

Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Quarterly Update

Third Quarter 2026 (July, August, September)

The following is a summary of Mexican Wolf Recovery Program activities in the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area (MWEPA) in Arizona, including the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR), San Carlos Apache Reservation (SCAR), and New Mexico. Additional Program information can be obtained by calling (928) 339-4329 or toll free at (888) 459-9653, or by visiting the Arizona Game and Fish Department website at azgfd.gov/wolf or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf. For information on the FAIR, call (928) 338-4385 ext. 226 or visit wmatoutdoor.org. Past updates may be viewed at these websites. Interested parties may sign up to receive this update electronically by visiting azgfd.com and clicking on the E-news Signup tab on the top left corner of the webpage. This update is a public document and information in it can be used for any purpose. The Mexican Wolf Recovery Program is a multi-agency cooperative effort among the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), USDA Forest Service (USFS), USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (WS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the U.S. National Park Service (NPS).

To view semi-monthly wolf location information please visit https://arcg.is/bLyPO

Please report any wolf sightings or suspected livestock depredations to the Alpine wolf office (928) 339-4329, Pinetop wolf office (928) 532-

2391 or toll free at (888) 459-9653. For sightings or suspected depredations on the FAIR, please call the WMAT wolf office in Whiteriver at (928) 338-4385 ext. 226. To report incidents of take or harassment of wolves, please call the AZGFD 24-hour dispatch (Operation Game Thief) at (800) 352-0700.

Overall Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Quarterly Updates

Numbering System: Mexican wolves are given an identification number recorded in an official studbook that tracks their history. Capital letters (M = Male, F = Female) preceding the number indicate adult animals 24 months or older. Lower case letters (m = male, f = female) are used to indicate wolves younger than 24 months. A lowercase letter "p" preceding the number is used to indicate a wolf pup born in the most recent spring. The capital letter "A" preceding the letter and number indicates breeding wolves.

Definitions: A "wolf pack" is defined as two or more wolves that maintain an established territory. In the event that one of the two breeding (dominant) wolves dies, the remaining breeding wolf, regardless of pack size, retains the pack status. The packs referenced in this update contain at least one wolf wearing a radio telemetry collar. The Interagency Field Team (IFT) recognizes that wolves without radio telemetry collars may also form packs. If the IFT confirms that wolves are associating with each other and are resident within the same home range, they will be referenced as a pack.

CURRENT POPULATION STATUS

The end of year count for 2025 generated a minimum abundance of 317 Mexican wolves in the wild (142 in AZ and 175 in NM). *An abundance of 319 was previously reported, however, an error was detected in the data reflecting that two mortalities had not properly been accounted for*. This was a 10.8% increase in the population from the minimum of 286 wolves counted at the end of 2024. The increase documented from 2024 to 2025 marks the tenth consecutive year of population growth, the longest continuous streak since recovery efforts began. At the end of 2025, there were a minimum of 71 packs documented (29 in AZ and 42 in NM). Annual counts are conducted in the winter when the population experiences the least amount of natural fluctuation (i.e., the population increases dramatically in the spring with the birth of new pups and declines throughout the summer and fall as pup mortality generally occurs in this period). Thus, the IFT summarizes the total number of counted wolves in winter. Counting the population at the end of each year allows for comparable year-to-year trends at a time of year when the Mexican wolf population is most stable.

WOLF PACK UPDATES:

For each documented wolf pack in the table below, wolves fitted with functioning collars at the end of the quarter are listed by studbook number. Studbook numbers of wolves without collars or with non-functioning collars are not listed in the pack updates. Not all wolves in the population are collared or have assigned studbook numbers. Captures, mortalities, removals, and food caching are listed in the corresponding column for the listed period. If a pack was food cached at any time within the quarter, the food cache column will indicate the type of food cache. The primary reason for food caching will be noted with "S" for supplemental and "D" for diversionary; the reason for a food cache may change over time. If a wolf dies, becomes fate unknown, or is removed in the current period, its studbook number will be removed from the pack column in the following quarterly report. After three months of consistent dispersal behavior away from pack territory, a dispersing wolf is no longer considered a member of its originating pack and will be added to a new row as a single wolf or member of a different pack. Packs that have raised pups in the quarter will be listed as "Yes" in the "Raising pups" column. This will remain for the calendar year if the pack was documented rearing pups in the period of April through September. Any fields that require further comment will be annotated with "*" and further comments are listed in the "Comments" column.

