



News Release

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Anticipated Release of Mexican Wolves Delayed until 2011

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), along with the Arizona Game and Fish Department announced today that the planned release of Mexican wolves into the Apache National Forest of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area will be postponed until sometime in 2011.

The Service, after coordinating with its partners in the Mexican wolf recovery program in Arizona and New Mexico, determined that a release at this time would not be possible. After concerns were expressed by some of the partners the Service decided to step back and assess those considerations. The Service determined that additional time to plan and prepare for the release is needed to ensure the best possible outcome.

“We were hoping that a release this fall would signal our continued commitment to a successful recovery program, but the timing must be right for the wolves to have the very best chance for survival,” said Dr. Benjamin Tuggle, Regional Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife’s Southwest Region. “Although we have been working with our partners, we haven’t completed all of the necessary coordination and work, and in keeping faith with our commitments to our partners, and especially to the wolves, it became clear that the time isn’t right.”

“I believe that Dr. Tuggle made the right decision in delaying this release until conditions are optimum,” said Larry Voyles, Director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department. “We will continue to work with the Fish and Wildlife Service and our other partners to find common ground and ensure the success of this important program.”

“We will continue our efforts on the ground, and the coordination with our partners, until we determine the most favorable time for their release and we’ll move forward then,” said Tuggle.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of

lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department Mission:

To conserve, enhance, and restore Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and habitats through aggressive protection and management programs, and to provide wildlife resources and safe watercraft and off-highway vehicle recreation for the enjoyment, appreciation, and use by present and future generations.

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