

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR WOLF PROPOSALS
COMMENTS RECEIVED AS OF JANUARY 10, 2020

1. "Proposed reducing the wolf harvest quota in WMU 313 from 2 to 1 and in WMU 316 from 2 to 1." This is completely unnecessary and is simply FWP backing down due to anti-wolf hunting "extremists." Quotas should be raised not reduced, but I believe you ALREADY know that! Either leave quota at two or increase... stop being cowards..... enough already!

Richard Wildermuth Corvallis, MT

2. ***From: Ed Rutherford <edr45152@aol.com>***
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 5:23 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Montana Fish & Wildlife Commissioners,

Please decide to lower the quota to no more than one wolf in units 313 and 316.

Times have changed, and the, often silent, majority of people no longer accept that killing something or someone you don't like, or just because you can, is acceptable.

You have chosen to be stewards of the environment in one of the greatest natural areas remaining in our wonderful country. No part in nature exists to kill anything simply to mount its stuffed carcass.

With fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers coming to your area each year, wolves in these units are significantly more valuable to your economy and natural balance when they are alive, not unnaturally and unnecessarily slaughtered.

I am aware that the wolves do exit the boundaries of Yellowstone for food but they spend 95% of their time in the park as determined by their radio collar data.

I'm sure you would appreciate the same consideration should you decide to visit areas outside of Montana's borders with your family.

Although you will undoubtedly receive pressure at your upcoming meeting, please decide to lower the quota to no more than one wolf in units 313 and 316.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Edwin Rutherford

3. **From:** *bj.fischer* <bj.fischer@comcast.net>
Sent: *Tuesday, January 7, 2020 9:01 PM*
To: *FWP Commission* <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: *[EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316*

Dear Montana Fish and Wildlife Commissioners,

As a citizen very concerned about wildlife issues, I respectfully request that you reduce the quota in Wolf Management units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

Studies of the elk population have shown that that the presence of wolves has not caused reduced elk numbers in these units. Quite the contrary. While the number of wolves remained constant from 2011 to 2018, the number of elk in Unit 313 increased by 76%, exceeding the objective population. Additionally, many wolves taken in these units are Yellowstone wolves. Data from collars show that these wolves spend at least 95% of their lives in the park.

In my estimation, all of this adds up to indicate that hunters' interests are not being infringed upon in the least. In 2018 hunters took 173% more elk than in 2011.

It would seem that since wolves are considered big game in Montana and hunters can legally shoot them, that there is ample opportunity for hunters to hunt wolves other than in units 313 and 316. If you reduce the quota in units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit, hunters have two fewer wolves to take... less than 1% of the 2017 statewide total.

An increasing number of people come to Yellowstone eager for the opportunity to view our majestic wildlife. This provides economic resources to the areas surrounding Yellowstone. With viewing wolves and grizzlies being extremely important to visitors who are spending money, it would seem to me that the were wolves in these units are very valuable... ALIVE!

Dear commissioners, I very much appreciate your consideration of my appeal.

Sincerely yours,
Jill Fischer
Corvallis, OR

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

4. **From:** Terri Minnick <terri.minnick@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 2, 2020 at 9:14 PM
Subject: Public Comments /Proposal to change Wolf Quota
To: <fwpcomm@mt.gov>

I am writing respectfully to ask you to consider changing wolf quotas in units 313 and 316 to ONE wolf per unit.

My husband and I are photographers, campers, hikers, wildlife watchers, and most importantly tourists from Illinois. We have made many trips to Yellowstone over the years. We have stayed in the park lodges and also in bordering towns...lodging, restaurants etc .

We are coming all the way from Illinois to see and photograph wildlife with special interest in wolves. There is no other place like it . Surely you must realize the importance of wolves and what they bring to the economy.

So many hearts are broken..all these watchers..when when "Yellowstone Wolves" are killed. Hunters can certainly fulfill their quotas elsewhere where wolves are plentiful.

I am sure you have the numbers. There are more watchers than hunters .

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. & Mrs. T.V. Minnick

Palos Park, IL

5. **From:** Gail Clark <owllcaller@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 8:56 PM
To: FWP Commission <FwComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Wolf Quotas - WMU's 313 and 316

FOR PUBLIC RECORD

Greetings,

Since I will be unable to attend the Feb.6, 2020 meeting in Helena, I will express my concerns in this correspondence.

I am asking the Commission to please reduce wolf quotas in YNP WMU's 313 and 316 from two to one wolf. The last available figures I've been able to find (years 2011 thru 2018) indicate that elk herd

objectives have been met by a wide margin despite the presence of wolves. Also apparent within that time frame is that hunter elk harvest rates increased dramatically by over 170% in both units.

In the same seven year period, hunting licenses for wolves decreased while numbers of wildlife “watchers” increased exponentially.

It’s vital that visitors who travel long distances and spend considerable sums of money be rewarded with the best opportunities to view and photograph wolves and other wildlife species. Too, CWD is becoming more of a shared concern, I’m sure, and it’s likely that wolves may be very helpful in curbing this disease.

Reducing wolf quotas in WMU’s 313 and 316 will, most importantly, reduce the likelihood of over-harvesting.

Sincere thanks for taking the time to consider my concerns.

