

## PRESS RELEASE:

Today, conservation groups [notified](#) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for its unlawful delay in producing [the mandatory 12-month finding](#) on [their Endangered Species Act listing petition](#) for Northern Rockies gray wolves. The decision was due in July 2022, but conservation groups have gotten no indication that such a determination is forthcoming and are concerned about the absence of protection for wolves in the meantime.

Since 2009 the States of Idaho and Montana have drastically altered their wolf management laws and regulations to push populations below viable levels. Idaho, for instance, allows for essentially unregulated and unlimited wolf-killing. Although the Fish and Wildlife Service previously promised that “if a State changed their regulatory framework to authorize the unlimited and unregulated taking of wolves, a condition we have previously determined threatened a wolf population, emergency listing would be immediately pursued,” the Service has failed to act in the face what amounts to open season on wolves in the Northern Rockies.

“Maybe giving the Fish and Wildlife Service a Notice of Intent (NOI) to file a lawsuit over the unlawfully missed deadline will prompt the agency into action. Wolves are threatened by the patchwork policies of inadequate protection in the northern Rockies and need west-wide federal listing,” said Michael Saul, Colorado director of Western Watersheds Project. “The species can’t wait for the Service to waffle any longer.”

“Wolves and their pups are being brutally slaughtered for bounties in Idaho. No one knows how many are left. This isn’t recovery: it is state sanctioned persecution and eradication of intelligent, socially-bonded, and ecologically important animals. It’s way past time for Director Martha Williams to intervene,” said Suzanne Asha Stone, director of the Idaho-based International Wildlife Coexistence Network.

“Wolves are suffering at the hands of humans and efforts to increase the persecution continue while those entrusted to protect them are unresponsive,” said KC York, president and founder of Trap Free Montana. “Over 168,000 comments and substantial information have been submitted to USFWS for relisting. This inaction intensifies the collateral damage to non-target trappings of wildlife and pets and to all those who value wolves alive. It is the responsibility of the USFWS to stop this radical politically driven mismanagement of wolves, now, and restore public confidence in the USFWS.”

“We are appalled by the USFWS delay,” said Brooks Fahy, executive director of Predator Defense, a national wildlife advocacy nonprofit. “Intact wolf families are essential to our ecosystems, yet USFWS has green-lighted perpetual slaughter by dithering over the listing decision.”

“Wolves continue to die in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming while waiting on a decision from the USFWS. A timely determination could have saved countless lives,” says Kristin Combs of Wyoming Wildlife Advocates. “Wyoming’s policy of listing wolves as predators in over 85% of

the state means they can be killed year-round with no license or oversight. The health of Wyoming's deer and elk herds continues to suffer while wolves are killed just for existing."

"Northern Rockies wolves need federal protections now," said Joe Bushyhead, endangered species attorney with WildEarth Guardians. "Anti-wolf zealots in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming have taken direct aim at the species in what should be its stronghold. Cruel, unscientific hunting and trapping seasons are underway. This is not the time for bureaucratic dithering."