

Wolves Don't Have Time to Wait

Woodland Park Zoo leads nationwide zoo movement calling for emergency federal protection of wolves

SEATTLE — Act now to **#RelistWolves!** That's the call from Woodland Park Zoo, echoed by dozens of zoo directors around the nation, asking United States Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland to join us in calling on the government to issue federal protection for wolves.

Why you should care: Much like humans, wolves are family-oriented, intelligent and resourceful animals who work hard but love to play and hang out with loved ones. Affectionate and sensitive, wolves form deep and dedicated relationships, and tight family bonds. Wolves are also a keystone species, meaning they play a major role in the health of entire ecosystems. It is estimated that there were once as many as one million wolves in North America. In the United States, a government-led effort to exterminate wolves began in the 1800s and nearly succeeded—by 1960 only a few wolf packs remained, near the Canadian border of northern Michigan and Minnesota.

The conservation movement of the 1960s led to the passage of the Endangered Species Act in 1973, and wolves were listed throughout the contiguous U.S. as Endangered. This listing meant wolves could not be hunted without specific permits, and the major threat to wolves was removed.

In January 2021, the Trump administration ruled that wolves should no longer be federally protected by the Endangered Species Act, which left management decisions to the states. Since then, hundreds of wolves have been slaughtered with no scientific oversight, with some states aiming to decrease wolf populations by as much as 90 percent. The result has been catastrophic to the already-fragile wolf populations in the United States, sending this species back on the path to extinction.

This week, a letter signed by dozens of zoos across the country was sent urging United States Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland to act now to issue an emergency relisting for federal protection for wolves. The letter sent to Secretary Haaland from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums reads in part:

"We are conservation organizations, and we, like you and your employees, work to save animals from extinction... That's why we work with your employees to rescue and recover endangered and threatened animals, like polar and grizzly bears, sea turtles and even spiders and reptiles. Because each one matters.

"Our inability to turn away is why we are writing to you today."

"A wildfire of animal cruelty has ignited in the Idaho and Montana legislatures. In a fervor to reduce wolf populations by as much as 90 percent, they have directed professional wildlife managers in their states to authorize methods of take designed to devastate wolf populations: baiting; electronic calling; night vision equipment; unlimited weaponry; use of vehicles; snaring; unrestricted limits; and compensation for expenses — what used to be called

"bounties." This effort is not wildlife management. It is not hunting. It is pure, unbridled cruelty. And it is threatening one of our nation's greatest conservation success stories."

Secretary Haaland has the power, and the choice, to stop this. She can single-handedly protect wolves with an emergency listing, which the Endangered Species Act allows "at the discretion of the Secretary" when a species faces "a significant risk to their well-being." This action will put in place a 240-day "cease-fire" and provide time to stop the over-exploitation of wolves and create solutions based in science, not politics.

To read the full letter sent to Secretary Deb Haaland, [CLICK HERE](#).

List of organizations signing on to letter penned by Woodland Park Zoo

Doug Piekarz, Akron Zoo
Jared P. Tagliatela, Ape Cognition and Conservation Initiative
Peter Kareiva, Aquarium of the Pacific
Craig Ivanyi, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
Chris Pfefferkorn, Birmingham Zoo
Keith Winsten, Brevard Zoo
Norah B. Fletchall, Buffalo Zoo
Patrick Tennyson, Butterfly Pavilion
Keith Lovett, Buttonwood Park Zoo
Crislyn McKerron, Cabrillo Marine Aquarium
Darde Long, Chattanooga Zoo
Thane Maynard, Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden
Tom Schmid, Columbus Zoo & Aquarium
Sue Wahlgren, Cosley Zoo
Daryl Richardson, Dallas World Aquarium
Hayley Murphy, Detroit Zoological Society (Detroit Zoo)
Mike Crocker, Dickerson Park Zoo
Rick LoBello, El Paso Zoo
Mark Cross, Endangered Wolf Center
Rick Schuiteman, Fort Wayne Children's Zoo
Jon Forrest Dohlin, Fresno Chaffee Zoo
Patrick M. Burchfield, Gladys Porter Zoo
Linda Santos, Honolulu Zoo
Lee Ehmke, Houston Zoo
Robert Shumaker, Indianapolis Zoo
Cynthia Claus, Jenkinson's Aquarium
Randy Wisthoff, Kansas City Zoo
Amanda Shurr, Lehigh Valley Zoo
John Chapo, Lincoln Children's Zoo
Kevin Bell, Lincoln Park Zoo
Megan Ross, Lincoln Park Zoo
Denise M. Verret, Los Angeles Zoo & Botanical Gardens
Dan Maloney, Louisville Zoo
John Walczak, Louisville Zoo
Jay Tetzloff, Miller Park Zoo
Steve Coan, Mystic Aquarium
Jack Mulvena, Naples Zoo
Kurt Strand, National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium
Carrie Heinonen, North Carolina Museum of Life and Science

Neil S. Anderson, Northeastern Wisconsin Zoo
Alan Varsik, Northwest Trek Wildlife Park
Nik Dehejia, Oakland Zoo
Greg Charbeneau, OdySea Aquarium
Dwight Lawson, Oklahoma City Zoo
Heidi Rahn, Oregon Zoo
Yvonne Strode, Peoria Zoo
Norberto J. (Bert) Castro, Phoenix Zoo
Alan Varsik, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium
Abbie Krause, Pueblo Zoo
Beth Heidorn, Racine Zoo
Sally Jacobson, Red River Zoo
Ryan VanZant, Rolling Hills Zoo
Phillip A. Ginter, Ross Park Zoo
Jeffrey P. Bonner, Saint Louis Zoo
Dr. Nadine Lamberski, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance
Tanya M. Peterson, San Francisco Zoo & Gardens
Rich Block, Santa Barbara Zoo
Ken Frye, Scovill Zoo
Ken Mitchell, Staten Island Zoo
Scott Shoemaker, Sunset Zoological Park
Gary Siddall, The Aquarium of Niagara
Dr. Michael Adkesson, The Chicago Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo
Alan Tousignant, The Trevor Zoo at Millbrook School
Tom Schmid, The Wilds
Tim Brown, Tracy Aviary & Botanical Garden
Andria Heath, Utica Zoo
W. Mark Swingle, Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center
James J. Breheny, WCS Zoos and Aquarium
Alejandro Grajal, Woodland Park Zoo
Jeff Ewelt, Zoo Montana
Gene Peacock, Zoo Boise
Lisa New, Zoo Knoxville
John Linehan, Zoo New England – Franklin Park Zoo & Stone Zoo

For more information on Woodland Park Zoo, visit www.zoo.org and follow the zoo on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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