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Contact: Collette Adkins Giese, Center for Biological Diversity, (651) 955-3821  
Deb Balzer, Howling for Wolves, (612) 481-1571

### **Court Refuses to Stop Killing of 400 Minnesota Wolves This Fall**

MINNEAPOLIS— The Minnesota Court of Appeals today denied a motion for a preliminary injunction, filed by conservation groups, seeking to stop wolf hunting and trapping this fall. The decision allows hunting and trapping to go forward, pending the court's final ruling early next year on a lawsuit filed by the Center for Biological Diversity and Howling for Wolves over the state's failure to take formal public comment on the hunt.

"I'm deeply disappointed by the court's decision, which unleashes 6,000 hunters and trappers to go out and kill 400 wolves," said Collette Adkins Giese, a Minneapolis-based attorney with the Center. "It weighs heavy on my heart that hundreds of wolves will be shot or suffer and die in traps and snares."

Minnesota's wolf-management plan promised that wolves would not be hunted or trapped for five years after the removal of their federal Endangered Species Act protection. But the state's legislature eliminated that safeguard last summer in a rider attached to a must-pass budget bill. After wolves lost federal protection in January, Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources issued rules allowing a fall hunt. But the state agency refused to provide formal public notice and opportunity for comment, instead offering only an online survey. Nearly 80 percent of survey respondents *opposed* the wolf hunt.

"The Department of Natural Resources has been dead set on killing wolves and continues to bend to pressure from the small segment of the public that wants to kill wolves," said Maureen Hackett, president of Howling for Wolves. "Although we are disappointed by today's decision, we will continue to call on the Department of Natural Resources to start prioritizing conservation and stop ignoring the pleas of thousands of citizens who oppose wolf hunting and trapping."

Livestock producers have pushed for hunting and trapping to reduce the state's population of about 3,000 wolves. But hunting and trapping may actually *increase* conflicts between wolves and livestock by disrupting pack dynamics and creating more orphan wolves — lone wolves roaming without families — that are likelier to target domestic animals out of desperation. Proven nonlethal options can be used to safeguard livestock from wolves, including guard dogs, flagging and fencing. Hunting and trapping are premature until state managers better understand the impacts on wolf populations from the legally sanctioned killing of this imperiled species.

Wolf hunting is scheduled to begin Nov. 3 with the opening of the deer firearms season.

*The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 450,000 members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.*

*Howling for Wolves was created to be a voice for wild wolves. It aims to educate the public about Minnesota's wolf population and let people know how they can take action to keep wild wolves in a self-sustaining existence. For more information:*  
[www.howlingforwolves.org](http://www.howlingforwolves.org).