



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Mexican Wolf Recovery Program  
2105 Osuna NE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113

07/24/2026

### Memorandum

To: Acting New Mexico State Director, U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service - Wildlife Services

From: Acting Mexican Wolf Recovery Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southwest Region

CC: Field Coordinator, Mexican Wolf Recovery Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southwest Region

Subject: Mexican Wolf Decision Memorandum, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to amend and replace the previously issued July 22, 2026, memorandum authorizing a control action to address recurring livestock depredations on the [REDACTED] (see Figure 1). Following a pending depredation investigation by USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services on July 23 on the neighboring [REDACTED] allotment, this amended memorandum authorizes personnel from USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services to trap and place into captivity one uncollared Mexican wolf from Federal or private land within the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] allotment, with the intent to translocate the wolf to the wild in Mexico. The uncollared Mexican wolf can be any wolf from within the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] allotment except for any captive born wolves that were previously fostered (released) into the wild. If a fostered uncollared wolf is trapped, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will release the animal to Federal land within its home range.

Live removal is authorized only on private or Federal land and excludes areas within one mile of known dens to minimize the risk of taking lactating wolves and to avoid potential impacts on young pups. Please coordinate with USFWS before initiating operations to identify known den locations that must be avoided.

For any wolf that is captured, call USFWS personnel to either release the animal to Federal land within its home range (if collared or a foster uncollared) or remove to captivity (any non-foster uncollared).

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We are only authorizing the live removal of one uncollared, non-foster wolf at this time. This memorandum will be deemed complete, and authorized activities will cease once one wolf is removed from the area.

### Background

Under the regulations for the nonessential experimental population of the Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*, 50 CFR 17.84(k)) and the USFWS Mexican Wolf Recovery Program recovery permit (ESPER0048320), the USFWS or designated agency may intentionally harass, implement non-lethal control measures, translocate, place in captivity, or lethally control problem wolves.

It is the USFWS's intent to recover the Mexican wolf in a manner that reduces economic impacts on the local livestock industry.

### Definitions

*Problem wolves* mean Mexican wolves that, for purposes of management and control by the USFWS or its designated agent(s), are (A) individuals or members of a group or pack (including adults, yearlings, and pups greater than 4 months of age) that were involved in a depredation on lawfully present domestic animals; (B) habituated to humans, human residences, or other facilities regularly occupied by humans; or (C) aggressive when unprovoked toward humans.

A *depredation* is defined as a confirmed killing or wounding of lawfully present domestic animals by one or more Mexican wolves.

A single *depredation incident* is defined as the aggregate number of livestock confirmed to be killed or mortally wounded by an individual wolf or by a single pack of wolves at a single location within a 24-hour period. Depredation incidents do not include confirmed depredations where the injured animal survives.

### Current Conditions

Seven confirmed depredation death incidents and two confirmed depredation injuries of lawfully present livestock occurred on the [REDACTED] from March 20, 2026, to July 21, 2026, and a pending depredation investigation on the neighboring [REDACTED] allotment occurred on July 23, 2026 (see chronology below and Figure 1). These depredations have been associated with uncollared wolves and the [REDACTED].

### Chronology of Recent Events Prompting Management Decision (see attached Figure 1)

3/20/2026: Depredations (death) of six lawfully present cows and two lawfully present calves on Federal land – confirmed wolf. Assigned to uncertain.

3/20/2026: Depredation (death) of a lawfully present calf on New Mexico State Trust land – confirmed wolf. Assigned to uncollared.

4/10/2025: Depredation (death) of a lawfully present calf on private land – confirmed wolf. Assigned to uncollared.

4/24/2025: Depredation (death) of a lawfully present calf on New Mexico State Trust land – confirmed wolf. Assigned to uncollared.

4/27/2025: Depredation (death) of a lawfully present calf on New Mexico State Trust land – confirmed wolf. Assigned to [REDACTED].

4/29/2026: Depredation (injury) of a lawfully present calf on private land – confirmed wolf. No assignment made.

5/11/2026: Depredation (death) of a lawfully present calf on Federal land – confirmed wolf. Assigned to [REDACTED].

6/5/2026: Depredation (injury) of a lawfully present calf on private land – confirmed wolf. No assignment made.

7/14/2026: Depredation (death) of a lawfully present calf on New Mexico State Trust land – confirmed wolf. Assigned to uncollared.

