

PUBLIC HEARING

RE: U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE proposal to
Delist the Western Great Lakes Distinct
Population Segment of the Gray Wolf

DATE: 5/10/06

PLACE: Westwood Conference Center, Wausau, Wisconsin

TIME: 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

MS. DRYER: Good evening. It is 7:30 and time to start the meeting. I'm going to ask you all to take your seat if you were going to stay for the hearing.

Good evening. I am Pam Dryer on behalf of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service I welcome you to this public hearing.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive comments from the public and other interested parties on the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's proposal to Delist Western Great Lakes Distinct Population Segment of the Gray Wolf.

I'm Pam Dryer, I am the manager for the Whittlesee Creek National Wildlife Refuge of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in Ashland, and I will be serving as at the preceding official for this hearing and Mariann Merkel is our official court reporter, and she will be preparing the comments, about the statements made during this hearing, so it will be reported her. The transcript of the hearing will be posted on the Web site of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in a few weeks so you can go onto that Web site and find it and the address for Web site is available with the material that is being handed out in the foyer.

Just so you know, I will have no further involvement in this proposal after tonight and I really haven't had any previous involvement except as a hearing officer in 2003. So I am basically here to be an official impartial participant in the hearing, but there or other U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service representatives that you probably have had chance to meet this evening and they are assisting with the hearing and many of them will also be involved in receiving the comments in helping the Service come to a final decision on this proposal. Specifically, I would like introduce and re-introduce to some of you Ron Refsnider from our regional office, Louise Clemency, with our Green Bay field office and also here is Joel Trick, he's in the back, and two other people who are helping out in the foyer is Laura Ragan and Kim Mitchell.

This is a public hearing on under Section 4 of the Federal Endangered Species Act 1973. This is a proposal to remove the gray wolf from the Western Great Lakes area of the United States from the endangered and threatened wildlife as a commentary was

published in the Federal register on March 27 2006, beginning on Page 152-6.

The proposal included information on the four public hearings that are being held.

Convening public hearings is just one of the methods the Fish & Wildlife Service uses to put the data and comments on this proposal. No final decision has yet been made regarding this proposal, nor will any decision be made at this hearing. Public comment on this proposal must be received no later than June 26, 2006. And after reviewing in consideration of the existing administrative record, your comments tonight, your interpretation of the existing data, and all other information gathered during the comment period, Fish & Wildlife Service will make a final decision on the proposal.

Information that you provided in your comments tonight will become part of the administrative record and will be considered by the Fish & Wildlife Service in the decision-making process. That's one of the reasons we have the reporter here that will take your comments.

I want to make sure that you're aware too of three tables that are back in the foyer. One is it a registration table where you will need to take a number, just a little number on a card, if you wish to present oral comments tonight. I will be given government officials a chance to provide other comments and then I will simply be taking them in chronological order. If you would like to get on our mailing list to receive future information on this proposal, please add your name and address or e-mail address to the sign up sheet and, again, that is on the registration table out in the foyer.

On the second table, there is a variety of written information about this proposal and about wolves and the Endangered Species Act. Please take copies of anything from that table that interest you, and I also want to point out that along with that there is this light blue comment sheet that you can use to turn in written comments tonight. You can either turn them in tonight or later by mail or by fax. The comment boards are actually on a third table over to my left and there is a box right there that you can drop those comments in.

When I call your number to present your comments, please come to that microphone right there and when you begin your comments state your full name and we would like you to spell your name also and that's to help our court reporter. If you're representing an organization, please state the name of the organization that you are representing. If you are representing yourself, you did to the need to state an organization and just give your state of residence.

If you have a copy of any written comments to go along with your oral comments, you can give them to the court reporter to me or to Ron or Louise at the front that just helps us where transcribing the oral comments.

I'm going to ask that you limit your oral comments to five minutes so that we can make sure that we get everyone a chance to make comments tonight; and if you stray from the issue, exceed the time limit, engage in personal insults or make other inappropriate

remarks, I will ask you to promptly wrap up your comments and then as you reach five minutes I'll give you a quick warning.

