

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2309

February 08, 2012

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
United States Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar,

Thank you for removing the gray wolf in the Western Great Lakes states from the Endangered Species List. Delisting the wolf was a sound decision now that the wolf's population is almost double that required for species stability under the Endangered Species List. Indeed, the growing population presents new challenges to Minnesotans, their livestock, and their pets. For that Reason, I respectfully request that the Department of Interior provides adequate funding to support gray wolf population management in Minnesota.

Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources has developed a good plan to manage the gray wolf population now that the wolf has been removed from the Endangered Species List. However, the state needs federal support to effectively execute the plan and to ensure that the wolf is adequately protected. After decades of federal support managing the gray wolf, the state needs help getting its program started.

As you know, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 included a provision to reauthorize the Wolf Livestock Compensation Project. In 2011, this successful program reduced the risk of livestock loss from predation by wolves and compensated livestock producers for losses caused by wolves in Minnesota. I want to thank you for this funding and urge the Department of Interior to direct funds at the highest levels possible from this program to Minnesota in 2012. In addition, I urge you to consider directing funds from the Endangered Species Act recovery program and any other relevant program towards managing the wolf population in Minnesota.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I encourage you to take prompt action to ensure funding for wolf management in Minnesota. With support from the Department of the Interior, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will have the resources it needs to protect Minnesotans, their livestock, and the wolf populations.

Sincerely,



Al Franken
United States Senator