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State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

MICHAEL R. STYLER
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Division of Wildlife Resources

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To The Utah Congressional Delegation:

The purpose of this letter is to express the Utah Wildlife Board's support for congressional efforts to return management authority of the gray wolf (*Canis lupis*) to the State of Utah. The Utah Wildlife Board (Wildlife Board) is a seven-member panel appointed by the Governor. Our primary responsibility is to set policies pertaining to wildlife in the State of Utah, and we support removing gray wolves from the protections of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Specifically, the Board supports S. 3919 and H.R. 6028 now making their way through the United States Congress to the extent that they return management authority of wolves to the State of Utah.

In 2003, the Utah Legislature directed the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) to prepare a wolf management plan for approval by the Wildlife Board. In response, the UDWR convened a diverse group of stakeholders to help draft an effective plan. In 2005, after an exhaustive public process, board members approved the Utah Wolf Management Plan in preparation for the return of management authority to the state.

In 2010, the Utah Legislature passed S.B. 36, *Wolf Management Act*, which prevents full implementation of the Utah Wolf Management Plan until wolves are removed from the protections of the ESA statewide. We concur with the Utah Legislature and request that wolves in Utah be managed by the UDWR under the guidance of the Utah Wolf Management Plan.

The Utah Wildlife Board recognizes that unmanaged wolf populations pose a serious threat to key wildlife species in Utah. In nearby states – including Idaho, Montana and Wyoming – wildlife officials attribute some declines in their big game herds to the unchecked growth of wolf packs. We want to prevent a similar situation from occurring in Utah by balancing both wolf and prey populations. We are confident that the UDWR has the personnel and expertise to effectively manage wolves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Woodard".

Rick Woodard, Chair
Utah Wildlife Board

