

LOBO WATCH

Sportsmen Taking Charge of Predator Problems

Editorial News/Press Release

March 15, 2011

Hundreds Expected To Turn Out For Wolf-Judge Protest Rally At Missoula U.S. District Court Building

Residents of the Northern Rockies have just about had their fill of wolves. Actually, what they've mostly grown tired of is how wolves are now making a seriously negative impact on other wildlife populations - namely the elk, deer and moose populations that have made Montana, Idaho and Wyoming famous, and which are now disappearing rapidly in many areas. Rural residents have also become weary of fighting to keep wolves away from their livestock, and worrying about the safety of their children.

Many of those who live close to the land are equally disturbed at how a handful of self-proclaimed "*environmental*" groups continue to fight the wolf management hunts needed to control wolf numbers at a level where big game herds can still flourish, plus allow ranchers to profitably raise cattle and sheep. Likewise, tax-paying citizens are now realizing that these same groups or organizations have financially benefited from the billions of federal dollars they've received through the Equal Access to Justice Act, for the grossly padded legal expenditures for which these "*non-profit*" organizations are reimbursed. And many Northern Rockies residents are now growing extremely suspicious of the one federal judge these groups continually get to hear their cases, and wonder just what the incentives are for this judge to always decide in their favor.

That anger...that frustration...that distrust will surely be openly displayed on March 24, 2011 as a large crowd of sportsmen, rural land owners, ranchers, and those who have seen their logging careers ended by these same "green" organizations, and the very same Judge Donald Molloy, gather in protest of efforts to once again thwart any control of ever growing wolf numbers, and ever escalating wolf devastation. The issue has reached and surpassed the boil-over point, and hundreds are expected to join the protest - and there will more than likely be quite the array of protest signs - some targeting wolves, some taking environmental groups to task, and some questioning the motive of the judge inside.

LOBO WATCH has been hearing from groups up and down the western side of Montana...and from across Idaho...and even from Wyoming who fully intend to be standing in front of and alongside the Russell Smith U.S. District Court building on that day. The rally will take place at the corner of East Broadway and North Pattee streets in Missoula, as Judge Molloy once again listens to the wishes of groups like the Defenders of Wildlife, the Center for Biological Diversity, and the Humane Society of the United States, who are opposed to any control of wolf numbers, and especially reducing the wolf populations to an acceptable level. The hearing on March 24 is an attempt by these groups to have the definition changed for the "*experimental*" and "*non-essential*" classification of the non-native and non-endangered Canadian wolves that many feel the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wrongly transplanted into the wildlife rich Northern Rockies. Those groups are just as likely to try convincing Molloy to eliminate that classification altogether.

After listening to the arguments of these groups last June, Molloy placed gray wolves back on the Endangered Species List, which cancelled out management hunts that were scheduled for Montana and Idaho. Molloy based that decision on the fact the USFWS did not accept Wyoming's wolf management plan, and he ruled it was wrong to permit hunts in adjacent states. However, another federal judge in Cheyenne, WY decided that USFWS had been wrong to reject Wyoming's plan. Still, the management hunts in Montana and Idaho remained cancelled - and that will be one part of the issue that draws many angry sportsmen to this protest rally. Some will be protesting

for individual state right to manage wolf numbers, others will be calling for the complete resignation or impeachment of Judge Molloy.

This rally is being co-organized by a number of sportsman and land owner based organizations. LOBO WATCH has become the lead organizer. Anyone wanting to participate should contact Toby Bridges at lobowatch@yahoo.com. Right now, plans are for protesters to be at the courthouse starting at 12 noon, since the actual hearing begins at 1:30 p.m., and there needs to be a crowd around the courthouse when key players and the media begin to show. Molloy's court session will likely end around 4 p.m., and some protesters need to still be on hand. Any time or date changes will be posted on the LOBO WATCH website, at www.lobowatch.org or www.lobowatch.com.

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