

Relocation Challenge



You have been chosen to serve on the Wolf Relocation Team for placement of Canadian grey wolves in the Granite River National Forest, a fictitious park located in the western region of the United States. In an effort to bring the wolves back to their former habitat, a pack of nine wolves (identified as 1 through 9) has been trapped in Canada for release in this region.

Materials for each team

- Wolf Facts sheet
- penny

Part I

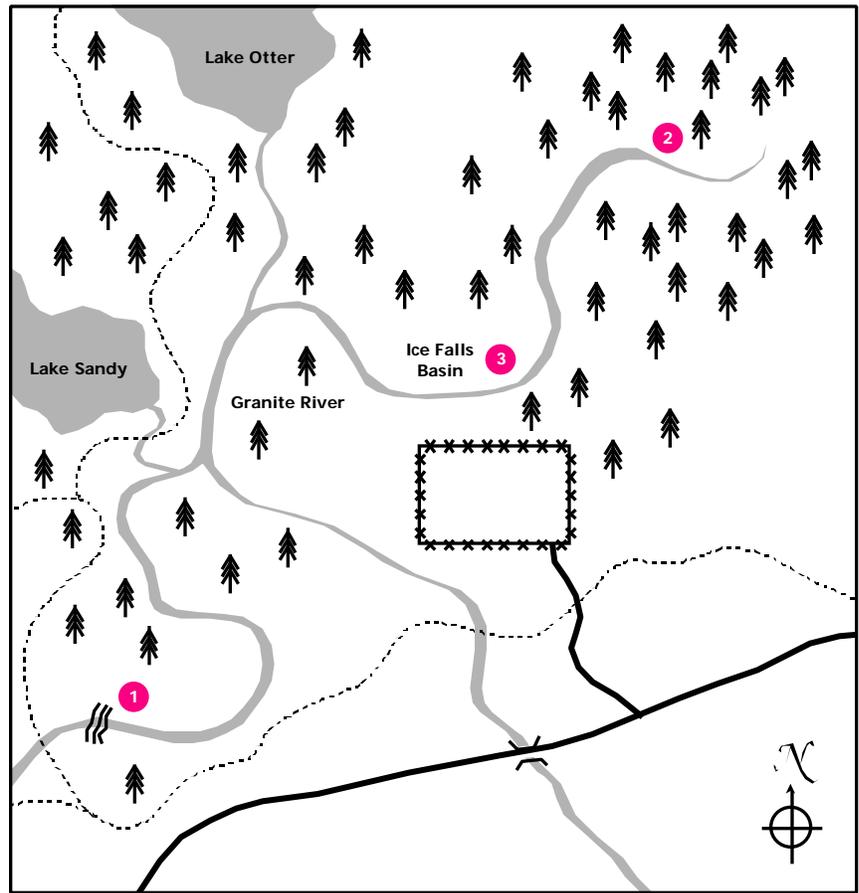
After a 10-week holding period to help the grey wolves adjust to their new surroundings, they can be released in one of three spots in the National Forest. Which location seems most appropriate to your team? Give your reasons for the selection. Refer to the Wolf Facts sheet for information to help you make your decision.

Site 1 On the western side of the park, 11 km (7 mi) from the nearest dirt road but within half a kilometer (third of a mile) of a waterfall that is a favorite hiking destination in the summer. Herds of elk have been grazing in the open fields less than 3 km (1.8 mi) away.

Site 2 Near the headwaters of the Granite River in a remote area of the National Forest. The area is rocky and infrequently visited by people. Bison and elk occasionally come to drink along the riverbed.

Site 3 The Ice Falls Basin area, deep in the river valley. Snowmobile riders travel across the area often, but it is more than 160 km (100 mi) from the border of the National Forest and is densely populated with bison and elk. A broad expanse of federal grazing land is located 16 km (10 mi) from this site.

Granite River National Forest



Map Legend

- hiking trail
- dirt road
- xxxxx federal grazing land
- ▲ forest
- ||| waterfall

Your Team's Decision

Our team believes the wolves should be relocated to site ____.

Our reasons include:

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Part II

The wolves are released at the site and several months pass. Flip a coin to determine what happens next to the wolves. Heads leads to Scenario A; tails leads to Scenario B. Develop recommendations for your scenario, and then answer the final questions.

Scenario A

Wolf 3, a young adult male in the pack, wanders north-east for several months. He remains alone and hidden in the woods until he crosses the state border and finds Harris Jordan's sheep ranch. For two weeks, he is spotted around the ranch and finally kills a pair of sheep one night. Mr. Jordan calls the Fish and Wildlife Service. Before officials can reach the ranch, Wolf 3 disappears. Twelve days later and 65 km (40 mi) away, a cattle ranch owner finds a newborn calf skeleton. By the time they discover the carcass, there is no indication of how it was killed. However, Wolf 3 is spotted on a wooded hillside in the vicinity.

In thinking about what should be done, consider the following questions:

- What are the major issues?
- What are some options for dealing with Wolf 3?
- What options would allow for leaving Wolf 3 where he is?

Your Team's Recommendation:

Scenario B

Wolves 2 and 6, male and female, leave the pack and set off alone. A lumber truck on a logging road accidentally hits and kills Wolf 2. Wolf 6 builds a den in an isolated area of the forest almost 5 km (3 mi) from any known grazing areas. She gives birth to five pups within two months.

In thinking about what should be done, consider the following questions:

- What might happen to Wolf 6 and her pups?
- How might the wolf population be affected if Wolf 6's pups died?
- Should officials intervene to save the pups if they are in danger? Why or why not?

Your Team's Recommendation:

Final Questions

Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1 How will local residents, wolf supporters, and other government officials receive your decision? Who will support it? Who will oppose it?

2 List other information you would have liked to have to make your recommendation and why you think that information is important.

3 What sources could you go to to find your missing information?