

Wolf timeline

June 23, 2012: An adult female wolf (3640) was captured near Golden Lake in Iron County. The wolf was released after being collared and ear tagged.

March 15, 2016: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sent a letter to the state director in Michigan for U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services to designate Wildlife Services' employees as agents of the Service pursuant to the U.S. Endangered Species Act (1973) for the purposes of addressing situations where gray wolves in Michigan constitute a demonstrable, but not immediate, threat to human safety.

The letter stated: "In coordination with the DNR and USFWS, when a gray wolf threatens human safety in Michigan, Wildlife Services' employees acting in the course of their duties may take gray wolves on behalf of the Service in accordance with the Act's implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.21(c)(3)(iv)):

"Remove specimens which constitute a demonstrable but not immediate threat to human safety, provided that the taking is done in a humane manner; the taking may involve killing or injuring only if it has not been reasonably possible to eliminate such threat by live-capturing and releasing the specimen unharmed, in a remote area..."

May 16, 2016: The Michigan DNR captured an adult male wolf (6632) on the Kolpack Farm in Ontonagon County. The wolf was released after being collared and ear tagged.

May 20, 2016: The Michigan DNR Wildlife Division contacts the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service via email to urge the agency to authorize Wildlife Services to use lethal control to help manage wolves on the Tom Dykstra farm in Ontonagon County. The farm had experienced chronic wolf problems in each of the past several years. Duane Kolpack has a farm of his own, but he also works as a caretaker at the Dykstra farm.

The email read, in part: "The aggressive nature of the depredation on this farm and brazen attitude toward people is becoming disconcerting. Over the past approximately two-week period, this farm has had 12 calves killed and four others injured by depredating wolves. In one case, the wolf was sufficiently bold as to enter the pasture and kill a calf at the very moment one of our Wildlife Technicians was in the same field investigating a previous kill. We believe there may be three wolves hunting this particular farm. We have captured two of those animals, fitted them with GPS collars, held them in a crate, and fired cracker shells over their heads at the time of release in an effort to discourage them from further activity on the farm. This effort appears to have failed. Within two days of capturing and harassing these animals, three more calves were killed. The GPS data suggest these wolves have not abandoned the farm and, in fact, continue to occupy the area within one mile of the capture location. With these facts in mind, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources feels strong that the three wolves frequenting the Dykstra Farm should be euthanized before they develop into a serious threat to human safety."

In a response from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to the DNR Wildlife Division and Wildlife Services that same day, the following passage was included:

"We greatly appreciate the exceptional efforts made by the Michigan DNR and Wildlife Services to address the wolf issues occurring at the Dykstra farm in Ontonagon County. Unfortunately, the matter has progressed to the point that there are human safety risks and we agree with the Michigan DNR's recommendations action should be taken before the human safety risks become more serious or immediate."

Note: *Subsequent of this reporting, additional details emerged on the narrative of what happened at the Dykstra Farm when the DNR wildlife technician had been present. Biologists confirmed that a DNR wildlife technician had been at the farm delivering batteries for lights being used to harass wolves. A passerby told the technician there was a wolf in the pasture harassing cows. The technician drove out into the pasture. The wolf was staring down a calf, preparing to kill it. From about 60-80 yards away, the technician blew the horn of the vehicle. The wolf did not move. The technician then fired a shot from the vehicle over the head of the wolf and it ran away. GPS data showed one of the wolves collared left the farm after being harassed did not return. DNR Wildlife Division administrators had determined the wolves on the farm were becoming more brazen, producing a demonstrable, yet not immediate, threat to human safety, prompting the email to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

May 24, 2016: A wolf depredation report was received from the Duane Kolpack farm in Ontonagon County. A calf received a bite to the right hind leg and the right side, resulting in a tear in the hide. The wolf was killed during the attack. The report indicated the livestock producer had previously installed flashing lights around the pasture, moved cattle and calves closer to the farm and conducted checks of the herd in the morning and evening.

May 24, 2016 (Report dated incorrectly: May 25, 2016): An uncollared adult male wolf was shot and killed by U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services personnel in Ontonagon County, under (50 CFR 17.21(c)(3)(iv)), "demonstrable, but non-immediate threat to human safety" on the Dykstra farm.

May 28, 2016: An adult male wolf was shot and killed by U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services personnel in Ontonagon County, under (50 CFR 17.21(c)(3)(iv)), "demonstrable, but non-immediate threat to human safety" on the Dykstra farm. The wolf had previously been collared (6632) and ear tagged (1024).

June 11, 2016: An adult female wolf was shot and killed by U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services personnel in Ontonagon County, under (50 CFR 17.21(c)(3)(iv)), "demonstrable, but non-immediate threat to human safety" on the Dykstra farm. The wolf had previously been collared (3640) and ear tagged (0534).

Between Aug. 14, 2004 and Feb. 18, 2017: A total of 25 wolves have been killed in the Upper Peninsula under provisions of 50 CFR 17.21(c)(3)(iv)). Twenty of these wolves

were taken under, “demonstrable, but non-immediate threat to human safety.” The remaining five were euthanized under wider tenets of the same regulation.

These wolf killings included six in Ontonagon County – including the three from the Kolpack Farm (May 25, and 28, June 11, 2016) – 10 in Gogebic County, four in Iron County, three in Houghton County and one each in Baraga and Chippewa counties.

There was one wolf killed in 2004; four in 2005; three in 2007; five in 2010; four in 2011; one in 2015; six in 2016 and one in 2017. No wolves have been killed in 2018 (as of Nov. 27, 2018).

Aug. 19, 2016: The DNR Wildlife Division was contacted by Senator Casperson’s office asking for help for the Dykstra Farm, which is suffering more calf losses to wolves.

Later, that same day, DNR Wildlife Division responded saying, “As long as wolves remain on the federal endangered species list, we can conduct lethal control only when human health and safety are threatened. Last spring, a very bold animal created that concern. I’ve not heard anything to suggest the same condition currently exists.”

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