

Arizona Wildlife Federation
Position paper on Mexican Wolf Reintroduction

The reintroduction of Mexican wolves in the southwest has been underway for many years. As often happens with the reintroduction of extirpated species particularly top line carnivores this process has been controversial. Social as well as biological considerations have to be carefully balanced to achieve success. **The Arizona Wildlife Federation remains strongly supportive of the efforts of the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the other cooperating Agencies to meet the goals of the 1982 Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan.**

Specifically the 1982 Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan established a primary goal of re-establishing a minimum of 100 wild wolves in a portion of its historical range in Arizona and New Mexico. A secondary goal of managing wolves and their habitat to not negatively impact the economy and lifestyles of local residents is integral to long term success.

The AWF recommends that the cooperating agencies focus their efforts on achieving the goals of the 1982 recovery plan. We also recognize that some expansion of the current recovery area may be needed to achieve success. Any evaluation of the expansion of the recovery area should consider the biological and social information gleaned from analysis of the current recovery efforts. We also recommend that once the goal population is reached that the Arizona Game and Fish Department have full management flexibility to apply sound wildlife management science and techniques to manage the population. Numerous legal challenges across the country have foiled other States efforts to manage wolf populations when they have reached the recovery goals. New legislation or creative solutions by the managing agencies will be required to make this effort successful in Arizona.