7/23/2026: Pending depredation (death) of a lawfully present livestock on Federal land – recommended confirmed wolf. No assignment made.

#### Management Actions Conducted to Deter/Reduce Conflicts

The rancher is not interested in proactive management from the Interagency Field Team (IFT) on private land or leased New Mexico State Trust lands where the depredations occurred.

The IFT initiated a diversionary food cache for the [REDACTED] on Federal Land after the pack denned in early May to help deter wolf-livestock conflict. This food cache is currently ongoing and has been consistently utilized by the [REDACTED].

A Decision Memorandum for the lethal removal of [REDACTED] was issued in May 2026 to address chronic depredations that occurred from late March 2026 to the end of April 2026 on the [REDACTED]. This memo and lethal removal authorization was fulfilled by USDA–APHIS Wildlife Services on May 14, 2026. Removing [REDACTED] temporarily reduced depredations, but incidents have resumed.

#### Considerations:

I make my decision fully considering the following:

1. Evidence in the USFWS's files shows that Mexican wolves have caused the death and injury of the domestic animals.
2. Given the rate and proximity of the depredations, the USFWS believes it is likely that Mexican wolves will continue to depredate on domestic animals soon without additional control measures.
3. We have considered evidence of the use of attractants or intentional feeding of Mexican wolves in the area. There is no evidence to suggest the intentional use of attractants or feeding to draw wolves into the area has occurred.
4. The basis of the control action is livestock depredations, and thus, we have not considered evidence related to wolf/human interactions.

#### Decision:

Given the recurrence of depredations, I am authorizing the live removal for one uncollared wolf from private and Federal land within the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] allotment. Authorization applies to one uncollared wolf except a foster wolf. There is no authorization for

live removal of any wolf from New Mexico State Trust land. USDA–APHIS Wildlife Services is authorized to carry out this action from July 24 through August 31, 2026. Authorized activities will cease when one wolf is removed from the area.

This authorization prohibits activities within one mile of known dens to minimize the risk of taking lactating wolves and to avoid potential impacts on young pups. Please coordinate with USFWS before initiating operations to identify known den locations that must be avoided.

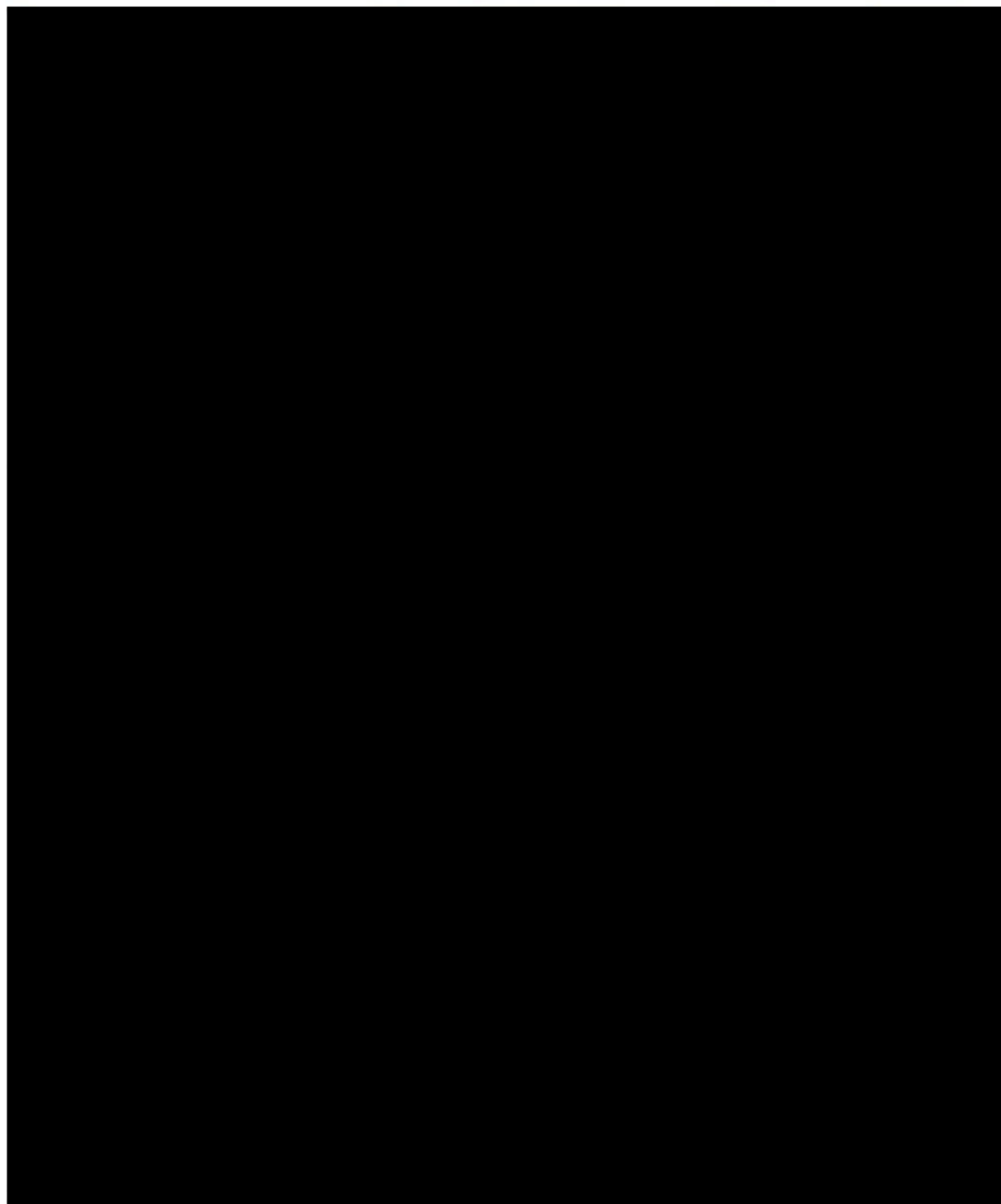
Authorities:

