



# MEXICAN WOLF 10(j) RULE REVISION

U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
Service

June 2022



# COOPERATING AGENCIES

## Federal

Bureau of Indian Affairs – Southwestern Region  
Bureau of Land Management – New Mexico / Oklahoma Office  
Bureau of Land Management – Arizona Office  
National Park Service – Regional Office  
USDA Forest Service – Southwest Region  
USDA APHIS Wildlife Services (AZ/NM)  
U.S Army Garrison White Sands Missile Range

## State

Arizona Department of Game and Fish  
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish  
New Mexico Department of Agriculture  
State of Utah, Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office

## County

Eastern Arizona Counties Organization (Graham, Greenlee, Gila, Navajo)  
Gila County, AZ  
Mohave County, AZ  
Chaves County, NM  
Hidalgo County, NM  
McKinley County, NM  
Torrance County, NM  
Graham County, AZ  
Catron County, NM  
Eddy County, NM  
Lincoln County, NM  
Otero County, NM  
Valencia County, NM





## RECENT PROGRESS

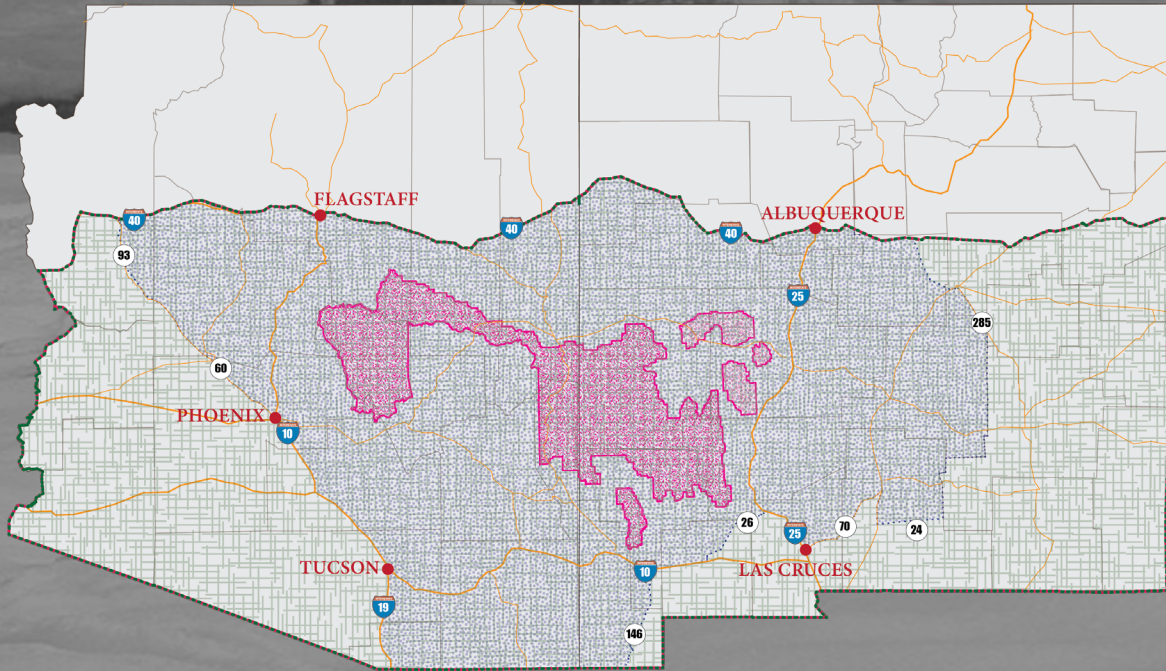
- Minimum population size in the MWEPA is 196 wolves.
- In 2022, 11 captive -born wolf pups were fostered into the wild.
- Focus remains on long - term conservation and recovery while also minimizing impacts on affected stakeholders.



# MEXICAN WOLF EXPERIMENTAL POPULATION AREA

ARIZONA

NEW MEXICO



2015 MEXICAN WOLF EXPERIMENTAL POPULATION AREA

WOLF MANAGEMENT ZONE 1

WOLF MANAGEMENT ZONE 2

WOLF MANAGEMENT ZONE 3



# BACKGROUND

- Protected by the Endangered Species Act in 1976. Reintroduction to the wild began in 1998.
- Recovery plan revised in 2017 established new recovery goals.
- Revised 10j rule brings the management of the MWEPA population into alignment with the Recovery Plan.



# FINAL RULE REVISIONS

## Population Objective

- Important for population stability and resilience over time
- Aligns with recovery criteria
- Average of 320 wolves

# FINAL RULE REVISIONS

## Genetic Objective – NEW!

- Important for population health and adaptability over time.
- Aligns with recovery criteria.
- 22 released wolves surviving to breeding age.





# FINAL RULE REVISIONS

## Temporary restriction of 3 take provisions

- Important to support progress toward genetic diversity
- Restricts:
  - Take on Federal land
  - Take on non -Federal land
  - Take in response to unacceptable impact to a wild ungulate herd



# ESSENTIALITY DETERMINATION

- Maintains nonessential designation of the MWEPA population
- Designation of the MWEPA in 1998 was nonessential



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & PEER REVIEW

- Service published proposed revisions in October 2021
  - 90-day public comment period; 2 public hearings + 3 public information sessions
  - 82,000 comments received
- Sought the expert opinion of five appropriate independent specialists to review the proposed rule.
- Final rule includes responses.



Photo: Mexican Wolf Interagency Field



# SUMMARY OF CHANGES

- Revise the wording of the population objective in response to peer review of the proposed rule to clarify our methodology to verify a stable or increasing population over an 8-year period.
- Revise and restructure our essentiality determination from the proposed rule to clarify the information and rationale used in our determination.

Jacquelyn M. Fallon

# FSEIS

- Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement released in May 2022.
- Analyzes the environmental effects of three alternatives, including Alternative One (proposed action and preferred alternative), a second alternative, and the No Action Alternative.





## WHAT'S NEXT?

- Rule becomes effective on August 1, 2022.
- Management Priorities:
  - Grow population
  - Minimize conflict
  - Improve genetics
    - Cross-fostering