

# Grey wolf withdrawn from US endangered list

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This undated picture provided by the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) shows a Grey Wolf at an undisclosed location in Montana. The grey wolf was Monday taken off the US list of endangered species, making a comeback 35 years after it virtually disappeared and can now be hunted in most US states, officials said.

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"We have recovered a [wolf](#) population," said Ed Bangs, wolf recovery coordinator for the US wild life services, based in Montana.

"The populations are viable, they are in great shape, they have extreme [genetic diversity](#) and so the [endangered species act](#) did its job to bring

wolves back."

The grey wolf was placed on the endangered list in 1974 after the animals were almost eliminated in many US states.

But thanks to conservation efforts its numbers now reach some 4,000 in the Great Lakes region, which includes Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, and there are more than 1,300 in the Rocky Mountain states of Idaho and Montana. There are also between 8,000 and 11,000 grey wolves in Alaska.

In all these states grey wolves can now be hunted again according to strict regulations.

But in northwestern Wyoming, where there are still only around 300 animals, the grey wolf remains a protected species.

"The states will be able to use regulated hunting to manage wolf populations," said Bangs, adding that "the hunting season will occur this fall, people will be able to buy a license to hunt a wolf."

He said some 265 wolves had been killed last year in the northern Rockies "because of cattle problems but the population still grew eight percent."

"The hunting won't affect the wolf population, but instead of having a person like me getting on a helicopter and shoot a wolf after it killed someone's cow, you'll have a hunter with a license to go out in the fall and hunt a wolf with a fair chase," Bangs added.

And he offered reassurances that conservationists would be keeping an eye on the nation's grey wolf population over the next five years.

"If the states don't do a good job over five years, we put them back on the [endangered species](#) list," he vowed.

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