

8/3/11 *Jackson Hole News&Guide*

Proposed wolf plan won't help region's ecology or economy

The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance represents some 2,000 members who share the desire to conserve Jackson Hole as a fully functioning ecosystem. With the abundant and diverse wildlife we have in the Greater Yellowstone, predators, including wolves, play a critical part in maintaining a landscape that supports healthy habitat and sustainable wildlife. For more than 30 years, the Conservation Alliance has worked to see that human activities are in harmony with our irreplaceable wildlife, scenic and natural resources. Your announcement on July 7, 2011, regarding a Wyoming wolf management plan does not fulfill the responsibilities we believe necessary to keep our region viable ecologically or economically. Wildlife is the backbone of the economy of Jackson Hole. Killing wolves would be extremely detrimental to this world-renowned ecosystem and the livelihood it provides for our community.

The greatest concern is the flex boundary, which implies that wolves only disperse between specific dates. This moving line will generate confusion and have adverse impacts on a species that requires careful management. It is certain that wolves will not adhere to a boundary that varies in time and space, and almost equally certain that hunters will also have difficulty with this arbitrary boundary.

Wyoming has said that wolf management will not allow population numbers to go below 100 in order to keep the species from returning to the endangered species list. The structure to make sure this happens should not be decided by the legislature but should be developed by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. WGF successfully manages a large number of species and our citizens support their efforts. As with all species managed by WGF, public participation is a critical component of the process. Hunting seasons, monitoring, what the objective is for population numbers that will prevent falling below 100 – these are all questions and decisions that WGF needs to begin working on immediately. There are many questions on how management will work and all stakeholders should join WGF in helping solve them.

The Conservation Alliance would like to see a more definitive boundary for the trophy game area; one that expands the trophy game area and provides an increased opportunity for a successful wolf population. We also request that WGF lead the effort to find the best ways to provide for wolves in Wyoming.

Sincerely,

Trevor Stevenson, Executive Director
Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance

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Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance