

The wolf population was stable from 1998 without hunting and trapping. Wolves control their own numbers and the DNR has not established a maximum population level for wolves. Following a single season of hunting and trapping that killed 413 wolves, the wolf population declined by nearly 25%. When the last population count was performed in 2012-13, there were an estimated 2,211 wolves in Minnesota. Pack size continues a steady decline.

A recreational wolf hunt doesn't support the long-term survival of the wolf in Minnesota. The DNR goals for wolf management as stated in the Minnesota Wolf Management Plan are to ensure the long-term survival of the wolf in Minnesota, and to reduce conflicts between wolves and humans. The random killing of non-problem wolves can destabilize wolf packs and increase conflicts.

A recreational hunt is unnecessary because state law allows wolves to be killed in protection of livestock, pets, and people. Lightened restrictions on killing wolves have led to a significant increase in the number of wolves killed because of conflicts. A recreational wolf hunt doesn't reduce or prevent these conflicts.

Inhumane and unethical methods are used to hunt and trap wolves. State law allows the use of painful steel-jawed leg traps, wire neck snares that cause painful brain bleeding, and bait like food and the distressed calls of crying pups that lure a wolf to their death.

Wolves are genetically programmed to fear humans. Wolves may approach food resources and dogs, but typically avoid humans. Researchers report wolves cower in their traps when approached. Wolves are elusive and generally stay hidden from human view.

Minnesotans value wolves and do not want them hunted. 79% of DNR survey respondents, including hunters, opposed shooting, trapping and snaring wolves. Hearing wolves howling in the wild is a magical experience that people want to pass on to the next generation. Wolves and their pups already die in high numbers from starvation, poaching, and car collisions.

A healthy wolf population supports healthy wildlife habitat. Wolves are vital to the delicate balance of the forest ecosystem because they influence the feeding behavior of deer and elk, allowing vegetation to grow in the forests and along streams, which in turn supports birds, fish and beaver. Wolves limit the spread of diseases in deer. Wolves support habitat for game species that provide hunting tourism dollars.

Wolf-livestock conflicts are traditionally low in Minnesota. In 2011, there 109 verified complaints at 96 sites. Out of this, 91 calves/cattle were verified killed on farms in MN, impacting less than 2% of all MN beef producers. There were 203 wolves killed in response. Livestock owners are compensated by the MN Dept. of Agriculture.

Recreational wolf hunting and trapping can increase wolf-livestock conflicts. The killing of random non-problem wolves can actually increase conflicts as packs are broken up and remaining members seek easy food near people. Hunting wolves in their habitat may push them towards urban areas to survive.

Wolf hunting perpetuates the persecution of the gray wolf. Persecutory attitudes and behaviors have driven the gray wolf to the brink of extinction. Minnesota wolves are the only original and biologically diverse wolf population remaining in the lower US.

The DNR has kept the public out of wildlife hunting decisions since 1995. For the last 17 years, the DNR has almost exclusively used an expedited emergency rulemaking process which allowed them to forgo public comment for 200 out of 202 hunting rules authorized.

Wolves support Minnesota tourism. Wolves are a "keystone" ecotourism species in a \$531M per year sustainable Minnesota industry that attracts visitors from all over the world to view wolf tracks, and experience wolves howling in the wilderness.