

Mexican Wolf Recovery Program



4/13/2015

History of Mexican Wolf Recovery



- ◉ 1970s – eliminated from U.S.; listed as endangered
- ◉ 1980s – eliminated from México
- ◉ 1977 – Initiated Bi-National captive breeding program
- ◉ 1982 – Finalized Recovery Plan
- ◉ 1998 – Established Experimental Population Area and began releasing wolves in the U.S.
- ◉ 2011 – México began releasing wolves
- ◉ 2015 – U.S. listed Mexican wolf as endangered subspecies and revised experimental population rule
- ◉ 2015 – U.S. documented minimum population of 109 in wild

Mexican Wolf Captive Population



- \approx 300 wolves in 54 captive breeding facilities :
 - U.S. (36)
 - México (18)
- SSP meeting in México City in July 2015
- Breeding 31 pairs of wolves in 2015

Captive Breeding Plans in 2015

- 36 transfers, including 7 wolves transferred internationally
- Semen and eggs collected from wolves in US and México facilities for “frozen zoo”
- 22 pairs bred for captive breeding program, plus 9 pairs identified for release in US and México
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Mortality in U.S. 1998-2014

Illegal mortality –	60
Vehicle collisions –	15
Other/Unknown –	14
Awaiting necropsy –	5
Natural –	21

(predation, starvation, disease, snake bite, euthanasia, toxemia, ingestion of foreign object, lightening)

Total	115
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Data Current as of March 2015



Current* Wild Population in U.S.

- Minimum of 109 Wolves (Doubling of population since 2010)
- 19 Packs (14 had at least 1 pup)
- 100% were wild-born



*Current as of December 31, 2013

Cross-Fostering Wolf Pups

- In April 2014, cross-fostered 2 pups into wild pack with 3 pups. All 5 pups survived cross-fostering
- 1 cross-fostered pup darted and collared in February 2015



Depredation and Predation in U.S.



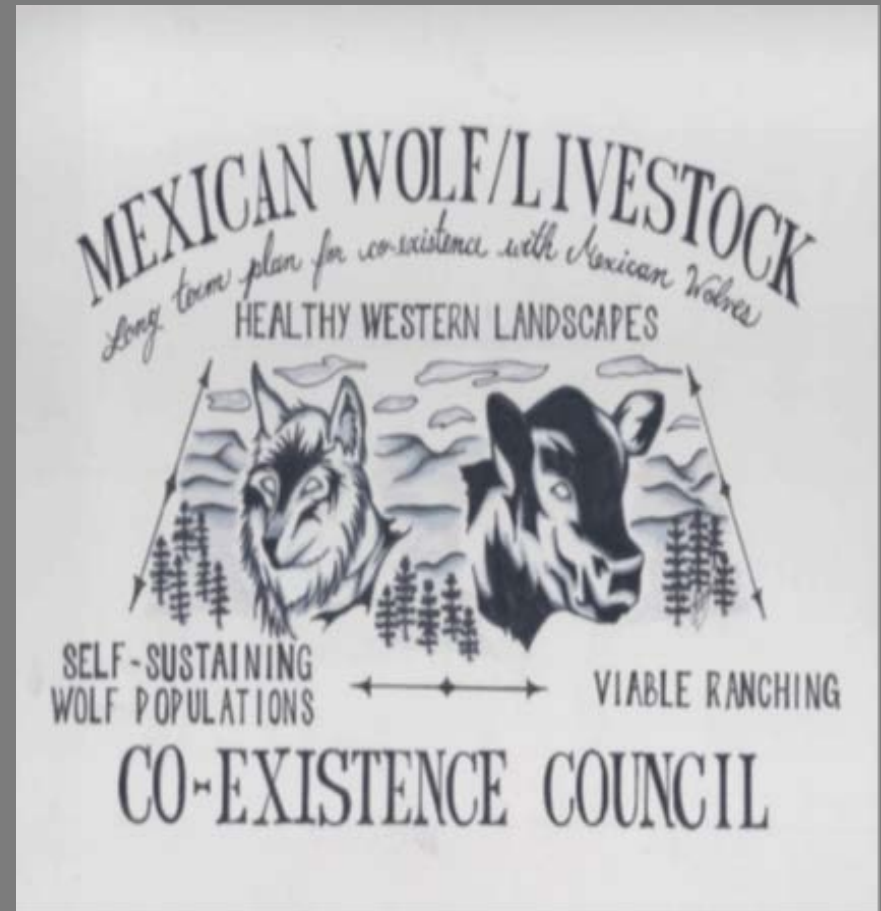
- 2014: 36 livestock confirmed killed
- \$61,000 paid in depredation compensation in 2013



