

Hello,

My name is Jessica and I strongly believe that wolves are an integral and major component of healthy ecosystems. I have done quite a bit of personal research on wolves and have seen first hand the damage caused by a lack of wolves. I have lived in various parts of Ontario, and my Uncle owns a dairy farm on the outskirts of Ottawa. When wolves are exterminated from a region, the deer, elk, and even ground squirrels and other rodents are permitted to eat unchecked. This disrupts the entire ecosystem. The following excerpt is from a book titled "Yellowstone to Yukon: freedom to roam" and it alludes to the issues that would be faced here in the Yukon if wolf populations dwindle. "To the surprise of everyone, the absence of wolves had a devastating effect on the ecosystem. If you compare historic photographs of the Hayden or Lamar Valley with the scene today, you will notice a lack of aspen and willow bushes. During the absence of top predators such as wolves, ungulates- especially elk- could spend hours leisurely browsing willow and aspen saplings to death. With the return of the wolves, elk are more wary and forced to move around, leaving patches of saplings to grow. With the comeback of the willows, another key species is back: the beaver. Willows are the beaver's most important food source. Now the beaver can build dams, providing wetland habitat for ducks, muskrats, moose, and other species." If it was not clear before this management plan was put in place it surely must be by now; that what we do to the wolves has echoes and ripples throughout the ecosystem. To preserve the wolf is to preserve the integrity of our wilderness.

Thank you for taking the time to read over this short email.

-Jessica P