

**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
MOUNTAIN-PRAIRIE REGION
134 UNION BOULEVARD
LAKEWOOD, CO 80228**

08-07

For immediate release
January 24, 2008

Ed Bangs 406-449-5225, x204

**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE REVISES SPECIAL RULE FOR
WOLF MANAGEMENT IN THE NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAINS**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today revised special regulations under the Endangered Species Act governing the management of gray wolves introduced in the Central Idaho and Yellowstone areas of the northern Rocky Mountains. The revision allows states and tribes with approved wolf management plans more flexibility to manage these wolves to ensure the health of wild populations and herds of elk and other ungulates, as well as to protect private property.

“The states have done an excellent job managing wolves, and this revision will provide the extra flexibility they may need to manage wolves for some time in the future,” said Jay Slack, Acting Regional Director for the Service’s Mountain-Prairie Region. “Nonetheless, we will not authorize removal if it brings wolf populations below management population targets.”

Removal of wolves will not be authorized if the removal action would contribute to reducing the wolf population in the applicable state below 20 breeding pairs and 200 total wolves.

The revision has been made to the Service’s 2005 special rule, which governs management of wolves reintroduced in these areas as nonessential experimental populations under section 10(j) of the Act. In general, the revised special rule will:

(1) Expand the circumstances under which wolf removal is allowed, beyond that currently authorized in order to meet established state or tribal population management goals for wild elk and other ungulates.

(2) Enable individuals on private or public land to lethally take a wolf that is in the act of attacking their stock animals or dogs, under certain circumstances.

For more information on the revised rule, its conditions and applications, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/mammals/wolf/> .

These modifications would not apply to states or tribes without approved wolf management plans and would not impact wolves outside the Yellowstone or central Idaho nonessential experimental population areas or in National Parks. An environmental

assessment has been prepared on this action and is available at the same website <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/mammals/wolf/>.

In its environmental assessment, the Service determined that controlling wolves to address impacts with elk and deer would not compromise recovery of the northern Rocky Mountain wolf. This determination is supported by current research on growth rates of the NRM wolf population, wolf behavior and biology.

The allowable actions identified in this revised special rule for wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains will not go in effect until 30 days after it has been published in the Federal Register.

Since 1995, only 60 wolves have been legally killed by private citizens in defense of their private property, or by shoot-on-sight permits as authorized by either the 1994 or 2005 experimental population special rules. In the past 12 years, two wolves have been taken by Federal land permittees as wolves chased and harassed horses in corrals or on pickets. There have also been a few reported instances of stock animals being spooked by wolves. Based on this information, the Service believes it is unlikely that wolf control to protect stock animals and dogs would meaningfully impact the wolf population.

The final revision to the 10(j), was published in the Federal Register on January 28, 2008. A copy of this revision can be viewed at the Service's website: <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/mammals/wolf/> .

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit **www.fws.gov**.