The USFWS Mexican Wolf Recovery Program recovery permit (ESPER0048320), issued September 4, 2024, under 50 CFR 17.22 and 50 CFR 17.32, provides that Authorized Permittees may take any Mexican wolf in a manner consistent with a USFWS-approved management plan or species management measure the USFWS adopted pursuant to the provisions of 50 CFR 17.84(k), as well as to conduct activities related directly to Mexican wolf reintroduced, non-essential experimental population conservation, protection, and recovery in Arizona and New Mexico. The permit's provision R(l) provides that, "Specifically, authorization includes all actions related to: capture including, but not limited to, leg-hold traps, helicopter or ground darting and net-gunning, and captive capture methods; handling; possessing; administering health care; propagating; radio collaring, or other marking techniques; releasing, translocating, and cross-fostering; obtaining and preserving blood, tissue, fur, semen, oocytes, and other samples that are considered parts of Mexican wolves (scat is not considered a part of a Mexican wolf and can be collected without a permit); transporting between approved Mexican wolf captive management facilities in the United States and Mexico, to and from veterinarian care facilities, and to approved release sites; purposeful lethal take (purposeful lethal take is limited to Mexican wolves within the MWEPA in Arizona and New Mexico); hazing via less-than-lethal projectiles; injurious harassment; investigating known wolf GPS radio collar clusters indicative of den, rendezvous or kill sites; research; and carrying out any other USFWS-approved husbandry practice, law enforcement, or management action for Mexican wolves."

The regulations for the nonessential experimental population of Mexican wolves at 50 CFR 17.84(k)(7)(vii) states that the USFWS or a designated agency may take any Mexican wolf in the experimental population in a manner consistent with a USFWS-approved management plan, special management measure, biological opinion pursuant to section 7(a)(2) of the Act, section 6 of the Act as described in §17.31 for State game and fish agencies with authority to manage Mexican wolves, or a valid permit issued by the Service through §17.32."

Thus, USDA–APHIS Wildlife Services employees are authorized to lethally control Mexican wolves in accordance with this Decision Memorandum, and any incidental wolf death or injury during this operation will be covered under Permit ESPER0048320. The USDA–APHIS Wildlife Services employees working under this permit will not be considered negligent when exercising appropriate methodology. Appropriate methodology is defined as USDA–APHIS Wildlife Services employees following all established policies and Standard Operating Procedures associated with Mexican wolf recovery.

Figure 1. [redacted] and [redacted] allotment



-  Depredation with Pending Investigation
-  Depredations
-  Allotment
-  BLM
-  National Forest
-  Private
-  State Trust

