



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

## Department of Fish and Wildlife

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3 August 2011

Jesse D'Elia  
Endangered Species Recovery Coordinator  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Regional Office  
911 NE 11th Avenue, 4th Floor  
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. D'Elia,

The purpose of this letter is to provide input from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) in regards to the proposed options for defining a Distinct Population Segment (DPS) analysis unit for the gray wolf in the Pacific Northwest (PNW). The Department supports a full analysis of such a DPS by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to determine if a PNW DPS is warranted. However, the Department primarily supports the federal delisting of gray wolves throughout the entire state of Oregon.

Based on the information provided by the Service, and from the conference call of the Service's Wolf Status Review Team on 20 July 2011, the Department recommends Option 1. Relevant to Oregon, the Service described this PNW DPS option as having an eastern boundary consistent with that described in 2010 Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (i.e., the boundary between east and west wolf management zones is defined by U.S. Highway 97 from the Columbia River to the junction of U.S. Highway 20, southeast on U.S. Highway 20 to the junction with U.S. Highway 395, and south on U.S. Highway 395 to the California border).

This PNW DPS boundary would offer many benefits for management of gray wolves in Oregon. This includes a consistent boundary for state and federal management purposes and a separation in predicted suitable wolf habitat between the Blue Mountain Ecoregion and the Oregon Cascades. This boundary option also reaffirms the Department's recommendation in a letter dated 8 May 2007 to Mr. Ed Bangs, Western Gray Wolf Recovery Coordinator for the Service. Lastly, it is the understanding of the Department that gray wolves dispersing from the Northern Rocky Mountain (NRM) DPS into the potential PNW DPS would count toward recovery goals of the latter.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important decision. If you have any questions, please contact me directly. I look forward to continuing my participation as the Department representative on the Service's Wolf Status Review Team.

Sincerely,

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