



WOLF COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 8TH, 2010
ELIZABETH INN AND CONVENTION CENTER
PLOVER WISCONSIN

1. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1A. Chairman Al Brown called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

1B. Roll call -all present except Marcus Brezee-excused, John Piechowski-excused. John Quall –unexcused. Al Brown will request that John Quall be removed from the committee

Committee members present were Scott McAuley, Mike Whiteside, Arlyn Splitt, Steve Staver, Arnold Popp, Harold Grandaw, Steve Ninneman, Arden Loker, Lisa Wilson, Mike Bader, Adrian Wydeven-DNR, Randy Jurewicz-DNR, Gary Schenck, Blaine Schneider, Bill Yingst, Mark Loka, Scott Zimmerman, Al Brown, and David Oginski-DNR. Members of the public present were Gary Smith, Kenneth Smith, Ed Harvey (WCC Chair), Jennifer Stenglein, Laurie Groskopf, Dan Hansen, Bob Knorr, and Mike Schmalz.

1C. We reviewed the wolf committee mission statement. Motion by Bill Yingst to support it, 2nd by Gary Schenck. Mc

1D. PUBLIC COMMENT later in agenda

2. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND UPDATES

Harold Grandow asked the chairman where the number 350 comes from in the Wisconsin Wolf Plan? Al Brown passed out a copy of the October 1999 NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD agenda item #3a (see handout number 1) that approved the WISCONSIN WOLF MANAGEMENT PLAN. Quote "this plan recommends delisting from state threatened to a nonlisted nongame species when the wolf population reaches 250 animals based on late winter count across the state in areas outside Indian reservations. A goal of 350 is recommended. Public harvest will be implemented when the management goal of 350 is achieved."

So the answer is it comes from the 1999 wolf plan, adopted by the NRB in 1999

2A. Adrian had several handouts. By the 1960's wolves were considered extinct in Wisconsin. In 1973 the eastern wolf was listed in the ESA. In 1974 Wisconsin wolves were listed. In 1978 it was modified to all grey wolves except Minnesota. The federal government listed them originally as subspecies in 1973, then by species in 1978 and by subspecies now.

Wisconsin has been track counting, by blocks for 31 years. 150-170 volunteer trackers. Public reports are important. Trail cameras are becoming a source of very good data. Wisconsin has been doing an annual population estimate of the state wolf population. This is a minimal count done in late winter when the population is at its lowest point of the year. We always miss some, loners are hard to count or estimate. **LAST YEARS POPULATION ESTIMATE WAS 690-733 WITH 181 PACKS AND 15 LONERS.**

In 2007 and 2008 the population was delisted and stayed fairly stable. In the 90's 500 wolves was the expected carrying capacity. Now it looks like 700 fits the graph better. Remember at this time we have no legal control.

According to Adrian Wydeven in THE HISTORY OF WOLVES IN WISCONSIN (see handout number 2)

"Wolves were federally reclassified to threatened on April 1, 2003, but on January 31, 2005 wolves were relisted as endangered due to a lawsuit. Wolves were removed from the federal list in Wisconsin and the remainder of the Western Great Lakes Distinct Populations Segment on March 12, 2007 (also included MI, MN, and portions of ND, SD, IA, IL, IN & OH). Wolves were federally relisted on September 29, 2008, federally delisted on May 4, 2009, and relisted on July 1, 2009. In winter 2010 there were 690-733 wolves in Wisconsin, including 181 packs and 15+ loners; 655+ wolves lived outside Indian reservations."

The last time (July 1, 2009) the USFNS was sued because of no public comment period. The delay now is genetics. There could be 2 sub-species of Eastern/Western Grey wolves. (The red wolf is in North Carolina only). The work on toxicology of the grey wolf in WI, MN, MI, and all of North America will take a while. The new (USFNS) rule may have to wait until research is done. The new Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan has been worked on. It is now on hold. The emphasis is getting them delisted first, then to work on the plan. The 1999 plan

uses several zones to manage the population. At this time "Human health and Safety" concerns can be used for wolf control.

So far 10 wolves have been euthanized in Price county and 4 (so far, Oct. 8, 2010) in the Bear Bluff pack in Eastern Clark county. The lack of fear toward humans, attacking dogs and livestock are the reasons these 2 packs will be eliminated. The state of Wisconsin retains the authority to euthanize wolves because of human safety. They still let the USFWS know what is about to happen.