Gail Clark

6. **From: Sara A. Cope <womanswork2@earthlink.net>**
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2020 5:35 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Support of Proposal to Reduce Wolf Quotas in Units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioners,

I respectfully request that you approve the proposal to reduce Wolf Quotas to one each in Units 313 and 316. I do so personally because it is my wish to someday visit Yellowstone Park and be able to see Wolves in the wild.

However my personal wish is simply that--a personal wish. I would like to offer some facts in support of my request.

1. There are certainly plenty of Elk available for hunting in these units demonstrating that Wolves are not reducing the elk population. I refer to some of your own statistics, specifically those of the years 2011 and 2018. The headcount for Elk in Unit 313 was at objective with 3,259 Elk counted. In 2018, that count stood at 5,738, an increase of 76%. It is important to note that while the Elk population increased significantly, the Wolf population was stable. The Yellowstone Wolf Project counted 38 Northern Range Wolves in 2011 and 39 in 2018.
2. The vast majority of Wolves taken in these two units Yellowstone Wolves. Overall, since Wolf hunting became legal, 30 of the 37 of the known Yellowstone Wolves killed have been killed in these two units. These include such notable Yellowstone Wolves as 06 and her daughter Spitfire. Neither Wolves nor any other animal understand the concept of human boundaries. Yes, Elk are a food source for Wolves and accordingly they will follow herds out of

the Park during winter migrations. However both Elk herds and Wolves return to the Park when winter comes to an end. Note that data recovered from collared Wolves indicates that Park Wolves spend 95% of their lives inside the confines of Yellowstone.

3. Your online harvest database indicates that hunters have had no difficulty in finding Elk to hunt. In both Unit 313 and 316, the success of Elk hunters was higher in 2018 than 2011 (up 38% in 313 and an astounding 173% in 316).
4. If hunting Wolves is what a hunter wishes, there are plenty of opportunities to do so elsewhere in Montana. In 2011, 166 Wolves were reported killed; 254 were killed in 2017, which is the latest year for which I could find counts. Reducing 313 and 316 by one Wolf each represents just 1% of the total.
5. Speaking for myself and others, we are extremely interested in visiting the Yellowstone area, not to hunt Wolves, but instead to "shoot them with our cameras." For example, a National Park Service study found that watching Wolves (as well as Grizzlies) are two of the biggest draws of the Park, with 2018 Peer Reviewed NPS study ranked "seeing wildlife" just below "extremely important". Also, according to NPS studies, wildlife tourists are leaving behind 28% more money in 2018 than they did in 2011. Not all of that can be attributed to inflation.

I want to sincerely thank you for taking the time to read my letter and carefully consider what I have had to say. There are a great many supporting facts and figures out there that can help support the case for reducing the Wolf Quota in Units 313 and 316.

Sincerely yours,

Sara A. Cope

7. **From:** Alexia <patiogal@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 7:23 AM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioners:

I'm a retired Ecologist, formerly with BLM and USFS, and worked in Montana, Idaho, and Nevada.

I respectfully request that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners **reduce the quota** in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to **one wolf per unit**. Wolves have not reduced elk herds in these units. Elk numbers have increased and are over objective since wolf hunting has been allowed. In unit 313, the elk population has increased by 76% since the 2011 count.

In reality, many of the wolves taken in these units have been Yellowstone wolves. Yellowstone National Park is the only place in Montana where recreational wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild. Watching wolves and/or grizzly bears are two of the biggest draws of visitors to Yellowstone, according to an National Park Service study. Not to mention the money spent by wolf watchers in gateway communities.

A smaller quota in units 313 and 316 will help protect Yellowstone wolves, with no effects to the elk herds there.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexia Cochrane

2215 Mary Ave.

Missoula, Montana 59801

208-756-7286

8. **From:** *Doraine* <giliwaya@aol.com>
Sent: *Friday, January 3, 2020 12:36 PM*
To: *FWP Commission* <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: *[EXTERNAL] Proposal to change wolf quotas in areas 313 and 316*

I am writing to ask that the wolf quotas in areas 313 and 316 be reduced. The wolves taken in these areas are usually Yellowstone wolves that stray outside the protected boundary of the park. These wolves should not be killed but protected. The wolves bring a lot of tourism to the area as well as a lot of much needed money. People come from a long way to see these wolves as they do bear and other wildlife. The wolves have not reduces elk herds as some have claimed. Habitat loss and disease and humans have more of an impact on elk loss than wolves. Please consider reducing the quota or better yet no hunting at all in these areas. Our wildlife especially wolves need protecting. Wolves belong. Thank you for your time

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

9. **From:** *John Heneghan* <johnhens@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: *Monday, January 6, 2020 8:38 AM*
To: *FWP Commission* <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: *[EXTERNAL] Proposed Change in Units 313 and 316 Wolf Quotas*

I am writing to urge the Montana Wildlife Officials to reduce the wolf quotas in units 313 and 316 from 3 wolves to 1 wolf.

My name is John Heneghan. I live in NE Illinois. I have been to Yellowstone 3 times in September primarily to observe wildlife, hike and bird. I have spent most of my time watching wildlife in the Lamar

valley. I have been to Isle Royale National Park many times as a visitor and volunteer. I had my first wolf sighting at Isle Royale, an adult and juvenile feeding on a moose carcass (we watched from our kayaks). Isle Royale has the longest continuous predator-prey study in the world.

