Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan

Get ready to protect Wisconsin's wolves into the future.



Wolves are incredibly devoted and loyal animals who form strong family bonds. They are fiercely protective of their families, and will go to great lengths to defend them. Wolves are also highly intelligent and social animals, and have been known to form close and lasting ties with their human caregivers. They are so much like you advocates. It is up to us to comment on this plan with facts and science but also your stories about why wolves are important to you. It is vital to put some of these feelings and our talking points into your own words. This is simply meant as a guide. Please visit our youtube channel for part one and part two on the discussion of these talking points. This is what our organization submitted to the WI DNR.

Feedback and comments can be submitted via the Online Comment Tool. Questions and comments can also be emailed (DNRWildlifeSwitchboard@wisconsin.gov) or mailed to the DNR.

Wolf Management Plan Comments
101 S. Webster Street PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921

The deadline to submit comments has been extended to 11:59 p.m. on Feb. 28, 2023.

Part 1:

Thank you for your interest in providing input on the draft Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan. This tool exists to capture public comments on the draft plan. If you have not read the draft plan, please take some time to do so before completing this survey. The draft plan can be found on the DNR wolf management plan webpage.

We are interested in your feedback on the draft plan. We encourage you to provide your thoughts on what is in the draft plan but also indicate anything you believe is missing and should be included in the draft. Please note: questions provided via this input tool will not receive a response. If you have any questions regarding the draft plan, please email them to dnrwildlifeswitchboard@wisconsin.gov.

Question Title

1. Your Name: Melissa Smith

Question Title

2. How much of the draft plan have you read before completing this survey?

All of it

Most of it

Just the parts I am interested in

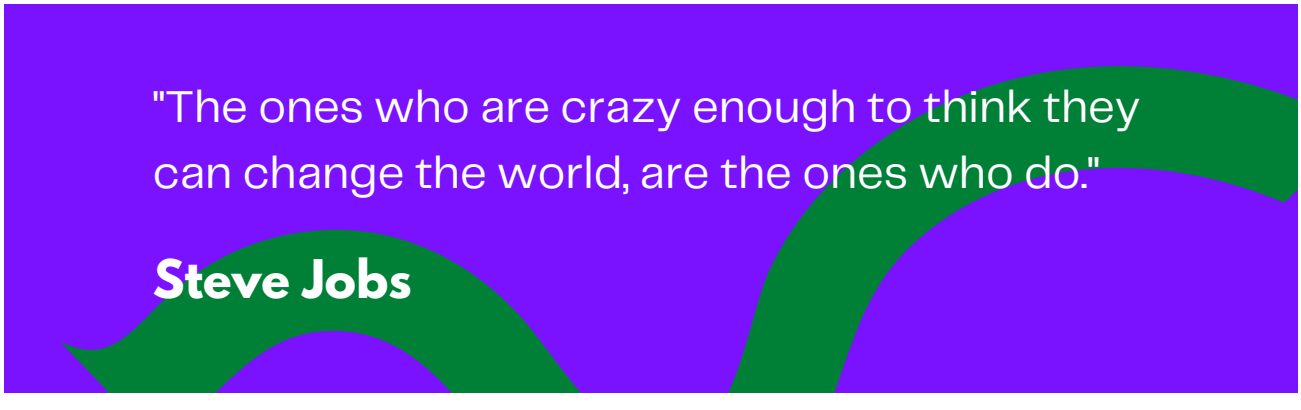
I have not read any of the draft plan

Question Title

3. Are you a Wisconsin resident?

Yes

No



Part 2:

4. Overall, what elements from the draft plan do you LIKE? Being specific is most useful to our team.

Numerical Goal: The previous plans referred to a 350 wolf recovery goal set when the population was much lower. The number proved contentious over the years, even though the original plan authors said it was never meant as a cap. The 2022 draft plan does away with that debate entirely. It's also reflective of a new direction for wolf management in the state

Social Survey: Overall, most Wisconsinites somewhat or strongly agreed that predators like wolves keep nature in balance (77%), wolves are culturally important (71%), and wolves are special animals that deserve our admiration (75%). Similarly, a majority of Wisconsinites agreed that people and wolves should be able to coexist (75%) and that it is important to maintain a wolf population in Wisconsin (80%).

Ecological Benefits: More than ever before, the DNR has taken consideration into the ecological benefits of wolves, including CWD, landscape of fear, etc. This should be priority one over all other goals

increased acknowledgement of tribal values and goals: Wisconsin Tribal Perspectives and Cultural Significance As part of the development of this plan, the department formally requested that the federally recognized tribes in Wisconsin contribute a written narrative on the cultural significance of wolves to be included in the plan. Acknowledging that it is not possible to speak with one voice for all tribes in Wisconsin, the invitation was extended to all. The request was sent to the Tribal Natural Resource/Conservation Directors and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of each of the eleven federally recognized tribes of Wisconsin. It was also sent to the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

While I stand firm against recreational hunting of wolves, I think the zone system and shortening of reporting is a step in the right direction. I support buffer zones. WE cannot allow what happened in 2021 to EVER occur again.

