

<http://www.nywolf.org/learn/wolves-of-the-us>

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These statistics have not been verified. Information reprinted here directly from above website. These numbers do not match those found in other research.

## **Wolves of the U.S.**

### **Wild Gray Wolf Populations in the United States**

Gray Wolves (*Canis lupus*) were once the most widely distributed wild mammals. They inhabited most of the available land in the northern hemisphere. Due to the destruction of their habitat and persecution by humans, they now occupy only about two-thirds of their former range worldwide, and only about 3 percent of the continental 48 United States.

#### **Western Great Lake States: – Total Gray Wolf Population: 4399**

Minnesota: 2921 wolves (from 2012)

Wisconsin: 782 wolves (from 2011)

Michigan: 687 wolves (from 2011)

Isle Royale National Park: 9 wolves (from 2012)

Status: Delisted/State Managed. Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections were lifted from these populations in January of 2012.

- Minnesota: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources implementing a wolf harvest season beginning November 3, 2012. The hunting quota for 2012 is 400 and does include the use of traps and snares.
- Wisconsin: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources implementing a wolf harvest season beginning October 15, 2012. The hunting quota for 2012 is undecided and includes the use of traps, snares, dogs\*, baits, and lures.
- Michigan: No wolf harvest season for 2012

\* Use of dogs in Wisconsin's hunt is being challenged in court (October 2012)

#### **Northern Rocky Mountain States & Pacific Northwest: Total Gray Wolf Population: 1784**

Idaho: 746 wolves (from 2011)

Wyoming: 328 wolves (from 2011)

Montana: 653 wolves (from 2011)

Washington: 27 (from 2012)

Oregon: 29 (from 2012)

California: 1 (from 2012)

Status: Delisted/State Managed. On May 5, 2011, Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections for wolves were eliminated in the northern Rocky Mountain states of Idaho and Montana, and parts of Utah, Washington and Oregon. Wolf hunts followed in the states of Idaho and Montana and over 500 wolves were killed. In fall of 2012 wolf hunts resumed in Idaho and Montana.

On September 30, 2012, ESA protections were removed from Wyoming. This State's management plan calls the state to:

- Deem wolves predators in 85% of the state (all but the northwest corner of Wyoming), where they could be killed by any means, at any time, without a license.
- In Wyoming's northwest corner, right outside Yellowstone National Park, classify wolves as trophy game animals meaning they could only be hunted with a license.
- Maintain only 100 wolves and 10 breeding pairs outside of Yellowstone National Park

**Northeast: none (officially)**

Since 1993, several gray wolves have been documented south of the St. Lawrence River, however definitive evidence of established packs in the Northeast has not been documented.

Status: Federal protection. If natural restoration occurs in the Northeast, this wolf population will be listed as endangered. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, there are over 26 million acres of suitable wolf habitat in the Northeast. Wolf recovery in the Northeast would restore vital ecological balance to the Northern Forest Ecosystem. According to the USFWS, "Wolf presence plays a meaningful role in the delicate balance between prey, other predators, and even vegetation. This is a role that scientists are just beginning to understand". To learn more about wolf recovery efforts in the Northeast visit Coalition to Restore the Eastern Wolf at <http://easternwolf.org/>.

**Southwest: Total Population: 58 Mexican Gray wolves**

Arizona: 32 wolves (from 2012)

New Mexico: 26 wolves (from 2012)

The Mexican gray wolf population is split between Arizona and New Mexico.

Status: Federal Protection with Exceptions.

**Alaska: Total Gray Wolf Population: 7,000 – 11,000**

Status: State managed.

Aerial Hunting : Aerial Hunting is against the law. In 1972 Congress passed the Airborne Hunting Act (AHA) to prohibit hunting or harassing animals from aircraft. Although illegal, the practice of aerial hunting has been resurrected by the Alaska Legislature under the guise of wildlife management and predator control. Alaska skirts the intent of Congress by exploiting a loophole in the AHA to use aerial hunting to artificially boost game species populations for hunters. Under Alaska's aerial hunting program

over 1000 wolves have been killed in the past several years. If passed, the Protect America's Wildlife Act (PAW) will close the loophole in the AHA and prevent other states who are proposing to follow Alaska's example.

### **Wild Red Wolf Populations in the United States**

Southeast: Total Population: 90- 110 red wolves on the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in northeastern North Carolina (2012)

Status: Federal Protection. The red wolf (*Canis rufus*) is one of two species of wolves in the world, the other being the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*). The red wolf is one of the world's most endangered wild canids. An estimated 100 red wolves roam the wilds of northeastern North Carolina and another 178 comprise the captive breeding program.