Wolves in units 313 and 316 have not affected the elk population in these 2 units, In 2011, 3259 elk were counted in unit 313. In 2018, the elk population was up by 76% from 2011, 5738.

37 Yellowstone wolves have been killed outside the Park. 30 wolves have been killed in units 313 and 316.

Local communities (West Yellowstone, Cooke City, Gardiner), benefit from the increased wildlife watchers who spend their vacation money in these communities. With decreased hunting, wildlife tourism becomes a more important aspect of the local economies.

Thank you for your consideration of the issue.

John Heneghan
Big Rock, IL

10. **From:** *Oksana Tumko* <oksana.tumko@gmail.com>
Sent: *Tuesday, January 7, 2020 9:04 PM*
To: *FWP Commission* <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: *[EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316*

Dear Commissioner,

I hereby respectfully request that the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Oksana Tumko

11. **From:** *stuart baylin* <silverwolfcoins@gmail.com>
Sent: *Tuesday, January 7, 2020 10:27 PM*
To: *FWP Commission* <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: *[EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change Wolf quota in units #313 & 316*

To the 5 Montana Fish & Wildlife Commissioners,

I am respectfully directing this heartfelt letter to you, because of profound concerns that I have concerning Wolves, especially those in Units #313 & 316.

Of what I understand, these are Yellowstone Wolves and have been the central theme of the management of a particular said quota.

Wildlife management in general, has been of great importance to me for many years, so much so, that I authored a motivational book/calendar on one occasion. It was a successful endeavor and made me realize one thing. I was not alone in my many sentiments expressed throughout my work.

Yellowstone has always meant so much to many, including myself. When I heard years ago, that wolves were being baited out of designated & protected areas so as to be thoughtlessly killed, I guess you can say I became that much more concerned and well, indignant if you will, because it just was not right, and what's not right is, in laymen's terms, wrong.

Many people have frequented these protected areas, including units 313 and 316, to see Wildlife, be it prey or predator. I have personally worked with canines of all kinds including my all time favorite, being the Wolf. Though predatory, they are majestic, loyal, loving and highly intelligent creatures who to me, deserve only the most thoughtful and considerate forms of management. To kill them just for the mere sake of it, has absolutely no rhyme nor reason, dear sirs. If they are in fact permitted to be hunted in many areas, why then bait and force them out of the few protective areas that they enjoy? To me, this behavior is reckless, thoughtless and completely unwarranted.

For example, they prey on elk. Humans must never feel that they are in competition with them, as they hunt out of pure necessity, not sport, They will NEVER bring God's good Creation to the point of extinction.

In brief, I ask in the most respectful way, that the quotas be kept as low as possible, especially concerning these 2 said units (no more than 1) and that unnecessary baiting out of protected areas be abolished, closely watched and managed.

I thank you 5 respected Commissioners for any and all consideration that you afford this matter, and my thoughts and prayers are with you always. Respectfully, Stuart Harris. .

12. **From: Jeanne Rasmussen <jeannemras@gmail.com>**

Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2020 3:25 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 & 316

Dear Commissioners,

There isn't a thing I can write that you haven't already heard but I feel I must offer my opinion for consideration.

My name is Jeanne Rasmussen and I am a 68 year old retired registered nurse, born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, currently living in Colorado for the past 35 years.

I believe my greatest concern/question is why kill any wolves in Units 313 and 316? In 2017, trophy hunters took 254 wolves statewide. If you reduce the quota to one wolf per unit, hunters have 2 fewer wolves to take and these wolves represent less than 1% of that 2017 statewide total, which is minuscule.

I was on a wolf watching tour out of Gardiner in 2012 and I contributed to the economy there and in Cook City. I love wolf watching but will not return because I refuse to contribute to the local economy, which affects wolf haters and wolf friendly businesses. If Montana can't reciprocate using a camera instead of guns and traps in units 313 and 316, then I am very disheartened and will even encourage friends and family from going to Yellowstone. Even one wolf per unit is too many, especially when

Yellowstone National Park is the only place in Montana where non consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild.

As far as the concern about not enough elk, wolves have not reduced elk herds in these units.

So I respectfully request that Montana Fish and Wildlife Commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

Thank you,
Jeanne Rasmussen
4656 Ponderosa Trail
Littleton, CO. 80125
303-933-4656
jeannemras@gmail.com

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Jeanne

13. **From:** *Betsy klein* <B@planb.foundation>
Sent: *Tuesday, January 7, 2020 9:05 AM*
To: *FWP Commission* <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: *[EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316*

Dear Commissioners –

First and foremost, I would like to thank you for proposing to consider reducing the wolf quota in 313 and 316.

Wolf watchers from all over the world travel to Yellowstone in hopes of seeing a wolf in the wild. I have visited there myself and stayed in the city of Gardiner for an entire week. Each morning while it was still dark, we traveled into the Park in hopes of seeing wolves. I will never forget the first time I heard wild wolves howl, and it brought tears to my eyes.

