



Forest Service

Region One

Northern Region
26 Fort Missoula Road
Missoula, MT 59804

File Code: 1920

Date: April 15, 2021

Route To:

Subject: Species of Conservation Concern List for the Flathead National Forest

To: Forest Supervisor, Flathead National Forest

As Regional Forester, I am responsible for identifying species of conservation concern (SCC) for each forest in the Northern Region. Throughout the course of your recent plan revision, resource specialists from the Regional Office and the Forest evaluated species for inclusion on the SCC list using the best available scientific information, including the expertise offered by regulatory agencies, researchers, and conservation communities. On November 28th 2017, I provided Forest Supervisor Weber with a list of species that I identified as SCC based the process and criteria outlined in the Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.12, Chapter 10, Section 12.52(c) and in Chapter 20, Section 21.22a.

The planning rule at 36 CFR 219.9(c) defines species of conservation concern as “*a species, other than federally recognized threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species*, that is known to occur in the plan area and for which the regional forester has determined that the best available scientific information indicates substantial concern about the species' capability to persist over the long-term in the plan area” [emphasis added]. When I identified SCC for the Flathead National Forest (NF) in 2017, wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) was proposed for listing as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act and so was not evaluated for inclusion on the SCC list. In October 2020, the Fish and Wildlife Service withdrew their proposal to list wolverine (50 CFR part 17).

Due to this change in status, wolverine is now eligible to be considered for inclusion on the SCC list. Biologists in the Regional Office worked with staff from your Forest to review the best available scientific information relevant to wolverine on the Flathead NF and evaluate whether wolverine meets the criteria for identification as SCC. Based on this evaluation, I have determined that the wolverine is not a species of conservation concern for the Flathead NF because there is not currently substantial concern about the species' capability to persist over the long-term in the plan area.

Rationale for my determination is documented in the animal evaluation spreadsheet posted on the [Northern Region webpage](#). This webpage also includes information about the SCC evaluation process and an updated question and answer document addressing questions we've heard regarding species of conservation concern identification for all Northern Region forest plan revision efforts.

LEANNE M. MARTEN
Regional Forester

cc: Julie Schaefers, Christopher Savage

