

STATEMENT OF REASON
WYOMING GAME AND FISH COMMISSION
CHAPTER 21
GRAY WOLVES DESIGNATED AS TROPHY GAME ANIMALS
FOR AN EMERGENCY RULE

This rule is being amended to clarify existing statutory authority in order to address concerns identified by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) regarding the State's regulatory mechanisms for the management of gray wolves. The Service is currently accepting comments on the adequacy of Wyoming's gray wolf management plan and regulatory mechanisms (as well as Idaho's and Montana's) in regards to the possible removal of the northern Rocky Mountain gray wolf population from the protections of the Endangered Species Act. The Commission seeks emergency promulgation of this rule because the Service will need to consider the provisions of this regulation as a part of its decision-making process. The Commission will immediately begin the normal promulgation process for a permanent rule.

Section 3. Definitions. Definitions have been added for "Doing damage to private property, National Parks, Unacceptable impact on a wild ungulate population or herd, and Wild ungulate population or herd". The definitions of "Chronic wolf predation area and Lethal take permit" have been amended for additional clarity.

Section 4. Gray Wolves Designated as Trophy Game Animals, has been amended to include specific language regarding the number of breeding pairs and gray wolves the Commission will manage for.

Section 5. Gray Wolves Designated as Predatory Animals, has been amended to require providing the name and address of the person taking a gray wolf when reporting gray wolves taken within the area where gray wolves are classified as predatory animals.

Section 6. Monitoring Gray Wolves, has been amended to incorporate language regarding the Commission's commitment to managing gray wolves in Wyoming so that genetic diversity and connectivity issues do not threaten the gray wolf population.

Section 7. Lethal Control of Gray Wolves in the Wolf Trophy Game Management Area. Language has been amended to indicate the Department may utilize aggressive management techniques to protect private property, including livestock and domesticated animals within the WTGMA. The name and address of the person taking a gray wolf under Wyoming Statute 23-3-115(c) is being required as part of the reporting process. Clarification has been added regarding gray wolf predation having unacceptable impacts on a wild ungulate population or herd.

Section 8. Issuance of a Lethal Take Permit. Clarification has been provided regarding when Lethal Take Permits may be issued, the number of wolves that may be taken, the location for use and cancellation of such permits.

Section 9. Non-lethal Control of Gray Wolves in the Trophy Game Management Area. Clarifying language has been included regarding the use of non-lethal control actions.

Minor edits and formatting changes have been added to other sections to provide additional clarity but do not change the intent of the regulation.