

Ranchers Call for President Donald J. Trump to Delist the Gray Wolf to Protect America's Food Supply

Ranchers from across Washington, Oregon, California, and Colorado are raising alarm over the toll of wolf depredation on livestock and rural livelihoods.



WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, October 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- During their September 2025 visit to Washington, D.C., ranchers met with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Hugh Brian Nesvik, Chief Aubrey Bettencourt of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Public Lands Council's Ex. Director Caitlynn Gloverr, and Congressman Doug LaMalfa's leadership team to emphasize the urgent need for proper management under the law. They stressed that until delisting is restored, depredation compensation is vital to keeping operations viable, and the current programs fall far short. Many long-standing ranching families are being forced out of business, unable to sustain losses that are entirely avoidable under proper management. Attendees included Oregon State Senator Todd Nash; Colorado rancher Tim Ritschard, President of the Middle Park Stockgrowers; Jeff Flood, Wildlife Specialist; Bill Shannon of Shannon Ranch; and Gary Cardoza of O'Neal Ranch.

Producers are calling upon President Donald J. Trump, who championed rural and working-land communities during his first administration, to recognize again the importance of balanced wildlife management and secure food systems. They are asking him to restore state management authority and ensure federal policies are based on sound science, not politics or ideological activism. Ranchers underscored that this is not merely a wildlife issue. It is a national security concern directly tied to America's food security.

In October 2020, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finalized a rule to delist gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) across the contiguous United States and Mexico under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), transferring management to the states after decades of successful recovery. Wolf recovery under the ESA is recognized as one of the nation's great conservation successes. By law, a species may only remain listed if it is endangered (in danger of extinction), or threatened (likely to become so in the foreseeable future) throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Yet, despite meeting these recovery benchmarks, environmental groups sued the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service, reverting management and full protection of wolves back to the federal government under the ESA as threatened in February 2022. Ranchers applaud the efforts of Senator Cynthia Lummis and Congresswoman Lauren Boebert for upholding the original intent of the ESA; recovery, not perpetual, non-scientific protection. Because of excessive litigation and fear of retaliation by environmental groups, producers continue to experience disproportionate impacts as wolves expand into working landscapes.

Congress has acted before: wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains were delisted from the ESA in 2011 and 2012, though subsequent court rulings later reversed delisting in Wyoming.

To move forward, accurate data and transparent reporting tools must be deployed. Only with verified information can policymakers and land managers make responsible, science-based decisions that protect both wildlife and livelihoods. This is something we all want: A balanced approach rooted in truth, stewardship, and shared responsibility.

Ongoing Challenges

- Inaccurate Statistics: Official depredation data underestimates livestock losses, skewing USDA policy and compensation programs.
- Producer Security: Ranchers face harassment for reporting wolf incidents, with some data misused by pro-wolf activists.
- Investigations: On-site investigations within 24 hours are critical to verify attacks; delays compromise evidence and accountability.

While wolf management has often been framed as a regional or agricultural concern, producers are urging the nation to recognize the broader truth: This issue matters to all Americans.

Behind every steak, burger, and roast are the ranchers, the unsung heroes of America's food supply. Via the beef byproducts used in the creation of everyday items ranging from pharmaceuticals to building materials, electronic components, and more, ranchers contribute to every sector of society, whether you eat beef or not. They work daily to ensure healthy herds and open landscapes that benefit both wildlife and people. Yet, despite this significant contribution to our society as a whole, ranchers face mounting losses as wolf populations expand beyond recovery targets and management remains mired in litigation and politics.

**** [Western Justice](#)** is leading a national effort to ensure the Gray Wolf is delisted from the Endangered Species Act (ESA) — based on science, not politics. The gray wolf population has exceeded recovery goals by more than threefold since reintroduction. Yet, despite clear biological recovery, federal protections remain — creating economic loss, livestock depredation, and frustration across rural America.

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