Known wolf mortality in 2009 was 72 wolves. Twelve of them were collared. Wolf harvest in U.S. states: Alaska; hunted 630, and trapped 950, Idaho; hunted 188, Montana; hunted 72.

Wisconsin rules on wolf/dog hybrids went into affect July 1, 2010. It is not legal to posses unless pens are up to standards and are sterilized.

The committee had a question on carrying capacity. Why did the carrying capacity change from 500-700? Wolves are in more varied habitat than ever before. **TRYING TO KEEP WISCONSIN'S WOLVES WILD IS OUR NEWEST CHALLENGE.** When delisted, the problem wolves will be the first concern. The questions of carrying capacity, population goals, and public harvest goals will also need to be answered.

Jennifer Stenglein of UW Madison gave a report on her study and another study. The other person's master's project shows promise on deterring packs from populated areas. It uses the territorial behavior to keep the packs out of an area. Howl boxes were used. It played howling through loud speakers and also recorded responses. They also used scent markings. They howled 4-5 times a night, for 15 nights. They had 3 test sites and 3 control sites. The questions are; did they leave, and how far did they go? The first year of results are in. Next year results should be very interesting.

Stenglein's project will focus on how management methods affect wolf population. The goal is to develop a computer model to estimate how management tools will affect the wolf population.

Randal Jurewicz WDNR reported on wolf damage claims. Most years it's been over \$100,000, this year, as of Oct. 1, 2010, it totaled over \$128,000. So it is up considerably, and there are 2 trophy deer farms to pay yet. **We have paid over 1 million in claims since 1985. (\$1,007,514.50)** \$28,000 for one deer farm. \$20,000 for another. It is very expensive to have over 700 wolves in Wisconsin. We have no depredation control so this year we had over 90 separate damage complaints (So far). Tax check off and endangered resource auto license pays for some of this. The Endangered Resource Bureau funds pay the rest. "If we had depredation controls in place, the damage claims would not have been as high as the problem packs would have been dealt with sooner. This would have minimized damage. He explained how they pay for missing calves. After one verified claim, they will pay for 98% of missing calves, based on fall market value.

This year USFWS has given an experimental damage payment to Wisconsin for \$140,000. The public comment period is until November 15th, 2010. Please send a letter to the USFWS.

1D. public comments

Laurie Groskopf presented her resolution for county boards (14 boards have passed it so far). **Public acceptance is the key to wolves living in Wisconsin.**

William Yingst made the motion, 2nd by mark Loka that

Whereas the WDNR established a wolf population goal of 350 animals in 1999 based on carrying capacity and human population density, and nothing has happened to increase prey availability or decrease human density in the intervening years,

And whereas numerous Wisconsin residents have experienced pet and livestock depredations, and threatening incidents involving wolves,

And whereas increasing predator populations, in particular wolves, has profoundly affected Wisconsin deer population, hunting opportunities, curtailed livestock and pleasure horse activities, and danger to pets and people

Be it resolved that the Wolf Study Committee of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress advises that the Wisconsin DNR wolf science committee maintains the wolf population goal of 350 or less in the next revision of the Wisconsin wolf management plan,

And be it further resolved that the Wolf Study Committee of the Wisconsin conservation congress requests that the WDNR and other partners implement meaningful population control in the next Wisconsin wolf plan to bring the wolf population to goal levels.

Motion Carried

We basically have people telling the committee and the Wisconsin Conservation Congress that they want the population lower.

2B. law enforcement update

WDNR Warden Dave Oginski explained the difficulty prosecuting illegal wolf kills. The people illegally killing wolves are people doing other illegal things. It makes it hard to make a conviction in most cases.

3. Discussion and action items

- Resolution #10-02-10 list timber wolves as an invasive species
Motion by Scot Zimmerman to reject, 2nd by Mike Bader. Discussion- does not fit the definition of an invasive species-did the author want this to go

anywhere or was it just a statement? - The next several committees will not forward it?-we would like serious resolutions.