I have at least a dozen friends and family members who have brought their friends and family members to Yellowstone to see the wolves. I am also aware that millions of people travel to see Yellowstone wolves, a number that is sure to have a significant positive fiduciary impact on the businesses near the Park and the economy of Montana in general.

In fact, according to an NPS study, wildlife watchers spent 28% more in 2018 than in 2012. As our wild spaces continue to shrink due to population growth and development, Yellowstone could quickly become one of the only places in the world to see wolves and other wildlife such as grizzly bears, so I would expect that percentage to continue to grow.

What does this mean? That the wolf watcher, the non-consumptive user, is very valuable economically to Montana gateway communities near the Park. The difference between what is gained by reducing the quota versus what is lost is astronomical financially.

It is also a decision that is more in line with trends that clearly show people want wildlife protected. The majority of people do not want wolves killed, especially those they equate to as "Yellowstone wolves," which are the wolves primarily killed in these two zones.

The reasons to reduce the quota are many — however, money talks. Reducing the quota is a logical, responsible decision when viewed purely from a financial standpoint. The impact socially and environmentally as society sees this as an effort to protect Yellowstone wolves will create very positive public relations for you and Montana, also equating into financial gain. This decision has no downside.

I respectfully request that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

Kind regards,
Betsy

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Betsy Klein
Co-founder / Plan B to Save Wolves
Co-founder / Sedona Wolf Week
Founder / I AM Wolf Nation®
714.478.0353

PlanB.Foundation [planb.foundation]

A 501c(3) corporation created to support organizations in their mission to protect, preserve and rescue wolves and wolf dogs through advocacy, education, and funding.

SAVE THE DATE! Sedona Wolf Week 2020, November 10-15.

14. **From: Deb Sanders** <creativearts1954@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 11:12 AM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

To whom it may concern ...

1. I Respectfully request that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.
2. Wolves have not reduced elk herds in these units.

In 2011, the year wolf hunting returned, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) counted 3,259 elk in unit 313 and considered that unit “at objective.” (2011 Statewide Elk Estimate, FWP)

In 2018 unit 313 had 5,738 elk. The population had increased by 76% over the 2011 count and was “over objective.” (2018 Statewide Elk Trend Estimate, FWP)

3. Many wolves taken in these two units are Yellowstone wolves.

4. Hunters are not losing out to wolves in these units.

In 2018 in unit 313, hunters took 38% more elk than in 2011. (FWP online harvest database)

In 2018 in unit 316, hunters took 173% more elk than in 2011. (FWP online harvest database)

In both units the Hunter Success Rate was higher in 2018 than in 2011.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

Deb Sanders creativearts1954@gmail.com

15. **From: Sergey Prokushkin <prokush@gmail.com>**

Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 12:54 AM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to you to request the Montana Fish & Wildlife to reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

The government statistics consistently shows that wolves do not reduce the elk population, contrary to the arguments of opposition. In 2011 FWP counted 3,259 elk in unit 313 and found the unit was “at objective’. Seven years later, the elk population had increased in the same unit to 5,738, a 76% increase (FWP, 2018).

Also, according to the same source, in 2018 in the units 313 and 316 the elk harvest by hunters increased by 38% and 173% respectively, compared to 2011, despite the increase in the wolf population. This clearly indicates there is no concern with hunters losing to wolves in the units 313 and 316. On the other hand, this year in unit 313 hunters killed three wolves instead of two, going over quota. So, reducing the quota is necessary to prevent over-hunting of the wolves.

Many wolves in these two units are, in fact, Yellowstone wolves. According to Senator Mike Phillips comment (2019, SB 185), of the 37 Yellowstone wolves killed since hunting wolves became legal in

Montana, 30 have been killed in units 313 and 316. Collar data of the killed Yellowstone wolves shows that they spent at least 95% of their lives in the park.

Yellowstone National Park is a unique place where non-consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild. A consistent increase in the number of visitors to Yellowstone (21% increase in 2017 as compared to 2011) and a decrease in the wolf hunting licenses sold (8% down in 2017 since 2011), is a clear indicator of the growing popularity of the wolf watching rather than wolf killing. Yellowstone visitors spent 28% more money in 2018 than they spent in 2012, according to The National Park Service data. A 2018 peer-reviewed NPS study found Yellowstone visitors still ranked seeing wildlife as just below “extremely important.”

To summarize, wolves in the units 313 and 316 are more useful and needed alive rather than killed.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Sergey F. Prokushkin, PhD

16. From: DAWN L WHITE <dwhite4226@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2020 9:00 AM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

I Respectfully request that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota of wolves in Units 313 and 316 to One wolf per unit.

These are some of the reasons why I think it is so important that the quota is reduced to 1 wolf per unit.

1) Wolves Benefit the Economy: Wolf-oriented ecotourism is a huge social trend. Visitors from all over the world come to Yellowstone just to see wolves. That’s because Yellowstone is the best place to see wolves in the wild! A National Park Service report shows that 4.1 million people visited Yellowstone in 2017, generating \$629.6 million to the park’s neighboring communities which Yellowstone supports. A park visitor survey showed that the number one draw for tourists is wildlife, specifically wolves and grizzly bears.

2) Hunters are not losing out to wolves in these units.

