

WolfLines #143

The Bulletin of Wolf Council
April 24, 2007

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Take Action to Help Wolves in the Northern Rockies

The deadline to submit comments on the proposal to remove federal protections for wolves in the northern Rockies is approaching. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is currently accepting comments on their proposal to remove the northern Rockies wolf population from the endangered species list until 5 p.m. on May 9. Upon removal of Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections, the state agencies will be tasked with ensuring the long-term viability of this species. Defenders is not supporting the proposal because it will hand control of wolf management to states that are more concerned with wolf eradication than conservation. Use our Delisting Fact Sheet to craft your letter opposing this plan which would have devastating effects on wolves in the West.

Voice your concerns about this plan today. Comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. on May 9.

Send your comments by:

- e-mail to WesternGrayWolf@fws.gov. Include RIN number 1018 AU53 in the subject line of the message.
- U.S. mail to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Western Gray Wolf Recovery Coordinator, 585 Shepard Way, Helena, Montana 59601. Include RIN number 1018 AU53 in the subject line of the letter.

Groups Successfully Halt Alaska Wolf Bounty

Defenders of Wildlife, Alaska Wildlife Alliance and the Alaska Chapter of the Sierra Club successfully stopped the state of Alaska from implementing a \$150 bounty on Alaska wolves as well as other financial incentives to kill wolves in designated predator control areas. When the state announced its plan to attempt to increase the number of wolves killed by aerial gunners, we filed a request for a temporary restraining order (TRO) to stop the bounties (read our 3/30/2007 press release). On March 30, the court granted our request. In response to the TRO, the state filed a status report with the court stating that they would not pursue

the bounty or other incentives. The aerial gunning season ends on April 30. Approximately 100 wolves have been killed in the five areas designated for predator control.

While Defenders was pleased with this victory, we are deeply troubled by the recent expansion of the predator control program in Unit 16B, an 11,000 square mile area north and northwest of Anchorage. This expansion allows hunters to kill up to 1,400 of the estimated 1,500 to 2,000 black bears in this area. Most troubling is that sows and cubs are being targeted for the first time and the timing of the hunts could mean that cubs born this year could be left to starve if their mothers are killed.

Read an article on the state's plans for Unit 16B.

<http://www.adn.com/news/alaska/wildlife/story/8780480p-8681979c.html>.

Oregon Wolf Bill Update

On April 12, the Oregon House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on House Bill 2295 (HB 2295). The bill, introduced by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), is intended to implement four components of the Oregon Wolf Management Plan that require legislation. In 2005, the plan was adopted by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission and is now in effect. Many Defenders' members and supporters expressed their opposition to the bill to members of the legislative committee before the hearing. Although more people attending the hearing testified in favor of the bill than against it, the phone calls and emails to the legislators beforehand had a significant effect and the committee chose not to hold a vote. This represents a significant victory for wolves and for the citizen participation process.

While Defenders of Wildlife fully supports the plan and would endorse a bill that mirrors it, we do not support HB 2295 because it differs significantly from the plan regarding when wolves can be killed. For months we have requested that ODFW add amendments to the bill that would correct these disparities, and we thought that progress had been made. Unfortunately, ODFW did not introduce the necessary amendments to ensure the protections intended by the plan.

The state wolf management plan was developed by a state-appointed citizen committee and reflects the best negotiated compromises to meet the conservation needs of wolves and to balance those needs with the concerns and needs of diverse human stakeholders. The bill must reflect the agreements that were reached and adopted as the state's official wolf plan. We encourage ODFW to propose the necessary amendments to enable the bill to be passed. Without these amendments, we will continue to oppose the bill.

Stay tuned for future developments regarding HB 2295.

Celebrate Red Wolf Recovery and Learn More About Wolves

Please join us in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the red wolf reintroduction program and the 10th anniversary of Defenders' partner, the Red Wolf Coalition. The event will take place on May 12 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Walter B. Jones, Sr. Center for the Sounds at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. The event will feature presentations by Red Wolf Recovery Program Team Leader Bud Fazio and red wolf biologists at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., respectively. During the day, a red wolf education table and a short film about red wolves will offer more information about this endangered species. The celebration will also feature the unveiling of the "Wolves & Wild Lands in the 21st Century" traveling wolf exhibit consisting of 6 canid specimens complemented by educational panels. The center will be hosting the exhibit through August with public viewing available weekly Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The center is located in Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge at 205 South Ludington Drive in Columbia, NC. For more information, please contact Kim Wheeler, kwheeler@redwolves.com or 252-796-5600.

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