



In 1976 with only seven individuals remaining, *Canis lupus baileyi*, the Mexican (MX) wolf, was classified as an endangered species. A captive breeding program was commenced to save the species. This sub-species of wolf is native to parts of Arizona and New Mexico, which made up 10% of its historic range. The other 90% of that former range is in Old Mexico.

<https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/>

A milestone of sorts, and the beginning of an effort to save a species that would, and is costing millions of taxpayer dollars. Here are some maps from the Lobos of the Southwest.

<https://mexicanwolves.org/index.php/wolf-country>

In 1998 the US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) established a "nonessential experimental population" of wolves in the Blue Range of eastern AZ under the 10j Rule. That label is extremely important from a management standpoint, for without it, flexibility is lost.

[https://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/10\(j\).pdf](https://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/10(j).pdf)

Many cheered; a lot of environmental organizations and urbanites. And many swore: a lot of ranchers, livestock growers, farmers, and rural folks.

You could find sportsmen and women in both camps to varying degrees.

The AZ Game & Fish Department (AZGFD) manages all wildlife within our state's boundaries, including threatened and endangered species. In the last 20 years, in concert with the FWS, the MX wolf has made a comeback because of their efforts. **The most recent census of the wild population showed at least 163 wolves in AZ and NM.** Here is some more information from AZGFD on MX wolf management and reintroduction.

<https://www.azgfd.com/wildlife/speciesofgreatestconservneed/mexicanwolves/>

In the meantime, there are captive breeding populations spread around the United States (approximately 30 facilities) and in Mexico (at least 10

the United States (approximately 50 facilities) and in Mexico (at least 10 facilities). The captive wolf population is now up to approximately 400 animals.

There are two options for releases to enhance genetic diversity in the population; adult wolves raised in captivity (naïve to fending for themselves on the landscape), or cross-fostered pups (replacing wild born pups with captive born pups in the den). Since 2014, 52 captive pups have been fostered into wild dens. At least 10 of those fostered pups survived their first year, and three have produced litters of their own. Cross-fostering pups have incrementally expanded the gene pool, while keeping captive raised (naïve) adult wolves off the landscape, along with eliminating the need for them to learn how to be wild and stay away from people.

In 2015, the FWS published a final rule governing the animal's designation and management.

1. The 10j Rule remained in place allowing some flexibility in the restrictions that otherwise would be in place absent the designation.
2. A population goal of 300 to 325 wolves was set within the defined Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area (MWEPA) of eastern AZ and western NM.
3. The area with which wolves could be introduced was expanded, and also extended to the southern AZ border with Mexico.
4. The final rule also permitted killing or "take" of wolves under certain circumstances to protect livestock and non-feral dogs.

In 2017 the FWS completed their Recovery Plan and have been working with cooperative partners at the AZGFD, NM Game & Fish Department and the White Mountain Apache Nation. Notwithstanding the complexities of managing this apex predator, the population has consistently risen each year.

**-AZSFWC supported the Recovery Plan and the 10(j) Rule as the only means to manage and control the animal in a sensible and measured manner, tracking with the position of the AZGFD.**

**-Wolf opponents remained steadfast wanting "no wolves".**

**-Wolf advocates were and are, just as determined to expand the "recovery" unhindered across "suitable" (any place with food, water and shelter) habitat (not historical habitat) in the Southwest U.S.**

In 2018 two lawsuits were filed against the FWS, one for the Recovery Plan, which has not been ruled on yet, and the other over the 2015 10(j) Rule which is the matter at hand. A Federal judge said the 2015 10(j) Rule "failed to further the long-term conservation and recovery of the Mexican wolf." The FWS has until May of 2021 to respond to the judge's ruling.

<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/court-throws-lifeline-endangered-mexican-gray-wolf>

On April 15, 2020, in order to comply with the Judge's order, the FWS opened public comment on the preparation of a draft environmental impact statement supplement in conjunction with a proposed rule to revise the existing nonessential experimental population designation of the Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*).

