

What SB 183 Really Means to Livestock Producers in Montana

Section 5 voids Montana's wolf management plan – This will stop delisting in its tracks.

- Montana would no longer have “adequate regulatory mechanisms” in place, regardless of the effective date.
- The Obama administration will have no choice but to cancel delisting.

Section 6 voids Montana's Management Agreements with the Fish and Wildlife Service and with USDA Wildlife Services – Producers will lose two important lines of defense from wolf depredation.

- Fish Wildlife & Parks will lay off 5 wolf management specialists who monitor wolf movements, assess wolf numbers, help producers reduce losses and direct wolf control by USDA Wildlife Services.
- Fish, Wildlife & Parks will terminate payment of \$110,000 per year to USDA Wildlife Services for assistance with wolf management and control.
- The “Front Line” protecting livestock and producers will be eliminated.

Sections 7 and 8 set conditions that cannot be met – assuring wolves will not be delisted and Montana will loose and never get back wolf management authority.

- The bill not only stops delisting, it makes it impossible for Montana to seek delisting in the future by substituting a plan that U.S. Fish and Wildlife will not approve and that would never pass legal scrutiny.

Sections 9 – 12 give producers a false sense of security from prosecution and eliminates legal protection for wolves under Montana law.

- Eliminating state protection of wolves will not affect federal law but will prevent delisting in Montana.
- Anyone who kills a wolf will be subject to \$25,000 fines and a year in jail, much more severe penalties than under state law.

Your tax dollars will be wasted on frivolous court action.

- SB 183 mandates litigation on issues that have already been decided by courts.
- SB 183 mandates the state defend individuals for violating the ESA.

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What SB 183 Really Means to Hunters in Montana

This bill voids Montana's wolf management plan and changes Montana law – it will derail delisting.

- Montana would no longer have an approved plan or state laws, regardless of the effective date of the bill. On the verge of delisting in Montana, the federal government would have no choice but to pull back and leave wolves listed.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife announced its decision to delist wolves in Montana and Idaho, pending final review by the new administration. No other path to delisting is as clear and imminent as the one Montana is already on.
- Why would hunters let the Montana Legislature walk away from delisting now?

This bill voids Montana's MOU with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. That would end local management and take Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks out of the game.

- FWP would no longer be the lead agency. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be.
- FWP will lay off 5 wolf management specialists who monitor wolf packs, document new wolf activity, and provide critical information to state wildlife managers.
- The federal government would come back with limited seasonal personnel and minimal effort because it does not have the same concerns as Montanans, nor the responsibility to manage deer and elk populations.
- State management of wildlife is the best management -- and is the fastest track to delisting.

What's wrong with this bill's approach to delisting?

- This bill sets conditions that cannot be met – assuring wolves will not be delisted and Montana will lose its current management authority and may not get it back.
- It makes delisting impossible by substituting a plan that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will not approve and would never pass legal scrutiny.
- It will maintain Montana's dual classification – federally listed as endangered or experimental.
- It wipes out everything Montana has done to get to brink of delisting and a more flexible interpretation of the Endangered Species Act that works better for Montana.

What would Montana hunters actually lose in the short run? The long run?

- Hunters will lose local FWP expertise and knowledge about wolf numbers and distribution, access to local wolf managers, a local voice in setting objectives, how data are collected and used in management decisions, and FWP Commission oversight. Instead, Montana would get sidelined while the federal government called the shots and delisting gets further out of reach.
- Hunters would give up on the possibility of a 2009 wolf hunting season and a more proactive approach to managing wolves, similar to other wildlife. Instead, delisting will be derailed and wolves would continue to be managed reactively, with decisions driven strictly by livestock conflicts.
- Hunters would risk the very things they care about the most – healthy game herds and hunting heritage. This bill charts an untested path to delisting and will not get wolves delisted any time soon. By abandoning the current path and the shortest route, hunters will stay on the sidelines.

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