

Commissioners Sutton, Bayliss, Kellogg, Rogers, and Hostler-Carmesin  
Executive Director Mastrup  
California Fish and Game Commission  
PO Box 944209  
Sacramento, California 94244-2090

June 7, 2014

Dear Commissioners,

This letter is in regard to your decision to list the Gray Wolf as an endangered species in California. I participated in the decision process by writing letters to you, and attending your meetings in Ventura and Fortuna. To reintroduce myself, at Ventura, I was the rancher woman from Northern California that spoke about how everyone in the room loved animals, no matter which side of the fence they were on, we just all come from different experiences. I was the one that shared how OR7 had come close to our home, discrediting the assumption that wolves only travel in the wilderness. I was the one that had witnessed what coyotes and domestic dogs can do to livestock and wildlife and that common sense would tell us that the wolf would only be worse.

Somewhere along the line, you folks have not gotten the message that I and others have been trying to respectfully get across to you. That is a shame and I feel bad that we have fallen down in our responsibility of communication. In my desperation, please read this letter, and try to learn more about our side before something bad happens.

My background is very similar to other land owners, ranchers, recreationists, and outdoors people in California. My husband and I have been in the ranching business all of our lives. We are 7<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> generation Californians. We've raised our two daughters in ranching and the outdoors and have looked forward to our grandchildren becoming involved with this wonderful way of life. We are not wealthy at the bank, but blessed to be following our passion.

We believe it is our responsibility to not only be protectors of our livestock but also be protectors of the abundant wildlife, as well as the land and water within our stewardship.

Through the years we have changed our management plans to help restore and enhance our ecosystem. For a few examples, we have done stream work to help the recovery of the Modoc Sucker, with positive success. We have built fences and planted willows, sedges and other riparian plants to strengthen the stream ecosystem and improve habitat for fishes, birds, deer, antelope and other wildlife, and to improve water quality. We have changed grazing seasons to protect the rare plant, *Ivesia Paniculata*, as well as the lens-pod milk vetch. We are always amazed at the positive results that we have witnessed.

In addition, I in particular, have battled invasive plants. Because of my digging, spraying, grazing management and reseeding of beneficial plants, the Bull Thistle, Scotch Thistle, and Marlahan Mustard are not as plentiful as they once were here.

But now, we are faced with a challenge and dilemma like none other. It is, to me, downright misguided and wrong that because the Gray Wolf is now a protected species, I cannot protect the wildlife, and livestock that I so dearly love.

Please understand that I will not stand by doing nothing, and let the Gray Wolf (or any other predator) induce stress or kill my livestock or the wildlife of this state. That is my ethic, moral obligation, and responsibility. But now if I do try to protect them, I become a criminal. That is wrong!

When considering a management plan, we are not looking for compensation in the event of livestock or wildlife loss by the Wolf. There is no dollar value that can replace the years of hard work, joys and concerns, that we have invested in our livestock, land and the natural wildlife that reside on our property. We need PROTECTION from this apex predator!

Please, do what you can to right this unfortunate decision. You are welcome to come visit our place, to see what we do and experience every single day, and to personally see our passion. All along, I have wanted to work with you, not against you.

If you wish further communication, I more than welcome that.

Sincerely,

Kathleen (Kathy) DeForest

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