

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Public Hearing: What to Expect and How to Prepare



Thank you for showing your support for one of our most iconic wildlife species, the gray wolf. By testifying at these public hearings, you are sending a powerful message to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) that wolf recovery is far from over and Americans are fully committed to protecting these magnificent creatures!



What to expect at the public hearing:

- You will have the opportunity to speak directly to a panel of federal officials and biologists who will help produce the final decision on whether the gray wolf will be removed from the endangered species list across most of the lower 48.
- There will likely be attendees who support the delisting in the audience. Please be civil and professional in your comments and actions. Comments that are overly emotional or threatening can be disregarded by officials (or worse, used to undermine our efforts to save wolves).
- It's important to not be distracted and to remain focused on providing your important comments to the FWS. Please do not address your comments to the audience.
- Your testimony will be recorded, but you should also submit a written version.
- You will not be able to ask questions of the panel while you are speaking.
- There will be a strict adherence to a three minute time limit.

Tips for writing your testimony:

- You can use the talking points provided by Defenders to help you get started, but remember, it's critical for FWS to hear why YOU want to see wolves protected and restored to suitable, unoccupied habitat.
- Begin your testimony with the statement that you do not support FWS's proposal to delist the gray wolf and explain why you want to see wolves retain protections under the ESA.
- It's important to personalize your testimony with more than just facts about gray wolves. For example, you could share a story about an experience you've had with wolves, if possible.
- It is not necessary to include background on wolf recovery in your testimony. The panelists are very knowledgeable on the timeline of wolf recovery.

Practice!

- Practice your presentation at home to make sure you are within the time limit. They will ask you to stop once you've reached the time limit, even if you have not finished reading your testimony.

When you are testifying:

- Please wear a gray colored shirt to show our collective support for wolf recovery.
- It's important to speak slowly and clearly and to make eye contact with the panel.
- Don't let anything or anyone distract you.
- Be respectful of the hearing officers and other citizens that are testifying.

**Always remember, your passion and your voice are
your most powerful advocacy tools.**