

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H. F. 1415  
**Version:** Second Engrossment  
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**Subject:** Management of Gray Wolves  
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### Overview

House File 1415 seeks to establish short- and long-term solutions to the increasing number of gray wolves (formerly known as timber wolves) in northern and central Minnesota and the growing conflicts between wolves and human activities. Particularly troublesome have been increasing reports of wolf depredation of domestic pets and agricultural livestock.

**1 Gray wolf; hunting penalties.** Adds a new subdivision to the section of game and fish law that establishes penalties related to illegal hunting activities. Provides that taking a gray wolf in violation of game and fish laws is a gross misdemeanor. Also establishes the "restitution value" of a gray wolf as \$250.

**2 Gray wolves.** Expands current law dealing with the protection of wolves. A change in law makes it lawful for a trained guard animal to protect livestock from gray wolves under certain circumstances.

A gray wolf may be destroyed in defense of human life. Any such action must be reported to a conservation officer within 48 hours.

A person may harass a gray wolf that has come closer than 500 yards to people, buildings, dogs, livestock, or other domestic animals. A person may not track or search out a gray wolf for the purpose of harassment.

A livestock owner may shoot a gray wolf if the wolf is posing an threat to the person's livestock or guard animals. Any such action must be reported to a conservation officer within 48 hours.

The owner of a domestic pet may shoot a gray wolf if the wolf is a threat to a domestic pet under the owner's supervision. Any such action must be reported to a conservation officer within 48 hours.

The commissioner of natural resources must investigate a report of a gray wolf taking and document findings. If a wolf is taken while threatening livestock or guard animals the commissioner must notify the county extension agent where the taking occurred. The county

extension agent must recommend livestock best management practices needed to prevent future wolf depredation from the livestock owner.

Wolves and wolf-dog hybrids must not be released from captivity.

Terms are defined including "guard animal," "stalking," and "threat."

- 3 Gray wolf management plan.** Requires the commissioner of natural resources to work with the commissioner of agriculture in adopting a gray wolf management plan that will reduce conflicts between gray wolves and humans. If the wolf population exceeds 1,600 animals the commissioner must establish trapping and hunting procedures to reduce the population. Trapping will generally not be allowed in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.
- 4 Report to the legislature.** Requires the commissioners of natural resources and agriculture to submit a joint report on wolf management to the Senate and House of Representatives committees on environment and natural resources policy and funding.
- 5 Revisor's instruction.** Instructs the Revisor of statutes to change statutory and rule references from "timber wolf" to "gray wolf."
- 6 Effective date.** Makes the sections requiring preparation of the management plan and the report to the legislature effective the day following enactment. The balance of the bill is effective August 1, 1999.