The motion to reject passes

- #71-02-10 petition to delist wolves from the endangered resources and threatened list

No action needed as it has already happened

1D. public comment again

A handout (see handout number3) from Laurie Groskopf that the WDNR would be required to fully disclose all wolf incidents in Wisconsin between pets, livestock, humans ect...discussion-would it be legal to disclose personal info without permission-some landowners do not want the attention-**no action taken**

4. members matters

these comments/questions came from committee members-sell wolf tags over the counter-be careful how the harvest season is worded-how can a resort get dollars for lost business because of no deer-wolf license is too high at \$200-we need to get wolves delisted-it has been an up and down tear for wolf delisting-the conservation congress and this committee has not set a goal of 500-get out and vote-send letters to the USFWS-the wolves need to get delisted first

5. motion to adjourn at 10:15 pm by Scott Zimmerman,2nd by Mark Loka mc

Submitted by Scott McAuley-secretary

3.A, Min. of Oct. 27, 1999.

Wolf Plan (8)

3.A

Form 1100-1
(R 12/98)

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA ITEM

Item No. _____

SUBJECT: Approval of the timber wolf management plan (Item 3.C, Minutes of August 25, 1999).

FOR: OCTOBER 1999 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Adrian Wydeven

SUMMARY:

The Wolf Advisory Committee has been working extensively with the public since spring of 1996 to develop a plan to manage Wisconsin's growing wolf population. A Wisconsin plan is needed by the the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to remove wolves from the Federal Endangered Species List.

At the August 25, 1999 Natural Resources Board meeting in Haward, WI thirty-one persons testified on the proposed plan. The Natural Resources Board deferred action until its October 27th meeting and instructed the Department staff to make five modifications to the plan: 1) Create a stakeholder group to advise the Department on wolf management; 2) Allow more citizen input on annual population surveys and census estimates; 3) Provide a more complete funding request within the plan and anticipate increasing costs of wolf management; 4) Provide a prompt settlement procedure for those who have lost pets or livestock to wolves; and 5) Develop a detailed draft of procedures for a controlled public wolf harvest which will occur when the management goal of 350 is reached.

This plan recommends delisting from state threatened to a nonlisted. nongame species when the wolf population reaches 250 animals based on late winter count across the state in areas outside Indian reservations. A management goal of 350 is recommended. Public harvest will be implemented when the management goal of 350 is achieved.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan

#1

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- No Fiscal Estimate Required
- No Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement Required
- No Background Memo

- Yes Attached
- Yes Attached
- Yes Attached

APPROVED:

Howard H. Buckenmaier
Bureau Director

10/4/99
Date

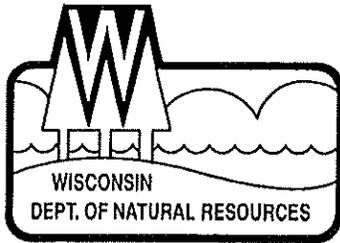
Steven W. Mueller
Administrator

10/5/99
Date

George E. Meyer
Secretary, George E. Meyer

10/7/99
Date

- cc: Judy Scullion - AD/5
- WI Cons Congress Executive Committee (3)
- Martha Kilishek - WI Wildlife Federation
- WI Wolf Advisory Committee
- Janet Smith - USFWS
- Neil Kniecik - GLIFWC
- Tim Eder - Nat Wildlife Federation
- Kenneth Bro - Sigurd Olson Env Institut



#2

The History of Wolves in Wisconsin

The gray or timber wolf has existed in Wisconsin from the time the glaciers melted, about 10,000 years ago. Wolves followed herds of muskox and caribou that moved in after the ice melted. Native Americans also followed the wolves and grazing mammals, and have coexisted with these large mammals since the glacier left. The wolf was highly respected for its hunting skills, and became an important symbol in the culture of many Native American tribes.

Europeans began settling Wisconsin in the early 1800's, and at the time as many as 3,000 to 5,000 wolves may have existed in the area. However, Europeans often had much more negative attitudes toward wolves, and soon began programs to eliminate wolves. A state bounty was placed on wolves in Wisconsin in 1865, and lasted until 1957. By 1900, wolves had disappeared from southern Wisconsin. In 1950, less than 50 wolves remained in extreme northern Wisconsin. In 1957 wolves were listed as a protected species, but the wolf population was down to a handful of wolves, and in 1960 it was considered extinct.

In 1967 and 1974 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated the timber wolf a federally endangered species. In 1975, wolves began to re-colonize Wisconsin in the northwest portions of the state, along the Minnesota border. **Wolves were not reintroduced into the state, but moved in on their own.** Wisconsin listed the timber wolf a state endangered species in 1975.