At the end of the evening, if we don't have -- if we do have time and you still have additional comments that you would like to make, we would give you that opportunity.

Again, just to maximum the opportunity for others to express their comments, I ask that you refrain from commenting on issues beyond the scope of the Fish & Wildlife Service's proposal to delist the wolf, that's what we are here for tonight.

This is an informal hearing, even though we do have a reporter but what that means is that we will not be questioning you or doing any kind of cross-examination in connection with your comments and it is solely intended to obtain your comments so that the Fish & Wildlife Service can consider them in making our final decision on the proposal. At the same time Fish & Wildlife Service do not respond to questions or engage in any discussions of the proposals during the hearing it is just strictly a time for you to talk to us. The presentation of the question and answer period previously was your opportunity to ask questions and have that discussion.

If you do have questions about the proposal or about the Endangered Species Act, I encourage you to take advantage of the material the information or go to our Web site or and you may read and still submit comments later.

There may be other opportunities also to ask individuals of the Fish & Wildlife Service outside of the hearing, for instance, afterwards or during the recess; and if we take one, I will decide that this hearing is to intended to receive public interest not to respond the to it.

The Fish & Wildlife Service's response to the issue of question raised during the public comment period including those that come up this evening will be published as part of the final decision for this proposal and that publication will probably occur early 2007.

So the transcript itself of the hearing will be in a few weeks but the proposal or the final decision will not be until early in 2007.

The comments are being recorded to assist Fish & Wildlife Service in receiving them and preserve them for the record. Please keep in mind that the reporter will be only recording statements made into the microphone. No comments from the audience and other statements made away from the microphone to the audience will not be come part of the record and will not be considered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service when making a final decision on this proposals. So all oral comments must be made into the microphone and directed to the front of the room.

In addition to or instead of providing oral comments, if you do not want to provide oral comments tonight, you still may permit them in writing and you can do that by e-mail, fax or just mail it in. Written comments maybe submitted here to the staff registration table or sent in later. Oral comments will not be accepted outside of this hearing or outside of the public hearing setting so if you call with a comment that will not be considered you will need to put it in writing later. As I mentioned earlier they must be received by June 26, and they will be given the same consideration as the oral comments today. We will conclude the

hearing by 9:00, but if we have covered all of those who wish to speak before 9:00, I will recess the hearing, go off the record, and until either additional people come forward for comments or until 9:00 but be will be open for comments until 9:00. When additional people come back or close to 9:00, I will reconvene the hearing, go back on record, and receive those comments to close the hearing.

We will now open the floor for your comments.

After I call your number, please come to the microphone, again state your name, spell your name, tell us what organization you represent, if any, and state your state of residence and then just begin your comments.

Please speak as clearly as possible so the reporter can hear you.

I will take federal official, state and local officials, government personnel first, and then will go in chronological order.

Tonight's hearing is designated to gather public comments from you and especially information regarding this proposal in order to help Fish & Wildlife Service make the best possible decision. To best serve that purpose, I ask that you remain respectful of the speakers at all times, and I noticed that you did that earlier tonight, and I'm very thankful for that.

We will begin with the first speaker.

Are there any federal officials that will be providing oral comments?

(No response).

How about state or local officials?

(No response).

Any government person? Adrian.

ADRIAN WYDEVEN: I represent the State of Wisconsin Department of National Resources. I'm a resident of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Department of National Resources is pleased that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has begun the process to remove gray wolves in the Western Great Lake States Distinct Population Segment from the list of federally endangered and threatened species and return management to the states.

The Wisconsin DNR supports this process and look forward to taking over management of wolves in the state.

We have had a long history of wolf conservation in Wisconsin.

In the 1940's Aldo Leopold, Conservation Commission member, fought to eliminate the bounty system on wolves and finally in 1957, Wisconsin ended bounty payments on wolves and then listed the species as a protected wild species, the first U.S. state to list the gray wolf as a protected species.

