



California Wolf Center
Education, Conservation, Research



**Animal Welfare
Institute**
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California Fish & Game Commission accepts Petition to list the Gray Wolf under the California Endangered Species Act

Wolves Afforded Immediate “Candidate” Status ~ Kicking off a One-year Process

SAN FRANCISCO, *Calif.* — California moved one step closer to deciding whether to protect the gray wolf under the California Endangered Species Act. At its October 3rd public meeting, the California Fish & Game Commission (Commission) voted unanimously to accept a petition that had been filed to list the wolf, thus giving the species immediate status as a “candidate” for listing, and providing full state protections until a final decision is made.

A California native driven to extinction nearly 90 years ago, the wolf had been missing from the state’s landscape until an adolescent wolf from Oregon, wolf OR-7, also known as “Journey,” crossed the state boundary in late December 2011. OR-7’s dispersal into the state kicked off celebratory shouts from wolf supporters and riveted the world, as satellite signals from his radio-collar made it possible for the state wildlife agency in Oregon to track his travels and provide that information to the California Department of Fish and Game (Department). The Department has been keeping the public apprised of OR-7’s ongoing travels in the northern part of the state with updates posted to its website. The wolf’s dispersal into California also kick-started a state listing process after four conservation groups filed a petition with the state to protect wolves here.

Biologist and former attorney Amaroq Weiss, who is the Northern California Representative for the California Wolf Center, gave a presentation at the hearing on behalf of the four petitioning organizations and on behalf of the California Wolf Center. “We are extremely pleased the Commission accepted the petition, implicitly acknowledging the wolf as part of California’s natural history and heritage,” said Ms. Weiss. “Ever since Journey wandered into our state, the California Department of Fish and Game has actively connected with stakeholders, worked out management steps with federal authorities, and kept county commissioners, private landowners and the general public informed. If the Commission lists the wolf, it will give the Department the broadest range of measures available by law to protect and recover this iconic native species.”

The Commission received 7,000 letters from the public supporting the petition, and only 33 letters opposing it. Californians who support the return of wolves to the state hope the process continues with a final decision in the coming year for full state protection as a listed species.

“Californians have spoken loud and clear that we welcome the return of wolves to our state,” said Camilla Fox, Executive Director of Project Coyote and Wildlife Consultant to the Animal Welfare Institute who testified before the Commission on behalf of six organizations. “We commend the California Department of Fish and Game and the Commission for their proactive stance and we stand poised to work with them to promote wolf recovery, increase acceptance, and implement effective strategies that foster coexistence.”

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California Wolf Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit wildlife conservation, education and research center committed to increasing public awareness and understanding of the importance of all wildlife by focusing on the history, biology, behavior and ecology of the gray wolf (Canis lupus).

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Project Coyote is a national non-profit organization promoting coexistence between people and wildlife through education, science, and advocacy.

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The Animal Welfare Institute is a non-profit charitable organization founded in 1951 to alleviate the suffering caused to animals by humans.

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Living with Wolves is dedicated to raising broad public awareness of the truth about wolves, their social nature, their importance to healthy ecosystems, and the threats to their survival.

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