

**Southern Arizona Cattlemens' Protective Association**  
**8200 East Box Canyon Road**  
**Green Valley, AZ 85614**

December 16, 2013

Public Comments Processing  
Attn: USFWS–R2–ES–2013–0056  
Division of Policy and Directives Management  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
4401 N Fairfax Drive, MS 2042–PDM  
Arlington, VA 22203

Subject: Comments on Proposed Revision to the Nonessential Experimental Population of the Mexican Wolf, USFWS–R2–ES–2013–0056 Proposed Rule Removing the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupis*) from the List of Endangered Species and Maintaining Protections for the Mexican Wolf (*Canis lupis baileyi*) by Listing It as Endangered

To Whom t May Concern:

These comments are being submitted by both the Southern Arizona Cattlemens' Protective Association and by James K. Chilton, Jr. as an individual commenter.

The Southern Arizona Cattlemens' Protective Association (SACPA) fully supports the delisting of the gray wolf.

SACPA believes the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) should also delist the Mexican Wolf. As a consequence, SACPA urges the FWS to withdraw the newly proposed revision to the Nonessential Experimental Population rule and delist the Mexican Wolf.

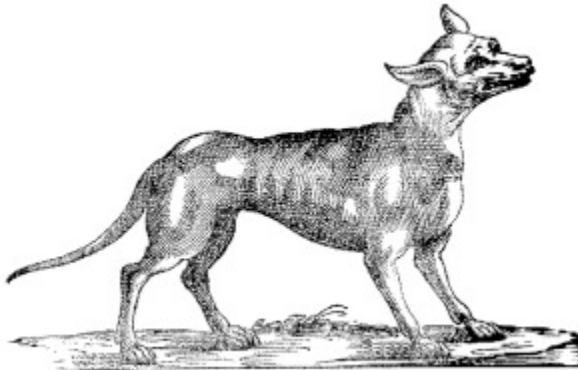
**Hybrid Wolves Should not be Listed as an Endangered Species**

SACPA does not believe there are any genetically pure Mexican Wolves existing in the current FWS program. Mexican Wolves are hybrids (part wolf and nineteenth and twentieth century dog). Both the morphological and DNA features of the current alleged Mexican Wolf demand that the Mexican Wolf be delisted.

The following documents, incorporated herein by reference, provide information regarding genetic impurities in the animals bred for release by the FWS:

[Mexican Wolf, McBride letter: Parsons response](#)  
[Jack Woody's 1986 History of the Mexican Wolf program](#)  
[Summary from International Studbook on the Mexican Wolf, 1987](#)  
**NEW:** [Mexican wolf, partial transcript symposio sobre lobo mexicano](#)  
**NEW:** [Mexican wolf field study, Dennis Parker 1987](#)

1997 lineage fact-sheets for Aragon, Certified, Ghost Ranch wolves,  
compiled by biologist Dennis Parker  
Photos of male founder of Ghost Ranch Mexican wolf lineage



Mexican Wolf, Francisco Hernández, 1651

It is our understanding that the Endangered Species Act does not allow hybrids to be listed. SACPA urges FWS agency officials to “make decisions based on science,” rather than political science or any other basis. The FWS code of ethics requires federal officers to be scientists rather than advocates. Science must drive policy, not policy driving science .

DNA and morphological data must be collected using museum specimens of real Mexican wolves. Then the DNA and morphological findings must be compared with the current alleged Mexican wolves' DNA and morphological information. Scientists should then determine whether the existing Mexican wolves are pure or hybrids. If it is objectively determined that the current wolf population is hybridized, then the wolves do not meet the criteria of the Endangered Species Act and should be immediately be delisted.

If the studies, based on sound science, demonstrate that current wolves are in fact pure Mexican wolves, then SACPA advocates strongly that Mexican wolves be managed under the current Non-Essential Experimental status (the 10j rule).

