

March 9, 2011

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boxer:

On behalf of the 48 groups representing millions of members listed below, we are writing today to ask you to oppose any efforts to legislatively delist endangered wolves. Several bills have already been introduced in the 112th Congress that would remove Endangered Species Act protections from wolves. We believe that passing any of these bills or moving similar efforts would have a devastating effect on the future of the wolves in America, and, more importantly, on the Endangered Species Act itself.

The tremendous recovery of wolves in the northern Rocky Mountains and Great Lakes represents one of America's greatest wildlife success stories. In the Yellowstone ecosystem and Northern Rockies, where once there were almost no wolves, today there are 1,700 wolves, and in the Great Lakes, wolves have expanded from northeastern Minnesota to Wisconsin and Michigan and now number over 4,000 wolves. But the job of recovery is not yet complete.

With delisting, Wyoming would allow wolves to be shot on sight across most of the state and nearly every other state with wolves proposes dramatic declines in wolf numbers. Moreover, wolves are only beginning to recover in states, such as Washington and Oregon, and not at all in many other states that could again support these iconic animals. In order to ensure continued recovery of wolves, it is vital that we keep in place legal safeguards to protect the wolf and make science-based management decisions.

It is equally important that we do not create the terrible precedent of allowing Congress to reverse Endangered Species Act listings one species at a time. To its credit, Congress has stood up to such efforts in the past. Now is not the time to open the door for members to begin moving bills that would delist individual species.

The Endangered Species Act had the foresight to acknowledge the importance of preserving wildlife of all shapes and sizes and that a species' value is not just inherent in its own existence but in the role it plays in the complex network of life. Since wolves were reintroduced to Yellowstone National Park, we have learned an incredible amount about the important roles wolves play in shaping ecosystems. By shifting the movement patterns of elk, for example, wolves allow streamside vegetation to recover benefitting both beavers and songbirds, and by controlling coyote populations, wolves benefit pronghorn antelope populations.

During its last 37 years, the Endangered Species Act has been an example to the world for how to best protect biodiversity. It remains one of our most important environmental laws, and the restoration of the Gray wolf one of our greatest conservation efforts. Please do not reverse this history. Please stand up to any efforts to undermine the Endangered Species Act and the future of the Gray wolf in America.

Sincerely,

Kieran Suckling
Executive Director
Center for Biological Diversity

Andrew Wetzler
Director Wildlife Conservation Projects
Natural Resources Defense Council

Tripp Von Noppen
President
Earthjustice

Michael Brune
Executive Director
Sierra Club

Rodger Schlickeisen
President
Defenders of Wildlife

Michael Markarian
Chief Operating Officer
The Humane Society of the United States

Leda Huta
Executive Director
Endangered Species Coalition

Steve Pedery
Conservation Director
Oregon Wild

Nicole Rosmarino, Ph.D.
Wildlife Program Director
WildEarth Guardians

Duane Short
Wild Species Program Director
Biodiversity Conservation Alliance

Greg Dyson
Executive Director
Hells Canyon Preservation Council

Bill Weiler
Executive Director
Gifford Pinchot Task Force

Walter H. Sykes
Co-Founder
NE Oregon Ecosystems

Brooks Fahy
Executive Director
Predator Defense

Michael Garrity
Executive Director
Alliance for the Wild Rockies

Gary Macfarlane
Ecosystem Defense Director
Friends of the Clearwater

Jon Marvel
Executive Director
Western Watersheds Project

Dave Werntz
Science and Conservation Director
Conservation Northwest

Sean Cosgrove
Ocean Campaign Director
Conservation Law Foundation

Randi Spivak
VP Government Affairs
Geos Institute

Jeffrey Flocken
DC Office Director
International Fund for Animal Welfare

Josh Pollock
Conservation Director
Center for Native Ecosystems

Santana Tamarak
Board Chairman
Western Nebraska Resources Council

Patricia Aitken
Executive Director
Friends of the Bay

Steve Anthes
President
Kettle Range Conservation Group

Marianne Edain
Director
Whidbey Environmental Action Network

Dan Silver
Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League

Kirk Robinson, PhD, JD
Executive Director
Western Wildlife Conservancy

David L. Wade
Director
Endangered Small Animal Conservation fund

Cathy Liss
President
Animal Welfare Institute

Edward E. Clark, Jr.
President
Wildlife Center of Virginia

Roz McClellan
Director
Rocky Mountain Recreation Initiative

Todd Steiner
Executive Director
Turtle Island Restoration Network

Daryl DeJoy
Executive Director
Wildlife Alliance of Maine

Carrie Phillips
Assistant Director
Pandas International

Kerry Kriger, Ph.D.
Executive Director
SAVE THE FROGS!

Caryl McIntire Edwards
Director
Voice for Animals

Keith Hammer
Chair
Swan View Coalition

H. Meade Cadot, Ph. D.
Director of Land Programs
Harris Center for Conservation Education

Cyn Sarthou
Executive Director
Gulf Restoration Network

Monte Thompson
Executive Director
Species Alliance

Dave Holaway
President
White Mountain Conservation

Veronica Egan
Executive Director
Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Jeff Williamson
Arizona Zoological Society
at The Phoenix Zoo

Kim McCreery, Ph.D.
Regional Director/Carnivore Biologist
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

Melanie Emerson
Executive Director
Sky Island Alliance

Kathryn L. Kennedy
Executive Director
The Center for Plant Conservation

Camilla H. Fox
Executive Director
Project Coyote