

## **FWP Fact Sheet Questions & Answers**

### **Montana's Regulated Wolf Hunt**

**Q. Why does Montana want to hunt wolves?**

**A.** FWP considers wolves as it does all other wildlife species it is charged to conserve and manage. An annual, regulated, well planned, and science-based hunt serves as one tool among many for Montana to use to conserve, manage and maintain a wild wolf population that's in balance with its habitat, other wildlife, and the people who live in Montana.

**Q. How does this hunt benefit the State of Montana?**

**A.** The people of Montana have done their part to make sure that wolves have a place to live. FWP, too, is well prepared to manage and conserve the wolf as part of Montana's wildlife stewardship responsibilities. Together, citizens and professional scientists, who understand the role of a carefully prescribed fair-chase hunt, will help Montana maintain healthy wildlife populations and reduce conflicts with domestic livestock.

**Q. How will the hunting season affect FWP's efforts to address wolf-livestock conflicts?**

**A.** Many wolf packs in Montana live near livestock and sometimes injure or kill livestock. Public hunting should help wildlife biologists provide some relief in areas prone to wolf-livestock conflicts.

**Q. Why is the hunt set to begin now?**

**A.** A regulated public harvest, as a part of a professionally run, science-based conservation and management program, is an important tool for managing a viable and fully recovered wolf population. FWP believes it's prudent to begin a wolf hunting season now due to increasing levels of wolf-livestock conflicts as the wolf population has increased, and due to concerns about the status of some deer and elk populations where wolves and other predators exist. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, responsible for keeping a watchful eye on Montana's management program for the next five years, believes the hunt will have no negative effect on wolf recovery and will provide Montana with a chance to learn about regulated wolf hunting as a management tool.

**Q. Why did FWP set the wolf harvest quota at 75, instead of a higher or lower quota?**

**A.** The quota is conservative and limits the total number of wolves that can be taken by hunters, while acknowledging the important role hunters play in wildlife conservation and population management. A conservative quota also ensures that FWP can carefully monitor the population before, during, and after the hunting season. Managers want to start slowly with the first season, learn from the experience to ensure that the hunt is managed correctly and responsibly.

**Q. Can FWP change the season in the future?**

A. Yes. FWP and the FWP Commission could adopt changes for the 2010 and 2011 season in February 2010. The public will have opportunities to comment on all season proposals.

**Q. Where will wolves be found this hunting season?**

A. Montana's three Wolf Management Units, which encompass the entire state. Wolves, however, generally occur in the western one third of Montana. Licenses are valid within all three specifically defined WMUs. Wolves can be found on both public and private lands. Hunters must obtain permission to hunt on private lands. Like for all hunting, it's the hunter's individual challenge to learn about the animal's biology, behavior, and movement patterns.

**Q. How should hunters prepare for the hunt?**

A. Learn about wolf biology, behavior, and movement patterns. Here are some tips:

- Know your target: a gray wolf is, on average 2.5 feet tall; 5-6 feet long; 70-120 pounds with a broad snout, round ears and fur ranging from gray, black or tan to white. Compared to a coyote, a wolf is massive and long legged.
- Choose the proper weapon. Experts suggest a center-fire rifle suitable for big game.
- Wolves are most active at dawn and dusk, though they often remain active all day in autumn and early winter.
- Wolves regularly travel on roads and trails, just like hunters, so look for tracks and scat.
- Wolves don't mind being seen compared to the secretive mountain lion—so stay alert, even in clearings and meadows.
- Wolves have a good sense of smell, hearing and sight; are curious and, when seen, may linger for a few seconds before fleeing.
- Wolves communicate with each other through a variety of howls and other sounds, so listen. If you howl at the right time, you might draw in a wolf.
- Pay attention to deer and elk behavior. Alert deer and elk may signal a wolf nearby.
- After the shot, follow the wolf to retrieve and tag it as you would any other big game animal. Wolves aren't known to confront a hunter over a carcass.

To learn more about Montana's wolf hunt, visit FWP online at [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov). Click

["Montana Wolf Hunt."](#)