

RESOLUTION # 2010-1 (

DELIST THE GRAY WOLF AND RESTORE MANAGEMENT TO THE STATES

WHEREAS, the "Recovery Plan for the Eastern Timber Wolf" identified population goals of 1,250 – 1,400 animals for Minnesota and 100 animals for Wisconsin/Michigan; and

WHEREAS, population estimates as of 2008 include 2,922 animals in Minnesota; 549 animals in Wisconsin; and 520 animals in Michigan; and

WHEREAS, as acknowledged by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Minnesota's wolf population has met the federal recovery goal since the late 1970's and Wisconsin / Michigan have met the federal recovery goal since the winter of 1993 – 1994; and

WHEREAS, a primary purpose of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is to "provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved, to provide a program for the conservation of such endangered species and threatened species, and to take such steps as may be appropriate to achieve the purposes of the treaties and conventions set forth in subsection (a) of this section."; and

WHEREAS, the primary purpose of the ESA has clearly been achieved for the gray wolf, and gray wolves have recovered in the Midwest, formally known as the Western Great Lakes Distinct Population Segment; and

WHEREAS, a lack of delisting, given the species has met recovery goals, can result in an erosion of public acceptance of wolves and the ESA; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan have each developed state management plans for the gray wolf that include population levels that will assure long-term sustainability and avoid the need for future state or federal endangered species listing; and

WHEREAS, State wildlife agencies are the competent authorities to manage resident species for their sustained use and enjoyment; and

WHEREAS, the overall aim of the ESA is to recover species such that the species can be managed by the appropriate entity. State wildlife agencies are the appropriate entities to assume management of the gray wolf as a resident species.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports and endorses efforts to delist gray wolves in the Midwest (formally known as the Western Great Lakes Distinct Population Segment) from the Endangered Species Act as a recovered species, and recommends the management of this species by state agencies, including public taking, for the multiple values and benefits associated with their recovery.