MEXICAN WOLF/LIVESTOCK COEXISTENCE COUNCIL

2014 STRATEGIC PLAN

MEXICAN WOLF/LIVESTOCK
Long term plan for co-existence with Mexican Wolves
HEALTHY WESTERN LANDSCAPES
SELF SUSTA N NG WOLF POPULAT ONS
V ABLE RANCH NG
CO-EXISTENCE COUNCIL

MEXICAN WOLF/LIVESTOCK COEXISTENCE COUNCIL

The Mexican Wolf/Livestock Coexistence Council
is dedicated to supporting viable ranching,
self-sustaining wolf populations and healthy western
landscapes in the American Southwest.

Council Members
Sisto Hernandez, Chair - White Mountain Apache Tribe
Wink Crigler, Vice Chair - X Diamond Ranch, Arizona
Howard Hutchinson, Secretary - Coalition of Arizona and New Mexico Counties
Kay Gale - Eastern Arizona Counties Organization
Mike Ford - The Conservation Fund
April Howard - San Carlos Apache Tribe
Barbara Marks - Marks WY Bar Ranch
Craig Miller - Defenders of Wildlife
Sam Ryerson - Spur Lake Cattle Co., NM/AZ
Gene Whetten - Adobe Ranch, NM

In Association With U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Department of Agriculture, APHIS Wildlife Services, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Turner Endangered Species Fund.

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INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

Who We Are

In 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service convened a diverse group of interests impacted by or involved with wolf recovery efforts in the Southwest U.S. The Mexican Wolf/Livestock Coexistence Council consists of ranchers from Arizona and New Mexico, conservation groups (Defenders of Wildlife and The Conservation Fund), Native American tribes (San Carlos Apache Tribe and White Mountain Apache Tribe), and two coalitions that represent rural counties in New Mexico and Arizona. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Department of Agriculture-APHIS Wildlife Services, and Turner Endangered Species Fund act as liaisons to the Council. The Coexistence Council also works with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), a registered 501(c)3, to administer the Mexican Wolf/Livestock Interdiction Fund at the direction of the Coexistence Council.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service challenged our group to use our collective experience and problem solving skills to develop a long-term, innovative solution to wolf/livestock conflicts. Our first task was to develop guidelines for paying depredation compensation (see appendix). We then worked throughout 2011 and 2012 to develop the program described herein to help achieve three interdependent goals: *viable ranching, self-sustaining wolf populations, and healthy western landscapes.*

This strategic plan was collaboratively developed by the Council Members to articulate the wide range of perspectives around wolf recovery efforts. Individual council members may differ in their descriptions of and strategies for some issues in this document, but we are united in our efforts to support our three interdependent goals.

> "Recovering the Mexican gray wolf must be accomplished on a working landscape. Together, through stakeholder collaboration, we can achieve a balance of activities that sustain economically viable ranching operations and a genetically robust population of wild wolves. This plan is a significant step in that direction."
>
> -Dr. Benjamin Tuggle
> Southwest Regional Director
> U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Our Challenge

Working ranches are an important part of the American West, both for the economic contributions they make to rural communities and for the food production they provide to society. Western ranches also use and rely upon natural areas that provide important habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species. In the American Southwest, many ranches include or abut expansive landscapes, which are important to the recovery of endangered Mexican gray wolves. Ranchers, conservationists, land managers, and the general public agree that such important areas should be managed to help maintain or restore, where necessary, functioning ecosystems. While many recognize the ecological role wolves play, wolf presence brings new and unwelcomed challenges including financial impacts to ranchers in the Southwest.

After the first fifteen years of reintroducing Mexican gray wolves to the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (BRWRA), a 4.4 million acre area within the Apache and Gila National Forests in Arizona and New Mexico, finding a solution to these long-standing conflicts is essential for the future of the wolves and those who live on the land. It requires a new approach that balances the needs of people, predators and livestock over the long term.

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Understanding the Range of Perspectives

The Coexistence Council has been working to understand conflicting perceptions and values, and to bridge the gap between the ranching advocates' perspective of wolves as a liability and wolf advocates' perspective of wolves as an asset. The only way to do that has been to put everything on the table, including suspicion and fear, and seek common ground. Although strongly held values, identities and interests were colliding over the wolf recovery issue, we were still hopeful given the knowledge that electricity, one of our world's greatest inventions, was also brought about by bringing polar opposites together. The Coexistence Council accepted the risks of having to moderate closely held values while crafting and endorsing this plan. The following describes the range of perspectives our group was challenged to understand and bridge using new and creative solutions.

