



**THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY  
MONTANA CHAPTER**

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Mr. Dirk Kempthorne  
Secretary of Interior  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington DC 20240

Dear Interior Secretary Kempthorne,

The following are the comments of the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society regarding political interference in the implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

The Wildlife Society is a non-profit association of professional wildlife biologists dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. For nearly 70 years it has promoted wildlife conservation and its connections with people. The Society's goals include:

- Advancing professional stewardship of wildlife resources and their habitats, and
- Advocating the use of sound biological information for wildlife policy decisions.

The Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society strives to support the wildlife management profession, endeavors to conserve ecosystem integrity and restore habitat for wildlife across the state, and promote sound policies that sustain hunting and wildlife-related recreation and the resources essential to that purpose.

In the wake of hearings being conducted within the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee, the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society wishes to express our concern about political interference that has occurred in the implementation of the Endangered Species Act. We urge you to rectify those transgressions and encourage you to take steps to prevent their reoccurrence.

Given the authority that you possess, we ask that you take steps to remedy the situation by:

- 1) Creating explicit policies that reinforce a culture of scientific openness and send a clear, publicly expressed message to all political appointees that substituting opinions for science is unacceptable;
- 2) Engage in an immediate reevaluation of decisions where political interference has been exposed, and investigate other possibilities where it may have occurred.

You in particular can ensure that full transparency in the decision-making process is a proud agency standard, to the extent that federal scientists are empowered to speak out should political interference tend to once again creep in.

Ms. MacDonald's resignation should give encouragement to all biologists to stand up for scientific integrity and principle, particularly when the cause of wildlife conservation is politically corrupted. Only clear and firm professional resolve will restore a level of trust in the integrity and ability of our government to fulfill its public trust and stewardship responsibilities to the natural American landscape.

Thank you for taking our concerns and comment into consideration.

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