



PRESS RELEASE

RED LAKE BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS PASS WOLF MANAGEMENT PLAN: POISED TO ASSUME MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ON 800,000 ACRES OF TRIBAL LAND.

At their September 14 Tribal Council Meeting, the Red Lake Tribal Council voted to adopt a management plan for wolves inhabiting their vast land holdings in north-central Minnesota. The Tribe's plan designates over 843,000 acres (in eight Minnesota Counties) as a "wolf sanctuary", where tribal laws supercede state laws and management activities will be designed to preserve wolves and their habitats. The plan addresses the importance of working with surrounding jurisdictions (including Canada), but emphasizes that Red Lake's Tribal Government will have ultimate authority over management actions that involve wolves on tribal properties. The plan describes a "common sense approach" to wolf management, where wolf issues are addressed on a case-by-case basis, and management actions will promote coexistence with this top-level predator.

The management plan incorporates options that will help ensure long-term survival of wolves on Red Lake lands and that will protect them from adverse effects that could lead to population declines. The wolf represents a "minor" Clan of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa and the importance of wolves in Chippewa culture is highlighted in legends and oral history. Tribal Spiritual leaders and elders speak of the parallel fates of wolves and native people. Many believe that if wolves prosper, the people of Red Lake will prosper, and if wolf populations suffer, so will the Red Lake Nation. Thus, management of wolves on Red Lake lands shall be driven by the great respect that the Red Lake Band of Chippewa have for this important tribal resource. Red Lake lands shall remain a sanctuary for wolves, with management scenarios designed to promote and preserve them.

Despite Minnesota wolf numbers exceeding recovery criteria listed in the 1992 revised Federal Recovery Plan (1251 – 1400 wolves) for over 10 years, wolves remain on the federal Endangered Species List in Minnesota.

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