In 1975 Wisconsin DRN listed the gray listed the gray wolf as a state endangered species when wolves returned after being extirpated for 15 years.

Since 1979 the Wisconsin DNR as conducted annual surveys of the

state wolf population. These surveys have provided scientifically sound information on the wolf population status in the state continuously for 27 years.

In 1989 the Wisconsin DNR approved the State Wolf Recovery Plan that set a goal for downlisting wolves to threatened status when the population exceeded 80.

In 1999 the Wisconsin DNR approved the state wolf management plan that set a state delisting goal of 250 and the state management goal of 350 wolves in the state outside of Indian reservations.

These state goals or higher than federal goals to provide assurance that wolves will no longer become endangered in Wisconsin.

In 1999 the Wisconsin DNR also downlisted wolves to threaten status when the population exceeded 80 wolves and then delisted wolves to protected status in 2004 when the population exceeded 250.

Since 1983 the Wisconsin DNR has reimbursed all people requesting payments for verified wolf depredation. Careful stewardship by the Wisconsin DNR with help from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has allowed the wolf population to grow from 2 wolves in 1975 to over 450 wolves today.

The State of Wisconsin has exceeded requirements for federal delisting the wolves. The goal was to have at least 100 wolves in Wisconsin and Michigan for five or more years. The two states have exceeded this goal for 13 years and currently share about 900 wolves. Also the State of Wisconsin has had an improved management plan in place for the last seven years. We urge the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to quickly complete the delisting of wolves and return management to the states. Depredation on domestic animals is increasing in the state and more flexible management is needed. Numbers of farms suffering wolf depredation grew from 8 in 2002 to 25 in 2005. As human tolerance wolves is declining in portions of the state, more flexible management is necessary to maintain the wolf population at tolerable levels.

The Wisconsin DNR congratulates the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the successful recovery of gray wolves in the Great Lakes region. We are proud of our partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in helping wolves recover. We are also greatly appreciate help from other partners in USDA-Wildlife Services, US Forest Service, National Park Service, Wisconsin Indian tribes, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, Wisconsin County Forests, Minnesota DNR, Michigan DNR, Timber Wolf Alliance, Timber Wolf Information Network, Defenders of Wildlife, National Wildlife Federation, and other groups and individuals who have supported wolf recovery in the state.

The Wisconsin DNR is committed to the long-term conservation of wolf populations in the state. We are committed to preventing wolves from ever again becoming endangered in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin DNR will work closely with our many partners to make sure wolves never return to our list of threatened and endangered species.

Thank you.

MS. DRYER: Thank you.

Will the person with Card Number 1 please come forward.

JEFF LYON: I am Jeff Lyon, I represent the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation supports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's two proposals, one to designate the Western Great Lakes of gray wolves population as a distinct population segment and, two, also to remove the gray wolf from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife in the Western Great Lakes District Population Segment.

Wisconsin has met and exceeded the goals for number of distribution of wolves that were established in the 1989 recovery plan. In addition, the numbers and distribution has been sustained over a number of years. Having met the scientific goals of wolf recovery as set forth in the recovery plan, the Endangered Species Act contemplates the recovered species be delisted.

As Adrian mentioned, the Wisconsin DNR held public hearings back in 1996 to receive public input to develop a state wolf management plan. A final plan was approved by the DNR Board in October of 1999. That plan set forth a goal of 350 wolves in the state outside of our Indiana reservations. That plan, as mentioned during our information session, was approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and will be used to manage wolves once they have been delisted.

I think the wolf recovery plan has been extremely successful. When we look at the numbers from 0 wolves in 1973 to just receiving numbers that in 2006 the count is 455-522. I think we can see that it has been very successful.

