



# California Wolves

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Gray Wolf

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Home > Conservation > Mammals > Gray Wolf

## Gray Wolf

### Introduction

The gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) is a native species that was likely extirpated from California in the 1920s. The gray wolf is now returning to California on its own by dispersal of individuals from populations in other states. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is working to monitor this recovering endangered species.

### Wolf Conservation and Management

- Quarterly Wolf News (PDF) (October 2017)
- Wolf Activity Map (PDF) (October 2017)
- CDFW collars adult female wolf in Lassen County (July 2017)
- California's Known wolves – Past and Present (PDF) (October 2017)
- Gray Wolf or Coyote? Also, non-lethal methods to discourage livestock depredation by wolves (PDF)
- California Wolf Conservation Plan (PDF)
- Wolf Stakeholder Working Group

### Conservation Plan for Gray Wolves in California (December 2016)

- Final Wolf Plan Part I (PDF)
- Final Wolf Plan Part II (PDF)


### Gray Wolf Depredation Investigations and Concerns

- Options for California Livestock Producers to Discourage Wolf Presence and Guidance for Suspected Wolf Depredation (PDF)
- Depredation Investigation 11/20/2017 (PDF)
- Depredation Investigation 11/15/2017 (PDF)
- Depredation Investigation 11/7/2017 (PDF)
- Depredation Investigation 11/2/2017 (PDF)
- Depredation Investigation 10/16/2017 (PDF)

### Subscribe

to Gray Wolf Updates by Email

Wolf Pup video RC3 9 August...



Shasta Pack pups in Siskiyou County, August, 2015.

### Gray Wolf

- FAQ
- Report a Wolf Sighting
- Living with Wolves
- Information on gray wolf in California (PDF)
- Wolf Photos
- Gray Wolves in California (PDF)

An evaluation of historical information, current conditions, potential natural recolonization and management implications (DFG 12/2011)

https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/mammals/gray-wolf

**California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Plan for Gray Wolves in California  
Part I**

**December 2016**



**Charlton H. Bonham, Director**

- ❖ ESA defines "take" as "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." Harass is further defined as "an intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering"
- ❖ Under CESA, "take" is defined as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill" and is prohibited with limited exceptions

## Tools for California Livestock Producers to Discourage Wolf Presence, Guidance for Suspected Wolf Depredation, and Wolf Legal Status

### *Suggested Techniques for Discouraging Wolf Presence*

These techniques are generally more effective when used in combination. They may also discourage the presence of other potential livestock predators, such as coyotes and black bears.

#### Livestock and carcass management – make pastures and other areas less attractive to wolves.

- Remove diseased, injured, or dying animals from pastures and open range areas.
- Dispose of carcasses where they are not readily accessible to wolves and other scavengers.
- Clean up/remove old carcass disposal areas (bone piles)

#### Placement of Barriers

- Fence or pen livestock at night using permanent or portable fencing.
- Consider the use of fladry (a series of cloth or synthetic flags hung at a regular interval along a rope or fence line) – wolves can be reluctant to cross fladry lines for 30-60 days.
- Fladry can be used alone or in conjunction with existing fences.
- Fladry can also be electrified ("turbo-fladry") for added effectiveness.

#### Electronic predator aversion devices

- Install flashing lights and/or sirens around the perimeter of pastures, calving areas, and other sensitive sites.
- Some predator aversion devices are triggered by motion, while others turn on at random intervals (e.g., "Foxlights").
- Move/relocate devices regularly to reduce the potential for wolf habituation.

#### Livestock protection dogs and guard animals

- The presence of livestock protection dogs can reduce wolf visitation to livestock pastures.
- The effectiveness of livestock protection dogs depends on breeding and training, and their utility may be limited in large areas with dispersed livestock.
- Multiple livestock protection dogs accompanied by herders offer greater livestock protection.
- Wolves have sometimes killed livestock protection dogs (generally when the dogs were outweighed and/or outnumbered).

#### Human presence

- Increase the frequency of human presence in localized areas.
- Consider the use of trained "range riders" or herders for open range livestock occur.

