

## **DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE**

### **For Immediate Release**

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# **District Judge reverses gray wolf delisting throughout Northern Rockies**

## **Judge Molloy acknowledges unreasonable threat to wolf population under current plans; states that USFWS acted prematurely by delisting wolves despite scientific evidence**

MISSOULA, Mont. – Today, Judge Donald Molloy of the U.S. District Court in Missoula granted a preliminary injunction placing gray wolves in the Northern Rockies region back under federal protection until a court case challenging the removal of wolves from the federal list of endangered species is decided. Below is a statement by Suzanne Asha Stone, northern Rockies wolf conservation specialist for Defenders of Wildlife, regarding today's announcement.

“We're very pleased with today's decision to restore federal protections to wolves in the Northern Rockies until the ongoing case is ultimately decided by Judge Molloy. This is a very important first step, since it stops the continued and almost indiscriminate killing of wolves under the states' management plans that could have put the long-term recovery of the wolf at risk.

“The delisting of wolves was inappropriate and illegal in large part because existing state management plans are inadequate to ensure the long term conservation of wolves in the region, allowing far too many wolves to be unnecessarily killed. Responsible, balanced management by the states would benefit wolves, ranchers, hunters and all Northern Rockies residents. While the court continues to weigh our challenge to the delisting decision, we will continue to work to improve the current state plans so that they maintain a healthy wolf population.”

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Earthjustice filed the lawsuit on behalf of Defenders of Wildlife, Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club, Center for Biological Diversity, The Humane Society of the United States, Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, Friends of the Clearwater, Alliance for the Wild Rockies, Oregon Wild, Cascadia Wildlands Project, Western Watersheds Project, and Wildlands Project