

BACKGROUND

HOWLING FOR WOLVES[®]

HOWLING FOR WOLVES IS A MINNESOTA-BASED WOLF ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION THAT FORMED IN 2012 TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT WILD WOLVES TO FOSTER TOLERANCE AND TO ENSURE THE WOLF'S LONG-TERM SURVIVAL. HOWLING FOR WOLVES OPPOSES RECREATIONAL WOLF HUNTING AND TRAPPING AND ALL WILDLIFE SNARING. WE CURRENTLY SUPPORT THE CONTINUATION OF FEDERAL PROTECTIONS FOR THE WOLF BY THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Wolves play a unique role and are important in Minnesota.

- Minnesota is home to the largest and only original wolf population that never went extinct in the lower 48 states.
- Wolves are a critical part of our ecosystem for other wildlife whose habitat depends on the wolf for vegetation growth.
- Unlike deer and other species hunted in Minnesota, wolves live in packs and depend on each other for survival. Human killing of wolves disrupts wolf packs, creating unstable and unpredictable effects such as increased wolf-livestock conflicts.
- Minnesotans value having wolves and want them protected for future generations. In a 2013 Lake Research poll, 79 percent of Minnesotans agreed that the wolf is an asset to protect for future generations. A MN DNR survey showed 79% said “no” to wolf hunting.
- There is significant economic value in protecting wolves in Minnesota. A 1996 study showed the economic boost from wolves was \$33 million per year just for Ely, Minnesota. Further, a 2011 United State Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) report highlights Minnesotans spent \$621 million on wildlife viewing. The wolf offers Minnesota an opportunity to distinguish our state as truly wild wilderness.
- For many Minnesota Native American tribes, the wolf holds a sacred cultural role. Several tribes have forbidden wolf hunting on their lands, established wolf sanctuaries, and find killing wolves hurtful and disrespectful.
- When wolf protections are reduced, more illegal wolf killing occurs. Scientific studies show that with legal wolf killing comes more illegal, hidden wolf killing.

Today, Minnesota wolves have federal Endangered Species Act protections and there is no wolf hunt – thanks to efforts by Minnesotans and people throughout the country. On January 10, 2022, a federal court returned the gray wolf in Minnesota and in the Great Lakes region to the Endangered Species List. Wolves in Minnesota are listed as “threatened” and wolves are killed for livestock producers for wolf-livestock conflicts.

The newly approved 2022 MN DNR wolf plan contains wolf hunting and trapping and states a goal of continuing a “stable” wolf population. Howling For Wolves considers this goal and wolf hunting as harmful to Minnesota’s wolves, as a “stable” population is NOT necessarily a healthy population. The methods used by the MN DNR to count wolves are not sensitive enough to detect problems with the population’s health and survivability into the future. Wolves are still recovering from nearly going extinct. The population should be able to grow as it can where conflicts are preventable and tolerable with no artificially predetermined “stable” number. The current “number” of wolves in Minnesota is fewer than in the mid-2000s, before three wolf hunting and trapping seasons!

Howling For Wolves supports removing wolf hunting and trapping seasons from state law and from the MN DNR 2022 Wolf Plan because Minnesota wolves are constantly on the brink of being killed the moment federal protections are lifted. Wolves are already illegally killed despite their protections. Anti-wolf groups continue (wrongfully) to push for wolf hunting and trapping in Minnesota.

Note: MN’s DFL Party has included the following in their 2022 Action Agenda: *“Opposes wolf hunting/trapping including the use of snares, support grant programs to fund farmers’ use of nonlethal prevention methods, fair streamlined reimbursement for livestock losses, and increase public education efforts as to how wolves live.”*