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Ranching Advocates' Perspectives

To say ranchers felt put upon by the arrival of the endangered Mexican gray wolf in Arizona and New Mexico is an understatement. Livestock producers were already dealing with mountain lions, bears, coyotes, broken gates, wildly fluctuating cattle prices, prolonged drought, and growing government bureaucracy. Then the wolves, which previous generations had fought hard to get rid of, were back. Along with these predators came livestock losses, more governmental rules and regulations, and worry. Today, a growing wolf popoulation concerns ranchers that a few losses might turn into many, that government sponsored reintroduction will inject additional interference into their businesses, that they may lose their ranches, that wolves may negatively impact wild game or introduce disease, and that the reintroduction program is just another way for special interest groups to run them off the land. Most of all, ranchers worry that their heritage, lifestyle, and family businesses, based on ranching and outfitting, might slowly disappear, resulting in further fragmented and diminished Western landscapes.

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Wolf Advocates' Perspectives

Wolf advocates view the reintroduction of wolves much differently. They believe the Mexican gray wolves, the most endangered wolves anywhere, were wrongly reduced to only a handful of survivors in the wild and are back from the brink of extinction after decades of hard work and dedication. They consider the recovery effort to be a high conservation priority because it involves the only wild wolves of their kind anywhere in the world and the wolves played an important role in shaping southwestern landscapes. The recovery of a handful of wolves and their pups and the repopulation of their old haunts, could make the land healthier and more productive, while helping other species thrive including humans. Based on wolf advocates' experience, Mexican gray wolves can bring much needed tourist dollars to rural towns needing an economic boost. To them, wolf recovery is an opportunity to right a wrong of the past, and any hardship to ranchers and landowners is a small price to pay and easy to address.

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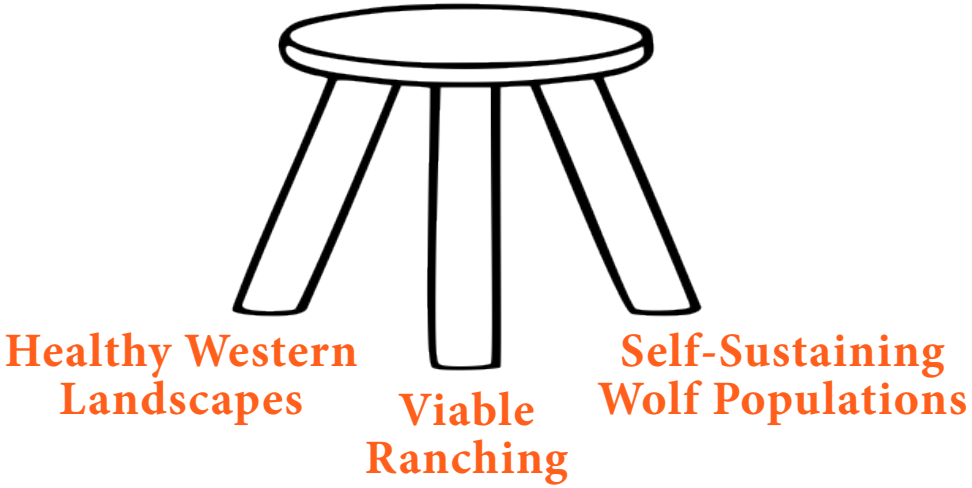
Key Aspects of Our Program

Despite these polarized perspectives, the Coexistence Council was able to find common ground where our interests overlapped, what we call our three legged stool: viable ranching, self-sustaining wolf populations, and healthy western landscapes. We believe these three interdependent goals support each other and promise a brighter future for wildlife and people and the landscape on which we all depend, like the way three legs interact to support a stool.

Guided by these three goals, we developed a unique and innovative program. It is based on a review of compensation plans from around the world coupled with the considerable and collective experience of ranchers who have been living in wolf country, as well as program managers skilled in the use of conflict avoidance and compensation measures. We believe our program has the greatest chance of success because members of the impacted communities have developed it and will oversee its implementation. The program is comprised of three core strategies.

Our Long-term Vision:



Strategy I: Payments for Wolf Presence

Our program recognizes that there are real economic consequences to livestock producers coexisting with wolves. In addition to known wolf kills, other examples of impacts include undetected depredations, and changes in livestock behavior that can result in a reduction of livestock weight gain/reproductive rates, meat quality and increased management costs. The Coexistence Council will seek out and administer funds that are made available to affected livestock producers using a yearly application process. The program will provide payments based on a formula that includes the presence of wolves, number of livestock exposed to wolves, and the rancher's participation in proactive conflict avoidance measures. Eligible applicants are those with private lands or grazing allotments in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (BRWRA), the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, the San Carlos Apache Reservation, and private lands adjacent to the BRWRA.

