radio-collaring of wolves for research purposes,  
19          and the resolution of conflicts. WS also  
20          provides information on wolf biology, damage  
21          prevention, mitigation to producers, resource  
22          managers, and other interested parties. The

23 ability to mitigate losses associated with wolves  
24 has contributed to wolf recovery throughout the  
25 region.

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1 The number, diversity, and distribution  
2 of wolf conflicts in the western Great Lakes  
3 region continues to escalate as wolf populations  
4 have exceeded recovery goals and continue to  
5 thrive. wolf conflicts in Minnesota have  
6 steadily increased 31 percent over the last five  
7 years with a dramatic 34 percent increase noted  
8 from 2009 to 2010. The distribution of wolf  
9 conflicts in Michigan continues to expand across  
10 the Upper Peninsula and is anticipated to  
11 increase with the recent confirmation of  
12 reproduction in the Lower Peninsula. Livestock  
13 losses in Michigan have increased 1,250 percent  
14 from 2008 to 2010. In addition, wolf complaints  
15 in Michigan have increased 221 percent from 2008  
16 to 2010.

17 In Wisconsin, issues associated with a  
18 wolf population that has more than doubled since  
19 2003 include: 147 percent increase in total  
20 verified wolf complaints, over 200 percent  
21 increase in dog complaints, and a 260 percent  
22 increase in farms with verified livestock losses.  
23 Wisconsin noted more than a 100 percent increase  
24 in depredation payments from 2009 to 2010 that

25 totaled over \$200,000 in compensation.

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1 An integrated wolf damage management  
2 program and public education have encouraged  
3 public acceptance and support for wolf presence  
4 in agriculture and rural residential areas of the  
5 Great Lakes states. Effective response to wolf  
6 conflicts is a key opponent to building and  
7 maintaining public tolerance of wolves. However,  
8 restrictions on methods for conflict management  
9 are leading to frustration in communities where  
10 conflicts occur, especially in Michigan and  
11 Wisconsin where limits on methods are greatest.

12 WS is increasingly concerned that this  
13 frustration is resulting in increased illegal  
14 take of wolves. Wisconsin Department of Natural  
15 Resource data indicates there were 21 wolves  
16 known to be illegally killed in Wisconsin in  
17 2009, the highest level detected for any one year  
18 since wolves returned to the state. Nineteen  
19 wolves were illegally killed in 2010.

20 In Michigan, the number of wolves  
21 illegally killed has increased each year since  
22 2007 to a peak of 15 wolves in 2010. Eleven  
23 wolves have already been illegally taken in  
24 Michigan in 2011. Actual wolf losses to illegal  
25 killing were likely higher than reported, because

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1           only a fraction of the dead wolves are located.  
2           The increased management options associated with  
3           delisting wolves will facilitate prompt,  
4           effective response to conflict and enhance public  
5           acceptance of wolves.

6                        Thank you for the opportunity to provide  
7           comments for the notice regarding the proposed  
8           rule to remove gray wolves in the western Great  
9           Lakes DPS from the List of Endangered and  
10          Threatened Species. We appreciate the  
11          opportunity to work cooperatively with the U.S.  
12          Fish and wildlife Service.

13                       Sincerely, William H. Clay, Deputy  
14          Administrator of wildlife Services.

15                       MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you. Are there  
16          any other federal entities who wish to make  
17          comments?

18                       (No Response.)

19                       MS. LISA MANDELL: Any tribal officials?

20                       (No Response.)

21                       THE WITNESS: Okay. State officials  
22          wishing to make comments?

23                       MR. JOHN GOZDZIALSKI: Good evening and  
24          welcome on behalf of Wisconsin's DNR to  
25          Wisconsin's northwoods and the Ashland area. My

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1 name is John Gozdziński, G-o-z-d-z-i-a-l-s-k-i.  
2 I am the Regional Director for DNR's northern  
3 region, and I am a resident of Spooner,  
4 Wisconsin. I am here tonight on behalf of the  
5 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and  
6 Secretary Cathy Stepp to pass along preliminary  
7 comments by the Department on the proposed  
8 delisting rule of the western Great Lakes  
9 Distinct Population Segment. I also would like  
10 to note that formal and final comments will be  
11 submitted during the pending 60-day public notice  
12 period.

13 The Wisconsin DNR has long supported the  
14 delisting of the gray wolves in Wisconsin, and we  
15 have done that ever since it was first proposed  
16 by Secretary Babbitt back in 1998. We believe  
17 and agree that the wolves in Wisconsin are fully  
18 recovered and they are no longer in need of  
19 federal endangered species protection.

20 The Wisconsin DNR also wishes to thank  
21 the service and the Department of Interior for  
22 responding to our petition and that of the  
23 Minnesota DNR to help delist the wolf population  
24 here in the Midwest. The Wisconsin DNR has been,  
25 and will remain committed to the long-term

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1 conservation of wolves, but we also feel that  
2 management is extremely important, especially  
3 when it comes to problem wolves and packs that  
4 are creating problems, controls that have not  
5 been possible due to the current listing.

6 Our wolf population in Wisconsin  
7 continues to grow. Our preliminary count for the  
8 over-winter population in 2011 is at least 800  
9 wolves spread cross central and northern  
10 Wisconsin. This represents the most wolves ever  
11 counted in the state. The number of wolves far  
12 exceed the federal delisting recovery goal of 100  
13 wolves and exceed the population goal of 350  
14 wolves in the Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan. As  
15 a result of this current population, we are  
16 experiencing significant and troubling problems.  
17 Let me state a few statistics.

18 We have received a record number of 47  
19 farms with wolf depredation to livestock in 2010,  
20 resulting in the deaths of at least 75 livestock  
21 animals and injury to six others. We have  
22 experienced a record number of 14 cases of dog  
23 attacks near peoples' homes, resulting in the  
24 death of six dogs and injury to another eight.

25 A total of 20 cases of depredation on

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1 dogs in hunting and training situations resulted  
2 in the death of 19 dogs and injury to another

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3 four. And lastly, a record number of human

4 safety concerns caused by wolves resulted in  
5 capture and euthanization of 15 different wolves  
6 and one wolf highbred.

7 The state needs to gain control and  
8 authority to resume targeted lethal control as  
9 soon as possible so that we can grow and address  
10 these depredation issues. I would like to take a  
11 few seconds to talk about the genetic issue.

12 The Wisconsin DNR has supported and  
13 assisted in genetic surveys of the state and  
14 regional population and accepts that we have a  
15 diverse genetic population. However, we disagree  
16 with the service that a newly discovered species,  
17 the eastern wolf, exists here as a separate  
18 species. Scientists agree that our wolves are  
19 mixed and of a healthy genetics, more closely  
20 associated with the gray wolf and are basically  
21 the same genetics of the wolf that was listed  
22 back in 1978 as the gray wolf.