### **Expansion of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area is NOT Appropriate**

The FWS has failed to demonstrate the need to expand the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area. SACPA cannot identify any sound science in the proposed rule to support the expansion of the currently defined Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area. As a consequence, SACPA opposes the proposed expansion of the Mexican Wolf experimental Population Area that would include all of Arizona and New Mexico between Interstate 10 and Interstate 40.

## **The law requires an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared**

An EIS needs to be prepared based on the guidelines of the Commission on Environmental Quality regulations which require the agency to “consider” connected, cumulative, and similar actions. 40 C.F.R. § 1508.25(a). Under the law, the FWS must cooperate with Local, County State and Tribal officials. The expansion of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area and/or switching listing status of the wolf are major federal actions that require an EIS be prepared. The proposed rule is a failure to comply with the law that an EIS discussing various alternatives was not prepared prior to making listing decisions, range expansion decisions and publishing rules.

The FWS needs to disclose in an EIS the full and damaging social, cultural and economic impacts of this unorthodox arbitrary change in management on rural residents, ranchers, farmers, miners, hunters, recreationist and local governments. Foreseeable harm would include the loss of tax revenue and increased government operation costs due to presence of introduced wolves. The appropriate evaluation of other probable and serious harm can not be handled in such a cavalier manner. Please refer to, and incorporate by reference, the following "Published Studies on Negative Economic Impacts of Wolf reintroduction:

[Wolf \(Canis lupus\) Predation Impacts on Livestock Production: Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, and Implications for Compensation Ratios | J. Steele, B. Rashford, T. Foulke, J. Tanaka and D. Taylor, Rangeland Ecology and Management, September 2013](#)

[Catron County New Mexico Commission Report: A County in Crisis, June 18, 2012—click here for full report \(5.5 Mb\)](#)

[County\\_in\\_Crisis: Executive Summary](#)

[Re-Establishment of the Mexican Wolf: The Economics of Depredation | New Mexico State University Range Improvement Task Force Report # 80 \(3.2 Mb\)](#)

[Warning Brochure for Residents of Wolf Country | Catron County New Mexico Wolf Interaction Investigator Jess Carey](#)

[Mexican Wolf Predation Collateral Damage Identification Brochure \(warning: graphic photos\) | Catron County Wolf Investigator Jess Carey \(10.7 Mb\)](#)

[Economic Impacts of the Mexican Gray Wolf Depredation on Family Cattle Ranching in Catron County, New Mexico: Final Report on the Results of the Wolf Depredation Study | Alex Thal, Tylor Brown, Jess Carey, Nick Ashcroft. 2011. Revised July 27, 2012 \(219 kb\)](#)

[Comparability of Confirmed Wolf Depredations to actual losses: Wolves Denning in Calf/yearling Core Areas | Catron County, New Mexico, final 03/01/2011](#)

[Click here for more articles about Mexican wolves in Catron County, NM](#)

## **Psychological Impact of Wolves on People**

In addition, **Exhibit 1** is a Study regarding the Psychological impact of Wolf reintroduction, by James S. Thal, Ph.D. Dr. Thal's study clearly recognizes the real fear engendered by this federal action and its impact on people living in wolf areas, the attendant economic costs and the reality of daily concern for children's safety and for the husbandry of domestic animals.

## **Wolf Depredations**

**Exhibit 2**, is a list of wolf depredations in Catron County, New Mexico between May 4, 2006 and October 23, 2013. The Catron County depredation list is a small sample of what residents of other counties in Arizona and New Mexico are forced to endure regarding wolf depredation. Citizens living in wolf areas should not have to bear the psychological and economic damage thrust upon them by outsiders and a by arbitrary imposition of burdens on rural residents by distant urban policy makers. Erratic, cumbersome and time consuming procedures mandated to obtain compensation for constant losses will never cover the actual taking of their property or pay for the loss of security around their homes, private property, grazing permits and school bus stops.

