U.S. Sen. Johnson: Statement on Department of Interior gray wolf announcement

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WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) issued the following statement Wednesday after Acting Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt announced that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will soon propose a rule to delist the gray wolf in the lower 48 states and return management of the species to the states and tribes:

“I am pleased the Interior Department will propose a new rule to delist the gray wolf from the Endangered Species Act. While today’s announcement is a positive development, liberal activists will surely sue and yet again seek out a sympathetic federal judge to block the decision. The only way to avoid legal wrangling and provide a clear resolution for Wisconsin is to pass legislation to allow the state to move forward with a wolf population management plan. My bill to do so has bipartisan support, and I will continue to press my colleagues to act on this important issue.

“Once the Fish & Wildlife Service publishes the proposed rule and opens a public comment period, I expect hundreds of Wisconsinites will share their personal views, along with thousands of others nationwide, in support of the government’s new delisting effort.”

Sen. Johnson has worked to remove the gray wolf from the endangered species list in the western Great Lakes region since 2015 when he introduced legislation with former Rep. Reid Ribble (WI-8) to address the issue. He most recently introduced an

amendment to the Natural Resources Management Act to allow three Western Great Lakes states and Wyoming to develop pack management plans.

The gray wolf maintains a stable and growing population with an expanding territory in Wisconsin. A brief explanation of the issue from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service can be found here.