

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING MANAGEMENT OF
WOLVES IN UTAH**

2003 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Sponsor: Michael R. Styler

This joint resolution of the Legislature urges the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to expedite the process for transferring authority to manage wolves to the states. The resolution also urges the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to reject requests to establish additional recovery areas that would include the state of Utah; urges the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to draft a wolf management plan that is to the extent possible consistent with the wildlife management objectives of the Ute Indian Tribe, prevents livestock depredation, and protects the investments made in wildlife management efforts; and urges the Division of Wildlife Resources to prepare a grant proposal recommending that the Department of Natural Resources, through its species protection line item, fully compensate private landowners for losses, not covered by other mitigation sources, resulting from depredation to livestock by wolves.

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

WHEREAS, wolves have become well established in the Northern Rocky Mountain states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, and dispersing young wolves from these expanding populations are traveling into and attempting to recolonize parts of Utah;

WHEREAS, the biological status of wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountain Recovery Area has recently exceeded criteria for full recovery under the Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Plan;

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service has stated that the presence of wolves in Utah is not necessary for the recovery of wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountain Recovery Area;

WHEREAS, Utah is not a participating state in the Northern Rocky Mountain recovery effort for Gray Wolves;

WHEREAS, the wolf is currently protected in Utah by state statute as well as by the

Federal Endangered Species Act;

WHEREAS, the state of Utah has a legislated, public process for the purpose of developing policy for the management of protected wildlife, which includes the Regional Advisory Councils and the Utah Wildlife Board;

WHEREAS, the Utah Wildlife Board has been recognized by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies for its ability to resolve complex, controversial wildlife management issues;

WHEREAS, the Utah Wildlife Board has approved a Policy on Managing Predatory Wildlife Species that provides direction to the Division of Wildlife Resources in managing predator populations;

WHEREAS, recent biological assessments recognize that lands within the original boundaries of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation in the Uinta Basin of Utah contain suitable wolf habitat;

WHEREAS, the state of Utah and the Ute Indian Tribe are party to a Cooperative Management Agreement which recognizes the need for cooperation in the management of wildlife within the original boundaries of the Reservation;

WHEREAS, citizens and conservation organizations in Utah have invested significant resources to restore populations of wildlife in Utah; and

WHEREAS, hunting, ranching, and livestock production contribute significantly to the economy, heritage, and quality of life in Utah:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah urges the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to expedite the delisting process for wolves in the Western Gray Wolf Distinct Population Segment, thereby transferring authority to manage wolves to the states.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature urges the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to reject requests to establish additional recovery areas that would include the state of Utah, leaving the entire state in the Western Gray Wolf Distinct Population Segment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature strongly urges the Utah Division of

Wildlife Resources to draft a wolf management plan for review, modification, and adoption by the Utah Wildlife Board through the Regional Advisory Council process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature urges that the objectives and strategies of the plan, to the extent possible, be consistent with the wildlife management objectives of the Ute Indian Tribe, prevent livestock depredation, and protect the investments made in wildlife management efforts while being consistent with United States Fish and Wildlife Service regulations and other Utah species management plans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature strongly urges the Division of Wildlife Resources to prepare a grant proposal for consideration by the Department of Natural Resources, within the department's species protection line item, to fully compensate private landowners for losses not covered by other mitigation sources and resulting from depredation to livestock by wolves.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Region Six, the United States Secretary of the Interior, the Utah Wildlife Board, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and the members of Utah's congressional delegation.