## Hazing (non-injurious harassment)

- ❖ If a wolf is near, approaching, or chasing livestock, *confront the wolf or otherwise scare it off.*
- ❖ Techniques for non-injurious harassment include approaching the wolf (on foot, on horseback, or with a motorized vehicle), making loud noises (yelling, gunshots directed away from the wolf, cracker shells, air horns, etc.), and spotlights.
- ❖ *Non-injurious harassment is allowed when wolves are within 0.25 mile of livestock, or within 100 yards of a dwelling, agricultural structure, campsite, or commercial facility.*
- ❖ Injurious harassment (physically contacting a wolf, firing bullets or nonlethal ammunition at a wolf, pursuing a wolf with a motorized vehicle, etc.) is prohibited.

## **Wolf Ecology 101**

**Pack = family group breeders and offspring (pups, yearlings, adults)**

**MT average home range:  $\sim 200 \text{ mi}^2$**

**MT average litter size: 4 (1-11)**

**Breeding season is  $\sim$  February**

**Denning is  $\sim$  April**

**"Rendezvous" sites  $\sim$  June-Sept**

**MT average pack size: 6.7 (2 $\sim$ 27)**

**Mort causes: control, illegal, unknown, hunting**

**Long distance disperser (500+ mi)**

**Wolves are NOT 250 lbs!**

**$\sim 20$  deer/wolf/year**

**Lassen Pack**

**$\sim 5$  (2 adults, 3 pups). Black wolf?**

**6 months of data**

- **$427 \text{ mi}^2$**
- **55 miles long**





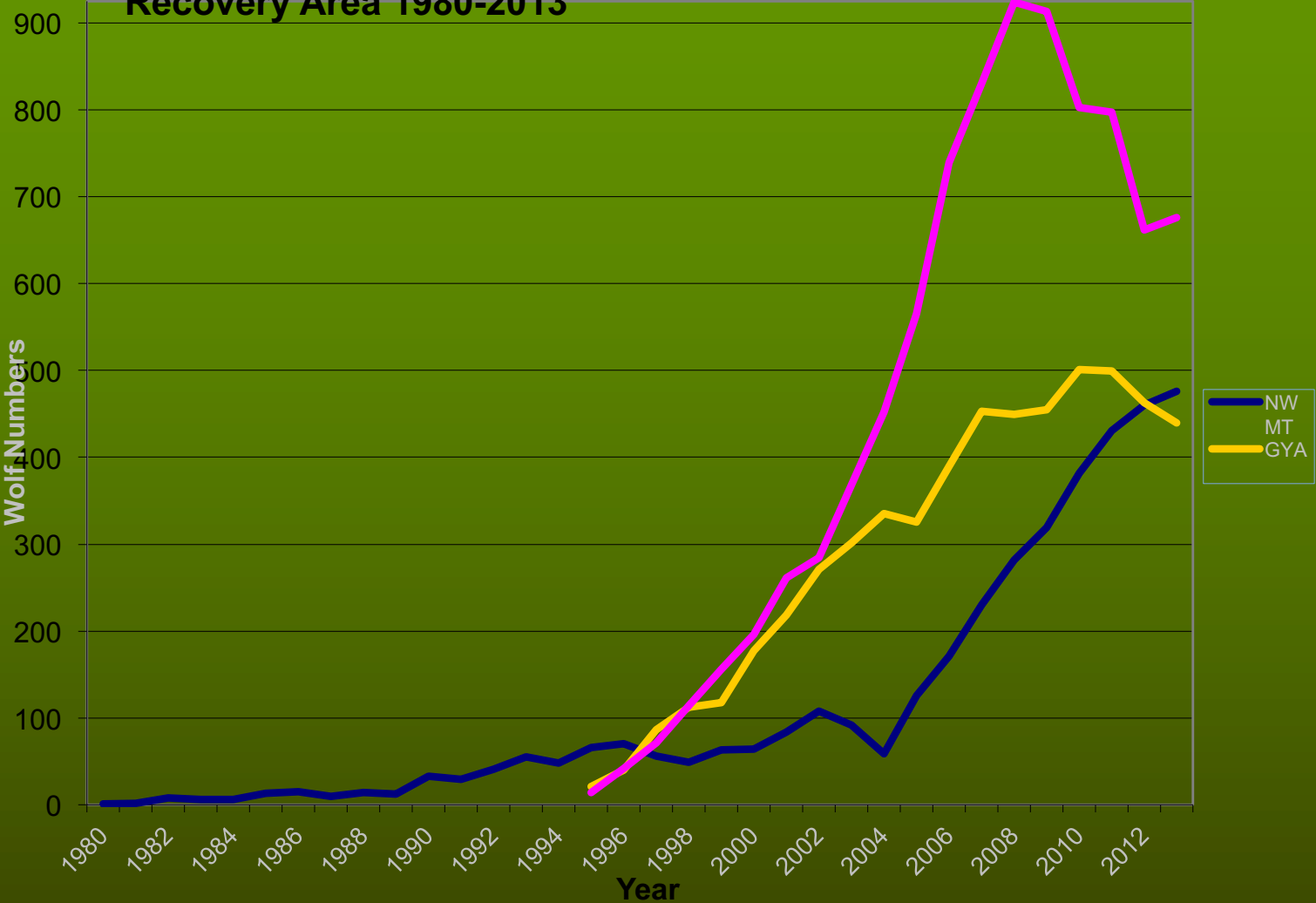


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**Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Population Trend by Recovery Area 1980-2013**



# LIVESTOCK INTERACTIONS

- ❖ Livestock losses low regionally
- ❖ *BUT* losses can be significant to individual producers
- ❖ Unverified losses are a problem
- ❖ Natural prey distribution on private lands
- ❖ need better understanding more research
- ❖ lethal and non-lethal



# Management Tools

- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Prevention
- ❖ Control
- ❖ Compensation



