

# Board of Supervisors

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April 1, 2014

Dr. Benjamin Tuggle, Regional Director  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
P.O. Box 1306  
Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306

[RDTuggle@fws.gov](mailto:RDTuggle@fws.gov)

RE: Letter of Support for Cooperative Agency Alternative As the Preferred Alternative in the USFWS EIS Regarding a Proposed Nonessential Experimental Population Rule for the Mexican Wolf in Arizona and New Mexico

As a Cooperating Agency in the NEPA process for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a Proposed Nonessential Experimental Population Rule for the Mexican Wolf in the Southwest, Cochise County, Arizona, is in support of the Cooperating Agency Alternative developed by the Arizona – New Mexico Stakeholders Working Group. We request U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) consider the Cooperating Agency Alternative as the Preferred Alternative in the referenced EIS.

We support State Game and Fish Department management of the Mexican wolf because of the expertise and longevity of State wildlife agency biologists with local knowledge and ties to the community. We do not support federal management of wolves because of the environmental litigation that sways decisions, the turnover in federal biologists and the complete disconnect between Fish and Wildlife Service biologists and the people most affected by the wolves. As detailed in the Cooperating Agency Alternative, we understand that until the Mexican wolf (currently protected under the gray wolf listing) is delisted, USFWS will have some oversight responsibilities in management of the wolf.

Our previous objections to various aspects of the USFWS Mexican and gray wolf programs have not changed. All comments submitted to date remain relevant. We will continue to be a cooperating agency on the EIS, wolf management plans and other aspects of the planning process. We remain committed to our Cochise County Board of Supervisors unanimous vote to oppose the reintroduction, translocation and/or expansion of the Mexican wolf into Cochise County.

In summary, we support the proposed Cooperating Agency Alternative because it provides a better solution for our County and the wildlife within the States of Arizona and New Mexico than the USFWS alternatives proposed to date.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann English, Chairman  
Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Patrick G. Call, District 1 Supervisor  
Richard R. Searle, District 3 Supervisor  
Michael J. Ortega, County Administrator  
Larry Voyles, AGFD