



April 12, 2024

Governor Mark Gordon
State Capitol
200 West 24th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Dear Governor Gordon,

The Wildlife Society, the professional scientific organization representing wildlife professionals, condemns in the strongest possible terms the recent episode where the physical disabling of an individual wolf in the most inhumane fashion occurred near Daniel, Wyoming. The long delay in killing this injured wolf in order to callously display and photograph it while still alive outraged us. We urge swift remedy of the lack of statutory language (laws) that renders the pursuit and running over of a wolf with a snowmachine legal in Wyoming.

It is the position of The Wildlife Society that when [humans use wildlife](#), that use must be consistent with ecological principles as well as an appropriate human activity. One of the pillars of the [North American Model of Wildlife Conservation](#) is that wildlife should only be killed for legitimate purposes. In this instance, a wolf was killed for frivolous purpose in a manner that, in our view, could never be considered an appropriate human activity.

It is also the position of The Wildlife Society that [hunting](#), when properly regulated following biological principles, is an appropriate means of managing some wildlife populations. There is no definition that we are aware of that would enable or condone what happened in Wyoming as hunting or identify the individual involved in this incident as a hunter. According to the Boone and Crockett Club, "[fair chase](#) is what separates hunting from simply killing or shooting. It demands restraint and self-reliance, aligns with North American wildlife laws, and is in service to conservation." Every ethical hunter knows and every hunter education student is taught that one of their primary responsibilities is to take an animal quickly and humanely in order to minimize suffering. In this instance hunting was not involved, only inhumane handling, unnecessary suffering, and delayed killing.

Governor Gordon, the undersigned current and Past Presidents of The Wildlife Society have a combined total of nearly 1,100 years of experience researching and managing wildlife and their habitat worldwide. Our experience was gained at state wildlife agencies, including Wyoming's, federal service, universities, and private businesses. We urge you to work with the legislature to fix the statutory gap identified in this incident that has tarnished the reputation of Wyoming worldwide. I am available if you would like to discuss our views on this topic further. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Robert P. Lanka, MSc., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
78th and current President, The Wildlife Society (2023-2024)
41 years experience

Rick Baydack, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
69th President, The Wildlife Society (2014-2015)
43 years experience

Len Carpenter, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
55th President, The Wildlife Society (2000-2001)
30 years experience

L. Chambers, Ph.D.
75th President, The Wildlife Society (2020-2021)
45 years experience

Daniel J. Decker, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
58th President, The Wildlife Society (2003-2004)
50 years experience

Thomas Franklin, MSc., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
63rd President, The Wildlife Society (2008-2009)
46 years experience

Eric Fritzell, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
49th President, The Wildlife Society (1994-1995)
50 years experience

Diana Hallett, MSc., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
56th President, The Wildlife Society (2001-2002)
30 years experience

Jonathan Haufler, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
68th President, The Wildlife Society (2013-2014)
50 years experience

Winifred B. Kessler, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
67th President, The Wildlife Society (2012-2013)
51 years experience

Paul Krausman, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
66th President, The Wildlife Society (2011-2012)
56 years experience including 5 years with wolves

Richard Lancia,
59th President, The Wildlife Society (2004-2005)
Many years experience

John E. McDonald, Jr., Ph.D.
72nd President, The Wildlife Society (2017-2018)
35 years experience

E. Charles Meslow, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
43rd President, The Wildlife Society (1984-1986)
40 years experience

Darren Miller, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
73rd President, The Wildlife Society (2018-2019)
27 years experience

John F. Organ, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
61st President, The Wildlife Society (2006-2007)
47 years experience

Gary Potts, MSc., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
70th President, The Wildlife Society (2015-2016)
45 years experience

Art Rodgers, Ph.D.
President-elect, The Wildlife Society
46 years experience including 15 years with wolves

Thomas J. Ryder, MSc., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
65th President, The Wildlife Society (2010-2011)
46 years experience

Rollin D. Sparrowe, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
50th President, The Wildlife Society (1995-1996)
60 years service

W. Daniel Svedarsky, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
62nd President, The Wildlife Society (2007-2008)
55 years experience

Bruce C. Thompson, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
71st President, The Wildlife Society (2016-2017)
41 years experience including 6 years with wolves

W. Alan Wentz, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
47th President TWS (1992-1993)
40 years experience

Gary White, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
74th President, The Wildlife Society (2019-2020)
49 years experience

Don Yasuda, B.S., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
77th President, The Wildlife Society (2022-2023)
36 years experience

Cc: Drew Perkins, Chief of Staff
Randall Luthi, Policy Director
Sara DiRienzo, Transportation, Wildlife, Gaming and Workforce Policy Staff
Brian Nesvik, Director, Wyoming Game and Fish Department

[The Wildlife Society](#) and its network of affiliated chapters and sections represent more than 15,000 professional wildlife biologists, managers, educators, and students dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through [science](#) and education. Our mission is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitat through science-based management and conservation. To learn about The Wildlife Society's position on Wolf Restoration and Management in the Contiguous United States please click [here](#).