

**IRON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
2 SOUTH SIXTH ST. SUITE 7 CRYSTAL FALLS, MI 49920**

COMMISSIONERS:
JACOB CONERY
JEFF OFSDAHL

PATTI PERETTO, CHAIR
MIKE STAFFORD
MARK STAUBER

**RESOLUTION
TO SUPPORT DELTA COUNTY'S RESOLUTION OF
MANAGEMENT OF WOLVES IN MICHIGAN**

Whereas; On March 16, 2021, the Delta County Board of Commissioners adopted a Resolution in support of having a sound scientific managed wolf harvest in the U.P. in 2021, and

Whereas; a history of the Michigan Gray Wolf Recovery Plan of 1997 was presented in their resolution along with a large volume of statistical data on the Plan management through the years; and

Whereas; The Iron County Board of Commissioners wishes to echo the content and message as presented by the Delta County Resolution and of which a copy is attached; and

Be It Resolved; that the Iron County Board of Commissioners directs staff to forward this resolution to all Michigan counties, our State Legislatures, the Governor's office and the Michigan Association of Counties as a gesture of our full support on this resolution.

At the April 13, 2021 meeting of the Iron County Board of Commissioners the Resolution was offered for approval by:

Commissioner Stafford with support by Commissioner Conery

Ayes: Conery, Ofsdahl, Peretto, Stafford, Stauber

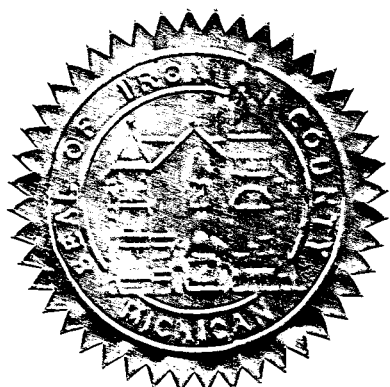
Nays: none

Absent: none

MOTION PASSED

Julie Kezerle
Julie Kezerle, It's Clerk

Patti A. Peretto
Patti A. Peretto, It's Chair



DELTA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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RESOLUTION #21-07

Resolution (Management of Wolves in Michigan)

Resolution in favor of having a sound scientific managed wolf harvest in the U.P. in 2021

Background History

WHEREAS, in 1989 according to MDNR figures there were 3 wolves in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. That number would increase to 509 by 2007, 636 by 2014 and 695 in 2020. These numbers of wild wolves in the U.P. are the result of natural immigration and reproduction according to MDNR officials.

WHEREAS, in 1997 the MDNR finalized the Michigan Gray Wolf Recovery Plan. That plan was used to assist in the removal of the Gray Wolf from the federally Endangered Species Act. To address changes and to continue to manage the wolf population based on the best available scientific information, the MDNR revised its original wolf plan and created the 2008 Michigan Wolf Management Plan. MDNR convened 20 individuals to represent agencies and organizations to develop the "Michigan Wolf Management Plan" signed complete by MDNR Director Rebecca Humphries on July 10, 2008 and updated the plan signed complete by MDNR Director Keith Creagh on June 11, 2015 (see attached certification list of members of the "Wolf Management Roundtable").

WHEREAS, the Wolf Management Plan was developed and updated to provide strategic guidance for the management of wolves in Michigan. It was developed to help: 1) maintain a viable Michigan wolf population above a level that would warrant its classification as threatened or endangered; 2) facilitate wolf-related benefits; 3) minimize wolf-related conflicts; and 4) conduct science-based wolf management with socially acceptable methods.

WHEREAS, all plans adopted this definition of a viable population – "A population of at least 200 wolves is believed to be large enough to be viable, as well as to have sufficient genetic diversity, to exist indefinitely in total isolation from any other wolf population". When the winter population maintained a minimum level of 200 animals for 5 consecutive years and the species was federally de-listed, wolves could be removed from the state list of threatened and endangered species. The minimum criterion of 200 wolves does not reflect the maximum number of wolves the available habitat in Michigan can support. Based on density of the deer population in 2003, one model estimated the U.P. could sustain a population of 1,330. All

indicators now point to a much decreased herd and a 2020-2021 deer population close to or at a historic low.

WHEREAS, most Michigan residents recognize the importance of addressing wolf-related conflicts in a public-attitude survey conducted by MSU. According to the report 73% of respondents approve of having wolves in the State (52% in the U.P.; 71% in the northern L.P.; and 74% in the southern L.P.). Also 76% of respondents would support some type of active wolf management. At least 75% of respondents would support active management in areas experiencing wolf depredation of livestock, hunting dogs and other pets. At least 65% of respondents would support active management if wolves lowered the number of deer available for hunting.