### So what is at stake? (three key issues)

1. Status of the population: "essential" vs "experimental non-essential".
  - A. Essential; Fully protected by Endangered Species Act (ESA) with limited flexibility for any management. Removal of any wolves, for any reason, would be extremely difficult.
  - B. Experimental non-essential; While still protected by the ESA, management flexibility remains in place. Removal of wolves is allowed for legitimate reasons; ie, livestock depredation. Ability to replace wild wolves with captives if the population would crash as an example.
2. Population objectives and release strategies; numbers, historic vs suitable habitat, release of captive wolves vs cross-fostered pups.
3. Removal of individual wolves due to genetic consequences. If this option is eliminated, the ability to take wolves for legitimate causes and with due consideration from the FWS and cooperators is gone, and there will be greater strife between landowners and wolf recovery.

### Wolf advocates essentially want the following:

1. No limits on the number of the wolves. (currently a cap of 325 wolves in AZ and NM)
2. Transplants of captive wolf pairs throughout suitable range. (naïve wolves under the guise of enhanced genetic diversity)
3. No limits on the territory they can occupy; ie, north of Interstate 40 and north of the Grand Canyon on the Kaibab Plateau and Arizona Strip.
4. Connectivity with Mexico to the south and connectivity to *Canis lupus occidentalis* migration (Gray wolves) from the north.
5. Reformation of livestock predation guidelines (stop killing of problem wolves) and more enforcement of accidental trapping and killing of wolves.

<https://mexicanwolves.org/index.php/recovery-solutions>

<https://gcwolfrecovery.org/>

[https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/mammals/Mexican\\_gray\\_wolf/index.html](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/mammals/Mexican_gray_wolf/index.html)

<https://wildearthguardians.org/wildlife-conservation/defend-native-carnivores/mexican-wolf/>

[https://act.defenders.org/page/19127/action/1?](https://act.defenders.org/page/19127/action/1?supporter_appealCode=3WDW2008CHXXX&en_og_source=FY20_Web_Action)

[supporter\\_appealCode=3WDW2008CHXXX&en\\_og\\_source=FY20\\_Web\\_Action](https://act.defenders.org/page/19127/action/1?supporter_appealCode=3WDW2008CHXXX&en_og_source=FY20_Web_Action)

<https://mexicanwolves.org/index.php/news/2058/51/TAKE-ACTION-US-Fish-Wildlife-Begins-60-Day-Public-Comment-Period-on-Mexican-Wolves>

The comment period is open until June 15, 2020

You can provide your input here:

<https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=FWS-R2-ES-2020-0007-0001>

Jim Unmacht  
Executive Director

## AZSFWC Awards \$30,140, in Grants

Second quarter grant applications were presented and voted on at the May 26th AZSFWC Board meeting. Five grants were approved in the amount of \$30,140 and included the following:

- \$13,000 was awarded to the Mogollon Sporting Association for the Tonto Basin Water Project.
- \$1,800 was awarded to Kahuna's Kids for their annual Mentoring Kids Fishing Derby.
- \$5,340 was awarded to the Mule Deer Foundation for the Lennix Tank Rebuild Habitat Project.
- \$5,000 was awarded to AZ Chapter SCI for purchase of an event trailer.
- \$5,000 was awarded to the AZ Bowhunters Association for the purchase of 3-D targets.

Read more about these projects [HERE](#).

**Upcoming Member Group Activities & Events**  
**This is very fluid given response to COVID-19**  
**Many groups have had to cancel or postpone activities**  
**Be sure to check with a group for up to date info**

AZ Chapter of Safari Club International  
Modified Banquet June 27

Loew's Ventana Canyon Resort  
FREE ADMISSION

Stay and Play Packages and Early Bird Raffle Packages are on sale now  
<https://www.azsci.com/banquet>

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MOHAVE SPORTSMAN CLUB







AOASPORTINGCLAYSSHOT.COM

Date: TENTATIVELY RESCHEDULED TO Saturday, November 7th. Time: 8:00 am - 1:00 pm (Check in at 8 am, shoot at 9 am, and lunch at 12 pm) Location: Ben Avery Shooting Facility (4044 W Black Canyon Blvd, Phoenix, AZ 85086)

