

**From:** [Grizzle, Betty](#)  
**To:** [Sartorius, Shawn](#)  
**Subject:** Re: FYI - public comment re NM  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 11, 2017 11:07:32 AM  
**Attachments:** [Nelson Public Comment re wolverine in NM Nov 2016.pdf](#)

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Another public comment (see attached) from 2005, different area of New Mexico.

On Wed, Jan 11, 2017 at 7:58 AM, Sartorius, Shawn <[shawn\\_sartorius@fws.gov](mailto:shawn_sartorius@fws.gov)> wrote:

Thanks Betty,

Those kinds of observations are tantalizing for sure. People need to have cameras ready!

On Wed, Jan 11, 2017 at 8:23 AM, Grizzle, Betty <[betty\\_grizzle@fws.gov](mailto:betty_grizzle@fws.gov)> wrote:

Hi Shawn - I am reviewing the public comments submitted on the notice of the (re)proposed rule for the wolverine. I thought you might be interested in this one (see attached for pdf) about potential sighting in New Mexico. I spoke to Jim Stuart, NM Dept. Fish and Game, yesterday and he had not heard about this. As you know, very difficult to verify these observations without photograph.

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# PUBLIC SUBMISSION

<b>As of:</b> January 05, 2017
<b>Received:</b> November 17, 2016
<b>Status:</b> Posted
<b>Posted:</b> November 18, 2016
<b>Tracking No.</b> 1k0-8t3a-l3fb
<b>Comments Due:</b> November 17, 2016
<b>Submission Type:</b> Web

**Docket:** FWS-R6-ES-2016-0106

Threatened Status for the Distinct Population Segment of the North American Wolverine  
Occurring in the Contiguous United States

**Comment On:** FWS-R6-ES-2016-0106-0001

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants: North American Wolverine

**Document:** FWS-R6-ES-2016-0106-0218

Submitted Electronically via eRulemaking Portal

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## Submitter Information

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## General Comment

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Peggy Nelson. I have lived in Taos County, New Mexico for the last 43 years, and in California before that. While I am an attorney by training, and a retired District Court Judge, by passion and avocation I am a naturalist - hiker, backpacker, observer of our wild lands and animals. In part, I grew up following my geologist father during the summer time in the high desert mountains of California, and east slope of the Sierra Nevada. I learned to identify plants and animals, observe behavior, and keep track of what I have come to know. I currently live in a small community north of Taos, New Mexico, and regularly have deer, elk, turkeys, bobcats, coyotes and bears visit my property. Bird life is abundant and I keep track of the migratory comings and goings of many local birds. I have no formal training in wildlife biology or identification, but consider myself well versed in my surroundings.

During the 4th of July weekend of 2005, I was backpacking with three friends up the east fork of the Santa Barbara River of the Pecos Wilderness Area, in southern Taos County. We camped at the north side of a high, marshy meadow, which was flanked on the south by a skree slope leading up to a higher ridge, and ultimately Jicarrita Peak. Our camp was at about 10,000'. After

a leisurely breakfast, at about 9:00 or so, we all noticed a creature running back and forth across the scree slope. I got out my binoculars - as we all did - and we watched the comings and goings of an animal that seemed strange to us. At first I thought it was a bear cub, given the size, but it wasn't shaped like a bear (and I see lots of bears), and didn't move like a bear. I also wasn't sure what the size of a "this year's" cub would be in early July. We then speculated that it might be a badger, because we could discern a stripe down the side of the animal. But, having seen a badger a few years before, I knew that a badger would have been lower to the ground, and would have had more distinct markings on its side and face. This animal had longer legs, a dark face and a more muted stripe on its side and face. We left, wondering what we had seen.

When I returned home, I pulled out my reference book on North American Mammals, and immediately suspected we had seen a wolverine. About a month later, at a conference in Estes Park, CO, I saw a stuffed wolverine, and knew immediately that that was the animal we had seen. The size, shape and markings were consistent with what I had seen. My friends later confirmed their belief that we had witnessed a wolverine as well, after we all consulted all sources we had available to us. I believe that the thought of actually seeing a wolverine never crossed my mind because it was extirpated in the Sangre de Cristos and other areas long ago. But, there is absolutely no question in my mind that the animal was there, and we had seen it.

Shortly thereafter, we reported our sighting to a retired New Mexico Game and Fish Department wildlife biologist, who forwarded all the information to the NMGFD.

I would be happy to provide more specific information to the FWS if desired, or needed. There is no question in my mind that among the other wonders out there are wolverines in New Mexico.

Habitat for wolverines, and other snow dependent creatures is diminishing and all protection should be given to these animals and the habitat they need for survival.