The FWS has arbitrarily dismissed from consideration the valuable lessons of the last decade of wolf introductions. One valuable lesson should have been that problem wolves do not cease their bad behavior just because they have been captured, returned to a breeding facility and then re-released in another location. Problem wolves that have exhibited unacceptable, non-wild behavior through depredation upon domestic animals and human habituation need to be removed from the recovery area and never returned. Plenty of evidence in federal re-catch-and-re-release documentation supports this observation.

## **Wolf Management Requirements under the 10(J) Rule**

If the species is not delisted, SACPA believes the Arizona Game and Fish and the New Mexico Fish & Game should administer any future wolf program. The FWS has wasted millions of taxpayers' dollars to impose danger and concern on hapless rural residents.

Any citizens must be allowed to take a wolf if threatened by the animal or in defense of another who is threatened by a wolf. In addition, the FWS must prohibit translocation of wolves into areas that do not contain suitable habitat and wild prey for the wolves. Problem wolves must remain in captive breeding facilities. Furthermore, the FWS needs to require that human-habituated wolves be classified as problem wolves and be removed from the release program.

Wolves released in Mexico that stray into the United States must be managed under the 10(j) rule. These wandering wolves should not be granted endangered species status.

The 10(J) rule should allow appropriate harassing actions or humane take by the FWS or other federal, Tribal or state agencies when wolves exhibit non-wild behavior by seeking out domestic animal prey or when they become habituated to humans and show atypical confidence in approaching people. Importantly, this provision should include providing a federal take permit, for any law enforcement personnel (to allow them to lethally take a wolf for immediate protection of human safety). Additionally, the 10(J) rule must allow serious and effective methods that will immediately stop wolf attacks on dogs, horses, or other domestic pets or livestock. Further, the rule must permit exclusion of wolves from private property. This should include public education practices that teach people how to deal with habituated wolves. Also necessary is the need to issue long-term take permits to those who are suffering aggressive action by Mexican wolves around their homes, corrals and living areas.

## **Wolf Depredation Compensation**

As in Minnesota, wolf depredation compensation must include classing missing livestock as wolf kills. Due to the fact that ranches in Arizona and New Mexico range in size between 1,000 and 100,000 acres--often rugged--, it is nearly impossible for a rancher to find all wolf kills. Ranchers with the misfortune to be the operators whose lands have been designated for wolf recovery bear the unequal burden of diverting much management time to a problem created and imposed by the federal government. That time and that cost are detoured from the already-substantial challenges of livestock husbandry on rugged western ranges often settled by the pioneer ancestors of current members of the historic ranching culture.

## **Wolf Disease Control**

The FWS must be responsible for and compensate ranchers for adverse impacts resulting from diseases such as rabies and *Echinococcosis*, also known as *Hydatid Disease* when transmitted from wolves to livestock and pets. If the disease is transmitted to livestock or pets, *Echinococcosis* is a potentially fatal parasitic disease caused by tapeworm of the genus *Echinococcus* - including *Echinococcus granulosus* and *Echinococcus multilocularis*. Please refer to **EXHIBIT 3**.

## **Impact on the Historic Livestock Ranching Culture and Community**

Virtually no consideration has been given to the damage to a priceless cultural and historic heritage--the western ranching tradition. The American West is celebrated in major artistic works of western art, song, novels, movies, and poetry. The members of the ranching culture have their own unique dress, unique language terms combining the Hispanic and Anglo ranching heritage, customs that direct community interactions, a well-recognized sport (rodeo) and world-wide recognition of this culture.

The exceptional list above distinguishes ranching as a culture, not merely an occupation. This still-conserved treasure is under constant attack by activists who make the kind of unfounded, unscientifically supportable pejorative claims previously targeted at other minority cultures, including that of Native Americans. The current wolf "management" proposal is another step toward unevaluated federal action that intentionally or unintentionally places unfair, arbitrary, unequal, and unscientific burdens upon the members of an iconic American cultural group.

Respectfully,

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