

Colorado Gray Wolf 10(j) Rulemaking EIS US Fish and Wildlife Service

State Coordination Meeting Notes

June 26, 2023
3:00 – 4:00 pm MST
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendees:

Name	Organization
Scott Becker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Kurt Broderdorp	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Brady McGee	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Liisa Niva	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Adam Zerrenner	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Clay Crowder	Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD)
Jim deVos	Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD)
Brian Dreher	Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Eric Odell	Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Stewart Liley	New Mexico Department of Game & Fish (NMDGF)
Kim Hersey	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
Jessica Forbes	WSP
Lori Fox	WSP
Margaret Stover	WSP

In-Person Meeting at WAFWA

The group tabled the discussion on the in-person meeting at WAFWA until Reid DeWalt from CPW is present, likely during the coordination meeting on 7/10.

Draft Language on Mexican Wolf Genetic Integrity

The Service combined the comments from Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah and then drafted a collective response. Because the Service's action is implementing the 10(j) rule and not reintroducing wolves, the comment and response will not appear in the preamble of the rule, but they will help to clarify that the Service wants to keep gray wolves and Mexican wolves separate. The preamble will discuss impacts to gray wolves and include language on the Mexican wolf genetic integrity issue.

The Service shared their screen with draft comment and response language related to Mexican wolf genetic integrity and the agreement for Colorado to allow the return of gray wolves back to Colorado that are captured in Arizona or New Mexico. NMDGF asked if the language could be revised so that it does not tie the agreement for Colorado to accept wolves back with reaching CPW's state delisting goals since concern about genetic integration would last beyond when gray wolves recover in Colorado.

CPW asked if there would be a point in Mexican wolf recovery where genetic introgression might be beneficial and NMDGF explained that the Service's geneticist found that Mexican wolves do not need and

would not benefit from introgression and that genetic mixing could impact Mexican wolves' status as a listable entity. The Service will send the comment and response to CPW for their review and input.

MOU Update

AZGFD explained that it could take 2-3 months for the MOU to be approved. Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah plan to meet to discuss the MOU and then meet with the Service. NMDGF noted that the 10(a)(1)(A) permit should be the priority since the MOU is not regulatory. The Service asked to see a draft of the MOU as soon as it is available.

EIS Question

WSP asked CPW whether they have a more updated source for the current number of wolves in Colorado. CPW shared that the most updated data is 2 wolves and said that the information could be cited as a personal communication from Brian Dreher.

Next Meeting

The group decided to cancel the meeting scheduled for 7/3 and planned to meet again on 7/10.

