



Thank You for Your Feedback

This past summer the National Park Service (NPS) asked for your feedback regarding the purpose, need, and range of preliminary alternative management concepts for the Moose-Wolf-Vegetation Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Isle Royale National Park (park). During the public scoping comment period, the park hosted four public open house meetings the week of July 27, 2015 in Houghton, Michigan; Grand Portage, Minnesota; and at the park in both Rock Harbor and Windigo. About 115 of you attended the meetings. During the comment period, the NPS received feedback from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 19 other countries.

All of the input received has been compiled and posted online. We encourage you to visit <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ISROwolves> if you would like to review individual comments.

Plan Update: Revised Scope of the EIS

The NPS began this planning process by considering a broad range of potential management actions as part of determining how to manage the moose and wolf populations for at least the next 20 years. However, based on the public comments we received and additional internal deliberations, the NPS has determined that it will revise and narrow the scope of this EIS to focus on the question of whether to bring wolves to Isle Royale National Park in the near term, and if so, how to do so.

Although wolves have not always been part of the Isle Royale ecosystem, they have been present for more than 65 years, and have played a key role in the ecosystem, affecting the moose population and other species during that time. The average wolf population on the island over the past 65 years has been about 22, but there have been as many as 50 wolves on the island and as few as three. Over the past five years the population has declined steeply, which has given rise to the need to determine whether the NPS should bring additional wolves to the island. There were three wolves documented on the island as of March 2015 and only two wolves have been confirmed as of February 2016. At this time, natural recovery of the population is unlikely.



The potential absence of wolves raises concerns about possible effects to Isle Royale's current ecosystem, including effects to both the moose population and Isle Royale's forest/vegetation communities. The revised purpose of the plan, therefore, is to determine whether and how to bring wolves to Isle Royale National Park to function as the apex predator in the near term within a changing and dynamic island ecosystem.

Given the revised scope of the EIS, actions to manage moose, such as culling or translocation of moose, as well as actions to manage vegetation, such as fire, direct restoration, or other tools, will not be considered in this EIS. After a decision is made regarding whether and how to bring wolves to Isle Royale, the NPS will monitor conditions on the island, and will initiate additional planning processes to address other aspects of the island ecosystem, such as the moose population and forest community, if such planning processes are deemed necessary.



NPS Photos

Revised Preliminary Range of Alternatives

The NPS will evaluate alternative approaches for bringing wolves to Isle Royale, as well as the alternative of not bringing wolves to Isle Royale (the no-action alternative), which remains a viable option. Following this evaluation and additional input from you on the EIS, an alternative will be selected for implementation and documented in a record of decision. Based on the revised purpose statement, the NPS is now considering the following alternatives.

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| Alternative A (No-Action Alternative) | The NPS would not intervene and would continue current management. Wolves may come and go through natural migration, although the current population of wolves may die out. |
| Alternative B | The NPS would bring wolves to Isle Royale as a one-time event over a defined period of time (e.g. over a 36 month period) to increase the longevity of the wolf population on the island. This action would occur as soon as possible following a signed record of decision. |
| Alternative C | The NPS would bring wolves to Isle Royale as often as needed in order to maintain a population of wolves on the island for at least the next 20 years, which is the anticipated life of the plan. The wolf population range and number of breeding pairs to be maintained on the island would be determined based on best available science and professional judgement. This action would occur as soon as possible following a signed record of decision. |
| Alternative D | The NPS would not take immediate action and would continue current management, allowing natural processes to continue. One or more resource indicators and thresholds would be developed to evaluate the condition of key resources, which could include moose or vegetation-based parameters. If a threshold is met, wolves would be brought to Isle Royale as a one-time event (per alternative B) or through multiple introductions (per alternative C). |

Consideration of Environmental Consequences

The NPS will use science and the best information available in considering how key resources at issue would change, either negatively or positively, if any one of the alternatives were implemented. Based on preliminary deliberations, the NPS would evaluate the impacts of bringing wolves to the island, as well as not bringing them to the island, in terms of potential changes in ecosystem integrity, moose and wolf populations and their health, vegetation conditions, the quality of the island's wilderness character, and the experience of park visitors. This evaluation would also consider the potential for these key resources to change during the life of the plan as a result of fluctuations in climate.

Stay Updated on the Plan

The NPS continues to work diligently to prepare and release the draft plan/EIS for a 60-day public review and comment period as soon as possible. Its availability will be announced through a press release, email and/or printed materials, as well as online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ISROwolves>.

Your Opportunity to Provide Additional Input Now

As a result of the revised scope, the NPS is offering an additional public comment period. All comments already submitted have been posted online. If you would like to review comments already submitted or provide additional comments regarding the revised scope, please do so online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ISROwolves>. You may also mail or hand deliver comments to the park at the address below. All comments must be postmarked or transmitted no later than 30 days from the date an amended Notice

Isle Royale National Park
ISRO Wolves
800 East Lakeshore Drive
Houghton, MI 49931

of Intent is published in the *Federal Register*.

Estimated Schedule

| Milestone | Date |
|--|------------------|
| Release draft plan/EIS for public review | Winter 2016/2017 |
| Release final plan/EIS | Summer/Fall 2017 |
| Record of Decision | Fall/Winter 2017 |