ARIZONA:

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Boggy Creek F2872	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Castle Rock M1921	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Crow Poison AM2995, AM1897	0	0	0	D	Yes	No	
Dutch Oven F2992, M3008	0	0	0	D	No	No	
Eagle Creek F1548. AM2709*	0	0	0	0	No	No	In September, AM2709 became a member of the Eagle Creek pack after traveling with F1548 for two months.

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Elderberry AF2977	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Fantasia AF2759, AM1584	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Firebox AM1881, AF3104	0	0	0	S	Yes	Yes	
Hoodoo AF2752, AM1789, M1893	0	0	0	D	No	No	
Juniper Bench AF1920*	0	1*	0	0	No	No	In September, AF1920 was found dead in Arizona. The mortality is under investigation. AF1920 was the last remaining member of the Juniper Bench pack. The pack is now defunct.
Pumpkin Spring AM2848, f3082	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Pyramids F3001	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Quakie Patch F3103, AM2766*	0	0	0	0	No	No	In July, AM2766 became a member of the Quakie Patch pack after traveling with F3103 for two months.
Rocky Prairie AM1383, AF1489, M3081	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Rose AM1704	0	0	0	0	No	No	

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Saffel* AM1854, AF1939, M3154*	1*	0	0	S	Yes	Yes	In September, the IFT captured, collared and released M3154.
Sierra Blanca AF1550	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Slaughter Draw M3105	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Snake Creek* AM2709	0	0	0	0	No	No	In September, AM2709 became a member of the Eagle Creek pack after traveling with F1548 for two months. AM2709 was the last remaining member of the Snake Creek pack. The pack is now defunct.
Trinity M3106	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Warm Springs AF1938, AM2796	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Single M3070	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Single 3102	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Single M1857	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Single M2556*	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	In July, M2556 became Fate Unknown after not being documented for three months.

FAIR:

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food Cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Baldy AM1347	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Lightning Ridge AM1852, AF3090*	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	In May, the IFT located AF3092, previously Fate Unknown was documented alive.
Pacheta Creek AF3076*	1*	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	In August, the IFT captured, re-collared and released AF3076.
Star Creek F2767, M3091	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Tu dil hil F2758, M2883	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Yellow Jacket F3085, M3141	0	1*	0	0	N/A	N/A	In September, an uncollared wolf was found dead in Arizona, The mortality is under investigation.
Sweater Creek AM1382	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	

**The number of wolf packs reflected at the end of each quarter differs from the number of packs recorded during the end of year counts due to the formation and loss of packs within the quarter, which is illustrated in the table above.*

Total number of wolf packs in Arizona at end of the current quarter: 28

NEW MEXICO:

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food Cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Agua Frio AM1875, F2997	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Aldo AM2561	0	0	0	0	No	No	

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food Cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Bear Canyon AM2563	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Beaver Point AF2884, AM2998, f3042, m3043	0	0	0	D	Yes	No	
Buzzard Peak AM2567, AF3099	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Centerfire AM2697	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Chimney Canyon AM2821*	0	0	0	0	No	No	In September, AM2821 became a member of the Hardcastle Canyon pack after traveling with the pack for two months. AM2821 was the last remaining member of the Chimney Canyon pack. The pack is now defunct.
Cimmaron Mesa AM2702, m3093	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Cottonwood Canyon AF3109	0	0	0	D	Yes	No	
Dark Canyon AF1456, F3098 *	1*	0	0	0	Yes	No	In September, the IFT captured, recollared, and released F3098.
Dillon Mountain AF1865, AM3080	0	0	0	D	Yes	No	
Elk Horn AM1838, AF1866, m3090	0	0	0	S	Yes	No	

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food Cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
El Torro AF2861, AM3088, m3086	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Frieborn AF3083, m3100, AM2922	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Gasoline Lake AF2865*, M3007	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	In September AF2865 became Fate Unknown after not being documented for three months.
Hail Canyon M2797	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Hardcastle Canyon AF3089, AM2821*	0	0	0	S	Yes	No	In September, AM2821 dispersed from the Chimney Canyon pack and became a member of the Hardcastle Canyon pack after traveling with the pack for two months.
Holdup Mountain AF2743, AM2847	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Indio Canyon AF3069	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
La Ventana AF3005, M3087	0	0	0	S	Yes	No	
Leon AF1578*	0	0	0	0	Yes	N/A	AF1578, previously Fate Unknown was documented alive and was documented traveling with an uncollared adult and pups in September.
Leopold AM1855, f3142*	1*	0	0	0	Yes	No	In August, the IFT captured, collared, and released f3142.
Luna AF1487, AM3009, m3039*	1*	0	0	0	No	No	In August, the IFT responded to the capture of m3039. The IFT collared and released m3039.

