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## Wolf conflicts: What a Utah livestock owner should know

### *Partial delisting presents a management challenge*

During the past two years, there have been many changes to federal and state regulations overseeing wolves and wolf management. If you are a Utah livestock owner, you might be wondering what options you have if a wolf attacks your livestock. This document addresses common questions and explains what you can and can't do.

### Are there wolves in Utah?

Although there have been confirmed wolf sightings — and rare instances of wolf-related livestock depredation — there are no known established packs in Utah.

### Are wolves on the Endangered Species List?

Yes and no. For many years, wolves were classified as an endangered species. Then, in 2009, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) delisted wolves, officially removing them from the Endangered Species List in parts of western states, including a small portion of northern Utah. **The**

**delisted zone (highlighted on the map) is the only area where the State of Utah has authority to manage, capture or kill wolves. In the rest of the state, wolves are still considered an endangered species and fall under federal control.**



Utah area where wolves are no longer listed as endangered.

### Can I kill a wolf that's attacking my livestock?

The action you can take depends on two things: the attack location and the type of attack. Livestock owners and operators are authorized to kill wolves in the **delisted portion of Utah only** (the area highlighted on the map, north of I-80 and east of I-84). In this area, you may only kill a wolf under the following conditions:

1. When wolves are harassing, chasing, actively disturbing or harming your livestock.
2. When wolves are in the act of killing (biting or grasping) livestock
3. Within 72 hours of a confirmed livestock loss. Personnel from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) or USDA Wildlife Services will confirm whether a wolf was responsible for the loss.

More details are available in the [Utah Wolf Management Plan](#), located at [wildlife.utah.gov/wolf](http://wildlife.utah.gov/wolf).

Across most of Utah, livestock owners and operators **do not** have authority to kill wolves. Outside of the small delisted zone, wolves are still listed as an endangered species and are fully protected under the Endangered Species Act. If wolves begin harassing or harming your livestock, and you live in an area where wolves are still protected, contact the USFWS at 801-975-3330.

To ask questions, report a wolf sighting or receive an agency consultation about wolves, please contact Kevin Bunnell, DWR mammals coordinator, at 801-538-4758 ([kevinbunnell@utah.gov](mailto:kevinbunnell@utah.gov)) or

Mike Linnell, state director for USDA Wildlife Services, at 801-975-3315 ([mike.a.linnell@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:mike.a.linnell@aphis.usda.gov)).

### Can I be reimbursed if a wolf kills my livestock?

Yes, but only if the predation occurs in the delisted zone (see highlighted area on map) and someone from DWR or Wildlife Services verifies that a wolf was responsible. If your livestock is killed in an area where wolves are listed as endangered, then the State of Utah cannot reimburse you. For more information, see the amended [livestock damage compensation law](#) passed by the Utah Legislature in 2010.

### Does Utah have a long-term plan for dealing with wolves?

In 2003, long before wolves were delisted, the Utah Legislature directed the DWR to prepare a wolf management plan. The DWR convened a diverse team with members from many interest groups. As the group worked on the plan, they anticipated that wolves would be delisted statewide. The DWR would then have the authority to manage and control wolves anywhere in the state. The final draft of the plan reflected this expectation.

In 2005, after an exhaustive public process, the Utah Wildlife Board and Utah Agricultural and Wildlife Damage Prevention Board approved the [Utah Wolf Management Plan](#).

### What will happen if a wolf enters the delisted area?

In 2010, the Utah Legislature directed the DWR to prevent any packs of wolves from establishing within the delisted portion of Utah (see [S.B. 36, Wolf Management](#)). The new law also directs the Division to request that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service immediately remove any wolves discovered in areas of Utah where they are still listed under the Endangered Species Act.

This new law suspends the portion of the [Utah Wolf Management Plan](#) that allows two packs to become established. The remaining strategies of the plan are still in effect. If or when wolves are delisted across all of Utah, the management plan will be fully implemented. **For now, Utah only has authority to manage wolves in the delisted area (see map). To comply with S.B. 36, the DWR will prevent wolves from becoming established in this portion of the state.**

### Is the DWR working to get wolves delisted across Utah?

The DWR will continue urging the USFWS to delist wolves statewide. After that occurs, the DWR can fully implement its plan and manage wolves responsibly whenever — and wherever — they enter Utah.

The DWR recognizes that unmanaged wolf populations may pose a serious threat to Utah's wildlife. In nearby states — including Idaho, Montana and Wyoming — wildlife officials attribute some declines in their elk herds to the unchecked growth of wolf packs. The DWR wants to prevent a similar situation from occurring in Utah. The DWR has a plan and personnel that can effectively manage wolves statewide. Right now, however, any wolves that move out of the small delisted area immediately become endangered. While endangered, those animals cannot be managed by the DWR, regardless of their impact on livestock or wildlife.