



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Richardson Seeks to Change Protocols for Mexican Wolf Recovery Program

SANTA FE – Governor Richardson seeks to change key protocols for the Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Program following a recent wolf kill incident in southwestern New Mexico.

"I am deeply concerned about the recent escalation in wolf removals and incidents surrounding yesterday's lethal removal of a female wolf," said Governor Bill Richardson.

On July 5, attempts to kill wolf AF924 were initiated before adequate notification was provided to the State of New Mexico. The wolf was killed by federal Wildlife Services before adequate communication was established which resulted in conflicts between federal and state staff involved with the wolf program. The Catron County Sheriff's Department, assisted by the State Police, is investigating an alleged altercation that occurred after the shooting of the wolf.

"This type of confusion is not an adequate basis for accomplishing important wolf restoration," said Governor Richardson.

The lethal removal of a female wolf, that leaves pups with a single parent, is a setback to the Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Program, and signals that it is time to reexamine the protocols under which wolves are removed from the wild.

Governor Richardson has instructed the Director of the Department of Game & Fish and members of the State Game Commission to work with the state's partners in the Mexican

Gray Wolf Recovery Program to review and revise standard operating procedures related to the control of nuisance (non-depredating) and problem (depredating) Mexican wolves. The Governor has also called for the immediate suspension of the use of Standard Operating Procedure 13 (SOP 13) procedures in New Mexico pending these revisions.

“I strongly support the effective recovery of endangered Mexican wolves in the Southwest, done in a responsible and sensitive way,” said Governor Bill Richardson. “Changes must be made to the protocol for the wolf re-introduction program.”

The Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Program is led by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and supported by a set of partners in the recovery area. The NMDGF is an active participant, along with the Arizona Department of Game & Fish, the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, U.S.D.A. Wildlife Services, and the White Mountain Apache Tribe. The standard operating procedures established by the partners enhance the coordination and effective management of wolves.

In March 2007, Governor Richardson directed the State Game Commission and the Department of Game and Fish to redouble their efforts to work with all interests to promote healthy wolf populations living in reasonable compatibility with our communities and land stewards in New Mexico. These activities are ongoing.

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