Strategy II: Funding for Conflict Avoidance Measures

Up to 50% of the yearly budgeted funds will be available to support the voluntary implementation of conflict avoidance measures. Tools and techniques such as increased human presence, timed calving, range riders, turbo fladry (temporary electric fencing with flagging), and use of alternate pastures are just a few of the approaches that have been used successfully to keep both livestock and wolves safe. These strategies will not be effective in every situation, but we will be available to provide recommendations to producers and state, federal, and tribal agencies regarding the most appropriate and effective tools.

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Strategy III: Funding for Depredation Compensation

The program will continue to provide compensation for livestock death or injury in instances that are not addressed in Strategies 1 and 2. Livestock producers already in the program may also apply for depredation compensation if they require immediate reimbursement. However, the reimbursement amount will be subtracted from the member's Strategy I – Payment for Presence allocation.

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GETTING INTO THE DETAILS

A Short History of the Mexican Gray Wolf

The Mexican gray wolf is considered the most endangered land mammal in North American and is considered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (ICUN) as the highest priority for wolf conservation worldwide. Mexican gray wolves once ranged from the southwest U.S. through central Mexico. Conflicts with human expansion and livestock production in the west led to the extirpation of Mexican gray wolf populations in the United States and Mexico by the 1970s and 1980s respectively. Mexican gray wolves were protected by the Endangered Species Act in 1976, three years after the passage of the Act. This prompted focus on reintroduction efforts in eastern Arizona and western New Mexico to restore wild populations and save the species from extinction.

In 1977 and 1980, the last known wild Mexican gray wolves were captured in Durango and Chihuahua, Mexico to establish a captive breeding population. In 1995, two additional lineages of pure Mexican gray wolves already in captivity were integrated into the captive breeding program to increase the founder population to seven. The first Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Plan was completed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1982 and, while it did not provide recovery criteria for delisting, the plan did provide an interim objective to ensure survival of Mexican gray wolves by maintaining a captive breeding program and reestablishing a self-sustaining population of at least 100 Mexican gray wolves. We now have a captive population of between 240 and 300 Mexican gray wolves in about 50 captive breeding facilities in the U.S. and Mexico. This captive population is derived from the original seven founder wolves and is the sole source of Mexican gray wolf genetics available to reestablish the species.

The Mexican gray wolf reintroduction project requires intensive management of the genetic integrity of both the wild and captive populations because the captive population was established with so few founding wolves.

In 1998, the first 11 captive-reared Mexican gray wolves were released in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area. The Blue Range Mexican gray wolves are now successfully moving from a largely captive-released population to a wild one. The population in the Blue Range has grown from 50 to at least 83 adult wolves in the last four years.

Despite this progress, the population hasn't grown as rapidly as projected and has been oscillating between 40 and 83 known (documented) radio-collared and un-collared wolves since 2003. The primary factors limiting further population growth appear to be poor pup survival, project-approved management removals of wolves in response to livestock depredation and/or for wandering outside of the recovery area boundary, and lawful and unlawful wolf mortalities. In recent years, wildlife managers have placed greater emphasis on conflict avoidance to help the population grow.

Natural reproduction and recruitment of wild wolves is the preferred method of population growth. By the end of 2013 the population grew to 83 wolves, 100 percent of which were wild born. Due to the limited number of founding wolves, genetic diversity guides pairings and management decisions, including removals and releases.

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The History of the Cattle Industry in the Southwest

Cattle raising began in earnest in the Southwest in the Spanish-Mexican era dating back to the 1700's. The first cattle to set foot in the Southwest may have been brought in from Mexico by Francisco Coronado in 1540 for supplying meat to the expeditions searching for Cibola. The first permanent herds were those brought by the legendary Father Kino, who saw a need to plan for ample provisions for future expanding populations. Cattle populations waned as new settler/Indian conflicts intensified in the mid 1800's. Other historical factors, such as hungry trekkers seeking out remnants of the Spanish herds during the Gold Rush, further depleted cattle populations.

In the mid to late 1800's, the federal government, in its desire to encourage westward expansion, enacted numerous laws and measures to encourage the regrowth of the cattle industry in the Southwest. For example, to support the increasing military presence (which had already decimated native wildlife), beef cattle with drovers were driven in from surrounding states, particularly Texas, which was facing a severe draught. One military post contract called for 500,000 pounds of meat in 60 days. Other laws recognized the existing rights to grazing lands and water.

Numerous challenges continue to face ranches – deemed by President Theodore Roosevelt as "the greatest existence of all." Weather, predator problems, government mandates, and markets have set the stage today for the smallest supply of beef animals in this country since about 1950. Today, rapidly rising prices and unfortunate fragmentation of Roosevelt's "great free ranches with their picturesque and fascinating surroundings," are threatening the ranching industry and their families. Ranching creates vital communities, maintains open spaces and natural habitats and is central to sustaining healthy western landscapes.