Intense monitoring of wolves in Wisconsin by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) began in 1979. Attempts were made to capture, attach radio collars, and radio-track wolves from most packs in the state. Additional surveys were done by snow-tracking wolf packs in the winter, and by conducting howl surveys in the summer. In 1980, 25 wolves in 5 packs occurred in the state, but dropped to 14 in 1985 when parvovirus reduced pup survival and killed adults. The Wisconsin DNR completed a wolf recovery plan in 1989. The recovery plan set a state goal for reclassifying wolves as threatened once the population remained at or above 80 for three years. Recovery efforts were based on education, legal protection, habitat protection, and providing compensation for problem wolves.

In the 1990's the wolf population grew rapidly, despite an outbreak of mange between 1992 -1995. The Wisconsin DNR began work on a management plan, and completed the plan in 1999. This management plan set a delisting goal of 250 wolves in late winter outside of Indian reservations, and a long-term management goal of 350 wolves outside of Indian reservations. In 1999 wolves were reclassified to state threatened status with 205 wolves in the state. In 2004 wolves were removed from the state threatened species list and were reclassified as a protected wild animal with 373 wolves in the state.

Wolves were federally reclassified to threatened on April 1, 2003; but on January 31, 2005 wolves were relisted as endangered due to a lawsuit. Wolves were removed from the federal list in Wisconsin and the remainder of the Western Great Lakes Distinct Population Segment on March 12, 2007 (also included MI, MN, and portions of ND, SD, IA, IL, IN & OH). Wolves were federally relisted on September 29, 2008, federally delisted on May 4, 2009, and relisted on July 1, 2009. In winter 2010 there were 690-733 wolves in Wisconsin, including 181 packs and 15+ loners; 655+ wolves lived outside Indian reservations.

