



Management of the Mexican Wolf

This project brought scientists and managers together in a venue independent of agency or local politics. The group set research priorities, enhanced the research needed for better management and recovery, and advised Mexican wolf management efforts based on the results of the latest research.

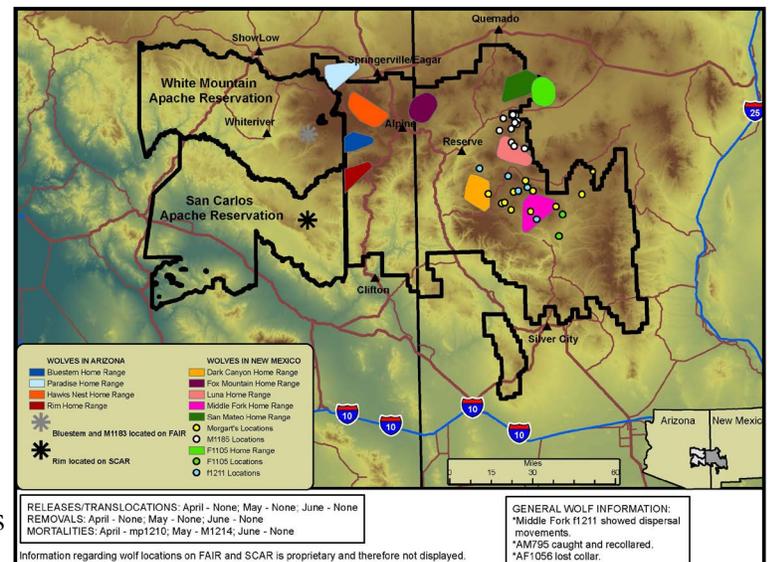
Who cares and why?

The management and recovery of the translocated Mexican wolf in Arizona and New Mexico is the responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and state and tribal wildlife departments. Many of the decisions made regarding wolf management and research are guided—and often hampered—by politics. There is a need for a research team independent of federal, state, tribal, and local politics to be able to study Mexican wolves so that better and unbiased data can be collected to enhance the data provided by state and federal biologists. The Mexican wolf recovery program is one of the most expensive in the U.S., and considerable data are still needed so that informed recovery decisions can be made with the best information available. Millions of dollars can be allocated elsewhere once successful recovery occurs. The cooperation of this project’s independent group of scientists will assist with the timely management and recovery of this endangered wolf.



What has the project done so far?

From 2006 to 2011, the project team met yearly. Participants included researchers and managers from federal (U.S. FWS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Geological Survey) and state (Arizona Game and Fish Department, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish) agencies, as well as universities (University of Arizona, Texas Tech University, University of Montana). The annual meetings fostered communication among agency managers and biologists and university researchers, all working directly or indirectly with Mexican wolf recovery. The discussions allowed research priorities to be developed in a more structured setting, with priorities initiated by managers and conservation biologists and relayed directly to researchers. At the last meeting, group members initiated discussions about obtaining funds for new research projects, because they see this as the most effective way to add impact to what the team is already doing. Such



Scientists mapped the locations of radio-collared Mexican wolves from April to June, 2011. Map courtesy of the USFWS.



Wildlife managers monitor radio-collared Mexican wolves using radio-telemetry. Photo courtesy of USDA.

Impact Statements

Brought together a group of researchers and managers from federal and state agencies and universities, fostering better coordination of Mexican wolf recovery.

Worked independently from, but coordinated with, federal and state Mexican wolf recovery programs, enhancing the research needed for better management and recovery.

Set research priorities based on input from federal and state recovery programs to best improve recovery of the Mexican wolf.

Advised Mexican wolf management efforts based on results of the latest research on management in the wild, genetic issues, social aspects, and activities with the captive breeding program.

funding would be distributed by the team as seed funds to new projects that address high-priority issues. The team believes that this will go far toward the goal of getting the wolf delisted as an endangered species.

What research is needed?

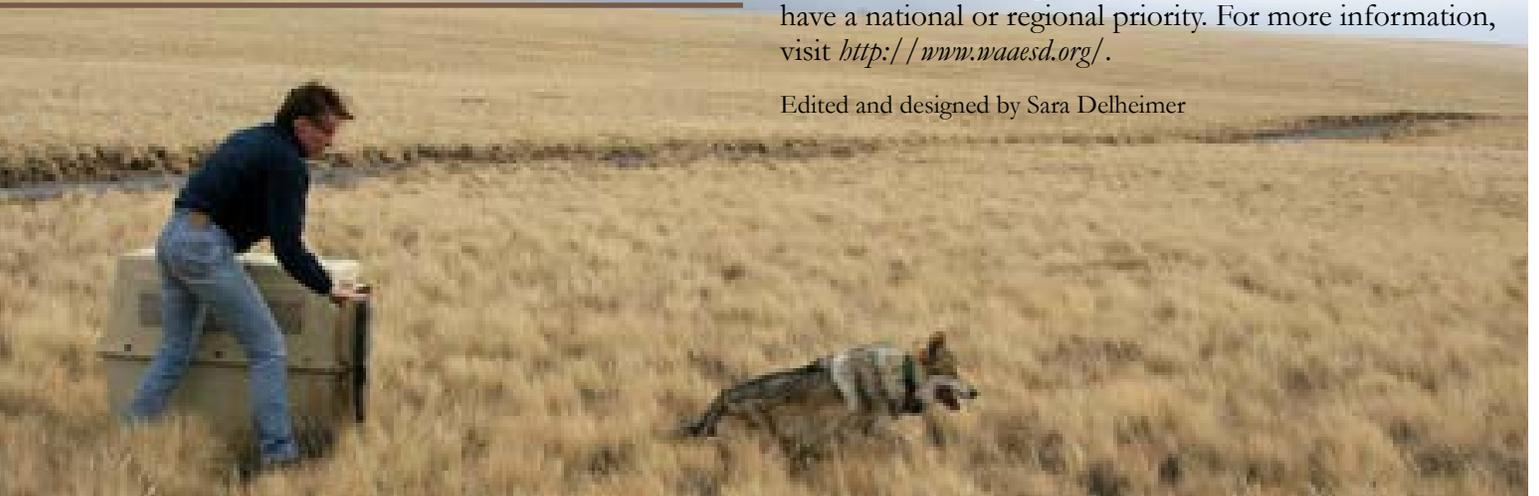
Continued coordination for Mexican wolf scientific research is needed, but for the impact of this team to be realized, some level of funding needs to be available to the team (which represents a broad range of scientific and management expertise). These seed funds would be disbursed by the team to new projects to address research interests identified by the scientific team as relevant to Mexican wolf recovery. In particular, research is needed on the low growth rate of the Mexican wolf population, which is the most significant issue currently preventing full recovery of this species. This multistate team determined that pup recruitment was currently the best research avenue to pursue. Pup recruitment research would attempt to assess why recruitment is poor, and it would attempt to improve recruitment.

Want to know more?

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This project was supported by the Multistate Research Fund (MRF) established in 1998 by the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act (an amendment to the Hatch Act of 1888) to encourage and enhance multistate, multidisciplinary research on critical issues that have a national or regional priority. For more information, visit <http://www.waaesd.org/>.

Edited and designed by Sara Delheimer



An Arizona Department of Fish and Game biologist releases a Mexican wolf. Photo courtesy of AZDFG.