23 The recognition of a new and separate  
24 species in the Western Great Lakes is contrary to  
25 over 30 years of listing protection and

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1 management as a single species. It is not based  
2 on the best and newest available science  
3 information. Our wolves may be of mixed  
4 genetics, but they are physically

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5 indistinguishable, readily interbred with each  
6 other, occupy the same range, and are and will  
7 continue to be managed as one population.

8 The service states that they are  
9 proposing delisting of the gray wolf, despite its  
10 proximity to the closer related species of the  
11 eastern wolf. However, the service bases that  
12 delisting on a threat analysis on combined  
13 numbers of both species and their hybrids.  
14 Delisting of a species is required based on  
15 numbers of that species as recovered and threats  
16 and analysis based on the numbers of the  
17 particular species.

18 There is also strong support amongst  
19 Wisconsin residents to delist the gray wolf.  
20 Again, let me state some statistics. The  
21 Wisconsin Wildlife Federation recently submitted  
22 a petition with approximately 37,000 signatures  
23 of residents. This past spring we held spring  
24 conservation rule hearings across Wisconsin. 89  
25 percent of those attending supported the

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1 delisting. And lastly, 16 county boards have  
2 passed resolutions supporting the delisting.

3 In conclusion, we thank the U.S. Fish  
4 and Wildlife Service and the Department of  
5 Interior for their new effort to delist the  
6 wolves in the Western Great Lakes Region.

7           However, we urge the service to work with the  
8           three states -- Wisconsin, Minnesota, and  
9           Michigan -- to delist the wolves in a defensible  
10          manner, the federal law for the successful  
11          delisting as long as -- excuse me -- and the  
12          proper state management of the wolves.

13                         Thank you for your time and coming to  
14                         Ashland.

15                         MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you. Are there  
16                         any other state entities that wish to comment at  
17                         this time?

18                                 (No Response.)

19                         MS. LISA MANDELL: Are there any county  
20                         or local government officials that would like to  
21                         provide comment?

22                                 (No Response.)

23                         MS. LISA MANDELL: Okay. I would like  
24                         to remind you that if you want to present an oral  
25                         comment but you have not registered, you are

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1           going to need to go to the registration table  
2           just outside of the main auditorium doors and  
3           register and get a number to do so.

4                         At this time, would No. 1 please come  
5                         forward to the microphone and remember to state  
6                         your name, spell it, identify who you represent,  
7                         if anyone, and give your state of residence  
8                         before providing comment.

9 MR. CHUCK MATYSKA: Good evening, my  
10 name is Chuck Matyska, M-a-t-y-s-k-a, and I am a  
11 resident of Cecil, Wisconsin. I am the president  
12 of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, and I also  
13 chair the Endangered Species Committee.

14 Good evening. My name again is Chuck  
15 Matyska, President of the Wildlife Federation.  
16 The Federation is the state's largest  
17 conservation organization representing over 160  
18 hunting, fishing, trapping, and forestry-related  
19 groups located throughout the State of Wisconsin.

20 The Federation is here tonight to  
21 strongly support the delisting of the wolf in the  
22 Western Great Lakes of the States of Wisconsin,  
23 Minnesota, and Michigan. While we will be  
24 submitting detailed written comments for the  
25 official record in the near future, there are

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1 just a few brief points we would like to make  
2 this evening.

3 The Federation, along with most  
4 conservation groups, was a supporter of the  
5 recovery of the gray wolf into the region. We  
6 did so based on the commitments and the goals set  
7 forth 25 years ago by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
8 Service and the Wisconsin Department of Natural  
9 Resources. Initial goals for delisting of the  
10 wolf from the federal and state Endangered

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
Species List were 100 and 250 animals

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respectively in wisconsin.

As we know, those numbers have long been surpassed, and now while the officially stated population of animals is around 850 wolves, sportsmen and women all know that the population is well in excess of 1,000 animals. There has been excessive depredation of farmer's livestock, landowner's pets, and sportsmen and women's hunting dogs. The overpopulation and habituation of wolves has led to the need for the wisconsin DNR to eliminate wolf packs in Jackson and Price Counties due to danger to humans.

Briefly in regard to the issue of genetics and the controversy over whether the

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wolves we have in wisconsin are canis lupis and/or canis lycaon, it is the Federation's position that it should not make any difference.

It is highly likely that the wolves that recovered into wisconsin from Minnesota were already hybrids. The real point is that whatever genetics there were when the wolf was first listed in wisconsin, it is still here but now the number of those genetic wolves is well in excess of the level needed to delist the species.

The last reason the Federation is here tonight is to represent the thousands of

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt

13 Wisconsin citizens that could not be here  
14 tonight. In four months at the end of the last  
15 year, the Federation circulated a Citizens  
16 Petition in Wisconsin which asked Secretary of  
17 the Interior Salazar and the Wisconsin  
18 Congressional delegation to work to remove the  
19 gray wolf from the Federal Endangered Species  
20 list as soon as possible. Tonight on your desk  
21 we present those petitions which total 36,769  
22 names. Please enter these petitions in the  
23 official rule-making record.

24 I thank you for the opportunity to speak  
25 to you this evening.

24

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1 MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you. No. 2,  
2 please come forward to the microphone. State  
3 your name, spell it, your affiliation, and your  
4 state of residence.

5 MR. ALLAN BROWN: My name is Allan  
6 Brown. I am a Wisconsin resident, Chippewa  
7 County, Stanley, Wisconsin. The first name is  
8 spelled A-l-l-a-n. I represent the Wisconsin  
9 Conservation Congress. The Wisconsin  
10 Conservation Congress is actually a legislative  
11 arm of the Department of Natural Resources Board  
12 of the State of Wisconsin. We are approximately  
13 360 members strong, and we are elected by the  
14 public at spring hearings every year all

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
15 throughout 72 counties in the state and there are  
16 five delegates per county.

17 On behalf of the Congress, what I want  
18 to basically relay tonight is that we are on  
19 record supporting delisting and returning the  
20 management of the wolves of Wisconsin back -- or  
21 over to the Department of Natural Resources, the  
22 State of Wisconsin.

23 As previously mentioned, it is basically  
24 the feeling of the Congress, wolves are wolves.  
25 We're talking socially, not necessarily

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1 biologically. And we also support a population  
2 goal of 350, which was listed in 1999 in our own  
3 Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan and that still  
4 currently stands until we do a new plan. It is  
5 also our position that wolves definitely have  
6 recovered in the State of Wisconsin. We're  
7 having a lot of trouble.

8 I don't think I have to stand here and  
9 go over and over what everybody else has been  
10 saying here tonight. It is just repetition. We  
11 all know. Thank you.