The Wisconsin landscape cannot handle any more wolves. In northern Wisconsin where most wolves are located, land use is a mix of county and state forest, lake homes, other small tracks of land owned by private land owners and farms with land suitable for grazing cattle and other livestock. We are having problems with wolves in agriculture sector and we need to be able to deal with them.

With the increasing number of wolves, obviously there has also been an increasing number of cattle and calves that have been killed by gray wolves, which is an obvious concern of Farm Bureau members and other members of the state. On May 5, I received some information from USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service on the number of cattle and calves killed due to predators. According to their information in 2005, totaled 300 head of cattle and 2700 head of calves were killed by predators in Wisconsin. Now the statistics said that two-thirds, about 2,000 of them, were killed by coyotes, but the remaining one-third presumably killed by wolves, bears and other predators.

Again, we do need to have the gray wolf delisted so our state DNR can manage the wolf population. Specifically, with respect to that, the state plan calls for wolves to be left alone except near farms and outside northern forest areas. Wolves will be open to more trapping and shooting near areas where livestock or pets have been attacked.

We have members out there who just as soon see no wolves in Wisconsin, but we realized that we're past that point and we need

to work with our state DNR to control the wolf population and control wolf depredation. Last year to address our concerns Farm Bureau worked with the DNR staff, the state DNR Board, State legislators on a rule that will provide payment to farmers for depredation caused to livestock by gray wolves.

We believe the state wolf plan is conservative enough to ensure that the gray wolf won't fall back into endangered status after the Federal government hands over control to the state. Because the plan also calls for the federal government to continue to monitor wolf numbers for at least five years.

In closing, the Farm Bureau believes scarce resources need to be spent on endangered species that truly need it. The gray wolf needs to be delisted and the Great Lakes need to be designated in their own distinct population segment.

Thank you.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Lyon.

Will the person with Number 3.

BRAD HOFFMANN: I only have four lines on mine so I will take less than a minute or two.

I'm all for the delisting and I think that these two at the front have explained a lot to me. I came in quite angry, but I've cooled off now. The confusion I think in the hunters in Wisconsin is originally we talked about 100 wolves, now we're talking 350 wolves was to be the maximum amount of wolves in this state. We hear 700 to 900 at some time during the year and this is what disturbs the hunter. If we're at 350 wolves, that is to be the top at any time during the year, that's what we understood when we started this program and I think it was fully supported by the hunters of Wisconsin, but they are very disturbed right now when they hear figures of 500, 700, 900 wolves. Now I realize that's not -- it is going to revert back to the State of Wisconsin but we agreed to a 100 and a maximum of 350. That's all I have got to state.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Hoffmann.

The person with Card Number 3.

MARK MOVOTNY: I'm from Price County, Wisconsin. I'm a farmer in Price County. I have a small beef herd and it is hard enough making a living the way it is and we don't need any more wolves. We have had problems with them in the past and we are in an area where there is a lot of wolf damage, a lot of it the guy from DNR is talking about, if you have reported cases, well a lot of them aren't reported and we're paying the price. I would like it stopped. Thank you.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Movotny.

Number 4.

DAVID WITHERS: My name is David Withers.

I'm a resident of Wisconsin representing both myself and the Wisconsin Bear Hunter's Association, Inc., tonight.

I would like to read into the record a letter from our

President Bill Klugow regarding WGL Wolf Delisting to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Wisconsin Bear Hunters' Association, an organization of more than 2,500 interested Wisconsin sportsman and their families, would like to go on the record as supporting the delisting of the gray wolf. Through the conservation efforts led by the Wisconsin's DNR in the past 20 years, the gray population has recovered substantially to a number that not only is significantly in excess of the original goals but assures that wolves in Wisconsin are in no danger of significant decline in their numbers.

Delisting will help the DNR be better able to manage the population of gray wolves. Our members are concerned with the increasing depredation by wolves of our game animals and pets. There have been many instances where our hunting dogs have been attacked and killed by wolves. Also farmers in northern Wisconsin have problems with their livestock being attacked and killed by the gray wolf.

