

GREAT LAKES INDIAN FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

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• MEMBER TRIBES •

MICHIGAN

Bay Mills Community
Keweenaw Bay Community
Lac Vieux Desert Band

WISCONSIN

Bad River Band
Lac Courte Oreilles Band
Lac du Flambeau Band
Red Cliff Band
St. Croix Chippewa
Sokaogon Chippewa

MINNESOTA

Fond du Lac Band
Mille Lacs Band

August 9, 2012

Via Electronic Mail

Cathy Stepp, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 7921
Madison WI 53707-7921

Dear Secretary Stepp,

The Voigt Intertribal Task Force (Task Force) of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, at its August 2, 2012 meeting, passed a motion unanimously opposing the killing of ma'iingan and claiming all wolves in the Wisconsin ceded territory as a necessary prerequisite to a population that would fully effectuate the Tribes' rights. As the Task Force has informed the Department many times, Anishinaabe teachings instruct that ma'iingan is a brother to the Anishinaabe and that the health and survival of the Anishinaabe people is tied to that of ma'iingan. The Task Force cannot countenance the killing of the Anishinaabe's brother and views the treaty reserved right as including its presence and function in the ceded territories.

Hence, the Task Force has a very different management goal for wolves than the State's current goal. The Tribes' goal is for all suitable wolf habitat to be fully occupied, thus enabling wolves to perform their appropriate ecological and cultural function on the landscape. The State's goal is to reduce the population to a level the Tribes consider ecologically unsound, culturally inappropriate, violative of their rights, and potentially unsustainable. This difference in management goals remains unreconciled, thus making it impossible to set agreed upon harvestable surplus numbers, an essential first step in setting quotas and making declarations.

The State does not have unfettered discretion to exercise its management prerogatives to the detriment of the Tribes' treaty reserved rights. It proceeds at its own risk if it moves forward with its current harvest scheme, which will drive down the population and diminish the Tribes' right to the presence and function of ma'iingan on the landscape.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James E. Zorn".

James E. Zorn
Executive Administrator

cc: Voigt Intertribal Task Force