12 MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you. No. 3,  
13 please come forward to the microphone.

14 If you want to present comments, you  
15 need to go out to the registration table, sign  
16 the registration sheet and get a number.

17

Sir, please sit down.

18

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I am a reporter

19

and I am reporting here for the news.

20

MS. LISA MANDELL: Can you do so from

21

your seat, please?

22

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. That would

23

be great.

24

MS. JAN CONLEY: Hi, my name is Jan

25

Conley, C-o-n-l-e-y. I am a residence of

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1

northwest wisconsin, and I guess that I am not

2

here to speak for anyone in particular, but I

3

guess I will just say I speak for the wolves.

4

They didn't authorize me to do it, but I am just

5

here anyway.

6

It has been estimated that two million

7

wolves once roamed the United States, and wolves

8

now occupy about five percent of the historical

9

range, which some have mentioned tonight. Now

10

there are approximately 14,000 wolves nationwide

11

and about 700 in wisconsin. And somebody said

12

that was the highest number we have ever had, but

13

according to the documents in the information you

14

gave us, there were 3,000 to 5,000 in the 1800's.

15

700 wolves is not enough to maintain a

16

breeding population, and I haven't heard that

17

mentioned here tonight. wolves have continued to

18

perform an important environmental role within

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
19 the ecosystem. They balance predator population.  
20 They help to limit wildlife disease by taking out  
21 weak and diseased animals. They keep the deer  
22 population in check.

23 Someone mentioned Lyme disease. The  
24 wolves predate on deer and deer carry Lyme  
25 disease, and I have had Lyme disease and it is

27

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1 not something that I would wish on anyone else.  
2 And by eliminating or reducing the number of  
3 wolves, more deer, more Lyme disease.

4 They provide meat for scavengers.  
5 Scientists that work with wolf recovery systems  
6 support a nationwide wolf recovery plan, rather  
7 than piecemeal. Wolves don't respect state  
8 boundaries. It is very concerning to me when  
9 congressional members decide to pass a bill  
10 delisting a federally protected species, namely  
11 the gray wolf.

12 I am also very concerned when I hear  
13 there will be no federal penalty for killing  
14 wolves, and the idea of suspecting the Wisconsin  
15 legislature or the DNR Board to make a  
16 non-political decision about fines or hunting  
17 season is very disturbing to me. Politics should  
18 not take the place of science.

19 I oppose the plan to delist the gray  
20 wolf. Thank you.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
21 MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you. No. 4,  
22 please come forward to the microphone.

23 MR. CHRISTOPHER LAFORGE: My name is  
24 Christopher LaForge, that is L-a, capital  
25 F-o-r-g-e. I am a residence of Northern

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1 wisconsin and happy to be here. Thank you for  
2 having this session.

3 I am opposed to the delisting proposal.  
4 I want to apologize right away for my need to  
5 make hasty preparation for this session. I was  
6 only informed about the session within the last  
7 four days.

8 My first comment I would like to make is  
9 that one public comment session in the midwest in  
10 a local town with a tiny human population is  
11 inadequate, and I request for an additional  
12 session to be held of official comment in a  
13 significant population center in the midwest  
14 where other people will have the opportunity to  
15 attend. Tonight we have about 50 people in this  
16 room that aren't associated with a government  
17 organization or the Fish and Wildlife Service,  
18 and we deserve to have more face time, thank you.

19 The Fish and wildlife Service's own data  
20 shows that Wisconsin and Michigan have not  
21 developed its population of wolves to its full  
22 habitat range. The population is still growing

23 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
24 significantly, and as Laura indicated that's an  
25 indication of not fully habitating the  
appropriate range of the wolf.

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1 Nationally, five percent of the  
2 historical habitat and one percent of the  
3 historical population is not recovered -- a  
4 recovered population by any reasonable standard.

5 Effective population sizes of a species  
6 are generally defined as number of breeding  
7 individuals. So an effective population size of  
8 500 individuals actually translates into a total  
9 population count of somewhere between 25 and  
10 5,000 individuals, depending on the species.  
11 That is Frankum's [sic.] discovery in 1995. Thus  
12 none of the wolf populations in any of these  
13 specific areas approaches viability, and most are  
14 considered crucially below the benchmark that  
15 would risk serious inbreeding.

16 The official 2010 count by the Fish and  
17 wildlife Service of 690 wolves does not represent  
18 a significant recovery of the wolf population in  
19 Wisconsin. The State DNR's goal of 350 will not  
20 maintain a survivable genetic population in the  
21 state and is representative of a poor  
22 understanding of biological science.

23 A strong national gray wolf recovery  
24 plan, if implemented, would aid the process

□

1 the Fish and wildlife Service to aid ecosystems  
2 within which the gray wolves evolved and which,  
3 at present, are continuously being degraded. In  
4 other words, working for a national wolf recovery  
5 plan as is being advocated by many national  
6 groups aids the habitat for innumerable species  
7 and is an idea that has significant historical  
8 precedence.

9 The recovery plan for the bald eagle,  
10 the peregrine falcon, and the brown pelican all  
11 show historical precedence of how the Fish and  
12 wildlife Service's use of a national recovery  
13 plan really aids the overrule recovery of a  
14 species in its overall habitat.

15 If the Fish and Wildlife Service were to  
16 create and develop a national recovery plan that  
17 was being proposed and suggested by an  
18 organization such as the Center for Biological  
19 Diversity, the formation of a team of some of the  
20 highly qualified wolf biologists and other  
21 scientists would ensure that a lot of the recent  
22 science could be brought to bear and create a  
23 situation in which the appropriate down-listing,  
24 and ultimately delisting of portions of the  
25 species and specific ranges, would make sense.

□

1 I add my name to the Conservation  
2 Biologists and the numerous organizations calling  
3 for a strong national recovery plan for all  
4 wolves, all species of wolves through the United  
5 States.

6 Thank you for taking the time to take my  
7 comments.

8 MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you. No. 5?

9 MR. DAVE CONLEY: I want to thank you  
10 for holding this hearing tonight. I am Dave  
11 Conley. I live in Douglas County. I am also on  
12 our Douglas County Board, elected to the board,  
13 and I didn't choose to speak as an elected  
14 official. My board took a position, contrary to  
15 what I would like to speak on at tonight's  
16 hearing.

17 MS. LISA MANDELL: Would you please  
18 spell your last name?

19 MR. DAVE CONLEY: Yes. C-o-n-l-e-y.

20 MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you.

21 MR. DAVE CONLEY: And I would like to  
22 speak in opposition to the delisting. What I  
23 fear is that this is really not driven so much by  
24 science. I think it is driven by politics. I  
25 think we have an example of that. We have

□

1           legislation passed by the U.S. Senate calling for  
2           the delisting. We have a governor out west who  
3           has said that he would not enforce the penalties  
4           in his state against wolf killings. And I think  
5           that it is a bit simplified if we think that  
6           science is driving this, and science will then  
7           determine how we will behave in the future if the  
8           wolf population crashes for one reason or  
9           another.