WHEREAS, maintaining prey populations required to sustain a viable wolf population is also highlighted in the Wolf Plan, wolves prey on a variety of wildlife species, and the importance of particular species as wolf food sources often varies seasonally. In the Upper Peninsula, the primary prey for wolves is the White-tailed Deer and maintenance of an adequate deer herd is necessary for the long-term persistence of a viable wolf population. Other prey, such as beaver, snowshoe hare and other small animals, are an important complement to deer in the diet of U.P. wolves. Several studies have estimated the average number of deer killed per year by individual wolves. Studies done by (Mech, Keith & Fuller) indicate that an individual wolf kills roughly 15-19 deer per year, whereas other research indicates a single wolf kills as many as 37-50 deer per year (Pimlott & Huntzinger). It is logical to assume that wolf predation is dependent on geographic conditions, prey populations and effort needed during the kill. The wolf is an apex predator (top of the food chain) so it is logical to assume that the wolf is opportunistic (unscrupulous, resourceful, unprincipled) in hunting for food.

WHEREAS, Proposal G was passed in 1996 and is a referendum on Public Act 377 which amended the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) to grant the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) exclusive authority to regulate the taking of game in Michigan. The NRC has exclusive authority to regulate the taking of game and sportfish, and is authorized to designate game species and authorize the establishment of open harvest seasons for game through the issuance of orders. The NRC is also required to use principles of sound scientific management in making decisions regarding the taking of game.

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2012 the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service removed Gray Wolves in the Lake States (Michigan, Wisconsin & Minnesota) from the federal Threatened and Endangered Species list. The Michigan legislature then enacted Public Act 520, which designated the wolf as a game animal. The organization "Keep Michigan Wolves Protected" then collected enough signatures to stop the 2012 harvest of wolves and a spot on the ballot for 2014 to stop all wolf harvests in Michigan. Then in May of 2013 Public Act 20 was signed into law which gave the Natural Resource Commission (NRC) the authority to designate the wolf a game species and re-established a 2013 wolf harvest. On November 15, 2013 Michigan had its first wolf hunt. The NRC authorized one area in the U.P. to conduct this hunt only season on a recommendation by the MDNR. A quota of 43 wolves was set and 23 wolves were killed during the entire season

From 1996-2020, 142 dogs were attacked and killed or injured by wolves in the U.P. Those that were documented by the MDNR. Local farmers have had cattle and other livestock killed by wolves with many not reported because of lack of belief by the MDNR who investigate agriculture attacks.

WHEREAS, Wolves need to be managed for local economic revenue (hunting seasons), property values (camps), wildlife viewing opportunities (tourism). According to local real-estate agents hunting camp and hunting property sales are down 40% beginning in 2001 because of the deer population decreasing. A study conducted for the State of Michigan on economic impact of hunting estimated a total impact effect for both residents and non-residents of \$538,026,148.00 and 8,800 employment (jobs created) in the U.P. Not anymore.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Delta County Commissioners on behalf of their county residents, landowners and businesses encourage the DNR/NRC to initiate a 2021 wolf harvest season across the entire U.P. using scientific data from other states and following the mandate given to the NRC under Proposal G, in so stating, a wolf harvest season should be set beginning on Nov. 15th, 2021 (hunting & trapping) and ending the last day of Feb. or until the quota is met (200 – 28% reduction). Tracking the quota should be done by mandatory registration within 48 hrs. of the kill and upon reaching the goal the season would be shut down (other states do this with all kinds of game). Also, be it further resolved that other County Commissions in the U.P. be encouraged to sign on to this resolution and State Senators and Representatives sponsor bills to put into State law a wolf harvest season in the U.P. with the dates as mentioned above (quota goals would change and be set where appropriate each year). Also, be it further resolved that the Michigan Association of Counties (“MAC”) be encouraged to lobby for such a harvest season.

I, Nancy J. Przewrocki, Delta County Clerk and Clerk of the Delta County Board of Commissioners do hereby certify this to be a true and exact copy from the minutes of the regular meeting of the Delta County Board of Commissioners held on March 16, 2021.

I, Nancy J. Przewrocki, Delta County Clerk do hereby set my hand and seal this 16th day of March, 2021.


Nancy J. Przewrocki, Delta County Clerk