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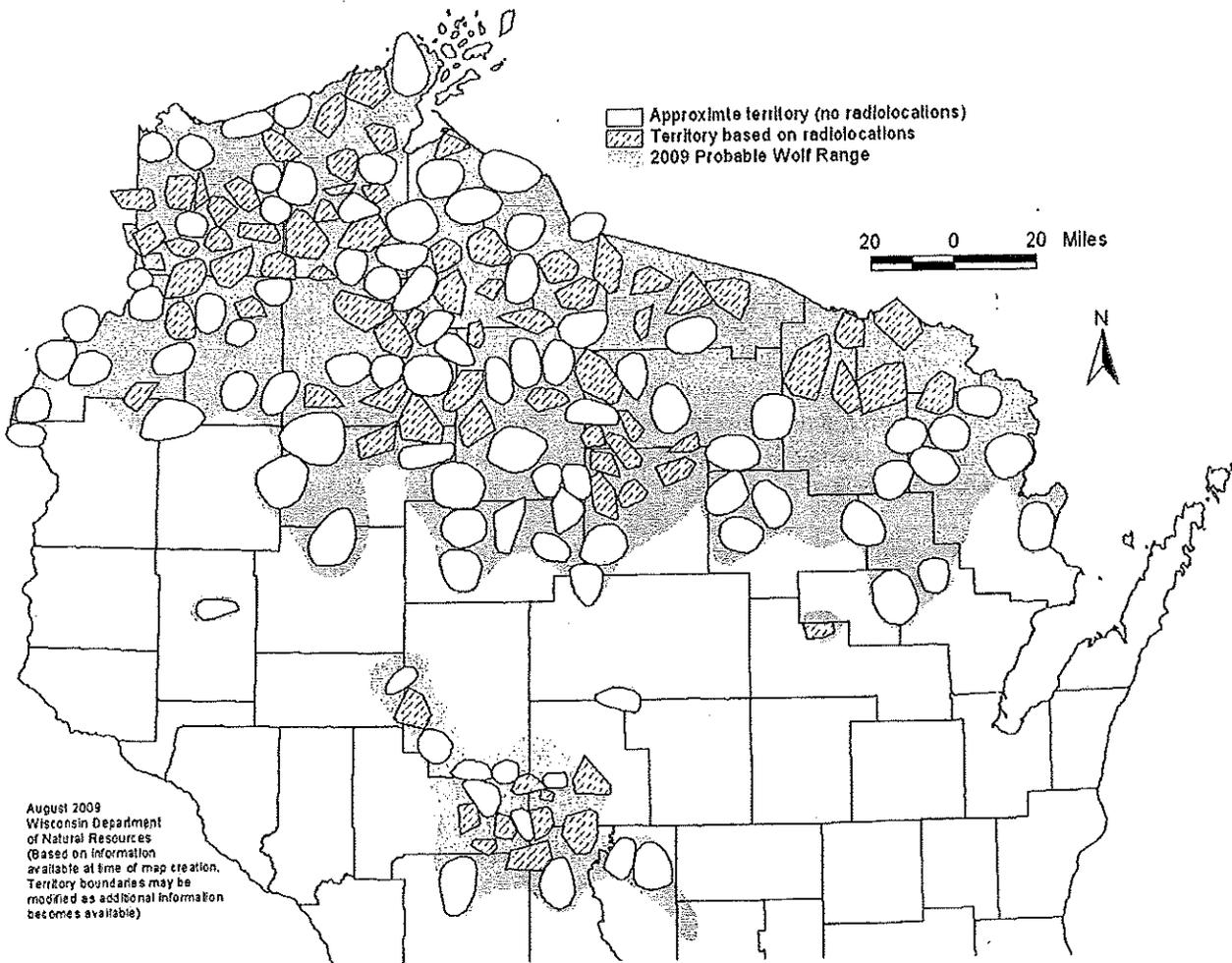
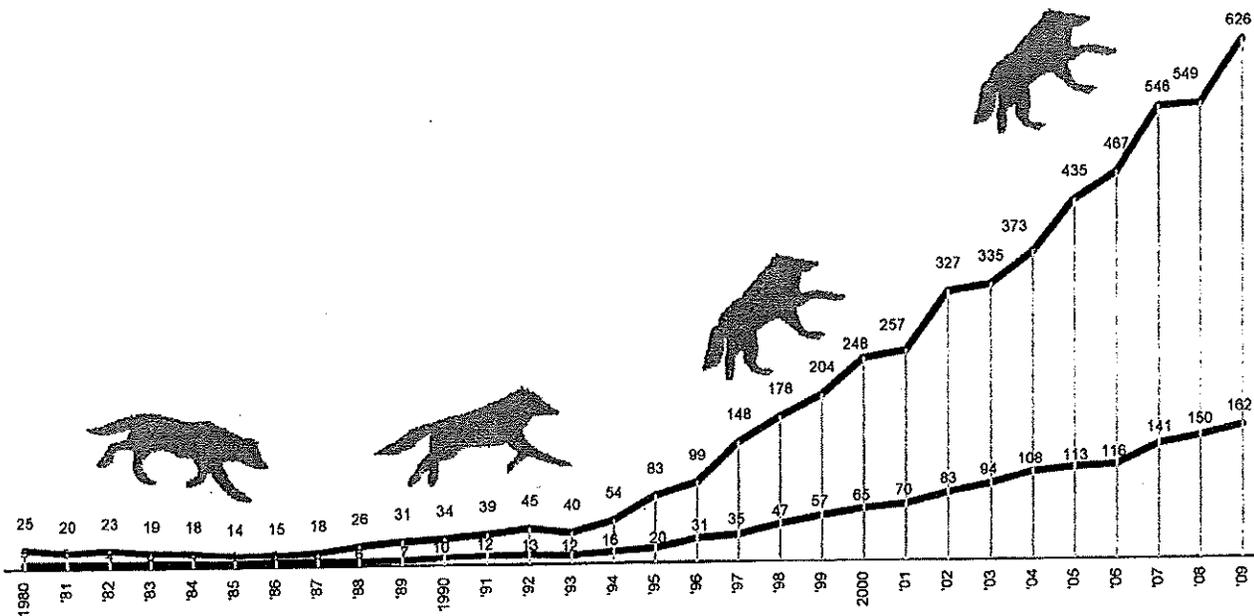


Figure 1. Gray Wolf Distribution in Wisconsin: Winter 2008-2009

Figure 2. Changes in Wisconsin Gray Wolf Population: 1980-2009



WI Conservation Congress Wolf Committee - WOLF INFORMATION

What were the “trigger” numbers that would lead to delisting?

