

## 2011 Wolf Season Proposal Key Points

- Fish and Game's goal is to manage wolves to reduce conflicts, ensure a self-sustaining wolf population and maintain state management authority.
- Idaho has more than 1000 wolves. The federal rule that removed wolves from the Endangered Species Act list requires Idaho to maintain at least 15 breeding pairs or 150 wolves to avoid relisting.
- Fish and Game's 2011 wolf season proposal is intended to bring Idaho's wolf population in balance with other big game species, reduce attacks on livestock and domestic animals and to keep wolves from encroaching on populated areas.
- Specific proposals seek to focus wolf harvest where wolf conflicts with people, livestock, domestic animals, and other big game animals are greatest.
- Fish and Game is proposing a carefully regulated general hunting season with mandatory reporting requirements. Most big game species in Idaho are managed under "general hunt rules and regulations." Fish and Game will manage wolves like other big game species such as bears and lions with harvest limits in certain areas. Hunters of bears, lions and wolves are all required to report harvest. Wolf hunters will have to report harvest within 72 hours and bring the hide and skull to a Fish and Game office where biologists collect information on age, sex and harvest location.
- Harvest limits are proposed in some areas where Fish and Game expects hunter success and agency control actions to be higher and to ensure Idaho populations remain connected to wolves in other states.
- Harvest will be monitored daily and will be posted on the Fish and Game website. Fish and Game will monitor mandatory reporting and check-in data, as well as other sources of wolf mortality, to ensure harvest does not cause the population to approach the 15 breeding pair/150 wolf delisting criteria. Seasons and areas can be closed if mortality is determined to be excessive.

- Hunters should monitor the Fish and Game website for closed areas prior to going hunting. Fish and Game will have a toll free number for harvest reporting and season updates.
- Experience in Idaho, Canada and Alaska indicates that overharvest of wolves will not be a concern. In 2009, less than one percent of over 30,000 wolf tag buyers harvested a wolf. Wolf harvest by hunters in 2009 slowed but did not stop the growth of Idaho's wolf population.
- Fish and Game proposes a trapping season in some areas because in 2009, regular hunting seasons were not effective in reducing populations. Idaho's experience is similar to those in Western Canada and Alaska.
- Fish and Game's mission, by law, is to provide populations for hunting, fishing, and trapping. All wolf trapping will be conducted by licensed, trained trappers in areas where access is limited, terrain is difficult, but where wolves are having significant impacts on other big game animals or approaching isolated communities such as Elk City.
- Fish and Game will continue to authorize control actions to address wolf conflicts where needed.
- Early next week, Fish and Game will conduct a random survey of hunters and members of the general public about the 2011 wolf season proposal. The survey will also be posted on the 2011 wolf proposal webpage for other interested parties to offer input. Results will be made available at the Idaho Fish and Game Commission Meeting July 27, 28, 29 in Salmon.