



WOLVES AND DEER

IN WISCONSIN

The naturally recovered gray wolf has returned to Wisconsin's northern and central forests. Once completely eliminated from Wisconsin, the late winter 2009 minimum estimate of the wolf population was 626 - 662 animals, an increase of 14% from 2008.

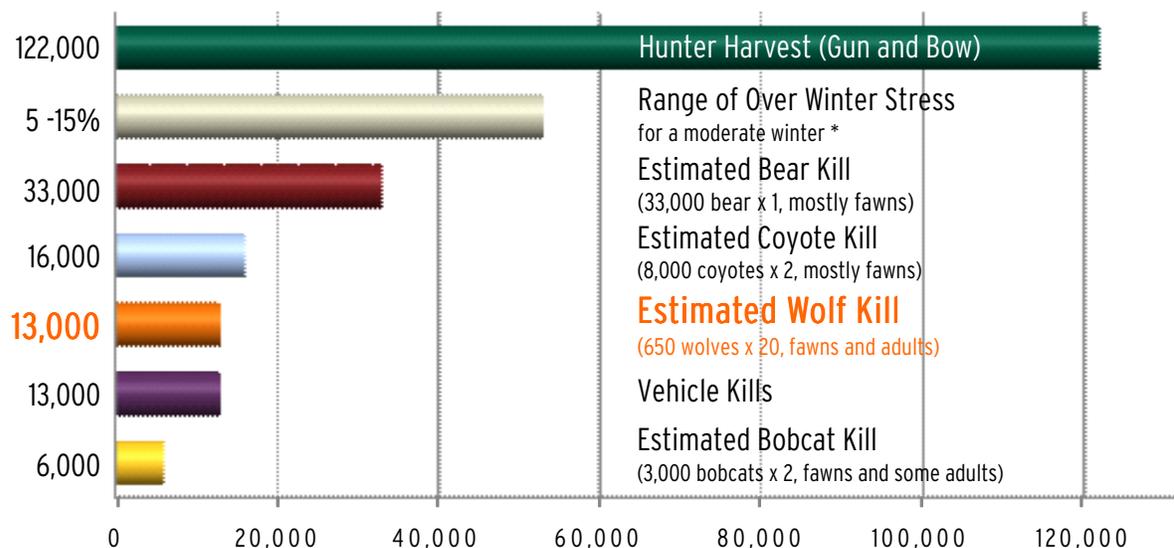
The return of the wolf to Wisconsin has raised questions about their impact on the white-tailed deer herd. A healthy adult wolf will take about 20 adult-sized deer per year. Wisconsin boasts one of the nation's largest deer herds with a healthy population after the 2008 hunt of approximately 1 million animals, which is 37% above the statewide goal of 731,500.

Abundance of deer will dictate the number of wolves an area can hold. Some wolves are increasingly hunting around bait piles that attract **and concentrate** deer, and wolves may reduce the chances that deer will continue to frequent these bait sites.



The chart below presents a comparison of the major causes of deer mortality in Wisconsin's northern and central forests where wolves and deer co-exist.

DEER MORTALITY IN WISCONSIN'S NORTHERN AND CENTRAL FORESTS



Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

* the range estimate is based on 5-15% of the 2009 winter standing deer herd for a moderate winter.

ILLEGAL WOLF KILLS

Illegal killing of wolves in Wisconsin continues to be a problem. Since 2004 wolves have been listed by Wisconsin as “Protected Wild Animals” and there was no open hunting season for wolves. In addition, the below federal ruling means that landowners in Wisconsin may no longer shoot wolves in the act of attacking domestic animals on their land.

Some organizations have established monetary rewards for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any individual(s) who have killed wolves. As a federally endangered species, anyone convicted of killing a wolf can be sentenced up to six months in jail and/or a \$25,000 fine. Penalties can also include loss of hunting license.



WOLVES AND TROPHY DEER PRODUCTION

Minnesota has developed one of the largest deer herds in the nation while simultaneously restoring the gray wolf to an estimated 3,000 animals. Minnesota has also become the number two all time Boone and Crocket trophy white-tailed deer producing state, followed by Wisconsin. This might suggest that wolves and deer are co-existing very well.

Wolves may even play a role in helping to increase the health and fitness of the overall deer population by culling the sick, weak, and the old and leaving the healthier animals to reproduce and thrive.

REPORT ALL POACHING

If you see or hear of any questionable activity towards wolves or other wildlife, report it immediately to the Wisconsin DNR’s Violation Hotline:

1-800-847-9367
(1-800-TIP-WDNR)
OR
#367 by cell phone
(available 24 hours)

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WOLVES AND HOW YOU CAN HELP:



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