While I also oppose lethal removal of wolves for depredation I am glad to see extensive talk about nonlethal abatement and increased scientific proof

Please insert what you personally like about the plan. There is room to write your stories in Question 7.

5. Overall, what elements from the draft plan do you DISLIKE? Again, being specific is most useful to our team

I would first like to state that when the DNR stacked the committee with pro-wolf-hunting groups they continued an anti-democratic and failed policy of the Walker administration by dismissing the values of the true majority of the public that do not support killing wolves even in cases of livestock loss (Manfredo et al. 2020) and completely ignored the will of youths and future generations of Wisconsin residents. Therefore, any claim about a majority view or balanced committee in this report is inaccurate on its face.

Using recreational hunting as a conflict resolution tool. Absolutely not.

There is also plenty of scientific evidence documenting the harms that may come from wolf hunting. Wolves self-regulate their populations, without any need for human intervention. Given their internal regulation, an “overpopulation” of wolves is scientifically unheard of, and clearly a value judgment by humans who would rather have fewer wolves on the landscape. Wolves know what they need and live sustainably; it is a fallacy that their numbers need to be “maintained.” The majority of Wisconsin citizens do not support wolf hunting. It is cruel especially with the use of dogs. Until that law is changed, a hunt being mandated is against the public trust, the DNR has the responsibility to set the wolf hunting quota at zero. As our lawsuit stated, Zero is a number

Nor is there any evidence that wolf hunting decreases wolf-human conflicts. On the contrary, wolf hunting will likely create problems that did not exist in the first place. Wolf killing disrupts the social stability that allows for their cooperation and self-regulation. Hunting causes the break-up of wolf family groups necessary for taking down large wild prey, which in turns leads to some wolves shifting from wild to easier domestic prey. Hence, wolf hunting would increase harms to wolves, domestic animals and their guardians. Wolf conflict is highly exaggerated.

The 2022 survey results showed that support (46%) for a regulated hunting and trapping of wolves is higher than opposition (29%); one-quarter of Wisconsinites were undecided. Support was higher among wolf-range residents (57%) than it was for residents outside wolf-range (43%). While modifications to question design between 2014 and 2022 limited statistical comparisons, informal comparisons suggest that statewide support for a wolf hunting and trapping season has declined over the last eight years. As was found in the 2014 survey, the top reason for opposition in 2022 was concern that wolves would become endangered again. The least selected reason for opposing a regulated wolf hunting and trapping season

Occupancy model: The new model relies on estimated territory size and how likely wolves are to inhabit a certain area. This estimate is of the the entire population with much larger confidence intervals. The agency believe this estimates the entire population. Built in the framework of full protection and A lot of uncertainty without being conservative and not good for setting hunting quotas. Test this model while using the old Adams model for 5 years. The 14% decline you saw glosses over a wide confidence interval, There are weakness in territory size and observations per pack. It also doesn't account for a lot of wolf mortality or poaching

Other concerns are that there is no oversight committee, The makeup of that very committee will have huge impacts on this plan In the plan you state that you will monitor expectations and outcomes. We have a hard time supporting that not knowing who this body is going forward? When will these assessments take place? We would like the committee formed before approval of the plan.

There should be ZERO hound training. These people had no problem slaughtering wolves wtihout one. This is set up to cause major violations and interference to other hunters. There should be no reimbursement of hound hunters at any time for any reason

Please insert what you personally dislike about the plan. There is room to write your stories in Question 7.

6. On a scale from 1-10, how would you rate your overall support for the draft wolf management plan as written?<-- 1 Very little support; the plan reflects nothing of what I'd like to see--> 10: Very high support; the plan reflects everything I'd like to see

0	our answer 7	10

7. Please provide any other comments related to the current draft wolf management plan here

I think the DNR did a great job on the plan overall. I really appreciated the social survey being completed. I would like to see the wolf plan include those who want to move wildlife management towards an ethical, science-based, democratic vision of wildlife conservation that respects diversity and the intrinsic value of all life. I would also like to see outside scientists included in development, including Dr Adrian Treves etc. I believe in the need for wildlife stewardship to be reflective of democratic values and public interest, best available science and the U.S. public trust. We advocate for the change of processes within current wildlife stewardship, game agencies and the biases within these systems, including this wolf plan

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