



Wolves Belong!

From your Executive Director....

We have been supporting the wolf recovery in New Mexico since the launch of our organization 25 years ago. It is, frankly, a continuing challenge because the pressures that drove wolves out of the state still exist. Add to that the changes to government policies, and the risk to our populations in Southwestern New Mexico continues. That is why our efforts to protect



Mexican gray wolves in our state must continue as well. The latest threat involves the US Fish and Wildlife Service's new management plan which puts the small foothold of wolves in jeopardy. We are part of a coalition filing suit to modify this ill-advised plan. The good news is that for the sixth year in a row, our wolf population has grown. Modest growth to be sure, but we will take it for now...

Mark Allison
Executive Director
New Mexico Wild

What threats do our wolves face?

Mexican gray wolves in Southwestern New Mexico and Southeastern Arizona continue to have a tenuous hold on survival. Direct killing by humans remains the greatest threat to Mexican wolf recovery today. Recently the father of the Seco Creek pack was found killed. Human-caused mortality continues to be a serious threat despite the severe penalties for killing endangered wolves. The pack leader killed was important to genetic diversity within the small

population of wolves. That diversity is essential to the wolf recovery plan. While the US Fish and Wildlife Service has been instrumental in the reintroduction of Mexican gray wolves, the latest management plan for this endangered species falls well short of using the best science available. Our immediate focus is on improving genetic diversity, reducing human-caused mortality, and increasing the wolves' range. The Western Environmental Law Center filed a lawsuit on behalf of New Mexico Wild and other partners to



Cross-fostering introduces Mexican gray wolf pups born as part of a captive breeding program into wild wolf dens to increase genetic diversity in the wild Mexican wolf populations. Photo courtesy of Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team.

contest the current plan's arbitrary geographic range limitations, to increase population size and genetic diversity, and to enhance Endangered Species Act protections by classifying the lobo as "essential".

Why are wolves important?

Ecosystems depend on keystone predators like wolves for health. They improve habitat and increase populations of countless species from birds of prey to even trout. Wolves cull sick animals and improve the health of herds. The presence of wolves influences the population and behavior of their prey, changing the browsing and foraging patterns of prey animals and how they move about the land. This, in turn, improves the health of forests, stream banks, and meadows and virtually all plants and animals that live there.

Wolves were eliminated in Yellowstone National Park in 1926 and reintroduced in 1995. Scientific studies demonstrate just how profound the role of wolves has been to a healthy ecosystem and the importance of predator and prey balance. We expect the same beneficial effect in the remote wolf territory where they roam in our state.

Beyond the positive impacts to the ecosystem, wolves are the ultimate symbol of Wilderness and their presence leaves us all a little richer.



Photo Courtesy of Evelyn Lichwa, Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team

What is the status of wolf recovery?

Federal policies encouraged the extermination of wolves in New Mexico, leading to the extinction of wolves in the wild by the 1970s. In 1998, wolves were reintroduced by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in special wolf management areas of the state. After nearly a quarter of a century of effort, the most recent count of our wolf population reached 196 animals in the wild. This marks a 5% gain over last year and the sixth year in a row of population increases.



However, those increases are modest and the packs continue to be at risk. To actually recover Mexican gray wolves, the best available science recommends a population of at least 750 animals in the wilds of the Southwest, including subpopulations in the Southern Rockies and in the Grand Canyon Ecoregion.

Recovery of Mexican gray wolves has been a key area of the work of New Mexico Wild. We have been at the forefront of protecting our small wolf population and keeping remote areas of the state wild enough for them to survive.

Our work continues. Thank you for your support!

Please consider a special donation to help us protect Mexican gray wolves and the natural habitats of New Mexico.

Use the enclosed reply envelope or donate online.



New Mexico Wild and several other advocacy groups have contributed to a combined **\$37,000 REWARD** for information leading to the conviction of the killer(s) of the Mexican gray wolf. Read more about Mexican gray wolves and the reward at bit.ly/loboreward.

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MEMBER UPDATE: MEXICAN GRAY WOLVES