# Collaboration

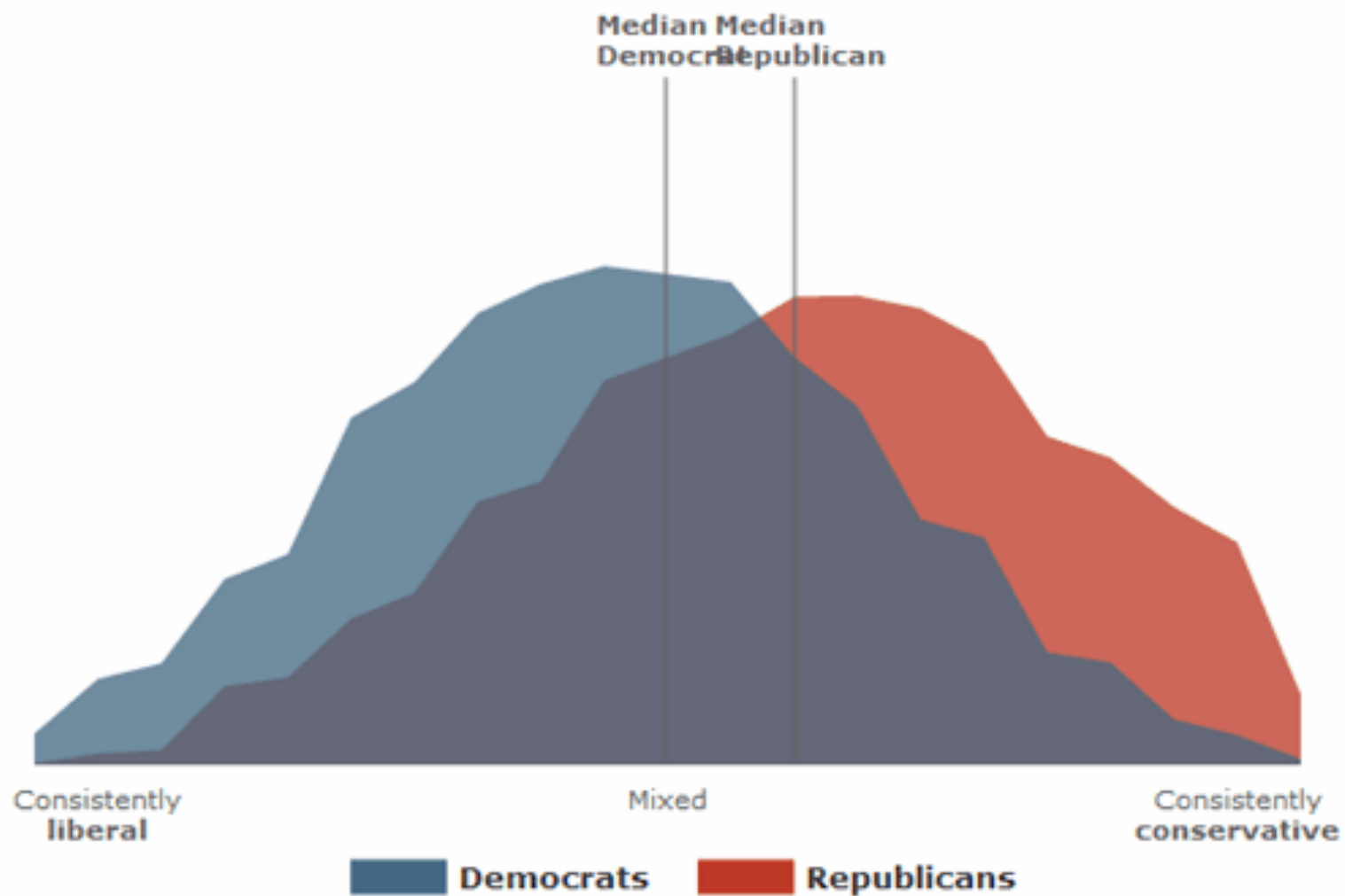




“A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.” – Mark Twain



## Political Polarization of the American Public, 1994-2014



Surveys conducted 1994, 1999, 2004, 2011 and 2014.

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# Collaboration



# Collaboration



# Prevention

- ❖ Non-lethal tools
- ❖ Bunch more where practical
  - ❖ Smaller pastures (rotated)
  - ❖ Evening feeding
- ❖ Carcass Removal
- ❖ Spatial Separation