10                        I don't foresee the U.S. Fish and  
11           wildlife Service as being able to, again, have  
12           the wolf listed if we have senators and governors  
13           saying we do not want wolves in our state, and I  
14           think that's a situation that we are fast coming  
15           to. I know when our county board took a position  
16           against keeping the wolves listed as endangered,  
17           the board -- it was not unanimous -- but the  
18           board did vote in favor of the delisting, but  
19           there was no science at that meeting. There was  
20           no scientific arguments made. It was emotional,  
21           and there were anagoge stories told about wolves  
22           growling at people when they walk around their  
23           house at night and things like that. That's what  
24           drives these decisions. I fear it is not  
25           science. I wish it was, I truly do.

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1                        I find it kind of interesting too that  
                          Page 31

2 the wolf population is now segregated, because I  
3 was prepared to say: Oh, at one time I saw a  
4 statistic that there were over 2 million wolves  
5 across North America. Now I say: Well, we can't  
6 really say that anymore because there are  
7 different species of wolves. But someone said  
8 that -- in fact, I would like to read it. It was  
9 said that small isolated wolf populations are a  
10 recipe for extinction.

11 And I would remind you that it was  
12 through the management of the DNR that back in  
13 the '70s the wolves were first being irradiated  
14 from Wisconsin. I see in one of the papers here  
15 that in 1980 there were 25 wolves left, and in  
16 1985 there were 14. And that was through the  
17 management of the DNR. So I would be a little  
18 reluctant to trust the management of the wolves  
19 with that record.

20 And one of the sheets on the table, I  
21 was happy to see it, we're talking about the cost  
22 to the populations of predation. Let's call them  
23 wolf dollars. In 25 years the sum total of wolf  
24 dollars that were claimed as damage to livestock,  
25 et cetera, through wolves is about a million

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1 dollars. And I wonder if we could have deer  
2 dollars, since wolves predate on deer and help  
3 manage that population?

4                   And I live here in Northern Wisconsin,  
5                   and I happen to think that the deer are very,  
6                   very numerous. How many dollars, deer dollars  
7                   are involved in car crashes and insurance claims  
8                   and deaths, and I knew a person that was killed  
9                   in a collision with a deer, so it does happen.  
10                  How many deer dollars are involved in crop  
11                  damage -- and sure, I assume there is some  
12                  reimbursement.

13                  But then in my situation, I have a  
14                  garden, and I don't get any deer dollars out of  
15                  the DNR, or anyone else, for the damage the deer  
16                  does to my garden, but it is a very real cost to  
17                  me. And what about the cost of Lyme disease? I  
18                  would expect that there is not a person in this  
19                  room that either hasn't had a direct family  
20                  member or someone that they know well who has had  
21                  a contact with Lyme disease, and it is a very  
22                  devastating disease. And there is a very real  
23                  cost to that.

24                  And then what about the loss of our  
25                  tourism dollars? I think if I were planning to

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1                   go to a place where I knew that there was this  
2                   very serious disease that a person could get from  
3                   a tick bite walking in the woods, I might change  
4                   the location where I recreate that summer. And I  
5                   am sure people think that way. So let's not just

6 put out a list that talks about wolf dollars;  
7 let's also talk about deer dollars and other  
8 dollars too if we want to have some perspective  
9 when we talk about these things.

10 So I am against delisting. I don't  
11 think our record is there to support it. I think  
12 we have a dismal record as far as how we have  
13 managed the species of the wolf, and I would like  
14 to see us do better, but I don't believe to  
15 delist within the very real possibility that it  
16 may never be listed again, no matter what happens  
17 to that population, I think it is a really scary  
18 thing. Thank you.

19 MS. LISA MANDELL: No. 6, please come to  
20 the microphone.

21 MS. AMY WILSON: Hello. My name is Amy  
22 Wilson, that is w-i-l-s-o-n, and I live in  
23 Northern Wisconsin. I am opposed to the  
24 delisting proposal. We are currently seeing  
25 overall wildlife populations around the world

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1 plummet, due to humans and their ever expanding  
2 activities.

3 I just know Wisconsin population, but  
4 Wisconsin population is 4 million. We add 28,000  
5 new people to Wisconsin every year -- 28,000. So  
6 Wisconsin wolves, we have, they say 700 and the  
7 target is 350. I find there is a disparaging

8 amount of sharing the planet when we think about  
9 how many humans are on this northern part of  
10 wisconsin.

11 So the effective population size to have  
12 a genetically viable wolf population is 500  
13 individuals. And as it has already been stated,  
14 a wolf, when they breed, there are a lot of other  
15 wolves that help out. So when you have 500  
16 individuals that are breeding, it translates to a  
17 count of about 2,500 to 5,000 individuals. It is  
18 so much more than what the DNR, the different  
19 entities that have talked before, that -- it is  
20 so much -- I am just going to start over again.

21 So gray wolves are very beneficial. We  
22 have seen them in Yellowstone where the wolves  
23 were reintroduced and they ate the elk. All of a  
24 sudden, the plants that were being devastated by  
25 the elk started to come back. The beavers came

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1 back. Because the beavers came back, the  
2 songbirds came back. A whole host of things  
3 happened. People were amazed.

4 well, I don't feel like the wolves in  
5 our area have been able to come back, and I do  
6 not feel like we have been given the chance to  
7 see what amazing things can happen here. I am a  
8 botanist, I am a plant lover. I plant trees  
9 every single year. I live in an area in Northern

10 wisconsin where the deer are eating everything.  
11 I am not seeing regeneration of aspen in my woods  
12 because there are so many deer. The trillium is  
13 going. All sorts of endangered plants are going.  
14 we know that wolves -- we know that top predators  
15 are needed for a viable ecosystem.

16 I call for a national wolf recovery  
17 plan, and I would really love to see that happen.  
18 I would like to see our whole country work on  
19 this. I believe that delisting the wolf will be  
20 detrimental to the wolf, to the environment, and  
21 for that reason, to our own human lives. We have  
22 to start reweaving the web of life back together.  
23 Thank you so very much.

24 MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you. No. 7,  
25 please come to the mic. And if you have Nos. 8

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1 and 9, if you would like to begin to make your  
2 way into the aisle area so you will be prepared,  
3 that would be great.

4 I would like to remind you as well that  
5 five minutes is the time limit. A couple of you  
6 have been pushing it.

7 MR. AL CLEMENS: I am Al Clemens,  
8 C-l-e-m-e-n-s, I am out of Ironwood, and I am  
9 here for a sports person and a livestock and pet  
10 owner.