The Wisconsin Bear Hunters fully support allowing the DNR flexibility in creating the most effective and balanced program control measures for depredating gray goals. Delisting will assist in developing the best management practices. The greatest gray wolf population outside of Alaska, is in the Midwest between Wisconsin and Minnesota, Michigan there are approximately 4000 gray wolves. We have about 900 wolves between Wisconsin and Michigan, which is almost nine times the federal delisting goal. Also, Minnesota alone has around 3020 gray wolves.

We would like to thank you, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for holding this hearing and allowing our members' position to be heard.

Thank you.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Withers. Will the person with number 5.

ADRIAN WYDEVEN: That was me.

MS. DRYER: Card Number 6.

JERRY KMUTH: My name is Jerry Kmuth. I'm the immediate past president of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and I'm here tonight to testify on their behalf.

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation supports the delisting of the gray wolf from its current status as a threatened species in the State of Wisconsin. The Federation is the largest conservation group in the State of Wisconsin consisting of 140 hunting, fishing trapping groups located throughout the State of Wisconsin. The mission of the Wildlife Federation is to support sound conservation education and sound conversation policies in the State of Wisconsin.

The Federation has historically been a very strong supporter of the gray wolf program in the State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin and Federal laws have assured the recovery of an important wildlife species to this state. The program has truly been a success and there has been a very substantial increase in the state's wolf

population and distribution. State and federal agencies, conservationists, land owners and all interested parties should be proud of what has been achieved. It is time to recognize this great success and to continue on the spectrum of sound management of the species.

Delisting is the first necessary step to progress on managing this important wildlife species as any other major wildlife species in the state. As with any wildlife species, wolf populations need to be in harmony with their habitat and the human environment. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation believes in maintaining the population goal for the state at 350 animals. We believe that this is the number that assures the best balance of the wolf population with the habitat and human environment.

The re-establishment of the wolf in the state has led to depredation of domestic animals in various locations throughout the state. The state has wisely supported a strong depredation compensation program for the loss of all domestic animals. The Federation believes that the continuation of such a program is vital to the continuing support of the wolf in the state and the credibility of the entire endangered species program in the state.

There is little doubt that there will be future depredation of domestic animals in the state. The Federation supports the control including dispatch of any wolf causing depredation of any domestic animal on public and private land in the state. The process for control and compensation of depredating wolves should be continued and expanded if necessary in fairness to those harmed by the depredation.

This delisting moves the wolf from threatened status to protected status. The Wildlife Federation requests the development of a process and a plan to eventually restore the wolf in Wisconsin to fur bearer status. There is great concern that the wolf management actions of government employees and affected landowners will, by themselves, be inadequate to assure needed control of the wolf population and the keeping of depredation under control. This process and planning effort should be a broad based effort for all stakeholders to assure a final result that is fair to all involved.

The Wildlife Federation remains concerned about the financial aspects of the program. We request that the program do an annual public report on wolf program related expenses and a five year projection of the program costs. The Federation also feels very strongly that the cost of the problem should not at this time be paid out of the hunting, fishing, and trapping license fees.

Thank you very much for your full consideration of this testimony.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Kmuth.

Will the person with Card Number 7 please come forward.

MIKE BRUST: Everybody is being very polite. It has been an emotional issue. First of all, my name is Mike Brust. I'm from the Wisconsin -- I'm currently chairman of the Timber Wolf Study Committee of the Wisconsin Congress.

It has been an emotional issue. As I noted, I think Mr. Hoffmann's comments were well put because the sportsman of this

state supported this program from the beginning but because the population has grown to a level that has become troublesome and hard to control in fact due to the Fish & Wildlife Service it has caused people to turn away from what was originally supported. So I'm very happy to see that we are finally, hopefully getting to the point where we will have a distinct population and we will be delisting and Wisconsin will be able to control the population of the wolves at a level that is satisfactory to the residents of the state and still not allow them to be endangered.