# Conflict Avoidance (non-lethal tools)



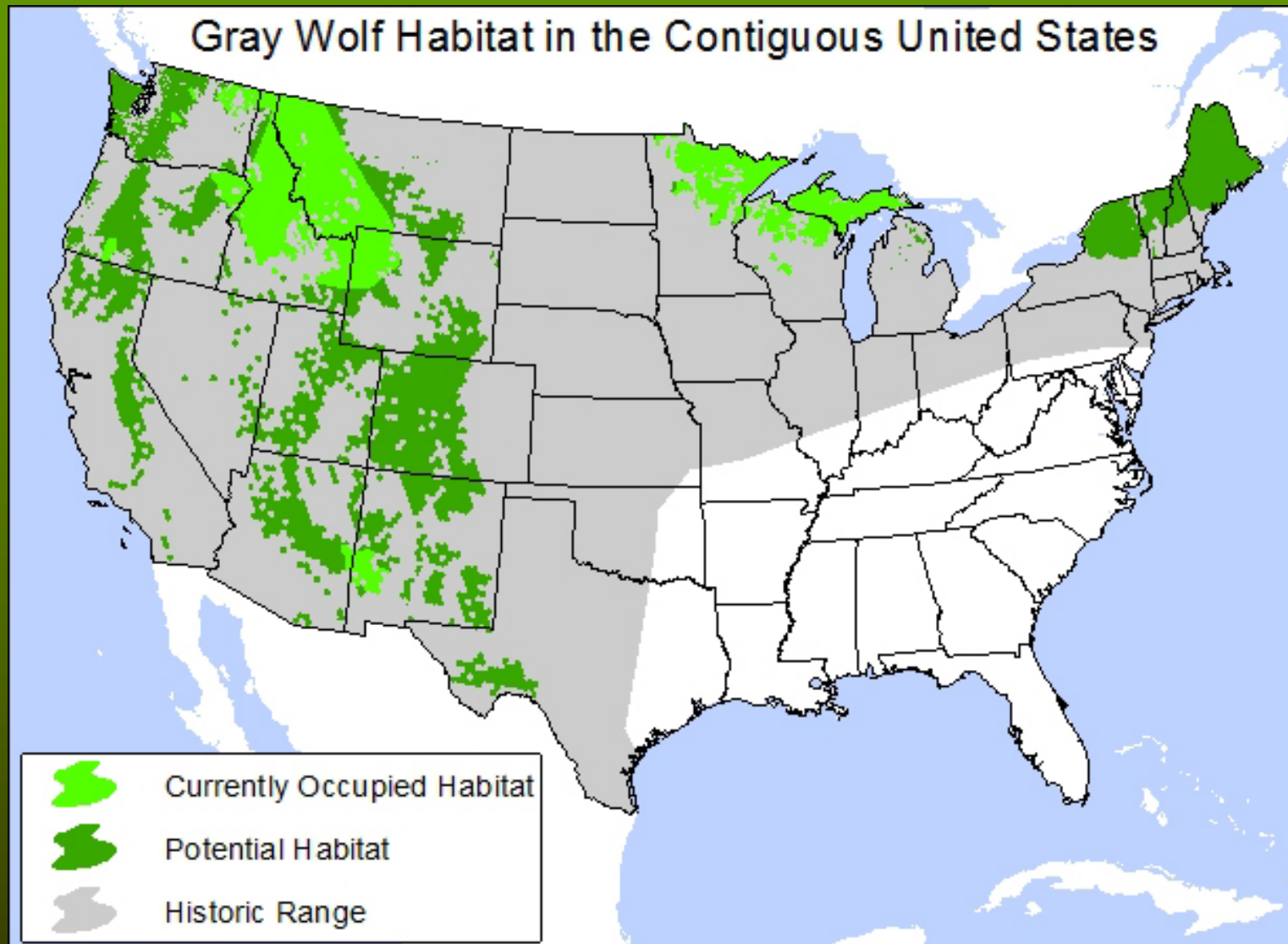
# Conflict Avoidance

