

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 8, 2024

The Honorable Martha Williams  
Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1894 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Williams:

We are writing to express our concerns about the recent decision from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a National Recovery Plan under the Endangered Species Act for gray wolves in the lower 48 states.

We are concerned that this unprecedented proposal will have harmful impacts on our home state of Wyoming, especially the farming and ranching communities there. Gray wolves are currently delisted and under state management in Wyoming, as well as several other states in the Northern Rocky Mountains area. This agreement has resulted in stable, established wolf populations. Best management practices are led by people in the State who are directly impacted and have spent many years balancing stakeholder priorities.

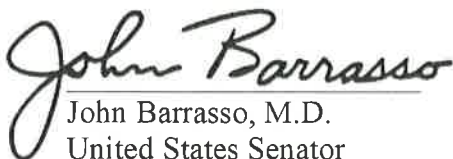
Decisions from Washington that led to listing and delisting this species created a mess of management practices that the states have been left to clean up. Wyoming has managed wolf populations to appropriate levels. They have the knowledge and expertise to continue management of this species.

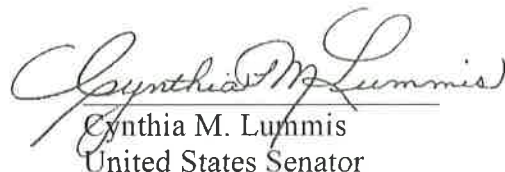
In the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Notification of Finding document, the Service stated that gray wolves in the Western U.S. do not meet the definition of an endangered or threatened species. If the species does not qualify for listing, why has the agency decided to develop a National Recovery Plan for gray wolves? The Service's objective remains unclear and uncertain. The proposed National Recovery Plan contradicts the agency's own findings. It has created confusion for wildlife management officials.

It is in the best interest of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure state wildlife officials are allowed to continue effective management of gray wolf populations. Wyoming has been considered the golden standard for various environmental and wildlife management practices, and has a legacy of responsible stewardship. State governments and local agencies are better able to meet the needs of the local communities and native ecosystems.

We request that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife continue to honor Wyoming's state management of its wolves. It is important to allow the state experts to continue management of gray wolf populations in the Northern Rockies.

Sincerely,

  
John Barrasso, M.D.  
United States Senator

  
Cynthia M. Lummis  
United States Senator