I do appreciate the Fish & Wildlife Service's efforts in this regard, particularly lately. We, as everyone knows, been kind of frustrated about the delays, not all of them caused by the Fish & Wildlife Service but I think your real aggressive approach to this in the last couple of years has been very welcome and frankly about time. So thank you for that.

I guess the other point that I would like to make is that we do hope that once wolves are delisted and management is turned over to the state that the monitored population will be allowed to be based on a more conventional method of wild population estimation. As most of you probably know in regards to wolves, Wisconsin knows there is no other wild population that I'm aware of where we estimate the population based on an actual count. It is generally considered by people spending time in the same habitat and even some DNR personnel discount only represent a fraction, probably one-half or less of the actual numbers of wolves in Wisconsin. So that is an issue that as we go forward and as we talk about ways to keep control of the wolves I hope had the Fish & Wildlife Service is aware of the fact that Wisconsin perhaps rightfully isn't very conservative in this approach but we really do need to consider the actual numbers of wolves in the state as opposed to the ones that the noses are counted on and, frankly, there has been a concern that that count has been managed by the DNR and some of the wolf study groups that a lot of the people have kind of a conflicting interest in.

So I guess to finish I would just like to say thank you for becoming more aggressive and finally getting this done and hopefully we will be able to go forward from here.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Brust.

The person with Card Number 8, please.

DUWAYNE HERNING: My name is Duwayne Herning, and I'm here tonight representing the Timber Wolf Alliance and I'm from Wausau. I have their official testimony and I will give you that. I'm sure it is pretty close to what you heard in Duluth and what you will hear in Marquette. I will just make two comments that are more personal but I know they tie into the organization. I appeared here three years ago and gave testimony and we said there were two things that were really important. TWA does support a viable population of wolves but they also support delisting. It is no secret the wolves in Wisconsin have pretty well saturated the good habitat and they are moving out into fringe areas, areas where there are people, and in Wisconsin that means areas where there are farms, and certainly if there are depredation problems you have to

take care of those problems. You can't have somebody losing their livelihood because of a situation like this and it is just good policy. It is good obviously for the species to eliminate the problem, but it is really good for PR. I can tell you as a member of the Wausau City Council nothing frustrates people more than having a problem or concern and it appears that nobody is doing anything about it. So it is sort of a similar thing. The second thing in regard to the management areas, we supported having a management area in the southwest part of the United States to protect the Mexican gray wolves but we really questioned separating the whole northern continental United States into two management units and speaking specifically in the eastern zone having the same management practices in the Great Lakes where you have an abundance of wolves and the same management practice in the northeast where you have none or maybe very few at the very most. So it is three years later, but I have to stand here and say, we think you got it right this time. So thanks a lot.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Herning.
Card Number 9.

JIM YATES: My name is Jim Yates. I'm from Merrill, Wisconsin. I raise calves from one week old to 18 months in southeast Lincoln County. I have had one six month old calf taken, killed in October of 2004. I had five taken that were four months old in July of 2005 and one was injured at that time, all of them were verified by the USDA and I was reimbursed by the DNR. None of the animals were eaten by the wolves they were just killed. They were all all in open farm field pasture and only 100 yards from the barn. So I would support the delisting. Thank you.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Yates.
Do we have someone with Card Number 10?

(interjecting) She left.

Are there any more cards?

Card Number 11 then, please. Is there a person with Card Number 11?

(No response).

MS. DRYER: Card Number 12?

