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California Cattlemen's Association



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Cattlemen Challenge Fish and Game Commission's Illegal Listing of Gray Wolves

Sacramento, Calif.—The California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and the California Farm Bureau Federation filed a lawsuit today challenging the California Fish and Game Commission's June 2014 decision to list the gray wolf as an endangered species under the California Endangered Species Act, a decision which formally took effect on January 1, 2017. The organizations are represented by the Pacific Legal Foundation, a nationwide leader in litigation aimed at ensuring limited government, private property rights and sensible environmental protections.

The suit alleges that endangered listing of the gray wolf under the California Endangered Species Act was improper for three reasons. First, the subspecies of gray wolves present in California originate from Canada and are not native to the state, as the law requires. Secondly, the Commission focused too narrowly on wolves in California, ignoring their robust and healthy population throughout their range in the western United States. Lastly, the Commission impermissibly listed the species based on what was, at the time, only occasional presence in the state by a single wolf.

"The Fish and Game Commission took a big bite out of its own credibility with this unjustified listing," said Damien Schiff, PLF Principal Attorney. "The agency managed to label the gray wolf as 'endangered' only by myopically and illegally ignoring its population outside California."

Endangered status for gray wolves could have a significant impact upon ranchers whose livestock fall prey to the apex predators and to the local rural economies that are dependent upon agriculture. CCA president and Butte County cattleman Dave Daley said the lawsuit is necessary for ranchers to ensure the humane treatment of their livestock.

"Under California law, you can't even pursue a species that is listed as endangered," Daley said. "If a rancher sees a wolf attacking one of his or her calves, he or she can't chase the wolf away without breaking the law. Ranchers are not seeking open season on wolves, we just want sensible wolf management that also allows us to protect our livestock. That will require delisting the gray wolf."

The case is *California Cattlemen's Association, et. al. v. California Fish and Game Commission*, filed today in the Superior Court of California for the County of San Diego. For more information visit <http://www.pacificlegal.org>.

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The California Cattlemen's Association has been serving cattle ranchers and beef producers since 1917—celebrating 100 years in 2017!