11 wolves are seen going in two ways;  
Page 36

12           either going to eat or coming from eating, as  
13           proven in the U.P. deer numbers and livestock and  
14           also pet owners are at their ends. Wolves were  
15           hunted and trapped to almost extinction, and now  
16           us sports persons and farmers and pet owners see  
17           why. The money that's being spent on babysitting  
18           the wolves are enormous. Guess what? It is our  
19           monies. Who voted to bring these animals here  
20           anyway?

21                       Rodney Stokes is the Director of the DNR  
22           in Michigan, and he wants to know why there is a  
23           drop in hunting licenses. Who wants to wander  
24           around the woods looking for a deer track in the  
25           snow? Our new and starting young hunters just

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1           are not buying licenses anymore, including me.  
2           we all know that the bear have taken their share  
3           of deer, but they have been doing this from Day  
4           One. Wolves are the problem. Get rid of the  
5           wolves and the U.P. will return to normal for the  
6           people and the pray.

7                       Idaho's governor, Butch Otter, declared  
8           the wolves a disaster emergency. Idaho and  
9           Montana are shooting wolves this fall. Our two  
10          bills in the State of Michigan to go into effect,  
11          maybe -- maybe in 30 days, they are useless. The  
12          bills -- in short, the livestock and pet owners  
13          and the wolves can only be shot by an owner, or

14           appointee, and a wolf has to be hanging on the  
15           said animal, and then reported to the DNR within  
16           24 hours, and then turned over to the DNR.  
17                        whoever wants the wolves, should pay for  
18           them. We need a hunting and trapping season now.  
19           Thank you.  
20                        MS. LISA MANDELL: No. 8.  
21                        MR. JOHN KOSKI: I am John Koski,  
22           K-o-s-k-i. We have two farms. We have had  
23           cattle on both farms for well over a hundred  
24           years, and a good friend and neighbor of ours,  
25           Mike Birtrich [sic.], was the last one to collect

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1           bounty on wolves when they had a bounty on wolves  
2           in Michigan.  
3                        MS. LISA MANDELL: Excuse me, sir.  
4           where do you reside, please?  
5                        MR. JOHN KOSKI: Pardon?  
6                        MS. LISA MANDELL: Where do you live,  
7           please?  
8                        MR. JOHN KOSKI: What did she say?  
9                        MS. LISA MANDELL: State of residence,  
10          please.  
11                        MR. JOHN KOSKI: Oh, Michigan.  
12          Bessemer, Michigan. N10086 Koski Road, Bessemer,  
13          Michigan. Do you want the address?  
14                        MS. LISA MANDELL: No, sir. Just your  
15          state of residence. Thank you.

16 MR. JOHN KOSKI: Okay. Anyway, since  
17 1998 now, our farm has a state record. We have  
18 lost more cattle on our farm than any other farm  
19 in the State of Michigan, and it is well over  
20 \$100,000 worth of losses now. And even some of  
21 these tree-huggers and that, they wanted to know  
22 how I knew it was wolves killing my cattle, so I  
23 had wolf manure analyzed at Northern Michigan  
24 University, and it came back that they ate  
25 domestic cows.

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1 And then some people they criticized our  
2 cattle, okay. One of ours bulls, Chromo West,  
3 was a grand champion at a Michigan State Fair in  
4 Escanaba and Major Prince was a grand champion at  
5 the Michigan State Fair in Detroit, but they  
6 don't have the Michigan State Fair in Detroit  
7 anymore. So we don't have struck cattle like  
8 them environmentalists think we do. And even if  
9 they lost over \$100,000 in cattle since 1998,  
10 they would have a different opinion. And even  
11 here I got a check for four animals from the  
12 State of Michigan for \$750.

13 When we ship our cattle to Iowa, we get  
14 more than \$800 for one yearling. See, Wisconsin  
15 won't accept our cattle anymore because of the TB  
16 in Lower Michigan. So for years we ship to a  
17 feedlot in Wisconsin, and then Lower Michigan is

18 lower and Minnesota is lower, and that's why we  
19 go to Iowa now.

20 Okay, thank you.

21 MS. LISA MANDELL: Okay. No. 9, please.

22 Is there a No. 9?

23 (No response.)

24 MS. LISA MANDELL: No. 10?

25 (No response.)

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1 MS. LISA MANDELL: No. 11?

2 MS. LAURA GROSKOPL: Laura Groskopl,  
3 Town of Harrison, Lincoln County, Wisconsin,  
4 G-r-o-s-k-o-p-l.

5 I have with me tonight 20 County Board  
6 resolutions, copies of certified copies of County  
7 Board resolutions. And these resolutions were  
8 passed, some of them before the delisting was  
9 being talked about, but they do advocate for a  
10 population goal of 350, or 350 or less, and they  
11 also advocate for controlling population. Some  
12 of them were passed, including the delisting, and  
13 two of them were passed only about the delisting.  
14 So in essence, all 20 of them do support the  
15 delisting. Most of these were unanimous votes,  
16 or close to unanimous, and there was science  
17 presented in each of the committee meetings to  
18 support this. So I want this to be part of the  
19 public record.

20 I want to talk a little bit about a  
21 farmer in my township. He lost some cattle and  
22 got a little bit of payment for it. But before  
23 he lost those cattle, he had quite a number of  
24 years of problems with the wolves. The wolves  
25 came in his yard in broad daylight while his

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1 little girl was jumping on her trampoline, and  
2 she ran inside and was able to beat the wolves,  
3 and she hasn't been on the trampoline since.

4 His neighbor was chased out of the  
5 garden. The wolves came right past the house.  
6 And that happened over a period of years, and  
7 this last year there were two verified threats to  
8 human safety on that farm. This man, all he ever  
9 wanted to be was a dairy farmer. He is the last  
10 one in our township, active milking. He is not a  
11 hunter, but he feels he has to carry a gun  
12 everywhere he goes. The last calve that was  
13 killed, he didn't even bother to call APHIS until  
14 three days later, he was so upset about it.

15 And my degree is in psychology. I have  
16 a lot of work experience in Human Services, and  
17 as I talked to this fellow and helped him  
18 communicate with the media, it occurred to me  
19 that this person is suffering from post-traumatic  
20 stress disorder, something I have also seen in  
21 other incidents involving wolves.

22                   So, yes, it is emotional. But, yes, we  
23                   do have a science to support that there is a fine  
24                   population in Wisconsin, a burgeoning population.  
25                   These counts are the minimum counts, they are not

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1                   the real count, and there is a growing  
2                   frustration in Wisconsin over the wolf situation.