DAVID BRUELIG: My name is David Bruelig, and I farm on the Lincoln-Marathon County Line, next to Mr. Yates there and we also have wolf problems. We feel that deregulation of the wolf should be coming as soon as possible. I talk to Senator Feingold last summer once and he said it should have already been done then so now here we are a year later and now we're talking 2007. So I hope we can push this along as reasonably fast as possible. Also I had the Wildlife services in for trapping and they were unable to get them then. The boys put a valiant effort out, we had 20 some traps there at one point, solar lighting, trying to keep the wolves from snatching calves, but the lighting didn't work. We had a calf

taken through the fence about 25 yards from the lights. So the boys that were doing the trapping imagined that some wolves just can't be trapped. If they had ever been a trap recreational trap and pulled out of it, they probably never catch them. So they said they sympathized with us but not much they could do with that one. Another thing is, the calves that the wolves do put their teeth marks into and the boys came out and checked them, verified it was a wolf kill, and we were reimbursed. The things that you don't see and don't get reimbursed for are the stampedes that we had in January on the ice, fence lines that were tore out. The wife and I spent one morning trying to move 30 head of cattle, probably a total of about 300 yards to get them back to the feeding area, later that day we lost one, they were so wore out and dehydrated, cut up from the ice, we had had a ice storm recently and their legs were all cut up and bleeding. I figured I probably lost 50 pounds of weight per head plus probably about a week of recovery on the cattle where they never gained nothing. So those things you don't get reimbursed for and I'm not here grumbling about it, but I wish we would get the delisting and get it into the DNR's hands so we can keep control of the wolves to a point. We have to keep them in check somehow, we just can't let the population go and grow as they keep moving south so. Thank you.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Bruelig.
Is this a person with Card Number 13.

MARK PAUL: My name is Mark Paul from Edgar, Wisconsin. I too am a farmer and I have lost cattle right out of my yard. They came in and they checked and they verified it is a wolf and I don't know what a person can do. Do you get paid, it is minimal and if they delist, they are coming further south. We have mile after mile on my block is a farm. We have maybe ten acres of woods in between the neighbors. It is just all farming territory and it happens to one and not the next and I guess delisting would be the way to go if you ask me, you know, control it by state a couple states, the whole United States is not the same, I mean, everybody can say that so. That's all I have to say.

MS. DRYER: Thank you, Mr. Paul.
Is there anyone with Card Number 14?

PAT TLUSTY: I am Pat Tlusty. I live in northern Taylor County. I was here two years ago, talked about the same situation. We agree with the delisting due to the fact that is a cow/calf producer and we lost seven head of cattle on our property, five of which were reimbursed with. The federal trappers were there and they trapped and euthanized two of the wolves. So far this year, we just starting calving we have 25 calves on the ground and things are going well. We have wolf tracks on another farm that is only about a mile and a half away from the home premises where we were calving and there is nothing we can do about it until those tracks are on the premises. We run the cattle three times a day and spend a couple hours each time with them so it's just extra labor and the amount of time you put into it in keeping these

calves alive and having these predators come and kill them it gets pretty frustrating. Hopefully, they go through with the delisting this time; if they don't, I don't know what is going to happen. But a lot of people in the north are getting pretty upset about nothing happening.

Other than that, that's about all I would have to say. Thanks for your time.

MS. DRYER: Thank you.

Is there anyone with Card Number 15.

(No response).

Then I called all the people who signed up. Is there anyone else who would like to speak who would like to provide oral comments?

(No response).

Is there anyone who previously spoke that didn't feel they had enough time and would like to provide additional comments?

(No response).

You are all very good at keeping within the time and I really appreciate you coming and providing oral testimony today. I'll call one more time is there anyone else?

(No response).

Then I'm going to recess the hearing but we will not close the hearing until 9:00 so if there are people that do want to come forward they can. Thank you for coming tonight.

(Brief recess off the record).

MS. DRYER: It is 9:00 and it is time for the hearing to be closed. So on behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service the hearing is closed. We are off the record.

(Whereby the hearing ended).

CERTIFICATE PAGE

STATE OF WISCONSIN)
)
COUNTY OF WOOD)

I, Mariann Merkel, duly qualified reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Wisconsin, do hereby certify that the foregoing examination of the person stated was taken before me on the date stated.

MARIANN MERKEL
Professional Reporter
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

Dated this 19th day of May 2006.
Marshfield, Wisconsin.