

Mexican Gray Wolf

Mexican Gray Wolf Scoping Meetings

We want to hear from you.

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Mexican Gray Wolf

Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery

- Began releases in 1998
- Reviews in 2001 and 2005
- Reintroduction will continue



The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its partners have been introducing Mexican gray wolves into the wild since 1998. Based on recent reviews, we have made the decision to continue the wolf reintroduction.

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“Scoping”



- First steps to determine any changes
- Information-gathering stage
- Want your recommendations

This series of scoping meetings and comment period are the first steps in the process of determining how the reintroduction will continue – whether or not there will be changes, and what the changes, if any, might be.

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Seeking your Input



3 and 5 year reviews

- Six issues identified for input
- Ideas for improvement sought

The 2001 and 2005 program reviews identified a number of issues that are limiting the success of the reintroduction, both in terms of the wolf population and in adequately addressing concerns of residents and visitors to the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area. We are seeking your input on six issues identified in the review process. We also want to hear any other thoughts you may have about improving the reintroduction process.

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Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area boundary

Wolves moving beyond
boundary are trapped/re-
released

- Affects ability to form
packs/establish home
ranges
- Return to captivity
- Takes staff time from
essential monitoring
activities



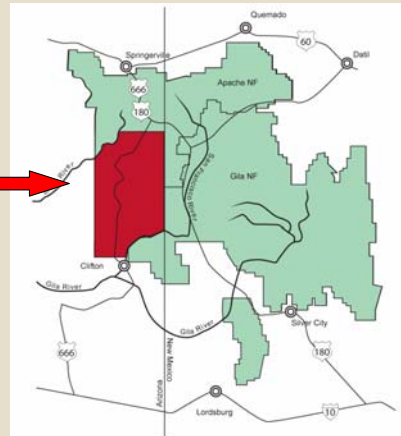
Under the current program, wolves that establish home ranges beyond the boundaries of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area must be trapped and re-released. Wolves are long-range dispersers; by nature they will move beyond the boundary. This challenges reintroduction in several ways. First, trapping and re-releasing wolves may interfere with their ability to form packs and establish and maintain home ranges. In addition, trapped wolves are placed back into captivity until a new release site is available to them. This takes them out of the wild, and may keep them out for some time. Trapping wolves moving out of the Recovery Area also takes a lot of time, time that field team members could be using to monitor the wolves in the Recovery Area, including tracking wolf movements and addressing depredations.

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Primary and Secondary Release Zones

New releases in Primary Recovery Zone only

- Limited release sites
- Genetic diversity



Right now, initial Mexican Wolf releases can only occur in the primary recovery zone within the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area in Arizona. This stipulation poses several obstacles to successful reintroduction. Because of the amount of space a pack needs and the limited size of the primary recovery zone, there are fewer release sites available to successfully add released wolves to the population. Another challenge posed by this requirement is maintaining and enhancing the genetic diversity of the population. We carefully consider the genetic makeup of each wolf, to limit inbreeding among mated pairs. Requiring initial releases only in the primary recovery zone prevents us from pairing a newly released wolf with a lone adult wolf in the secondary recovery zone.

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Misconceptions about secondary release zone

- From outside BRWRA
- Captured for veterinary care
- Natural movement



An unintended result of having primary and secondary zones is the misconception that the secondary zone is for problem animals relocated only after depredation incidents. In reality, wolves are re-released for other reasons, including those that have left the Recovery Area or wolves captured for veterinary care. Wolves also disperse from the primary to the secondary recovery zone. While we do translocate wolves that engaged in nuisance behavior in other areas into the primary and secondary recovery zones, they are only one component of the population in the area.

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Harassment Options

- Some provisions for “harassment” of wolves
- Options are limited
- Help needed to identify alternatives



The current program includes some provisions for people to “harass” wolves engaged in nuisance behavior or livestock depredations, but harassment options are limited. A wider variety of harassment methods could provide an effective deterrent to problem Mexican wolf behavior. We need your input in helping us identify all possible alternatives and remedies.

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Protecting Property

- Wolves attacking livestock on private/tribal lands may be shot
- Domestic pets not afforded same protection



Should pet owners
have same ability?

Wolves in the process of attacking livestock can be shot on private land, but domestic pet owners do not have the same authority under the 1998 Rule to protect their pets. Wolves have injured and killed domestic dogs within the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area. The current provisions do not allow for “take” of wolves attacking domestic dogs on private or tribal lands. Should pet owners have the same ability to protect their pets as livestock owners do to protect their livestock?

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Clarifying definitions

Shared Understanding

- *breeding pair*
- *depredation incident*
- *thresholds for permanent removal*

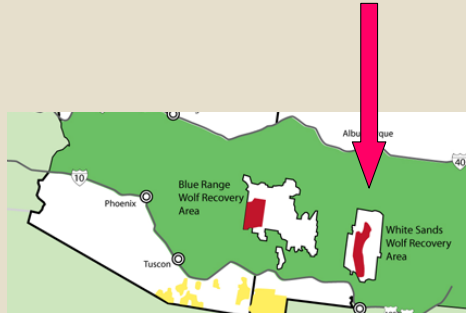
The review process identified the need to clarify several definitions including “breeding pair,” “depredation incident” and “thresholds for permanent removal.” Biologists, residents and other stakeholders may have different understandings of the terminology and we need to develop shared understanding of these and other terms.

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White Sands Missile Range

Unsuitable as recovery area

- Too small
- Not enough prey



Finally, The White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico was initially listed as a potential recovery area for Mexican wolves. However, it is not large enough nor is there enough prey for it to function as an independent recovery area.

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Today's Meeting

- Ask questions
- Tell us your ideas/experiences
- Write comments for public record



We are here to discuss these and other issues with you. We want to hear your ideas and benefit from your experiences. We encourage you to make written comments as well. Written comments will become part of the public record and we want to make sure your input is documented in your own words.

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Mail comments

John Slown
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office
2105 Osuna Road, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87113

You may submit formal written comments to John Slown, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office, 2105 Osuna Road, Northeast, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87113.

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E-mail or fax comments

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Comment period ends December 31

You may also e-mail or fax comments. The comment period ends December 31, 2007.

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Thank you for coming

Thank you for coming and for helping us to improve the Mexican gray wolf reintroduction program.