



# News Release

U.S. fish and Wildlife Service - Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife



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Contact: ODFW: Russ Morgan: 541-963-2138 or Michelle Dennehy (503) 947-6022  
FWS: Robert Romero: 503-682-6131 or Phil Carroll: 503-231-6179

## **GRAY WOLF FOUND DEAD IN UNION COUNTY, OREGON**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is investigating the discovery of a dead gray wolf in Union County, Oregon. The animal had been shot, and was recovered on May 25, 2007, from a forested area north of Elgin.

The carcass was badly decomposed when first discovered, making initial identification of the animal nearly impossible. Testing has confirmed that the animal was a mature female wolf, genetically related to the wolf population in Idaho, and that it died from a gunshot wound. Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement agents are requesting that anyone who may have information regarding the death of this or any other wolf contact them immediately at 503-682-6131.

This is the fourth confirmed wolf to have been found in the state. In March 1999, a radio-collared female was captured near John Day and returned to Idaho. In 2000, a collared wolf was found dead along Interstate 84 south of Baker City, and a wolf without a radio collar was found shot between Ukiah and Pendleton. All three animals were confirmed to have been migrants from Idaho.

“It’s important for people to be thinking about the possibility of wolves in their area and to understand how to respond,” said Russ Morgan, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife wolf coordinator in Northeast Oregon. “It is illegal to shoot a wolf, even one mistaken for another animal. Hunters in particular need to identify their target before shooting because wolves can look similar to coyotes.”

Hunters, livestock producers and others can visit <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wolves/> for more information on how to identify wolves and respond to encounters including predation.

Any gray wolf which shows up in Oregon is listed as an endangered species under both state and federal law. Killing an animal protected under the federal Endangered Species Act is punishable by a fine of up to \$100,000, one year in jail, or both. Killing a wolf is also a violation of Oregon state game law, with fines and penalties that are assessed by the court. In the unlikely event that a wolf attacks a human, any person may use lethal force to prevent or stop the attack. Such an incident must be reported to the Fish and Wildlife Service, at 541-786-3282, or 541-962-8584; or ODFW at 541-963-2138, within 24 hours. The wolf carcass must not be disturbed.

Individuals who see a wolf, or suspect or discover wolf activity are asked to contact one of the following immediately:

- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Wolf Coordinator Russ Morgan in La Grande: 541-963-2138
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wolf Coordinator John Stephenson in Bend: office, 541-312-6429; cell, 541-786-3282.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service La Grande Field Office: 541-962-8584.

Experts have long predicted that wolves from the expanding Idaho population would continue to cross the Snake River and enter Oregon. Breeding pairs and packs could also become established.

Although the Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed to remove the wolf from the list of threatened and endangered species in the Northern Rockies, including part of Oregon, the wolf will remain federally listed until that process is complete. The proposal is open to public comment until August 6, 2007, after which comments will be considered carefully and more procedural steps will be completed before a decision is made. Information on the proposal can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/mammals/wolf/>

Oregon has a Wolf Conservation and Management Plan, created with extensive, state-wide public input and collaboration, which was adopted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission in 2005. More information on wolves and wolf management in Oregon is available on the website: [www.dfw.state.or.us/wolves/](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wolves/)

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 547 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

The mission of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations. The agency consists of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, a commission-appointed director and a statewide staff of approximately 950 permanent employees. Headquartered in Salem, ODFW has regional offices in Clackamas, Roseburg, Bend, and La Grande with ten district offices located throughout the state. For additional information, please visit [www.dfw.state.or.us](http://www.dfw.state.or.us)