3                   So I would submit that those of you who  
4                   want to keep the wolves on the Endangered Species  
5                   List, the level of frustration it is causing  
6                   people to do things that they shouldn't be doing.  
7                   It is not good for farmers. It is not good for  
8                   business people. It is not good for families  
9                   wanting to recreate in the woods. It is not good  
10                  for hunters, but especially it is not good for  
11                  the wolves to keep them on the Endangered Species  
12                  List, because people were willing to be  
13                  reasonable in the beginning and compromise on  
14                  this wolf thing and stick with the 80 or 100 or  
15                  250, or even 350, but now they have been pushed  
16                  past their limit.

17                  So it is not good for the wolves to keep  
18                  them in this situation, and I hope that you  
19                  delist the wolves as soon as possible. You are  
20                  quickly becoming irrelevant to the whole  
21                  discussion as we see Congress taking over the  
22                  reins because of the level of frustration.

23                  I want to share one thing with you from  
                    Page 42

24 our retired wildlife biologist in Rhinelander,  
25 Ron Eckstein, a person people respect. And he

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1 says: If the people don't like what you are  
2 doing, it won't work.

3 So that's what I want to leave you with.  
4 Thank you.

5 MS. LISA MANDELL: Okay. Is there a No.  
6 12?

7 (No response.)

8 MS. LISA MANDELL: No. 13?

9 (No response.)

10 MS. LISA MANDELL: No. 14?

11 (No response.)

12 MS. LISA MANDELL: No. 15?

13 MR. PHIL LUPA: Hello, my name is Phil  
14 Lupa from Wisconsin. As a matter of fact, I live  
15 about six and-a-half miles right from this point  
16 right here to the west. Starting about three  
17 years ago --

18 MS. LISA MANDELL: Could you spell your  
19 last name, please?

20 MR. PHIL LUPA: Lupa, L-u-p-a. Starting  
21 three years ago, about the 1st of January we  
22 noticed some visitors. As a matter of fact, we  
23 had three of them one morning, 10:00 in the  
24 morning, walk right up in the yard, 20 feet from  
25 the house. I walked out with a 30-06 rifle

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1 thinking they might be coyotes, and after looking  
2 at them thinking to myself: well, I don't know.  
3 Probably shouldn't shoot. So I didn't. I had a  
4 good chance to shoot but I didn't.

5 And this kept going on for a period of  
6 time. As a matter of fact, I dealt with Mr. Dave  
7 Ruid from the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Todd  
8 Ambs from the State Department of Natural --  
9 Wisconsin DNR, and Mr. John Naas, a trapper. We  
10 had him up. They verified they were wolves, they  
11 were coming within 20 and 30 yards of both my  
12 son's and my house. And after a period of time,  
13 they would show up at 10:00 in the morning. They  
14 would show up at 3:00 in the afternoon.

15 I had my grandchildren, who live up the  
16 road from me, walk down to the house one  
17 afternoon. They got in the house, and the wolf  
18 crossed the path right where they have walked  
19 through within five minutes after they came  
20 through. Now I am not saying he was looking for  
21 the kids. But what I would like to know is what  
22 he would have done if he had encountered the  
23 kids?

24 I have a German wirehaired pointer,  
25 which is probably one of the most gentle dogs

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1           that you would ever find. He loves the  
2           grandkids. When the grandkids are out in the  
3           yard, he is out there with the kids. He is never  
4           more than a few feet away. It took me about two  
5           months to finally figure out why the wolves were  
6           coming. They were trying to get my dog.

7                     My dog would go out at 6:00 in the  
8           morning. I would go out at 6:00 in the morning.  
9           I would get up, I am retired, I would get up.  
10          The first thing I would do is I would strap on a  
11          shoulder holster and shove in a pistol and stand  
12          outside while my dog went to the bathroom.

13                    I did this, and they talk about  
14          post-traumatic stress syndrome, my kids were  
15          playing out in the yard. I was sitting on the  
16          deck with a shotgun with double-ought buck,  
17          because I couldn't tell when they were going to  
18          come through. They would come through at 2:00 in  
19          the morning, they would come through at 10:00.  
20          You just never knew. And about the time we  
21          figured they weren't going to show up, I wouldn't  
22          see them for a couple of days, I would turn  
23          around and there they were. It was just like  
24          when you were out deer hunting. You look and  
25          there is nothing there and you turn back, and

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1           they are standing there. And I did this for six  
2           months. I kept a log every day.

3                       As a matter of fact, Mr. Ambs and  
4           Mr. Ruid from the Department of Agriculture both  
5           have a list and I wrote down every time I seen  
6           them. One morning I was outside with my son and  
7           I heard this hellacious squeal.

8                       First I heard a wolf howl, and I have  
9           learned a lot of things about wolves and coyotes  
10          over the years. But I heard a wolf howl, and  
11          then we heard something. It didn't sound right,  
12          and then we heard another wolf howl. And I said  
13          to my son: Gee, this sounds like somebody is not  
14          having a good day. That just didn't sound good.

15                      So when Mr. Naas came out to do the  
16          trapping and that, I told him what I heard and I  
17          showed him in my log what I had written down, and  
18          I said: I think they got a coyote. It took him  
19          probably 15 minutes to go out and find a coyote  
20          where they had killed it not too far from my  
21          house.

22                      So I mean I know what they were doing.  
23          They were there trying to get my dog. They  
24          almost got my son's dog one morning, and I was  
25          told not to worry, unless -- they says: well, if

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1           you go out in the woods and maybe with your dog

2 if they were to attack your dog, you might be a  
3 target because you are there. well, after a  
4 while, I got to the point where I would watch my  
5 dog, any my dog knew when they were around.  
6 Because when they were around, he was heading  
7 back to the house if we were out in the woods.

8 So I got to trust his senses, and it  
9 really proved to me one morning when the trapper  
10 came up, and he loves people. Anybody who comes  
11 in the yard, comes to see him. And the trapper  
12 when he got up, the dog went up to him, he was  
13 playing with him, and all of a sudden the dog  
14 walked around to the back of that truck and he  
15 went on full alert. The hair stood on his back.

16 And I said to Mr. Naas: what have you  
17 got in the back of the truck? Oh, he said, I got  
18 all kind of things back there. I got wolf urine  
19 and I got, you know, this and that and the other  
20 thing.

21 And so from that point on, I watched the  
22 dog. This went on from January through June.  
23 The last thing they did was kill a fawn within  
24 20 yards of my residence. The dog went out one  
25 morning and brought me back a fawn leg.

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1 And I looked at it and I said: well,  
2 you know -- in my part of the county it is not  
3 unusual for a dog to pick up a deer leg in the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
4 summertime because guys butcher deer and they  
5 throw the legs out. And this leg was warm and  
6 bleeding. So I took it and hung it in the tree,  
7 and I watched and he went back and picked up the  
8 second leg. Then we found where the kill was and  
9 I followed it up and I found a baseball size  
10 skull cap and the bottom jaw is all I found. No  
11 hide, no nothing.