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food Cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Mariano Mesa AM1824	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Mangas AF2775	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Strawberry Canyon F3013	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Salthouse Canyon M3084*	0	0	0	0	No	No	In July, M3084 formed the Salthouse Canyon pack after traveling with an uncollared wolf for two months.
Noble Mountain AM2886,	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Piney Park AM2760, AF3096	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Pinon Knob AF2713, AM2873	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Pitchfork Canyon AF1853, AM2566	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Point of Rocks AM1717, m3051,*f3057	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	In April, m3051 dispersed from the Point of Rocks pack and became a Single after traveling alone for three months.
Quartz AF2754, f3063, f3064*	0	0	0	S	Yes	No	In July, f3064 dispersed from the Quartz pack and became a Single after traveling alone for three months.
Saddle Mountain F2540, M3101	0	0	0	0	No	No	

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food Cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Sheepherders Baseball Park (SBP) AF1553, AM2719	0	0	0	D	Yes	No	
Tres Lagunas AF2763	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Wagontongue AM3097, AM2804	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Whiskey Creek AM1842	0	0	0	0	No	No	
Willow Creek AF1890, AM1555	0	0	0	0	Yes	No	
Single AM1354	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Single m3107	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Single M1888	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Single F2929	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	
Single F3014*	0	1*	0	0	N/A	N/A	In May, F3014 was found dead in New Mexico. The mortality is under investigation.
Single M2945	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	

Wolf Pack Collared Wolves	**Captures**	**Mortalities**	**Removals**	**Food Cache**	**Raising pups (April – Sept)**	**Foster (April/May)**	***Comments**
Single f3064	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	In July, f3064 dispersed from the Quartz pack and became a Single after traveling alone for three months.
Single m3051	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	In April, m3051 dispersed from the Point of Rocks pack and became a Single after traveling alone for three months.

**The number of wolf packs reflected at the end of each quarter differs from the number of packs recorded during the end of year counts due to the formation and loss of pack within the quarter, which is illustrated in the table above.*

Total number of wolf packs in New Mexico at end of the current quarter: 39

MORTALITIES

Two Mexican wolf mortalities were documented in the third quarter (2 in AZ and 0 in NM). Cause of death for mortalities are under investigation by USFWS Law Enforcement unless cause of death is determined to be of natural causes upon initial investigation; where cause of death is clear, such as vehicle strikes, it will be included in the appropriate quarterly report. Due to Mexican wolf population expansion, to ensure accurate inter-annual comparisons in mortality rates, these data are presented as the total number of documented mortalities per 100 Mexican wolves. Using these data for the last five years, the values calculated are: 2025 9 mortalities/100 wolves, 2024 10 mortalities/100 wolves, 2023 12 mortalities/100 wolves, 2022 5 mortalities/100 wolves, 2021 13 mortalities/100 wolves. Cause of death for each mortality will be reported in the 2026 annual report when all the necropsies are finalized. The impact of these mortalities is uncertain but based on the 2017 Population Viability Assessment (PVA) completed for recovery planning purposes, continued population growth is again expected in 2026.

GENETIC MANAGEMENT

Captive pups fostered (since 2016)	**Captive pups fostered in 2026**	**[a] Fosters documented alive at the end of the quarter**	**[a]Documented foster mortality**	**[a,b]Fosters surviving to breeding age**	**[a] Fosters documented producing pups**	**[a]Documented litters produced by fosters**
148	**5**	**[c]12**	**19**	**23**	**14**	**37**

*[a]These are only **MINIMUM** values that have been documented by the IFT. The IFT does not affix radio collars on pups at the time of the foster, as the pups are too small. Pups are collared opportunistically when fostered wolves are captured later in the year or in subsequent years. Not all fosters that survive are captured and collared.*

[c]A release from captivity of the Quartz pack took place in New Mexico. Although the two released pups were not considered fosters, they will add two individuals to the genetic criteria once they reach breeding age on April 1, 2027. Consequently, they are considered alive at the end of the quarter and count toward the 'Fosters documented alive at the end of the quarter,' changing the count from 12 to 14." This will remain as a foot note rather than in the table due to the difference in release.

