

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. Estimated at 3,000 wolves when the last count was performed in 2007-2008, no baseline data was obtained before the start of the 2012-13 season. One in four wolves was killed by hunting and trapping in 2012. (Source: [Distribution and Abundance of Wolves](#))

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.

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.

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. Nearly 13,000 jobs in MN are supported by wildlife viewing. People come here to experience wolf habitat, to view wolf tracks, and experience wolves howling in the wilderness. We can't afford to lose this economic stimulus in northern Minnesota. (Source: [MN DNR Report](#))

The MN Legislature broke a public trust agreement to rush to a wolf hunt. In Minnesota law a 5-year wait was required before any consideration of wolf hunting following delisting. This wait was removed in July 2011 behind locked doors and without any public input during the hurried special session. (Source: [MN Wolf Legislation Report](#))

MN State laws already allows wolves to be killed when pets, people and livestock are perceived to be threatened. One hundred more wolves were killed as a result of new law in 2012 than all previous years. Wolves and their pups already die in high numbers from starvation, poaching, and car collisions. The population is not expanding. (Source: [Minnesota Wolf Management Plan](#))

Wolf-livestock conflicts are traditionally low in Minnesota. In 2011, there were 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. (Source: [MN USDA Wolf Depredation Data](#))

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.

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. (Source: [MN DNR – Survey Results](#))

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. Right now the DNR is preparing to reauthorize the expedited emergency rule allowing a recreational wolf hunt and is considering even higher kill quotas, all without allowing any public input.