

UPDATE: Scientists call for continuing Great Lakes wolf protections

UPDATED Tuesday, November 24, 2015--
-9:51 a.m.

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP) -- A group of scientists is taking issue with colleagues who want the federal government to remove gray wolves in the Great Lakes region from the endangered species list.



Twenty-six biologists who favor lifting protections from wolves in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin made their case last week in a letter to U.S. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell. The department has tried to drop wolves from the list but has been overruled by courts in lawsuits from animal protection groups.

In a statement Tuesday, 29 other scientists say Great Lakes wolves should stay on the list for now. They question the adequacy of state management plans and contend the wolves still meet the legal definition of endangered species.

And they disagree with the idea that keeping wolves on the list increases public resentment.

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TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP) -- A letter signed by 26 wildlife scientists urges the federal government to remove gray wolves in the western Great Lakes region from the endangered list.

The scientists sent the letter Wednesday to U.S. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and Dan Ashe, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Wolves nearly disappeared from the lower 48 states in the last century but have bounced back in some areas with federal protection. The combined population in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin is about 3,700.

Animal advocacy groups have used lawsuits to block government attempts to drop Great Lakes wolves from the endangered list and contend their status remains shaky.

In their letter, the specialists say the integrity of the Endangered Species Act is undercut if species aren't removed when they've scientifically recovered.

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