In 2018 in unit 313, hunters took 38% more elk than in 2011.

In 2018 in unit 316, hunters took 173% more elk than in 2011.

In both units the Hunter Success Rate was higher in 2018 than in 2011.

7. Experience shows that units 313 and 316 have gone over quota in the past. This year in unit 313, for example, hunters killed three wolves instead of two. So the smaller the quota in each unit, the better off wolves are.

3) Wolves are plentiful elsewhere.

In Montana, wolves are considered big game, and hunters can legally shoot them. But do they have to shoot them in units 313 and 316?

In 2011, hunters and trappers took 166 wolves statewide.

In 2017, they took 254 wolves statewide.

If the commissioners reduce the quota in 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit, hunters have two fewer wolves to take. Those two wolves represent less than 1% of that 2017 statewide total.

4)A demographic change supports reducing the quota.

FWP records reveal the number of wolf licenses sold in 2017 was 8% lower than the number sold in 2011.

Meanwhile, 21% more visitors came to Yellowstone in 2017 compared to 2011.

Yellowstone National Park is the only place in Montana where non-consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild.

The increase in the number of people who want to shoot wolves with a camera compared with the decrease in the number who want to shoot wolves with a rifle is significant.

If you visit Yellowstone to watch wolves and you spend money in a gateway town—regardless of whether you visit from your home in Montana or from out of state.

Visitor dollars create jobs in the Montana gateway communities of Gardiner, Silver Gate/Cooke City, and West Yellowstone.

With fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers, wolves in these units are more valuable alive than dead. Not only have more wildlife watchers come, they've left more money behind: Yellowstone visitors spent 28% more money in 2018 than they spent in 2012.

These are reason's why I think it would make a big difference if you could lower the quota to 1 wolf per unit.

I want to thank the commissioners for their consideration and taking the time to read my comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Dawn White

Dwhite4226@comcast.net

Frederick Maryland

17. **From: Eileen Sutz <seaspiriteileen@gmail.com>**

Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2020 1:27 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

To Whom It May Concern:

I respectfully request that the MF&W commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

My family and friends and I travel to Montana 2 times a year, to go to Yellowstone. We enjoy a visit to Bozeman and our longer stays in Gardiner. Since last year when 926F was killed we have not returned to Montana and will not until the quotas in area 313 and 316 are reduced to 1 wolf per unit. I'd prefer none. The killing of wolves in those units frequently exceed the quotas. Nothing is done.

Wolves and grizzly bears are two of the biggest draws of visitors to Yellowstone, according to a past NPS study.

Wolves have not reduced elk herds in these units. In 2011, the year wolf hunting returned, the FWP counted 3,259 elk in unit 313 and considered that unit "at objective."
(Ref: 2011 Statewide Elk Estimate, FWP)

In 2018 unit 313 had 5,738 elk. The population had increased by 76% over the 2011 count and was "over objective." !! (2018 Statewide Elk Trend Estimate, FWP)

Many wolves taken in these two units are Yellowstone wolves.
The 2005 FWP Elk Management Plan states that units 313 and 316 support the Northern Yellowstone elk herd. The (NPS) calls these elk the Northern Range herd.

Yellowstone wolves follow this food source whether the elk are in the park or outside the park in units 313 and 316. But most wolves and elk return to the park as winter ends.

Senator Mike Phillips reported that of the 37 Yellowstone wolves killed since hunting wolves became legal in Montana, 30 have been killed in units 313 and 316. Data from collars of killed Yellowstone wolves shows that they spent at least 95% of their lives in the park.

So the number of wolves living in Yellowstone's Northern Range helps determine the number of wolves hunted outside the park in 313 and 316.

In 2011, the Yellowstone Wolf Project counted 38 Northern Range wolves. (YWP Annual Report)
In 2018, they counted 39 Northern Range wolves. (YWP Annual Report)

While the number of wolves hunting elk stayed consistent, the number of elk in unit 313 increased by 76%.

If the commissioners reduce the quota in 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit, hunters have two fewer wolves to take. Those two wolves represent less than 1% of that 2017 statewide total.

21% more visitors came to Yellowstone in 2017 compared to 2011. (NPS data)

Yellowstone National Park is the only place in Montana where non-consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild.

The increase in the number of people who want to shoot wolves with a camera compared with the decrease in the number who want to shoot wolves with a rifle is significant.

A 2018 peer-reviewed NPS study found Yellowstone visitors still ranked seeing wildlife as just below “extremely important.”

Not only have more wildlife watchers come, they’ve left more money behind: Yellowstone visitors spent 28% more money in 2018 than they spent in 2012. (NPS data)
Visitor dollars create jobs in the Montana gateway communities of Gardiner, Silver Gate/Cooke City, and West Yellowstone.

With fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers, wolves in these units are more valuable alive than dead.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eileen Sutz

18. From: PATRICK JENNINGS <patali@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2020 10:41 AM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] public comment on wolf management quota in units 313 & 316

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on the proposed changes to reduce the quota to 1 (hopefully 0) of wolves taken in these 2 units around Yellowstone National Park.

I believe these units should be closed to wolf hunting. Montana is a large state with so much area to consider. Closing (or reducing) these units would reduce the wolf take by only 1%.

