



COUNTY OF SISKIYOU

Board of Supervisors

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July 17, 2025

The Honorable Doug LaMalfa
408 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Urgent Request for Congressional Support to Delist the Gray Wolf

Dear Representative LaMalfa,

On behalf of the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to respectfully request your leadership in advancing the federal delisting of the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Our county is facing increasing challenges due to the expanding gray wolf population, and federal action is critical and necessary.

As you may know, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ("the Service") attempted to delist the gray wolf in 2021, but this decision was reversed by a U.S. District Court. Following further review, the Service determined that wolf populations in the Northern Rockies and Western U.S. do not warrant federal protection. That finding reaffirmed its conclusion that gray wolves in these regions do not currently face risk of extinction and do not meet the criteria for ESA listing. The Service also announced its intention to release a nationwide wolf recovery plan by the end of 2025.

These steps toward delisting the gray wolf are encouraging, but ongoing delays are causing irreparable economic harm for Siskiyou County ranchers. Therefore, I urge renewed federal action to delist the gray wolf and would greatly value your support in moving this effort forward.

Expanding wolf activity within Siskiyou County has resulted in significant livestock losses, disrupted grazing operations, and mounting economic hardship for ranching families. Since 2021, there have been over 80 confirmed and 9 probable wolf depredations. Given the county's remote and heavily vegetated terrain, actual losses are likely much higher. Some estimates propose actual losses may be up to eight times higher than confirmed kills, as carcasses are difficult to locate and evidence is often lost over time. One ranch in the Shasta Valley has reported more than 40 confirmed depredations alone.

Jess Harris
District 1

Ed Valenzuela
District 2

Michael N. Kobseff
District 3

Nancy Ogren
District 4

Ray Haupt
District 5

Additionally, the Siskiyou County wolf liaison recently reported that the Whaleback Pack, which dens within the county, had at least nine new pups this year, underscoring how quickly wolf populations can grow and reinforcing the need for flexible local management.

These impacts extend beyond direct kills. The persistent presence of wolves near livestock causes chronic stress, reduced reproductive success and weight loss, particularly in beef cattle. These indirect effects threaten the long-term stability of local ranching operations and ripple through rural economies that depend on working lands and agriculture. In response, local governments, landowners, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife have invested in monitoring, non-lethal deterrents, and other coexistence strategies. Yet, wolf numbers and territory continue to expand, leading to additional livestock losses and undermining the economic viability of ranching businesses.

I encourage you to help move this issue forward by being our voice and advocate at the federal level and supporting actions that would prompt the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to initiate a new rulemaking process to delist the gray wolf. The species has met recovery goals, and continued federal listing is no longer justified. Taking swift action to update the gray wolf's status will allow states and local partners to manage impacts more effectively, while balancing conservation with the needs of ranching communities.

Thank you for your continued support of Siskiyou County and its agricultural heritage. The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors stands ready to assist in this effort and appreciates your leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

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Nancy Ogren
Chair, Board of Supervisors

CC: Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors
 Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange
 Assemblywoman Heather Hadwick
 California State Senator Megan Dahle
 U.S. Senator Adam Schiff
 Rural County Representatives of California