



Predatory Wolves Threaten The Ranching Industry

Today, thanks to the reintroduction of Gray Wolves in 1995, there are an estimated 7,000 to 11,200 Gray Wolves in Alaska, 3,700 roaming the Great Lakes region and 1,675 living in the Northern Rockies.

The Ranch Reality

Wolves pose a significant threat to livestock, negatively impacting ranch businesses. In addition to the loss of livestock to these predators, there are also high costs associated with measures to reduce livestock and wolf interactions and those to manage the physical stress to the cattle caused by the presence of wolves. Stress on cattle results in livestock weight loss and decreased reproduction rates.

Many view the Gray Wolf's recovery in the Great Lakes region as one of the Endangered Species Act's success stories. But to those on the front lines of the wolf's range, the program represents judicial overreach.

“Try to put yourself in the farmer's shoes. It's literally a federal crime. You could be watching your pasture and you could see a wolf killing your cattle, which is like watching someone at the ATM taking money out of your bank account, and you can do nothing to stop it.”

**-Charlie Poster
Assistant Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Agriculture**



Current Wolf Policy Under the ESA

In 1978, the Gray Wolf was classified as an endangered population at the species level (*C. lupus*) throughout the contiguous United States and Mexico. The Minnesota Gray Wolf population, however, was classified as threatened. It took Congressional action to start the delisting process, supported by environmental groups and the ranching industry alike. Unfortunately, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) recently denied the request, maintaining the endangered status of the gray wolf.

Mexican Wolves, also listed as endangered, are the only species that the FWS allows ranchers to manage, classified as “nonessential experimental population”. Under the current listing of the Mexican Wolf, the FWS or a designated agency can issue permits to livestock owners authorizing them to appropriately deal with any Mexican Wolf that is attacking their livestock on federal land, where specified in the permit. If a Mexican Wolf attacks a domestic animal on non-federal land, the owner can remove the wolf.

The PLC Perspective

The Public Lands Council (PLC) strongly advocates for the removal of the Gray Wolf from the Endangered Species List across the entire country as the population has surpassed FWS recovery goals by as much as 300 percent.

Ranchers need to have the ability to appropriately protect their business from these predators. Additionally, the nonessential experimental classification must remain on all Mexican Wolves into the future to allow for continued management in wolf livestock conflicts.

For more information, visit: www.publiclandscouncil.org

