

## WYOMING WOLVES BY THE NUMBERS

### 2018 YEAR-END TALLIES AS DEVELOPED 5.24.2019

As a result of a ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., management of Wyoming's gray wolf population was transferred to the state, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (National Elk Refuge) and the Wind River Indian Reservation on April 25, 2017.

State biologists report reduced wolf numbers throughout Wyoming's wolf range at the end of 2018.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department reported 286 wolves statewide running in 46 packs.

21 of the 46 packs were considered to be breeding pairs (An adult male and female with at least 2 pups by their side on December 31).

#### YEAR-END TALLIES FOR 2018

Yellowstone Park*:	80 wolves,	9 packs	7 Breeding Pairs
Wind River Indian Reservation:	10 wolves	2 packs	0 Breeding Pairs
Wyoming**:	196 wolves	35 packs	13 Breeding Pairs

*W-TGA 152 wolves 28 packs*

*W-PZ 44 wolves 7 packs*

*Total: 196 wolves 35 packs*

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TOTAL	286 wolves	46 packs	20 Breeding Pairs
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#### YEAR-END TALLIES FOR 2017

Yellowstone Park*:	97 Wolves	11 Packs	3 Breeding Pair
Wind River Indian Reservation:	12 Wolves	2 Packs	1 Breeding Pair
<u>Wyoming:</u>	<u>238 Wolves</u>	<u>40 Packs</u>	<u>19 Breeding Pairs</u>
TOTAL	347 Wolves	53 Packs	23 Breeding Pairs

\* A portion of Yellowstone Park's drop in wolf numbers (97 to 80) can be accounted for by the 2017-18 shifting of the Snake River Pack's home range to primarily outside the YNP (12 wolves, 9 adults and 3 pups of the year) and thereby being counted in Wyoming's reporting.

\*\* Wyoming's portion of the wolf population is divided into two parts: Wyoming Trophy Game Area (WYGA- 15.2 % of state), and The Predator Zone (W-PZ- 84.8 %of the state).

From 2017 to 2018 there was an 18 percent drop in overall numbers, a 13 percent drop in the number of Packs and a 13 percent drop in the number of Breeding Pairs.

**De-listing criteria** negotiated between the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and the U.S, Fish and Wildlife Service in 2012 can be broken into three layers: First, the entire Northern Rockies wolf population must be maintained at a minimum of 300 wolves with 30 Breeding Pairs (Breeding Pair is an adult male and female with 2 pups of the year at their side on December 31) divided equally between Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

Second, to ensure “...that these minimum levels are not compromised, Montana and Idaho each are required to manage for a population minimum of at least 15 Breeding Pairs and at least 150 wolves at the end of the year.”

Third, Wyoming “...will maintain the entire minimum recovery goal of at least 10 Breeding Pairs and at least 100 wolves outside of Yellowstone National Park (YNP) and the Wind River Indian Reservation” (WRIR). In addition, Wyoming can include the wolves in YNP and the WRIR in their obligation to meet the minimum of 150 wolves and 15 Breeding Pairs within the state. And “...so as not to risk relisting and provide management flexibility, Wyoming also intends to manage well above these minimum required levels.”

**Post-delisting monitoring.** The Endangered Species Act (ESA), Section 4(g)(1) requires the Secretary of Interior to implement a system in cooperation with the States to monitor effectively for not less than five years the status of all species that have been delisted. With the April 25, 2017 delisting date, it appears that this official monitoring period will continue into 2022. The primary purpose of post-delisting monitoring is to ensure that the recovered species does not deteriorate, and if an unanticipated decline is detected, to take measures to halt the decline to avoid relisting of the gray wolf.

**Relisting consideration** begins with a Formal Status Review. The following scenarios will lead to the initiation of a Formal Status Review:

- 1) If the wolf population falls below the minimum recovery level of 10 breeding pairs or 100 wolves in Wyoming statewide, including YNP and the WRIR at the end of any 1 year;
- 2) If the wolf population segment in Wyoming excluding YNP and the WRIR falls below 10 breeding pairs or 100 wolves at the end of the year for 3 consecutive years;
- 3) If the wolf population in Wyoming falls below 15 breeding pairs or 150 wolves, including YNP and the WRIR, for 3 consecutive years; or

4) If a change in State law or management objectives would significantly increase the threat to the wolf population.

Additionally, if any of these scenarios occur during the mandatory post-delisting monitoring period of at least 5 years, the post-delisting monitoring period will be extended 5 additional five years from that point.

**Information detailing these comments can be found at:**

Endangered Species Act of 1973. 108<sup>th</sup> Congress. 41p.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2012: *Removal of the Gray Wolf in Wyoming from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Removal of Wyoming Wolf Population's Status as an Experimental Population*, Federal Register vol. 77, no. 175:55530-55604.

Wyoming Game and Fish Commission: 09/14/2011, *Wyoming Gray Wolf Management Plan*. 61p.

Wyoming Game and Fish Commission: 03/22/2012, *Addendum: Wyoming Gray Wolf Management Plan*. 9p.)

***The information contained herein is as accurate and up to date as WU can determine, but it is not meant to be a legal review of Wyoming's wolf management plan, nor the position of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and Wind River Indian Reservation officials. It is provided by WU as reference only, and may be subject to differing interpretation and/or change in the future.***

Wyoming Untrapped May, 2019