

Public Comments

Nonmeandered Waters Navigation Lane Process

Adam Karst

Watertown SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Larry Kindopp

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Is this another way to infringe on the land owners rights? Haven't they lost enough!

Other

Jim Dawson

Sioux Falls SD

Position: other

Comment:

In my 50+ years of hunting in South Dakota I have noticed, especially in the last 5 years, a disproportionate relationship regarding the number of rooster to hens. Way more roosters, fun from a hunting standpoint, but worrisome from a overall population perspective. Has anyone seriously discussed having preserves and anyone else releasing roosters to also release hens???

Patricia Vineski

So. Colton NY

Position: support

Comment:

I am writing to urge you to ensure that wolves are protected in South Dakota.

With the premature federal delisting of wolves, it is imperative that South Dakota step up to protect wolves. The federal decision is a decision based on politics, not science. South Dakota must not make the same mistake of putting political agendas above science.

Wolves need connected populations for genetic sustainability. Without protections, wolves are at grave risk of losing genetic viability, which is nothing more than a slower slide to extinction. Connected populations need connected landscapes for the dispersals necessary to maintaining a strong, healthy gene pool. Yet today wolves occupy less than 10 percent of their historic range.

Natural ecosystems need wolves to maintain a healthy balance of species. Without a healthy balance of species, ecosystems deteriorate. Deteriorating ecosystems lead to plant die offs, causing more CO2 to be released into the atmosphere and degraded streams and rivers, leading to worsened flooding, pollution, and drought, with its increased risk of wildfires.

Wolf conflicts with livestock are actually rare despite the widespread belief that wolves pose a big threat to the livestock industry. Only 0.02% of livestock losses are due to wolves. In fact, killing wolves exacerbates potential conflicts with livestock as it often leaves juvenile wolves to fend for themselves, without benefit of pack knowledge, making livestock a more tempting prey.

I understand that protecting wolves is expensive. But non-lethal conflict-deterrence measures are more effective and less costly than killing wolves, and protecting wolves is protecting whole ecosystems and the myriad of life that depends on them to survive. Protecting wolves leaves more carbon dioxide in the ground, reduces wildfires, floods, and drought. Protecting wolves protects the air we breathe and the water we drink. Protecting wolves is a sound investment, not only in the present, but in the future world we hope to leave our children.

Yet, with all the benefits that protecting wolves brings, they are still aggressively hunted and trapped in states where they have already been delisted. And there are still inadequate regulatory mechanisms to protect existing wolf populations and stop the illegal poaching of wolves.

Wolf populations can only be sustained if mortality rates are less than 30%. Yet some state management plans allow for mortality rates as high as 40%. Studies show that no state management plans have adequately accounted for the number of wolves killed due to illegal poaching. If states accounted for illegal poaching, the mortality rate of wolves would be much higher. Not accounting for illegal poaching is simply a means of cooking the books for political and economic purposes, putting wolves and, as a result, entire ecosystems at risk.

Some 2 million wolves once roamed freely throughout North America, but bounties and federal extermination programs reduced their numbers to near extinction. Exterminated from all the contiguous United States except a portion of far northeastern Minnesota, it wasn't until the late 1960s that gray wolves were finally protected under what would become the Endangered Species Act. And now, wolves are again at risk of near extinction.

If we are to have a future here on earth, if our children are not to wonder what happened to the wolves, if we do not want to look into their eyes and hear them ask why we did nothing to save them, then we must protect wolves. We need wolves. Our children need wolves. Our future on this planet needs wolves.

Although I do not live in South Dakota, I hope, once travel is safe again, to visit your beautiful state. But if and only if, wolves are protected. I want to see wolves wild and roaming free and not just the places where they once were or might have been. I urge you, with all due respect, to ensure that wolves are listed as an endangered species in South Dakota.

Sincerely,

Patricia E. Vineski