The WI DNR announced in early summer, 2009, that it will do a major 10 year rewrite of the Wolf Plan. The last major rewrite of the Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan was approved in 1999. In that plan, the state and feds established various levels for handling wolves in Wisconsin. The following chart is from that plan:

Wolf Population	State Listing	Federal Listing
Less than 80	Endangered	Endangered
80+ for 3 yrs.	Threatened	Threatened
100+ for 5 yrs. WI & MI	Threatened	Delisted
250 for 1 yr.	Delisted	Delisted

What was the wolf population goal in the last major wolf plan rewrite in 1999 (update in 2006-2007), and how was it determined?

The wolf population goal in the last major plan rewrite was 350. This population was chosen based on population modeling studies and public input. The studies, done by Mladenoff and others in 1995 - 1999, determined the carrying capacity (maximum wolf population) of Wisconsin.

The population studies looked at human population density and prey availability.

Biologic carrying capacity based on prey availability: 262-662

Biologic carrying capacity based on human population density: 324-461

Mladenoff, D.J., T.A. Sickley, R.G. Haight, and A.P. Wydeven. 1997. *Causes and implications of species restoration in altered ecosystems: A spacial landscape project of wolf population recovery*. Bioscience vol. 47(1):21-31

The 1999 plan chose 350 as the goal for wolf numbers in Wisconsin. The number of wolves has, over time, grown to a current minimum (actual wolves counted in spring 2010) wolf population of 690 - 730. To read the Wolf Management Plan, go to www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/mammals/wolf/ and click on the wolf management plan.

Social carrying capacity is another consideration in picking a goal for wolves in Wisconsin. The Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies recently completed a study of attitudes in the areas where wolves live. Fully 2/3 of respondents indicated that they favored a goal of 350 or less in Wisconsin.

www.nelson.wisc.edu/people/treves/Home.html

The WI DNR notified the Natural Resources Board that it will request a higher wolf population goal in the 2010 10 year wolf plan rewrite. A preliminary draft version of the next 10 year wolf management plan was distributed to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Wolf Committee. This plan recommends two options for wolf management in Wisconsin for the next ten years. The two options are: #1 – no wolf population management goal, or #2 – a wolf population goal of 500 in wolf

management zones 1 & 2 (northern and west central Wisconsin), + or - 25%. This would result in management for 550 animals, probably + 25% = 687. This goal would support the current minimum estimate of 690 animals to continue.

A higher goal for wolf numbers will mean less population control measures when wolves are delisted from federal endangered species protection.

How has the WI DNR controlled wolf numbers in the past?

The WI DNR provided for removal of wolves causing proven depredation on a person's own land while federal delisting was in place. But the DNR never provided for any meaningful population controls in any previous plan. Depredation control removes individual animals and is not meant to provide population control.

David Mech, in Wolves: Behavior, Ecology, and Conservation, 2003, noted that "a high level of wolf control is necessary to prevent local reproduction and rapid recolonization from surrounding areas from bringing the wolf population rapidly back to its previous levels." (p. 153). Taking out individual problem animals would not meet this definition of population control.

How is Wisconsin promoting the federal delisting process?

The delisting process has been reversed several times, due to decisions of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and lawsuits brought in federal court. It is unclear what Wisconsin has done in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to promote permanent delisting and return of the wolf to the control of the state. Wisconsin did not enter as a litigant into a recent challenge to the last wolf delisting. Wisconsin has petitioned the U.S. Dept. of Interior to speed delisting of wolves and return management to Wisconsin.

Wisconsin 2010 data

During the first 6 months of 2010, wildlife services verified wolf incidents include: Five verified threats to human safety, 40 calves killed, two injured, two pregnant (in the process of delivering) beef cows and one other cow killed, 4 cases of horses being harassed, 9 (?) dogs injured and 12 killed (difficult to tell from the list which were killed and which injured), and one captive deer killed. These depredations are the tip of the iceberg as many more animals are lost without being reported or found and verified by wildlife services. For incidents involving dogs, only specific hunting dogs wear tracking collars, and so many incidents go undiscovered or unreported.

The advisory wolf control resolution has passed at least 14 county boards, most unanimously, all with little disagreement.

Questions or comments welcome: Laurie Groskopf, Town of Harrison, Lincoln Co. 715-453-6301. harrisonhounds@hotmail.com