- State game agencies have not yet measured an impact on wildlife populations from wolves

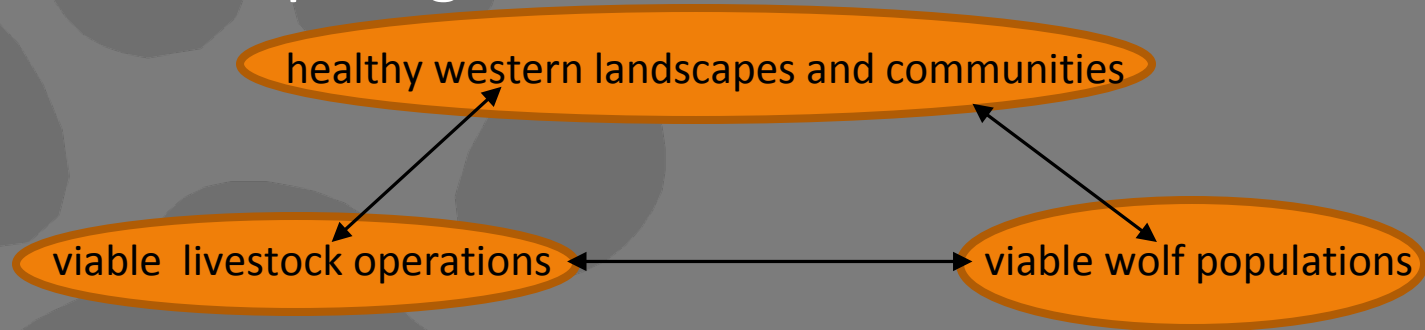
Mexican Wolf/livestock Coexistence Council

- 11 Ranchers, environmental groups, tribes, and county coalitions
- Developed coexistence program for payments for wolf presence, conflict avoidance, and depredation compensation
- Paid \$85,000 to 26 livestock producers for 2013 payments for presence



Mexican Wolf/Livestock Coexistence Council

Coexistence plan goal:



Maintain healthy western landscapes and communities while supporting viable ranching operations and viable wolf populations

Plan is formula based

- wolf territories, core areas, pups
- no. of livestock exposed to wolves

Requires funding



2015 Changes to Mexican wolf

- Listed Mexican wolf as endangered subspecies throughout its range
- Revised the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Rule:
 - Increases area where wolves can be released from captivity to improve genetics
 - Provides for population growth
 - Increases flexibility for management



