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## **Children & Wildlife Conservation Groups Launch National Campaign To Urge Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell To Maintain Protections for Wolves**

### ***America Stands Up For Protecting Our Wolves In A National Day of Action***

Washington, D.C. – Wildlife conservation and advocacy organizations from around the country and a passionate group of children launched a new campaign today aimed at convincing the Interior Department to maintain Endangered Species Act protections for gray wolves.

At noon on Wednesday, children, parents and wildlife conservation advocates gathered at Lafayette Park in front of the White House to urge the Department of the Interior to maintain Endangered Species Act protections for gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) throughout the United States.

The campaign was sparked by an announcement made on June 7th, by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, proposing to remove the gray wolf from the list of threatened and endangered species throughout the United States. The proposal places them at serious risk for ever achieving natural recovery. Although wolves have recovered in some parts of the country, as in the upper Midwest and northern Rockies, according to scientists, there are still many areas of suitable habitat throughout the United States where wolves have yet to recover.

“The restoration of the gray wolf to America’s wild lands could be one of the biggest Endangered Species Act success stories ever,” said Leda Huta, Executive Director of the Endangered Species Coalition. “But we are concerned that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is giving up on wolves when the job has only just begun.”

As part of a National Month of Action for Wolves campaign, this kick-off event coincides with the final month that Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell is accepting public comments on its proposal. There are several dozen other events that took place today around the country and more in the weeks to come, including rallies at the State Capitol buildings in Salt Lake City, Utah and St. Paul, MN. In New York, the Wolf Conservation Center led “A Family Walk to Protect America’s Wild Heritage,” to support wolf recovery on Wednesday, at the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation in Cross River, NY. The event included an appearance by their ambassador wolf, *Atka*. For a complete list of events, see the Endangered Species Coalition’s website: <http://www.endangered.org/wolves> along with [photos and video](#).

For decades, wolves have captured the imagination of wildlife lovers including children. Young children have been chiming in from around the United States in support of wolves, including a six year-old girl [who recently queried Interior Secretary, Sally Jewell](#), at a press event about the issue. The young girl, named Lucy, and her sister Katharine, will be at the Washington, DC event with other young children and their parents. “Wolves are beautiful animals and they keep nature in balance,” said Lucy. “Kids can make a difference,” said Katharine, age nine. “We are asking Secretary Jewell to protect these wolves so we can see them when we grow up.” There are approximately 7,000 followers on the children’s wolf advocacy website, [children’s wolf advocacy website](#), created by children for children.

Congressman Peter DeFazio, Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee today [released a statement](#) opposing the delisting of the wolf.

The heads of six major wildlife conservation groups including the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, Defenders of Wildlife, Center for Biological Diversity, and Earthjustice [sent a letter to Secretary Jewell](#), urging her to reconsider the proposal to remove wolves from the protection of the Endangered Species Act.

Conservation groups are concerned that the delisting is premature, as there are many areas of suitable habitat where wolves should still be restored. In addition, [scientists have expressed concern](#) that this proposal does not accurately reflect the conclusions of their research and that the proposal is not based upon the best available science concerning gray wolf recovery.

This delisting proposal would leave the management of the recovery of the gray wolf to individual states. This was shown to lead to increased killing and aggressive management practices, including sport hunting and trapping, after wolves were delisted in the northern Rockies in 2011. There are still significant areas of suitable habitat in the Pacific Northwest, Colorado, Maine, New York, and California that could support thriving populations of wolves if Endangered Species protections would remain until wolves can be established there. (See the [map of suitable habitat](#).)

The Endangered Species Coalition is a national network of hundreds of conservation, scientific, education, religious, sporting, outdoor recreation, business and community organizations working to protect our nation’s disappearing wildlife and last remaining wild places.

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