The amount of elk in these units has increased since 2011 when wolf hunting started, so that is not an issue. Hunters took 38% more elk in 2018 than 2011.

30 out of 37 Yellowstone wolves have been killed in units 313 and 316. (2019 comment by Senator Phillips), yet they spend 95% of their lives in the Park.

Yellowstone National Park is a true wonder of the world, there is nowhere in the lower 48 where you can see wolves, grizzlies, etc in their natural habitat, you should embrace that blessed gift by preserving as much of it as you possibly can. Your goal should be to protect one of the most spectacular places on earth.

Visitation of Yellowstone has increased significantly since wolves were reintroduced to Yellowstone. You should encourage and entice tourism by promoting this unique situation.

Personally, I spend most of my tourist dollars in Montana, because of the wolves and the enchantment of the Park. There is no place on earth that I'd rather be. Moving forward to reduce the wolf quota in these units greatly represents Montana as a leader in preserving this unique wildlife mecca. You have a gift, please preserve it for future generations.

Thank you very much, Patrick Jennings

19. **From:** Michelle Roberts <m.michelle.roberts@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 6:58 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment on Wolf Quota Units 313 & 316

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Michelle Roberts and I am writing to you today regarding the number of wolves that are allowed to be killed near Yellowstone National Park in Units 313 & 316.

I live in Indiana and my family and I have been traveling to Montana since 2014 for the specific reason to enjoy watching the beautiful wolves in Yellowstone National Park. I am also an amateur photographer, but to be honest with you, once I saw my first wild wolf in the Park, I ended up putting my camera to the side because I enjoyed seeing them so much, I didn't want the distraction of my camera. Of course, I have to use a spotting scope due to the distance they are from me. I will tell you that watching these amazing animals is truly a thrill for me and a lifelong dream! We usually stay in Gardiner, but have also stayed in West Yellowstone. While we are staying in Montana, we eat our meals out and shop at the many stores & gift shops located in & out of the park. We buy wolf books, photos & always bring home many souvenirs, whether we travel by car or plane. We have made many good friends from around the world, who also come to YNP for the very same reason. Many have commented to me how fortunate we are here in the U.S. to live where wolves are. I feel the same, we are blessed.

There are even hundreds of Social Media groups dedicated to the YNP wolves. The Yellowstone collared wolves are even named. We follow them & their family packs day in & out and get to the point that we actually feel as though we know them personally. Just like our beloved family dogs, they have different personalities and show love for each other, just like human families do.

I am asking that you please lower the quota from two to one in Units 313 & 316 because they are so close to our wolves and we have already lost too many Yellowstone wolves because of it. In fact the majority of wolves taken in these units are actually Yellowstone wolves. There are plenty of wolves in other areas not so close to the park.

I have done a lot of research and can document that the fact is wolves have NOT reduced elk numbers in these units & elk numbers have actually increased since 2011. Wolves are also plentiful in other areas not so close to the park. Hunters have been successful & lowering this number will not affect their rate of success either.

Data over the last 6 years has actually proven that the number of Wolf licenses purchased has decreased, while the number of wolf watchers and wolf photographers has increased by over 20%. It seems very apparent that non-consumptive wolf watchers & photographers are definitely bringing in more valuable needed dollars to YNP & the surrounding communities than the decreasing number of hunters.

In closing, as we all realize time changes many things and it definitely seems to me that people's attitudes towards wolves are changing and that now and in the future, Montana will consider itself fortunate to be the home of one of the worlds greatest treasures, the American Gray Wolf.

Thank you so much for your time and for your consideration of my request to reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 & 316 to one Wolf per unit.

Sincerely,

Michelle Roberts
7152 W Ivy Lane
New Palestine, IN 46163
317-319-0206

20. **From:** Karin Yehling <karinyehling@functionfirstfitness.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 9:33 AM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment to change wolf quota in units 313 & 316

Dear Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners,

I am writing to you to encourage you to decrease the quota in Wolf Management units 313 and 316 from 2 to 1 wolf per unit.

I am an avid visitor of Yellowstone National Park because of the wolves. I spend money all over the park and the surrounding areas as I go from place to place to observe the wolves. I mostly stay in the Northern tier, which is where units 313 and 316 sit just outside the boundary. The wolves most likely killed in these units are the wolves that I watch and photograph. They don't know boundaries nor should they. As a matter of fact, 95% of the wolves killed in these 2 units spend time in YNP.

The wolves have not only caused an increase in tourism but the elk herds have increased as well. The numbers speak for themselves; a 76% increase (Unit 313) in elk population from 2011 to 2018. Even the elk hunters have been more successful: a 38% increase in unit 313 from 2011 to 2018 and a 173% increase in unit 316 from 2011 to 2018. This does NOT justify the killing of more wolves. It appears that the wolves are making the ecosystem work better just by being present - the numbers and facts say so!

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Karin Yehling

21. **From:** Debra Wilson <dealeonrhechesapeake@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 3:59 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comments Concerning Wolf Units 313 & 316 Quotas

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to you again to voice my concern and objection to the killing of wolves that make the Yellowstone National Park their home that happen to step out of bounds of park land. Your commission set a quota limit and that quota limit continues to be exceeded for Wolf Units 313 & 316. Why does this continue to happen? There is no evidence that wolves are reducing the Elk herds from the targeted "objective" population of elk.