(non-lethal tools)

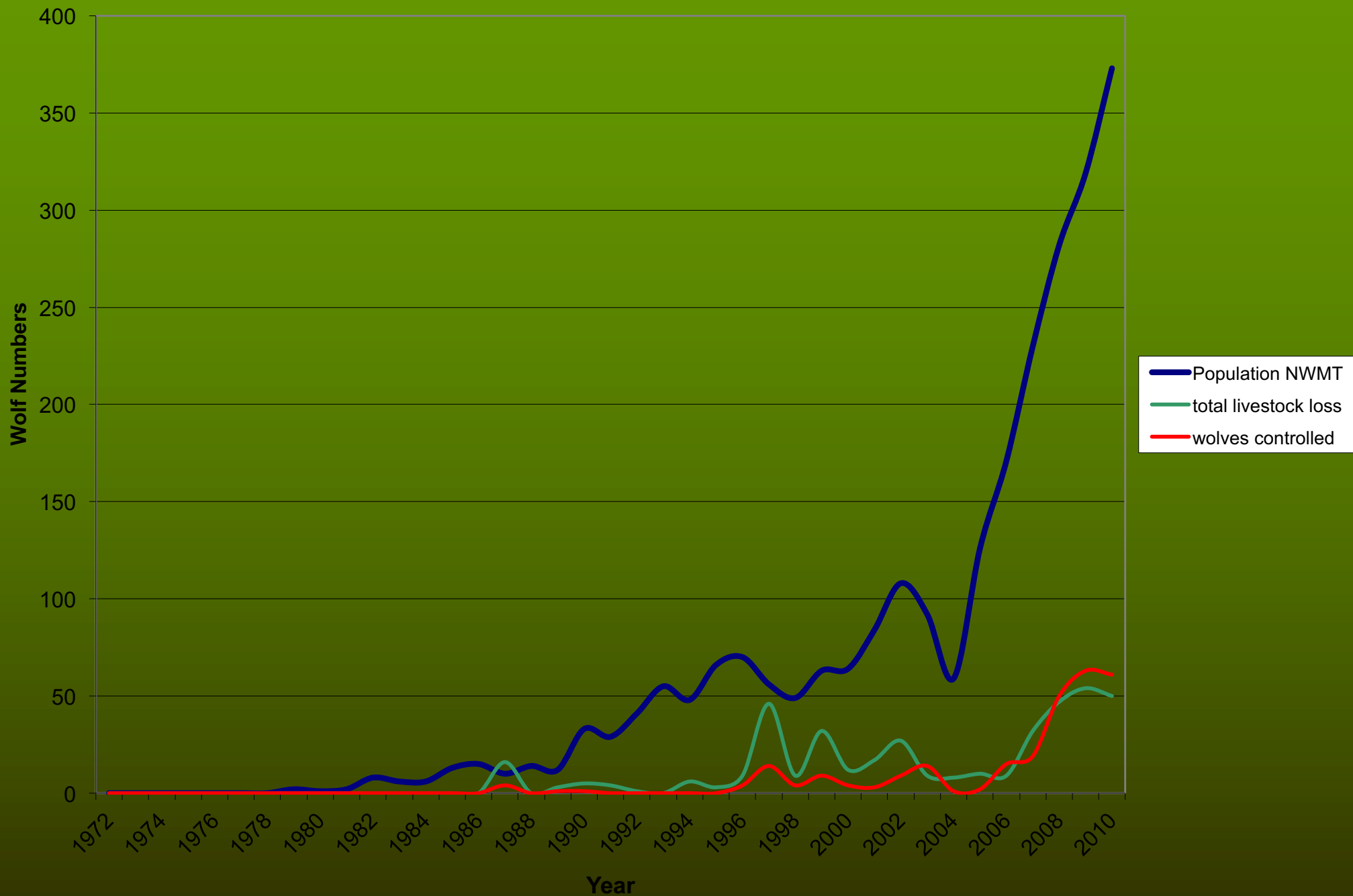


# Management/Control

(regional comparisons)



