

WEDNESDAY
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Another Pair of Wolves Ordered Removed From the Wild

Another pair of endangered Mexican gray wolves has been targeted for permanent removal from the wild.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said Wednesday the pair, both adults from the Saddle Pack, had killed a calf in the past week and was involved in three other depredation incidents over the past year.

The agency said members of the wolf interagency field team have started trapping efforts as part of the permanent removal order.

If the male wolf is not trapped within 14 days, the field team can shoot the animal. The female must be captured.

The Saddle Pack male and female are the latest wolves to be targeted for removal from the wilderness along the New Mexico-Arizona border.

Another male from the pack was shot last month and a 6-year-old wolf belonging to the San Mateo Pack was shot in February after the team had confirmed each animal was involved in three cattle depredations.

The Center for Biological Diversity has sued the Fish and Wildlife Service over mismanagement of the Mexican wolf. The group contends the permanent removal orders and the resulting kills are compromising the wolf's genetic diversity.

The Fish and Wildlife Service began releasing the wolves on the New Mexico-Arizona border in 1998 to re-establish the species in part of its historic range after the animals had been hunted to the brink of extinction in the early 1900s.

Environmentalists complain that program managers are undermining the recovery effort with aggressive policies.

Ranchers complain that wolves are killing livestock, hunters say the animals are thinning elk herds, and other critics claim the wolves are frightening children.