INCIDENTS

The following are investigations of livestock depredations conducted by Wildlife Services during the quarter that were determined to be caused by wolves. Investigations of dead and injured livestock conducted by Wildlife Services during this period that were determined to be from causes other than wolves (i.e., vehicle strike, illness, coyote predation, bear predation, or unknown cause) are not listed in this quarterly update.

DEPREDATIONS

	Confirmed Wolf (Current Quarter)		Yearly Total Confirmed Wolf Killed or Died from Injuries	Probable Wolf (Current Quarter)		Yearly Total Probable Wolf Killed or Died from Injuries
	Killed or Died from Injuries	Injured		Killed or Died from Injuries	Injured	
Arizona	7	2	**16**	0	0	**1**
New Mexico	18	2	**114**	7	0	**16**
2026 Total			**130**			**7**

Unshaded cells contain totals for the current quarter, gray cells contain totals for the year.

The yearly total number of confirmed wolf depredation incidents in **2025 (147) was up from the yearly total of confirmed wolf depredation incidents in 2024 (106).** The number of depredations per 100 Mexican wolves, using the yearly total confirmed wolf depredations (killed or died from injuries) compared with the final minimum population count for 2025 was 46 depredations/ 100 wolves**.** Depredations/100 wolves for the prior three years is as follows: 56 depredations / 100 wolves in 2022, 43 depredations / 100 wolves in 2023 and 37 depredations/ 100 wolves in 2024.

PUBLIC INCIDENTS

In June a concerned individual in Arivaca AZ called to report wolves killing a deer in their yard. The individual was worried that it was an urban setting and the wolves were not afraid of people. The incident was investigated by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Small sized paw prints were found and the incident was found to be caused by a coyote and not by a wolf.

In September a concerned individual in Magdalena, NM called to report a wolf interacting (non-aggressive) with their young dog on private land. The individual was worried that their adult dogs would try to defend the younger dog and kill the wolf. The incident was investigated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), no radio collared wolves were detected and no wolf tracks were confirmed. The USFWS updated the individual's ranch receiver and continued to monitor locations.

PROACTIVE MANAGEMENT

State	**Monitoring efforts** (monitoring with intent to haze a wolf)	**Hazing events** (successful hazing of a wolf)	***Diversionary food caches maintained**	**Carcasses** removed	**Proactive equipment projects** (RAG boxes, fox lights, fladry)
Arizona	74	6	3	4	0
New Mexico	1	0	8	0	0
2026 Totals	**183**	**78**	**23**	**9**	**0**

Unshaded cells contain totals for the current quarter, gray cells contain totals for the year.

**Includes supplemental food caches, as these also served as diversionary food caches this year.*

PROGRAM PERSONNEL

In August, Hunter Bredeson, Mexican Wolf Technician with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, left the Program.
In September, Bailey Dilgard, Mexican Wolf Biologist with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, left the program.

REWARDS OFFERED

The USFWS is offering a reward of up to $50,000, the AZGFD Operation Game Thief is offering a reward of up to $1,000, and the NMDGF is offering a reward of up to $1,000 for information leading to the conviction of the individual(s) responsible for the shooting deaths of Mexican wolves. A variety of non-governmental organizations and private individuals have pledged additional funding for a total reward amount of up to $51,500, depending on the information provided. The total amount is up to $103,500.

Individuals with information they believe may be helpful are urged to call one of the following agencies: USFWS Special Agents in Pinetop, Arizona, at (346) 254-0515; the WMAT at (928) 338-1023 or (928) 338-4385; AZGFD Operation Game Thief at (800) 352-0700; or NMDGF Operation Game Thief at (800) 432-4263. Killing a Mexican wolf is a violation of state law and the Federal Endangered Species Act and can result in criminal penalties of up to $50,000, and/or not more than one year in jail, and/or a civil penalty of up to $25,000.