## NW MT Wolf Popultion, Livestock Loss, Wolves Controlled 1979-2009



**Table 7b: Northern Rocky Mountain Confirmed Wolf Depredations<sup>1</sup> by State, 1987-2014.**

(Within the NRM Federal Recovery Area only; does not include Oregon, Washington, or Utah. See Table 7c.)

YEAR	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL	
<b>Montana</b>																														
cattle	6	0	3	5	2	1	0	6	3	10	19	10	20	14	12	20	24	36	23	32	75	77	97	87	74	67	50	37	810	
sheep	10	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	13	41	0	25	7	50	84	86	91	33	4	27	111	202	64	11	37	24	8	930	
other <sup>3</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	0	3	2	2	14	16	6	11	1	3	4	1	72	
dogs	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	1	2	5	2	5	1	4	1	4	3	2	4	2	2	1	0	1	46	
wolves moved	0	0	4	0	3	0	0	2	8	22	20	0	14	6	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	96	
wolves killed <sup>2</sup>	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	18	4	19	7	8	26	34	40	35	53	73	110	145	141	64	108	75	57	1028	
<b>Wyoming</b>																														
cattle									0	0	2	2	2	3	18	23	34	75	54	123	55	41	20	26	35	44	41	56	654	
sheep									0	0	56	7	0	25	34	0	7	18	27	38	16	26	195	33	30	112	33	6	663	
other <sup>3</sup>									0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	10	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	18		
dogs									0	0	0	3	6	6	2	0	0	2	1	0	2	0	7	0	1	3	1	0	34	
wolves moved									0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
wolves killed <sup>2</sup>									0	0	2	3	1	2	4	6	18	29	41	44	63	46	32	40	37	43	33	37	481	
<b>Idaho</b>																														
cattle									0	1	1	9	11	15	10	9	6	19	20	29	53	96	75	75	71	73	46	43	662	
sheep									0	24	29	5	64	48	54	15	118	161	184	205	170	218	324	148	121	312	413	100	2713	
other <sup>3</sup>									0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	5	0	1	1	12		
dogs									0	1	4	1	7	0	2	4	5	3	9	4	8	12	13	0	6	2	5	3	89	
wolves moved									0	1	0	3	5	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	
wolves killed <sup>2</sup>									0	1	1	0	3	11	7	14	7	17	27	45	50	108	93	78	63	73	94	67	759	
<b>Total, 3 States</b>																														
cattle	6	0	3	5	2	1	0	6	3	11	22	21	33	32	40	52	64	130	97	184	183	214	192	188	180	184	137	136	2126	
sheep	10	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	37	126	12	89	80	138	99	211	270	244	247	213	355	721	245	162	461	470	114	4306	
other <sup>3</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	5	10	5	2	3	14	17	7	15	7	4	6	2	102	
dogs	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	2	4	5	15	11	6	9	6	9	11	8	13	14	24	2	9	6	6	4	169	
wolves moved	0	0	4	0	3	0	0	2	8	23	21	3	19	16	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	117	
wolves killed <sup>2</sup>	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	21	7	23	20	19	46	59	86	103	142	186	264	270	259	164	224	202	161	2268	

1 Numbers of animals confirmed killed by wolves in calendar year. Excludes Oregon and Washington. See Table 7c.

2 Includes wolves legally shot by livestock owners. Others killed in government control efforts.

3 Total livestock other than cattle and sheep confirmed killed by wolves 1987 - 2014: 28 llamas, 39 goats, 24 horses, 4 miniature horses, 3 shetland ponies, 3 domestic bison, 1 donkey  
See Interagency Report narrative for compensation paid in each state.

# Compensation?

- Direct Losses
- Indirect Losses
- FSA – livestock Indemnity





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<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/mammals/gray-wolf>

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