



Wyoming
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture

Mark Gordon, *Governor*
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The Wyoming Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life.

April 13, 2023

Public Comments Processing
Attn: FWS-R6-ES-2022-0100
US Fish and Wildlife Service
MS: PRB/3W
5275 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22041-3803

To Whom It May Concern,

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) comments regarding the Proposed Rule establishing a nonessential experimental population (NEP) of the gray wolf in the State of Colorado.

Our comments are specific to our mission: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life. As the proposed project could affect our industry, citizens, and natural resources it is important that you continue to inform us of proposed actions and decisions and continue to provide the opportunity to communicate pertinent issues and concerns.

The State of Wyoming manages gray wolves as either trophy game animals or predatory animals. The predator management area extends the entire length of our shared border with the State of Colorado. As mentioned in the proposed rule, any NEP gray wolf from Colorado, which migrates north into Wyoming will fall under our existing management as predatory animal status. This year-round status does not require a license, and allows the lethal removal of any wolf on all lands, excluding the Wind River Indian Reservation. The predatory animal status is critical for Wyoming livestock producers to protect their animals from wolf depredation.

We respectfully request the USFWS ensure this information is embedded into the Final Rule and Final Record of Decision. Additionally, we believe the USFWS agency and respective decision documents provide assurances the NEP wolves from Colorado do not get additional protection as a sensitive species under other federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management or the US Forest Service.

As an example, the Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests are contiguous landscapes between Wyoming and Colorado. WDA strongly opposes the NEP gray wolf status on the Routt National Forest having the same status or protection for persistence and viability as a sensitive species on the Medicine Bow National Forest. WDA suggests considering memorializing this into Memorandums of Understanding or some other agreed upon legal document prior to the release of any gray wolves into the State of Colorado. Finally, the State of

Equal Opportunity in Employment and Services

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USFWS NEP Gray Wolf in Colorado

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Wyoming has jurisdiction of wildlife species, including the gray wolf and would appreciate the decision record to reflect and honor this in the forthcoming decision documents and records.

If you have questions regarding our comments, please contact Justin Williams, Senior Policy Analyst at 307-777-7067.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Doug Miyamoto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Doug Miyamoto

Director

DM/jw

CC: Governor's Policy Office
Wyoming Board of Agriculture
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation
Wyoming State Grazing Board
Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
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