



STATE OF IDAHO  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
LAWRENCE G. WASDEN

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VIA FACSIMILE ☎ 202-208-4561 and  
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of the Interior. I am encouraged your selection will provide an opportunity to bridge the divide between Eastern and Western perspectives and find a balanced approach for managing federal lands and addressing conservation issues.

Key to moving forward in finding this balance in our region is proceeding with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's recently announced plan to delist the Gray Wolf in Idaho, Montana, Washington, Oregon and Utah.

While Idaho strenuously opposed the federal government's decision to reintroduce wolves into Idaho, nonetheless the state has cooperated with the federal government to develop scientifically reasonable recovery standards and a responsible state management plan. Idaho has performed in good faith with the understanding we could regain our authority to manage wolves in the same fashion we manage other Idaho wildlife. Idaho has also supported the Service's delisting decision process through development of a defensible administrative record and advocacy in the courts.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wildlife managers agree with the State of Idaho that the wolf population in Idaho meets biological recovery standards and that our state

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wolf management plan is sound. The pending delisting rule does an excellent job of explaining the Service's rationale for proceeding with delisting. As you have made clear, decisions in the Department of Interior should be based on the best available science and not determined by political considerations. We are confident that the best available science supports delisting of wolves in Idaho. It is time to move forward with delisting and not relegate this issue to the back burner.

The wolf issue directly affects our state-federal relations, as well as the livelihoods and conservation attitudes of our agricultural communities. It is important the Department honor its commitments and not break faith with states that have played by the rules.

As a former state Attorney General, I know you can appreciate how the failure of the federal government to honor its commitments can erode public support for federal programs and thereby also erode future state/federal cooperation. While I acknowledge the pressure you are likely to receive from interests on both sides of this issue, Idaho has fulfilled all of the regulatory requirements for delisting of wolves in Idaho and now it is incumbent on the Department of Interior, in accordance with applicable law, to proceed with the delisting of wolves in Idaho.

I appreciate your personal attention to this most important matter and look forward to working with you on other issues of mutual interest.

Sincerely,



LAWRENCE G. WASDEN  
Attorney General

LGW/cs:jc