12 Two days later I went back, because I  
13 wasn't sure what it was and I had talked to  
14 Mr. Ruid down in Rhineland, and I went back up  
15 there and he says: well, it could be a bear; it  
16 could be this. So I went back and I actually  
17 took pictures. I found the wolf where he  
18 deficated and where it was full of deer hide. So  
19 I know it was a wolf kill. We had him cross in  
20 front of us as we were walking into the woods.

21 And I am a deer hunter. I could care  
22 less if I ever shoot another deer. That doesn't  
23 bother me. But when I have to worry about this  
24 piece of property that I live on, which we have  
25 owned since I was two weeks old and have lived

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1 there most of my life, and I have to fear for my  
2 life and strap on a gun first thing in the  
3 morning to go out to feel safe, something needs  
4 to be done.

5 I don't want all of the wolves shot. As

6 a matter of fact, the wolves that came into my  
7 yard, the male was probably one of the most  
8 beautiful things I have ever seen in my life. He  
9 was tall, he was tan, he had beautiful long legs.  
10 He was a gorgeous animal, but I don't want him in  
11 my yard. They can be in the woods as long as  
12 they are not anywhere near my house.

13 But I have already told the DNR, if I  
14 get one on my lawn, protective or not, if I see  
15 him where I cut my grass, I am shooting and  
16 that's the way it is, you know.

17 I thank you for your time.

18 MS. LISA MANDELL: Okay. Is there a No.  
19 16?

20 MS. SUE NEUHAUSER: Sue Neuhauser,  
21 N-e-u-h-a-u-s-e-r, from Northern Wisconsin.  
22 Okay. I feel very very strongly for people that  
23 are threatened by wolves. I think that wolves  
24 and people do not mix. I wish there was a way  
25 that we could figure out in this state where we

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1 could have wildlife refuges, where we could have  
2 islands of biodiversity that are off-limits to  
3 human activity, off-limits to hunting, off-limits  
4 to people stalking the animals, bothering them in  
5 their natural habitat and just leave them alone,  
6 but also have areas that are off-limits to the  
7 wolves. And where people live and where they

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
8 raise their children, which is most of the state,  
9 should pretty much be off-limits.

10 Now I am glad that this gentleman did  
11 not shoot the wolf if he wasn't being threatened,  
12 and I am glad that there was no bad outcome,  
13 nothing actually ever happened, but it is a scary  
14 situation.

15 Picking up the piece of paper in the  
16 back on the wolf depredation numbers, we can see  
17 that since 2003, 189 wolves have been euthanized.  
18 More have been captured. And I am wondering if  
19 189 wolves were euthanized with endangered  
20 species status, that's a pretty strong  
21 enforcement mechanism, 189 wolves. I mean that's  
22 half of our goal, population goal of 350.

23 which I don't know where that number,  
24 350 came from, and I have never had anyone been  
25 able to explain that to me adequately. It is not

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1 based on carrying capacity that I know of. I  
2 don't know if it is based on social carrying  
3 capacity or what that number is based on. It  
4 worries me that we have estimates of close to 700  
5 or 800 wolves right now, and it worries me that  
6 we are considering delisting. And the gentleman  
7 from Conservation Congress has flatly stated that  
8 their goal is to get the number back down to 350  
9 or 300. I would like to know what they plan to

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10 do with those extra 500 wolves that are now  
11 living in the state.

12 I am also concerned about  
13 politically-driven decisions. I belong to a  
14 group that works with bears. We track bears and  
15 we study their habits. And in 2009, a study was  
16 done on the bear population in the state. At the  
17 DNR website, the results of the study were  
18 published that from one study showed that, lo and  
19 behold, there were twice as many bears in the  
20 state than we previously had estimated.

21 The DNR in their own words on the  
22 website said that although we have this new  
23 finding of all of these bears, the DNR is not  
24 planning to make any policy decisions at this  
25 time based on this one finding. Four months

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1 later a decision was made to release twice as  
2 many bear hunting tags that year as previously.  
3 Thus my concern.

4 My concern about politics driving the  
5 decisions over the lives of animals in the state.  
6 My concern is politics having power over the way  
7 wildlife lives in the state, to the extent that  
8 the people that actually want to support wildlife  
9 and want to enjoy wildlife, we are the ones that  
10 are being threatened. We feel under attack by  
11 these constant, what do they call, suggestions

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
12 that are put forth in the Conservation Congress  
13 about hunting, about expanding the area, the  
14 areas in which the animals are hunted, about  
15 expanding the methods that are being used to hunt  
16 the animals.

17 I am not against population control. I  
18 am not against protecting people when there is a  
19 threat to their lives or their children's lives  
20 or the lives of their livestock. But I think we  
21 have to find some way to coexist with our  
22 wildlife in this state. And if it means that we  
23 need to put aside some acreage in this state, and  
24 we have the acreage, where we just face up to the  
25 hunting lobby and say: This is going to be

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1 protected refuge. No one can come here. These  
2 animals are to be left alone.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. LISA MANDELL: Okay. Is there a No.  
5 17?

6 MR. RALEIGH FOX: Thank you. My name is  
7 Raleigh Fox. The first name is R-a-l-e-i-g-h.  
8 The last name I don't think you will have a  
9 problem with.

10 MS. LISA MANDELL: Please go ahead and  
11 spell it for the record.

12 MR. RALEIGH FOX: Fox, F-o-x.

13 MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you.

14 MR. RALEIGH FOX: I live in Bayfield  
15 County, lived here most of my life. In my  
16 younger years, I spent four years in the  
17 Arrowhead of Minnesota, so I had four years of  
18 on-the-job experience with wolves. So when I  
19 moved back to Wisconsin and in my backyard we had  
20 wolves, I became concerned -- and I think if  
21 Adrian is still here -- he will verify that I  
22 have been in his face ever since.

23 Another member of the Conservation  
24 Congress at that time and I met with Adrian, and  
25 from that day on, our goal was to manage the

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1 wolves in Wisconsin like all other animals.  
2 There is nothing sacred about a wolf. A wolf is  
3 an animal. He is intelligent. He is the most  
4 proficient predator there is. He has no equal.  
5 I can see from living with them for four years  
6 what they do, and I didn't want it to happen in  
7 Wisconsin. I have become very frustrated.

8 I attended -- I have no idea how many  
9 committee meetings I attended. I was on the Wolf  
10 Committee from its infancy until just recently I  
11 retired from the congress. I have heard every  
12 argument that we heard tonight many many times.  
13 Basically they are all pretty much stereotype;  
14 they are all the same.

15 The bottom line is we have to deal with

16 the wolf as an animal, pure and simple. Forget  
17 the Hollywood hype, and hysteria that goes along  
18 with it, and get down to business and get a wolf  
19 management program, which right now I guess we  
20 would call that delisting, and I totally support  
21 that. Thank you very much.