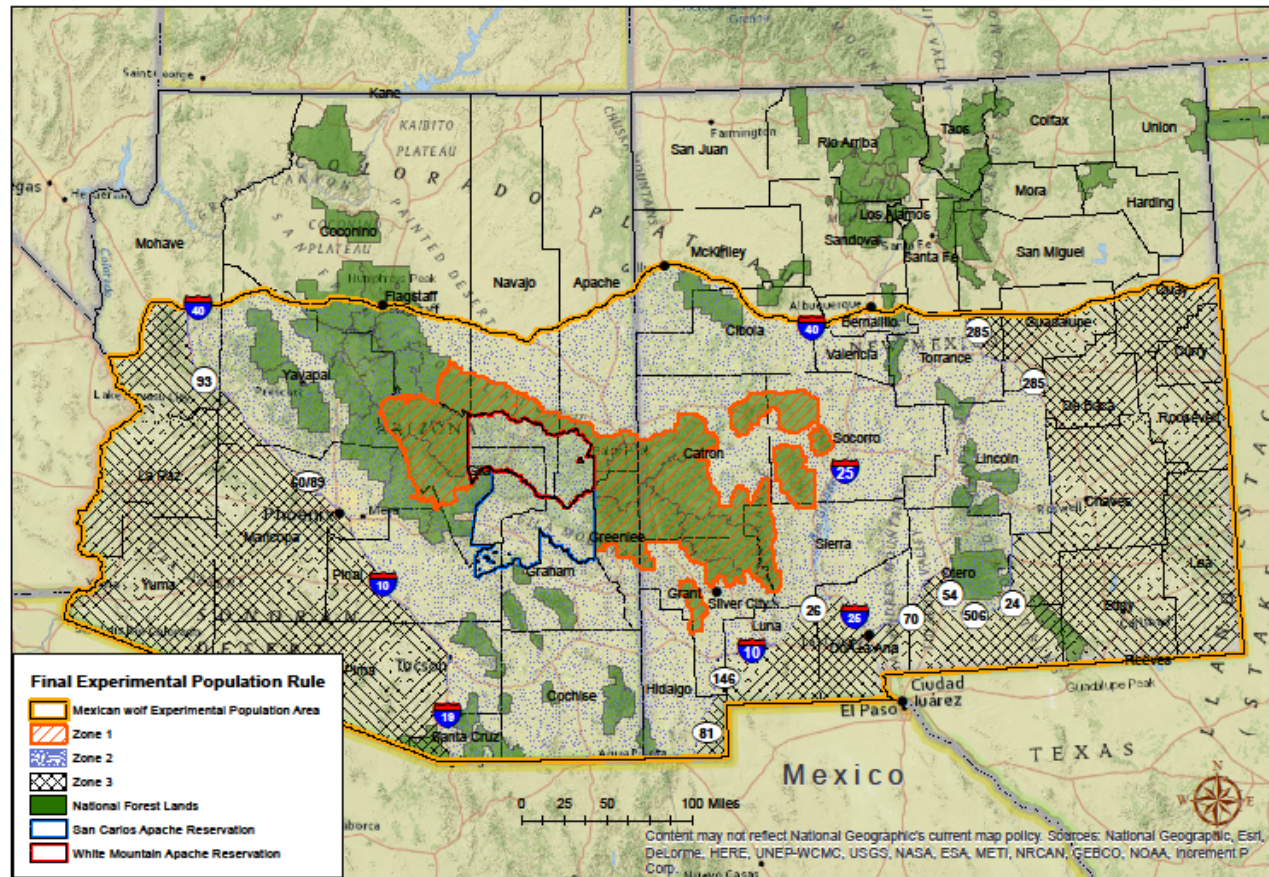
Experimental Population

The Experimental Population status provides more management flexibility, including:

- Relaxes prohibitions on take (harassment, injury, killing)
- Allows release and translocation of wolves
- Allows removal of problem wolves



Revisions to Mexican Wolf Experimental Population (10(j) Rule)



2015 Experimental Population Rule

- Harass or kill a Mexican wolf in self defense or defense of the lives of others
- take wolves in the act of biting, wounding, killing domestic animals (livestock and non-feral dogs) on non-Federal lands
- Permits for take of wolves in the act of biting, wounding, or killing livestock on Federal land
- Permits for use of less-than lethal projectiles (rubber bullets, bean bag rounds)
- Permits on non-Federal land to livestock owners/agents to assist with removal of problem wolves

Collaboration with México

- ◉ Share expertise and technology (trapping, radio telemetry, habitat analyses)
- ◉ Manage captive breeding population under the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan
- ◉ Transfer wolves across US/México border for breeding and release into wild
- ◉ Participate in semen and egg collection for frozen zoo
- ◉ Share research findings





Summary

- From 7 founding wolves, developed binational captive breeding population of $\simeq 300$ wolves.
- In 2014, there were a minimum of 109 wolves in wild in U.S.; 100% wild born
- México is reestablishing wolves in the wild
- Coexistence Council made first Payments for Presence to address economic effects of Mexican wolves on livestock
- Listed Mexican wolf as endangered subspecies and revised experimental population rule

Request Endorsement of Trilateral

- ◉ Work with Scientists in both countries to assess suitable habitat and ungulate populations for recovery of Mexican wolves
- ◉ Collaborate on management of the captive Mexican wolf population
- ◉ Collaborate on releases of Mexican wolves in the U.S. and México
- ◉ Coordinate on the release of Mexican wolves in México and their management in the U.S., should those wolves disperse north into the U.S.