

US to reconsider species protection for wolverines

June 11 2009, By SUSAN GALLAGHER , Associated Press Writer

(AP) -- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service intends to reconsider its decision that denied wolverines protection under the Endangered Species Act.

The reconsideration is part of a settlement of a 2008 lawsuit filed by wildlife groups challenging the agency's denial. The settlement filed Wednesday in U.S. District Court in Missoula must be approved by a judge.

The lawsuit last year charged that the government disregarded scientific conclusions that wolverines were in jeopardy. The groups challenged as too high a government estimate that about 500 wolverines live in the Lower 48.

The settlement requires the Fish and [Wildlife Service](#) to issue a new determination of the wolverine's status by December 2010.

"We're very pleased that the wolverine is going to get a second chance," said Tim Preso, a lawyer at Earthjustice, an environmental law firm based in Bozeman.

Fish and Wildlife Service spokeswoman Diane Katzenberger at the agency's regional office in Denver said the case still is considered ongoing litigation and therefore she had no comment on it.

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