While I loath to "request" any wolf be needlessly killed by a hunter's, or trapper/tracker firearm or bow, I respectfully request that the quota be dropped from 2 to 1.

Thank you,

Debra A. Wilson
POB 440
Deale, Maryland 20751

22. From: Marnie McKay <mmspirit_2000@yahoo.com>

Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2020 10:31 AM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Statement

I am contacting you..as Montana Fish & Wildlife Commissioners...as a concerned US citizen for the wolves in units 313 & 316 hunting quota. I am a past visitor to Yellowstone Park..and a future visitor as well. Wolves and grizzlies bears are a big draw by tourist to Yellowstone Park to see this wildlife in the wild. Past and future tourist bring economic support to local businesses surrounding the park. Money spent to stay at motels, eat in restaurants and shop in local shops for souvenirs, film equipment and various other supplies. According to NRS data..there has been a notable increase to visitors wanting to view wildlife alive ..making wolves more valuable alive!

Now on the other hand your concern is for the Montana big game..as wolves are so considered in your state. Hunters are not losing out to wolves for the elk hunting. In those 2 units 313 & 316 ..in 2018 hunters took 38% more elk....than in 2011. In 316 unit hunters took 173% more than 2011. In both units according to Online Harvest Database hunter success rate was higher in 2018. Also experience shows that units 313 & 316 have gone over quotas..for example hunter killed 3 wolves instead of quota 2!

To conclude Yellowstone Park is the only protected area for wolves to be seen...and shot with cameras. Wolves do follow in the winter the elk outside the park..which puts them in danger of being killed. But studies show if they survive they go back to their pack at the end of winter. Once back in the park..they can be seen by tourist spending money...in and outside Yellowstone Park...creating jobs bringing financial value to your area near this park. The future holds promise for you to consider decreasing the quotas on units 313 & 316 to consider how important tourist bringing financial value to your area north of the park...to see and film live wolf packs as well as other wildlife.

I respectfully thank you for any attention you give this future visitor my concern and comment.

Sent from my iPad

23. **From:** Diane Gubrud <shewolfwarrior.dg@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 2, 2020 9:29 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316.

My friends & family enjoy watching wolves & grizzly bears. They are two of the biggest draws for us at Yellowstone and the increase in the number of people who want to shoot wolves with a camera compared with

the decrease in the number who want to shoot wolves with a rifle is significant.

Not only have we seen more & more wildlife watchers visit..they've left more money behind for the park than the trophy killers do.

So with fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers, wolves in these units are more valuable alive than dead. Thank you for reading my comment .

24. **From:** giliwaya <giliwaya@aol.com>

Sent: Friday, January 3, 2020 12:15 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Reducing wolf quota in areas 313 and 316

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

I am writing to ask that you please reduce the quota of wolves taken in areas 313 and 316. The wolves in these areas are mostly Yellowstone wolves and these wolves deserve our protections. These wolves bring a lot of tourists and much needed money to the area. Wolves have not reduced elk herds in this area. Disease and humans sometimes are a cause. Wolves need our protections and wolves belong. Thank you for your time.

25. **From:** William Chamberlain <uswolfrefuge@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, January 3, 2020 6:24 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] The Reduction Wolf Quotas in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316

I respectfully request that the wolf quotas in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 be reduced to one wolf per unit. Many of the wolves taken in these two units are Yellowstone wolves. Their loss erases valuable data wasting tax payer dollars. Wolves have not reduced elk herds in these units. Your own statistics show that the elk populations in these units has not be reduced by wolves. Hunting in these two units is not being negatively impacted by wolves. In fact the sale of wolf tags is in significant decline. With fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers, wolves in these units are more valuable alive than dead. I respectfully request that the wolf quotas in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 be reduced to one wolf per unit.

Bill

William E. Chamberlain, Jr.

United States Wolf Refuge

curator & director of operations

The wildlife of today is not ours to dispose of as we please

We have it in trust and must account for it to those who come after

King George VI

26. **From: Mark Squire <mwsquire@earthlink.net>**
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 9:14 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Wolf Management - Request quota for Unit 313 and 316 be one wolf per unit - to reduce wolf attrition

Dear Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission:

I support reducing the wolf quotas in Unit 313 and Unit 316. I understand that wolves in these units are from the Greater Yellowstone Area, if not Yellowstone National Park.

My interest is ensuring that wolves remain part of a vibrant eco-system that remains in balance. I am concerned that additional deprivation of the wolf population may jeopardize their long-term viability as a keystone species.

I am also grateful for the opportunity to be able to observe wolves in their natural habitat. My husband and I run outdoor educational programs in the Yellowstone Region every year for young adults with disabilities. Allowing program participants the opportunity to observe wolf behavior is a highlight and is one of the few areas close to Colorado where this is possible. We have been going to the Yellowstone Region for many, many years and it has become apparent over the years that the number of wolves active within the Park has decreased over time. This may be due to a number of factors and piecemeal management will only hurt the long-term prognosis for wolves.

I appreciate you time.

