

Mexican Gray Wolf

Licenses, applications, harvest reporting and general information: **1-888-248-6866**

Trapping and the Mexican Gray Wolf

Trapping has been shown to cause no negative impact on Mexican gray wolf populations. However, for trapping in the USFWS Blue Range Wolf Reintroduction Area (BRWRA)—located in portions of Catron, Grant and Sierra counties—NMDGF strongly encourages the following to reduce potential injury to Mexican gray wolves inadvertently trapped.

Recommended techniques to reduce potential injury to Mexican gray wolves:

- To render a wolf unable to pull the trap free—double stake, cable stake (at least 18 inches deep), or otherwise securely fasten traps to immovable objects with aircraft cable or chain.
- To prevent lunging and/or rolling-induced injury—use short chains (12 inches or less), attached near the center of the trap base plate via a swivel and incorporate at least one additional swivel between the trap and anchoring point.
- To hasten recovery and safe release of animals—use drags of sufficient size and weight or steel grapples at least ½-inch in diameter or cross section that are attached to chains or cables at least 10 feet in length.
- Choose laminated, offset or padded jaws on foot-hold traps.
- Scout the area intended for trapping. If signs are evident that wolves are present, avoid the area if possible or use only No. 1.75 or smaller traps.

Trappers will not be held criminally liable if a Mexican gray wolf is accidentally captured.

Should a Mexican gray wolf be accidentally captured, immediately call the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Office at 1-888-459-9653 or telephone NMDGF's 24-hour dispatch at 1-800-432-4263 or telephone the local NMDGF Conservation Officer. The officer will respond to remove and secure the wolf until a member of the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team can arrive to process and radio-collar the wolf.

Wolves Are a Federally Protected Species

The Mexican Wolf Restoration Area includes portions of New Mexico. Wolves are protected by the federal Endangered Species Act and by the New Mexico Wildlife Conservation Act. Federal penalties for shooting a wolf can include a year in jail and a \$50,000 fine with additional New Mexico state penalties for violating the Wildlife Conservation Act.

Rewards up to \$45,000 for information leading to arrest and prosecution of wolf poachers are offered by federal and state agencies and conservation organizations jointly.

It is illegal to:

- Kill or injure a wolf because it is near you or your property.
- Kill or injure a wolf if it attacks your pet.
- Kill or injure a wolf feeding on dead livestock.
- Enter posted closures around release pens, active dens and rendezvous sites.
- Shoot a wolf because of mistakenly identifying it as a coyote or anything else (page 127).

However, it is legal to kill, injure or harass a wolf if:

- The wolf is in the act of killing, wounding or biting cattle, sheep, horses, mules or burros owned by you and which are on private or tribal land.
- Acting in defense of human life.

Any person taking such action **must report the incident within 24 hours** to the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Office: 1-888-459-9653 or the NMDGF 24-hour dispatch telephone: 1-800-432-4263. For more information about Mexican wolves and the USFWS Wolf Recovery Program, visit: www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/.

Wolf Encounters and Identification

The Gila National Forest and surrounding areas are locations where wolf encounters may occur. Mexican wolves typically weigh between 50–80 pounds, stand 28–32 inches at the shoulder and measure 5-½ feet from snout to tail (approximately the size of a large German shepherd). Coat color varies, but solid black or white Mexican wolves do not occur. Though similar in appearance to coyotes, Mexican gray wolves weigh two to three times more, have larger blocky heads with more rounded ears, and feet larger in proportion to the body. At a distance or a quick glance, coyotes and wolves can be difficult to differentiate. Many wolves have radio collars.

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NMDGF Photo by Dan Williams

Coyote



NMDGF Photo by Dan Williams