# FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
# DOCUMENT TRACKING CONTROL SLIP

**FWS Form 3-2180**
**Attach to front of folder**

**Date:** 11/21/2011

| **DCN:** 050046 | **ES No:** |
|---|---|

| **Orig Office:** CCU | **Input Date:** 11/21/2011 | **Addressee:** Defenders of Wildlife |
|---|---|---|
| **Due Date:** 12/05/2011 | **Signature Level:** RD | |

**Subject:**
Urges the Service to uphold additional puiblic comments on the Delisting of the Wolf

**Comments:**

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**Task Codes:**

0 - Prepare Draft Reply
1 - Prepare Reply
2 - Appropriate Action
3 - Surname
4 - Signature
5 - Review/Comment
6 - Revise
7 - Obtain Additional Comments
8 - Other - See Comments
9 - Mail/Distribute
10 - Finalize
11 - Simultaneous Surnames
12 - Email Draft Reply
13 - Advance Read
14 - File
15 - For Your Information
16 - Surname through DTS
17 - Required ES Review

**Routing:**

| Assigned To | Task | Assigned Date | Due Date | Completed Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CCU | 2 - Appropriate Action | 11/21/2011 | | 11/21/2011 |
| R6-ARD-ES | 1 - Prepare Reply | 11/21/2011 | 12/01/2011 | |
| R6 | 1 - Prepare Reply | 11/21/2011 | 12/05/2011 | |

Defenders of Wildlife * Greater Yellowstone Coalition * Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance
Natural Resources Defense Council * Sierra Club * Wyoming Outdoor Council

Director Dan Ashe
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

November 15, 2011

VIA EMAIL

Dear Director Ashe:

On behalf of over two million members and supporters of our organizations in the Greater Yellowstone region and across the country, we are writing to urge you to hold additional public hearings on your agency's proposed rule to remove the gray wolf in the state of Wyoming from protection under the Endangered Species Act.

As you know, this is an issue that the American public, and citizens across the Interior West, care deeply about. We feel strongly that one public hearing in the entire state of Wyoming is inadequate to gather a true representation of public sentiment on this important and controversial issue. Additional hearings would further the purposes of the Endangered Species Act in allowing broader public participation in decisions directly affecting the long-term survival and management of wolves in Wyoming.

Because Wyoming is such a large state, many residents will not be able to travel long distances to participate in the one public hearing planned for Riverton on November 15. Therefore, we request that your agency hold additional meetings in Jackson and Cheyenne. These additional hearings will allow residents in other parts of the state to learn firsthand what this proposed rule means for the future of wolves, and to have the opportunity to provide feedback directly to USFWS representatives.

Additionally, a hearing should be held in Jackson because Teton County will be directly affected by the proposed 'flex zone,' and because Teton County commissioners and the Superintendent of Grand Teton National Park have expressed serious concerns about the proposed plan to split the county between 'trophy game' and 'predator' zones.

A hearing should also be held in Cheyenne because it is the nexus of agency and political decision makers, and because it would facilitate participation from people in Casper and Laramie, which along with Cheyenne comprise the three largest population centers in the state.

As you know, this is a controversial and complicated issue. It is critical that U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the State of Wyoming get this right, and a key part of that means providing meaningful opportunities for public input.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. A reply can be directed to Bonnie Rice at bonnie.rice@sierraclub.org/406-582-8365.

Sincerely,

Susannah Woodruff, Rocky Mountain Region Associate
Defenders of Wildlife

Chris Colligan, Wildlife Advocate
Greater Yellowstone Coalition

Louise Lasley, Program Director
Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance

Matt Skoglund, Wildlife Advocate
Natural Resources Defense Council

Bonnie Rice, Senior Representative, Greater Yellowstone Ecoregion
Sierra Club

Sophie Osborn, Wildlife Program Director
Wyoming Outdoor Council

# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6
ES
DCN:050046

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

Bonnie Rice, Senior Representative
Sierra Club
P.O. Box 1290
Bozeman, Montana 59771-1290

Dear Ms. Rice:

Thank you for your November 15, 2011, correspondence to Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service Ashe requesting additional public hearings on our recent proposed rule to remove the gray wolf in the State of Wyoming from protection under the Endangered Species Act. Specifically, you requested hearings in Jackson and Cheyenne, Wyoming. Director Ashe has requested that I respond directly to you.

As you may know, Section 4(b)(5)(E) of the Endangered Species Act requires that we hold one public hearing on the proposal, if requested. In anticipation of such a request, we scheduled an informational meeting and a public hearing on November 15, 2011, in Riverton, Wyoming. Riverton was selected because of its central location and proximity to the portions of Wyoming most impacted by decisions on wolf management. Specifically, it is a 2½ to 3½ hour drive from Cody, Jackson, or Pinedale. Riverton also is a manageable 4½ hour drive from Cheyenne.

Given the substantial expense related to conducting public hearings in these tight budget times, the limited interest the Riverton hearing garnered (only 10 individuals offered formal testimony at the hearing), and the fact that we satisfied Section 4(b)(5)(E)'s statutory requirement for public hearings on this rule, we are declining your request for additional public hearings.

However, the 100-day public comment period will remain open through January 13, 2012 (11:59 pm Eastern Daylight Time). Interested parties may submit comments either electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at http://www.regulations.gov (see the proposed rule for detailed instructions), or by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to Public Comments Processing, Attention: FWS–R6–ES–2011–0039, Division of Policy and Directives Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, MS 2042–PDM, Arlington, Virginia 22203.

If you need any additional information or if you wish to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact me at the above address.

Sincerely,

Regional Director

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Acting Deputy Regional Director