Respectfully,

Sarah F. Squire

President, Will's Hope

www.willshopeopportunities.org [willshopeopportunities.org]

27. From: Lisa Dahlenburg <ldahlenburg@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2020 8:00 AM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Wolf Management Units 313 & 316

To Whom it may Concern,

I am sending this message to you respectively, to implore you to consider reducing the number of wolves being hunted in Units 313 and 316. According to 2018 statistics, elk population has increased by 76% over 2011 count. So why kill more wolves? Because wolves prey on hooped animals that are diseased, old, weak or injured, helps keep prey populations healthier and more vigorous. Also the habitat is healthier for birds and fish. The wolves add so much to the environment and actually help hunters because of the things I've mentioned above.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa Cimino

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](mailto:overview.mail.yahoo.com) [overview.mail.yahoo.com]

28. From: Bev Marie <bev.marie56@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 2, 2020 4:35 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Montana Fish & Wildlife Commissioners,

Im writing to you today to respectfully request that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

Many wolves taken in these two units are Yellowstone wolves. Senator Mike Phillips reported that of the 37 Yellowstone wolves killed since hunting wolves became legal in Montana, 30 have been killed in units 313 and 316. Data from collars of killed Yellowstone wolves shows that they spent at least 95% of their lives in the park.

Experience shows that units 313 and 316 have gone over quota in the past. This year in unit 313, for example, hunters killed three wolves instead of two. So the smaller the quota in each unit, the better off wolves are.

With fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers, wolves in these units are more valuable alive than dead.

I'm 63 years old and its been my dream to visit Yellowstone National Park to see all its beauty. I have followed the lives of the wolf packs that live there for years, I was heartbroken to learn that Lamar Canyon Pack Alpha Female 926F was killed in the hunt, I have followed her story since birth. Please change the quotas in units 313 and 316.

I thank you for your time and letting me express how I feel, Im just one Voice trying to make a difference.

Sincerely,

Bev Perez

Cincinnati, Ohio

29. **From:** Mary Brown <marybdvm@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 1:24 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Montana Fish & Wildlife Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly encourage you to reduce the wolf hunting quota in the hunting areas, Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 adjacent to Yellowstone to no more than one wolf per unit.

Although we do not live in Montana we like most tourists, visit Montana and the Yellowstone area with hopes of seeing wolves and grizzly bears. I am always hopeful of at least hearing a wolf howl if not seeing one. They are the main reason we visit the area since they are protected there and there is at least a reasonable chance for a sighting. As you know tourist dollars count for a lot in Montana especially in the gateway communities and surrounding areas.

Since hunting became legal at least 30 wolves have been shot in these two areas making it less likely. With fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers coming each year, wolves in these units are significantly more valuable alive than dead.

I'm sure you are aware of the many scientific studies on the ecological benefits of wolves and I am equally sure you have been inundated with hunters complaints of the wolves decreasing the numbers of elk but that certainly does not seem to be the case since the elk populations according to the Statewide Elk trend estimates have increased.

I am aware that the wolves do venture out of Yellowstone to follow the elk in the winter for food but they spend 95% of their time in the park as determined by their radio collar data and they follow the elk back in again in the spring. In the past hunters tended to kill wolves who ventured out over the allowed quota so hopefully the lower the quota, the lower the number of wolves killed.

Although you will face great pressure at your upcoming meeting, please decide to lower the quota to no more than one wolf in units 313 and 316.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Mary Brown, DVM, MPH

30. **From:** Tracy Haskell <thaskell@me.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2020 10:38 AM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 & 316

January 3, 2020

To The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commissioners:

Over the past four decades the American people have made great progress in restoring wolves to their native lands. Research conducted in 2016 (George et al, Changes in attitudes toward animals in the United States from 1978-2014, *Biological Conservation*, 201, 237-242) indicated that our attitudes towards wolves have become increasingly positive. This assertion seems to be supported as visitors to Yellowstone National Park cite the potential for watching wolves to be one of their primary reasons for visiting the park (NPS data). By extension it would seem prudent to reduce the hunting quotas for wolves in Units 313 and 316, units where Yellowstone Wolves are known to travel.

When I plan my trip to Yellowstone, I plan it with the hope of being able to watch wild wolves in their native habitats. It is my hope to see the effects their reintroduction has brought to the health of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. I am not alone in this desire. Ensuring the continued presence and health of the Yellowstone Wolf Population will ensure the continued economic benefits brought to the area by people like me. People who dream of watching wolves. Wolf watcher numbers are growing and the numbers of people hunting wolves is decreasing. From a purely economic standpoint, reducing the quotas in Units 313 & 316 makes tremendous sense.

Because of the success of wolf populations living in Montana, it would seem prudent to ensure that the Yellowstone wolves, and the economic benefit they provide to the area, have habitat in which they may safely reside. The wolf harvest reports (FWP & 2017 MT Wolf Harvest Report) demonstrate an increase in the number of wolves being taken. It seems that there are plenty of wolves for hunters outside of Units 313 and 316. Therefore, reducing the quota in these Units should have a negligible effect for hunters and a positive effect for Yellowstone Wolves.

Thank you very much for taking the time to consider my comments.

Sincerely,
Tracy Haskell
Bar Harbor, Maine