22 MS. LISA MANDELL: Thank you. No. 18?

23 MR. CORY WHITE: I am Cory white. I am  
24 from Wisconsin. I would just like to respond to  
25 a --

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1 MS. LISA MANDELL: would you state your  
2 last name, please?

3 MR. CORY WHITE: w-h-i-t-e. I would  
4 just like to respond to a handful of things from  
5 this evening and address the 350 wolf population  
6 goal number, which I think was arrived at at a  
7 point at which I don't think anybody thought that  
8 we were very likely to attain 350 or more wolves  
9 in the State of Wisconsin. I think that that was  
10 a number that was arrived at not with regard to  
11 the ecological carrying capacity of the state,  
12 but much more a political number, which in  
13 quotations, one might call it the "social  
14 carrying capacity" of the state, and I think it  
15 was a guess at that point.

16 well, I think that there is certainly  
17 plenty of evidence that people are very

18 frustrated and that the conflicts between wolves  
19 and humans are at a point in which we need more  
20 flexibility to address the problems that we're  
21 having. But fundamentally, I think that we are  
22 all enriched by the presence of the wolves in the  
23 state.

24 When I was a small child, it was a big  
25 event if we saw an eagle. Now, you know, I

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1 probably see a hundred eagles a year at this  
2 point. It is still a big event for my daughter  
3 when she sees one, but it is much more frequent.

4 The presence of wildlife I think  
5 enriches all of us, and we need to find a more  
6 reasonable number, and I would hate to have the  
7 management of the wolves turned over by the DNR  
8 to people who would prefer to eradicate them  
9 entirely, and certainly there are some who would  
10 like to do that.

11 In any case, I think that we need to  
12 revise the numbers. We need to think more  
13 carefully about it. I worry that, about the Fish  
14 and Wildlife Service turning over responsibility  
15 to the DNR, and if it means them washing their  
16 hands of the wolf issue and just letting go, I  
17 would much prefer that there be some ongoing  
18 relationship. But at this point the Endangered  
19 Species Act does not permit enough flexibility.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
Thank you.

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MS. LISA MANDELL: Is there a No. 19?  
while he comes forward, I want to remind  
you that if you wish to make oral comments, that  
you need to register at the registration table  
and get a number.

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MR. MIKE SOGGE: Good evening. My name  
is Mike Sogge. The spelling of the last name is  
S-o-g-g-e. I am joining you tonight as a Board  
of Director member on behalf of the Wisconsin  
Bearhunters Association and we support delisting  
of the gray wolf.

MS. LISA MANDELL: would you please  
speak into the microphone?

MR. MIKE SOGGE: I would like to thank  
the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for holding  
this public information meeting and hearing  
comments from the general public and stakeholders  
in the proposal to remove the gray wolf in the  
Western Great Lakes Region from the Endangered  
Species Act protection.

According to the most recent population  
estimates, in Wisconsin there are not less than  
825 wolves and more than 200 packs. Many years  
ago a recovery goal of 350 wolves had been  
established by the Wisconsin Department of  
Natural Resources. Wisconsin's wolf population

22 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
23 has increased steadily over the two decades,  
24 exceeding its recovery goals and greatly  
25 expanding the geographic range.

Great Lakes wolves have indisputably

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1 recovered and are no longer threatened with  
2 extinction. Their numbers have all been above  
3 recovery plan objectives. If the wolf is removed  
4 from the Endangered Species list, the state would  
5 be allowed to enact a wolf management plan, which  
6 has not been implemented for several years as the  
7 Federal Endangered Species Act strips the state  
8 of its power to manage the ever increasing wolf  
9 population.

10 The rising number of wolves in recent  
11 years has resulted in increasing wolf/human  
12 conflicts, particularly depredation of livestock  
13 and dogs. Obtaining the flexibility that results  
14 from state management is essential. It will  
15 allow Wisconsin DNR biologists and wildlife  
16 managers a flexible tool to manage these  
17 conflicts. The increased management ability,  
18 both localized and specific, will be a great  
19 change and would dramatically reduce the number  
20 of conflicts, reduce the monetary resources  
21 required for reimbursement of wolf depredations,  
22 and increase general human population's social  
23 acceptance of wolves in Wisconsin.

24 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hearing, 5-18-11.txt  
The United States Fish and Wildlife  
25 Service should not be distracted from recognizing

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1 the real wolf population coverage that has  
2 occurred by observing outdated research claims  
3 that the wolf population in the western Great  
4 Lake states is of two or more separate wolf  
5 species and, therefore, requires ESA protection  
6 of some newly developed wolf species.

7 The most recent genetic research  
8 conducted by Roland Kays, and others, suggests  
9 that there is only one wolf species in the  
10 western Great Lakes states.

11 Thank you on behalf of the Wisconsin  
12 Bearhunters Association.

13 MS. LISA MANDELL: Is there a No. 20?  
14 (No response.)

15 MS. LISA MANDELL: All registered  
16 speakers have provided their comments, and as it  
17 appears that no one wishes to comment at this  
18 time, we will temporarily recess. And if you  
19 choose to register to provide an oral comment  
20 between now and 9:00, we will reconvene and hear  
21 that comment. At either rate, we will reconvene  
22 at 9:00 to close the hearing.

23 (Whereupon, a break was taken from 8:52  
24 p.m to 9:00 p.m.)

25 MS. LISA MANDELL: Okay. It is now

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1 9:00. It is 9:00. It is the published closing  
2 time for this hearing. I am officially reopening  
3 the hearing.

4 We appreciate the time and effort you  
5 took this evening to attend this hearing and  
6 present your comments. They have been  
7 informative and will be considered in coming to a  
8 final decision. On behalf of the Fish and  
9 wildlife Service, thank you. The hearing is now  
10 closed and we are off the record.

11 (Whereupon, the hearing concluded at  
12 9:01 p.m. on May 18, 2011.)

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1 C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-E

2 I, Susan K. Edwards, a Notary Public for the State  
3 of Wisconsin, do hereby certify that on the 18th day of  
4 May, 2011, there came before me the above hearing; that I  
5 took down in shorthand, correctly, the proceedings and  
6 have caused the same to be transcribed into typewriting;  
7 that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct  
8 transcript of all of the proceedings had on the taking of  
9 said hearing.

10 I further certify that I am not related in any way  
11 to any party, their attorney, or an employee of any of  
12 them, and that I am not financially interested in the  
13 action.

14 I also certify that on this date said document was  
15 delivered to MS. LAURA RAGAN, U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
16 Service, BHW Federal Building, 1 Federal Drive, ES, Ft.  
17 Snelling, MN 55111.

18 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this  
19 \_\_\_\_\_ day of May, 2011.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
SUSAN K. EDWARDS  
Court Reporter

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