

WOLVES OF CAMP RIPLEY



Fish Trap Lake property owners have reported a few sightings of wolves in recent weeks. These are most likely visitors from well-established packs in nearby Camp Ripley, a 53,000 acre National Guard facility.

Back in 1994 wolves were declared a protected species. In 1995 a small pack of wolves migrated from Northeastern Minnesota to the Camp Ripley area which also serves as a wildlife refuge. Since then, the DNR and US Geological Society have been studying the wolves by capturing them, fitting them with radio collars and releasing them so they could track their behavior. They've found the wolves are surprisingly tolerant of the people, truck traffic and loud artillery fire within the camp.

There are now two packs with six to eight wolves in each pack. One is in the Northern part of the camp and the other in the Southern part near Miller Lake.

Camp Ripley's large tract of undeveloped land is an attractive habitat for wolves and a large deer population. There are so many deer there is little need for the wolves to seek food elsewhere. Area farmers haven't expressed concern for their livestock, but Fish Trap Lake pet owners may still want to be watchful.

In 2020 the US Fish & Wildlife Service de-listed wolves as a protected species. There is no hunting allowed within Camp Ripley and the wolf population is managed through a collaboration between Minnesota State and Tribal authorities.

Fish Trap Lake neighbors provide updates on [Nextdoor.com](https://www.nextdoor.com) and the Fish Trap Lake, MN Facebook group.