



March 25, 2026

Via Electronic Mail Only

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito, Chair
The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse, Ranking Member
US Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Subject: Support for Federal Gray Wolf Delisting Legislation

Dear Chair Capito and Ranking Member Whitehouse,

The Tri-Counties Workgroup writes on behalf of the Counties of Siskiyou and Modoc, California, and Klamath, Oregon to respectfully urge the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works to advance H.R. 845, the Pet and Livestock Protection Act, which was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in December 2025 and referred to your Committee. The legislation would direct the Secretary of the Interior to reissue the 2020 final rule removing the gray wolf from the federal list of endangered and threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

In 2022, a federal district court vacated the 2020 delisting rule, returning the gray wolf to federally listed status in most states, including Oregon and California. This decision was made despite a determination from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) that gray wolves in the Western United States do not meet the definition of an endangered or threatened species under the ESA. This determination is based on the best available scientific data, including population abundance, distribution, and genetic connectivity, and reflects the same recovery criteria the agency originally used to guide listing and delisting decisions. Maintaining broad federal protections despite these findings runs counter to the agency's own science and limits state flexibility to manage wolves and mitigate impacts on livestock producers.

As listing decisions continue to be contested in the courts, these prolonged legal battles extend uncertainty and delay effective management, leaving family ranching operations to absorb the continuing impacts. Under current ESA restrictions, local wolf packs have come to rely on livestock, pass this behavior to their offspring, and spread out to establish new packs, compounding depredation on livestock. While compensation is available for confirmed depredations through state agencies, there is no reimbursement for wolf-related stress on livestock, which causes significantly reduced weight gain and birth rates, resulting in long-term productivity losses. In addition, without access to real-time wolf location data, depredation



events are often not discovered and documented before evidence is lost or scavenged, preventing investigators from confirming the loss and making it ineligible for compensation.

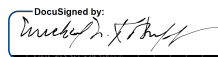
Ranchers are working around the clock to monitor and protect their herds, an approach that is neither sustainable nor economically viable. The cumulative pressure from wolves threatens the livelihood of local family ranches and the broader agricultural economy of our region.

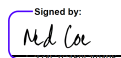
Removing the gray wolf from the federal list of endangered and threatened species would provide states with additional management tools and flexibility while continuing to ensure species conservation. Given the severe impacts on livestock producers and rural economies, we strongly urge the Committee to act promptly to advance H.R. 845 and provide states with the tools needed to address these challenges without further delay.

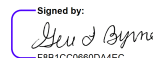
Sincerely,

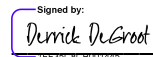
Signed by:

 Jess W. Harris, District 1
 Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

DocuSigned by:

 Michael N. Kobseff, District 3
 Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

Signed by:

 Ned Coe, District I
 Modoc County Board of Supervisors

Signed by:

 Geri Byrne, District V
 Modoc County Board of Supervisors

Signed by:

 Derrick DeGroot
 Klamath County Commissioner

CC: Senator Megan Dahle
 Assemblymember Heather Hadwick
 Rural County Representatives of California
 Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange
 Senator Jeff Merkley
 Senator Adam Schiff
 Senator Alex Padilla