Help Us Continue to Keep You Informed



# Hunt Raffle

NEW MEXICO FULLY GUIDED  
PRONGHORN HUNT  
BLACK MOUNTAIN OUTFITTERS



3 day rifle or 5 day archery hunt takes place in August 2020 or 2021 in unit 12 on over 500,000 acres which has historically

Tickets \$10  
Up to 700 tickets

over 500,000 acres which has historically produced numerous 85-90" bucks. Lodge-based 1 on 1 hunt includes lodging/meals trespass fees for 1 hunter & guest. Hunt is valued at \$9000.

will be sold

[CLICK HERE TO BUY](#)

Winner responsible for non-resident hunting license and tag (\$335) and gratuities.

**WIN A  
2020 FORD  
RAPTOR**  
FROM SANDERSON FORD

**SANDERSON  
Ford**

A silver 2020 Ford Raptor pickup truck is shown in the foreground, parked on a dirt road. The background features a scenic view of a mountain range with evergreen trees under a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the image, with the word 'RAPTOR' in a large, stylized, red and white font with a blue outline. The Sanderson Ford logo is positioned above the main text. The overall theme is patriotic, with a pattern of white stars on a blue background behind the text.



## Regular Sponsors & Supporters



## Members

1.2.3.Go...	Anglers United	AZ Antelope Foundation
AZ Bass Federation Nation	AZ Big Game Super Raffle	AZ Bowhunters Association
AZ Chapter NWTf	AZ Chapter SCI	AZ Council of Trout Unlimited
AZ Deer Association	AZ Desert Bighorn Sheep Society	AZ Elk Society
AZ Flycasters Club	AZ Houndsmen's Association	AZ Outdoor Adventures
AZ Outdoor Sports	AZ Predator Callers	AZ Taxidermy Association
Back Country Hunters	Christian Hunters of America & Anglers	Kahuna's Kids
Mule Deer Foundation	Mohave Sportsman Club	Outdoor Experience 4 All
SRT Outdoors Inc	Southern Arizona Quail Forever	Southwest Wildlife Foundation (YVRGC)
The Bass Federation	TRCP	Valley of the Sun Quail

Arizona	Forever
White Mountain Lakes Foundation	

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**Got Wildlife?**  
Get Your License Plate  
[servicearizona.com](http://servicearizona.com)

By purchasing this plate you will be making a contribution to Arizona's wildlife and wildlife habitat. Seventeen dollars (\$17) of each twenty-five (\$25) special license fee will go to AZSFWC's conservation fund. AZSFWC will review and approve all grants from the special license plate program revenues. These grants will fund important outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and on-the-ground wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement projects. (More info [HERE](#)).

These plates can be purchased online and can also be personalized. To order an AZSFWC Conservation License Plate go to: <http://www.servicearizona.com> Click on "Personalized/Specialty Plates" then if you wish to personalize it, check its availability. Once you have verified the availability of your personalization, or if you only want to order the AZSFWC Conservation Special Plate, click on "Order My Plate". Order your plate as a sequential shelf plate for \$25.00 per year or as a personalized plate for \$50.00 per year.

Here is another helpful link when ordering your special license plate. You can have many of your questions answered here:

<https://servicearizona.com/webapp/vehicle/plates/startChoice.do>

The AZSFWC Conservation Plate gives all Arizonan's an opportunity to contribute to programs that benefit our wild creatures. **Step up and support "Wild Arizona"**.

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation is a 501-c-3 not-for-profit organization whose mission is to educate and inform sportsmen, wildlife conservation organizations throughout the state and the public at large on important issues related to wildlife and wildlife habitat and to provide, via grants or other sources, funding to conserve Arizona's wildlife populations through habitat enhancement initiatives. The AZSFWC is responsible for managing the conservation license plate program (Wildlife Conservation Habitat Fund). The fund is derived from the sale of wildlife conservation license plates and member organizations as well as non-member organizations are eligible to apply for those funds.

