

The Minnesota Wolf Management Plan was developed through consensus agreement with the public and multiple stakeholders. This plan stated that there would be no public taking of wolves (i.e. hunting and trapping seasons) proposed for population management measures for 5 years following the Federal delisting of the wolf by USFWS. The five-year waiting period on wolf hunting and trapping was passed into Minnesota state law in 2000.

Minnesota Wolf Management Plan

Population management activities --Population management measures, including public taking (i.e., hunting and trapping seasons) or other options, will be considered by DNR in the future but not sooner than 5 years after Federal delisting by USFWS. If, in the future, public taking is proposed by DNR, there will be opportunity for full public comment. Decisions on public taking will be based on sound biological data, including comprehensive population surveys.

Federal Delisting

Minnesota gray wolves were delisted from the Federal Endangered Species Act on January 27, 2012.

Broken Promise

In the hurried special session of 2011, the legislature disregarded a previous agreement that had been attained by public consensus and passed into state law in 2000. The legislature removed the five-year waiting period on wolf hunting and trapping from law behind locked doors. The public was shut out.

Population Management Need

The Minnesota DNR has not demonstrated a need for population management activities (including hunting and trapping seasons). The stated purpose of the 2012-13 wolf hunting and trapping season was recreational.

Population Survey

The most recent comprehensive population survey was conducted winter 2007-2008. Minnesota wolf population estimated to be 2,921 (confidence range 2,192 to 3,525).

There has been no significant change in wolf population size or distribution since 1998. Excluding hunting and trapping, wolves naturally face high rates of mortality, and according to the DNR Wolf Management Plan approximately 35% of adult wolves die each year from starvation, intraspecific strife (territory disputes with other wolves), and human related causes such as poaching and car collisions. Additionally, newborn wolf pups have a very high mortality rate (50-60%).

DNR Online Wolf Hunting and Trapping Survey Data

Total Online Survey Responses: 7,351

Survey Results: Do you support hunting and trapping of wolves in Minnesota?

No: 5,809 responses (79%) Yes: 1,542 responses (21%)

2012-13 Wolf Hunting and Trapping Season Data

License applications (lottery): 23,000 for \$4 each

Licenses sold: 6,000 for \$30 each

Early Season Results (reported wolves killed from shooting): 147

Late Season Results (reported wolves killed from shooting and trapping): 266

Total Season Results (reported wolves killed from shooting and trapping): 413

Wolves Killed Outside Season Due to Wolf-Livestock Conflicts

299 wolves killed by farmers, property owners, DNR and Federal trappers.

Pending Legislation – 2013 Minnesota Legislature

Senator Chris Eaton introduced S.F. 666 to reinstate the five-year moratorium on recreational wolf hunting and trapping. On March 14, 2013 that bill was approved by the Minnesota Senate Environment and Energy committee and referred to the Environment, Economic Development and Agriculture Division. The companion bill, H.F. 1163 introduced by Rep. Jason Isaacson, awaits a hearing in the Minnesota House of Representatives.