

Trump Administration Announces Stripping Gray Wolf Protections Across Country

Plan Would Allow Trophy Hunting, Stymie Recovery

By [Center For Biological Diversity](#)

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today announced plans to strip gray wolves of Endangered Species Act protection across the lower 48 states.

If finalized the proposal will allow trophy hunting and trapping of wolves in the Great Lakes states. It will slow or completely halt recovery of wolves in more of their former range.

“This disgusting proposal would be a death sentence for gray wolves across the country,” said Collette Adkins, a senior attorney at the Center. “The Trump administration is dead set on appeasing special interests that want to kill wolves. We’re working hard to stop them.”

The proposal would remove federal protections for all gray wolves, with the exception of Mexican gray wolves, which are listed separately under the Endangered Species Act.

Congress stripped wolves in Idaho and Montana of protections in 2011, and the Fish and Wildlife Service stripped protection from Wyoming wolves in 2017. This led to the killing of thousands of wolves and cessation of further recovery in these states.

The Fish and Wildlife Service also stripped protection from gray wolves in the Great Lakes region in 2011, allowing trophy hunting and trapping seasons in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, but the courts restored protection in 2014.

“The courts have repeatedly slammed the Fish and Wildlife Service for prematurely removing wolf protections, but the agency has now come back with its most egregious scheme yet,” said Adkins. “Once again, we’ll take it to the courts and do everything we can to stop this illegal effort to kill wolf protections.”

Gray wolf numbers in these states have only recently recovered to pre-hunt numbers. These hunts will start anew if the Trump administration’s proposal is finalized.

The proposal will also all but ensure that wolves are not allowed to recover in the Adirondacks, southern Rockies and elsewhere that scientists have identified suitable habitat.

“The livestock industry and trophy hunters want wolves dead, but we’ll make

sure the feds fulfill their obligation to restore wolves across the country,” Adkins added.

Background

Volunteer wolf advocates around the nation are [gathering](#) this week to oppose the Trump administration’s plans. The “Wild for Wolves” events are part of the Center for Biological Diversity’s Call of the Wild campaign.

On December 17, 2018, the Center for Biological Diversity and the Humane Society of the United States [petitioned](#) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to maintain protection for gray wolves under the Endangered Species Act.

On Nov. 14, 2018, the Center for Biological Diversity [sued](#) the Fish and Wildlife Service for violating the Endangered Species Act by never providing a comprehensive recovery plan for gray wolves nationwide. If successful, that lawsuit would mean that wolves must remain federally protected until the Service implements a national recovery plan.

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