



July 15, 2019

The Honorable David Bernhardt  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Margaret Everson  
Principal Deputy Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

RE: "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Gray Wolf (Canis lupus) From the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife"

Dear Secretary Bernhardt and Principal Deputy Director Everson:

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) and 26 of our Member groups want to express our strong support for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's (USFWS) proposed rule, published March 15, 2019, titled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Gray Wolf (Canis lupus) From the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife" (Docket No. FWS—HQ—ES—2018—0097). AZSFWC urges you to move forward with the implementation of this proposed rule in an expeditious manner. This decision recognizes the contribution of the states, sportsmen and women, and others in allowing recovery plans to proceed for gray wolves in America.

AZSFWC fully understands and supports the statutory purpose and intent of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and believes it plays a vital role in the recovery of at risk species. When the gray wolf was reclassified as "endangered" in 1978, the best available science was used to demonstrate the species was at risk for extinction. Now however, we must use the best available science to delist the gray wolf and allow states to manage wolf populations at the local level.

We should acknowledge the scientific findings of USFWS and collectively celebrate the recovery of the gray wolf, as they are now found across the United States in numbers sufficient to sustain themselves. We should also be empowering state wildlife agencies and other stakeholders that are best suited to develop effective, local management plans for gray wolf populations. They should not be hindered with unscientific, burdensome federal regulations.

AZSFWC letter supporting the delisting of gray wolves – 7-15-19

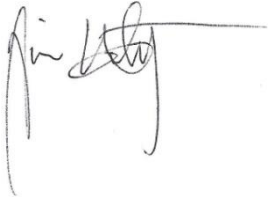
Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation  
PO Box 75731 New River, AZ 85087

Restoring state management authority to responsibly manage gray wolves fulfills commitments to delist the species once recovery objectives are met. It would help control growing wolf populations and aid in balancing a cross section of interests, including: healthy populations of prey species, agricultural interests, livestock producers, hunting, recreation and other wildlife.

Some of America's most important wildlife herds have fallen far below sustainable levels as a result of "protected" wolves. The resultant impacts on herd health, wildlife abundance, and the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation are very concerning. We cannot let scientific findings fall victim to politically motivated attacks. As the proposed rule demonstrates, the gray wolf is a success story of the ESA.

AZSFWC understands that we have the responsibility to protect species across the country, including the gray wolf, and all efforts to protect wildlife should be based on sound science and an open, transparent process. For these reasons, AZSFWC supports the proposed rule to delist the gray wolf from the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife. We urge you to finalize this proposed rule as soon as possible.

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Unmacht", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jim Unmacht  
Executive Director

*Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) is a 501c-3 non-profit organization dedicated to wildlife conservation, habitat work, youth recruitment and retention, as well as educating sportsmen and women on issues important to their passions. AZSFWC consists of 43 member, affiliate, and associate groups that reach across the spectrum of hunting, angling, shooting, outdoor recreation and businesses from all across Arizona. Our member groups represent in excess of 10,000 sportsmen and women from Arizona.*

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**AZSFWC Member Organizations Supporting the  
Removal of the Gray Wolf (Canis lupus) from the  
List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife**

Anglers United  
AZ Antelope Foundation  
AZ Bass Federation Nation  
AZ Big Game Super Raffle  
AZ Bowhunters Association  
AZ Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation  
AZ Chapter Safari Club International  
AZ Deer Association  
AZ Desert Bighorn Sheep Society  
AZ Elk Society  
AZ Houndsmen  
AZ Outdoor Adventures  
AZ Outdoor Sports, Inc  
AZ Predator Callers  
AZ Shooting Sports Educational Foundation  
Christian Hunters of America  
Mohave Sportsman's Club  
Mule Deer Foundation  
Outdoor Experience 4 All  
Southern AZ Quail Forever  
SRT Outdoors  
The BASS Federation  
Valley of the Sun Quail Forever  
White Mountain Lakes Foundation  
Xtreme Predator Callers  
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