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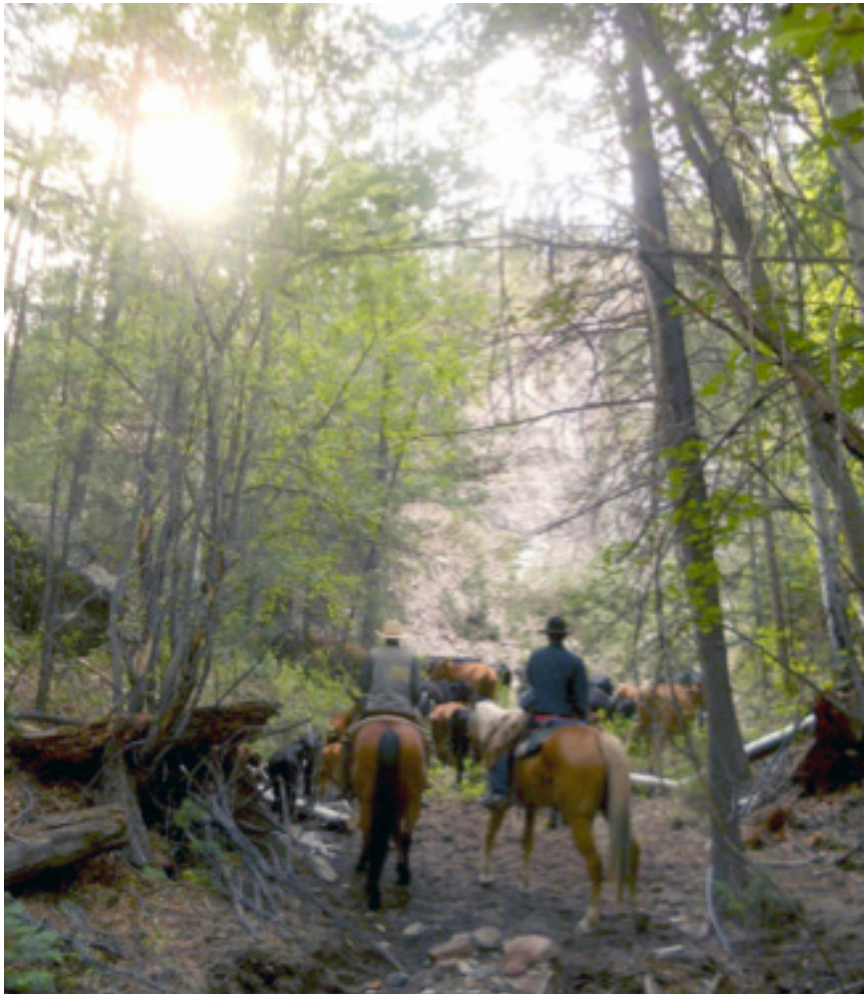

Healthy Western Landscapes

Healthy western landscapes are vitally important to the environmental, social and economic fabric of the Western states. Maintaining intact ranches across the west and ensuring self-sustaining wolf populations must be supported by meaningful, ongoing collaboration that serves to socially, ecologically and economically promote healthy western landscapes and the multiple benefits they provide.

A Deeper Understanding of the Challenges

Wolf presence poses new challenges for ranchers in the Southwest. The best available wolf habitat is found in landscapes that have been carefully managed by livestock producers for many decades, where water sources have been maintained and improved, and where rangelands have been kept open to support cattle and sheep, as well as wild game - the natural prey of wolves.

During the first 15 years of the Mexican gray wolf recovery program, the conservation group Defenders of Wildlife managed a compensation system for confirmed and probable depredations. Some ranchers, however, viewed it as inadequate because it did not fully address the costs experienced by ranchers due to wolf presence. In addition to direct losses from wolf depredation, livestock producers also incur economic impacts from the altered behavior of livestock in the presence of wolves resulting in reduced weight gain, lower reproductive success, reduced meat quality and increased prices for consumers.

Additionally, wolves are territorial and can present a danger to working dogs and pets. Some also fear for their own health, safety and the well-being of their children.

Finally, the wolf recovery program has brought increased federal and state agency presence, as well as heightened media attention, public scrutiny and pressure to change traditional management techniques. Community life has been interrupted by a daunting schedule of meetings.

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"The long-term vision of the Coexistence Council is an excellent model that will reap benefits for people and natural resources now and far into the future."

-Cal Joyner
Regional Forester for Southwestern Region
USDA Forest Service

The Depredation Compensation Program created even more contention due to the problematic process for determining the causes of livestock deaths and missing livestock. In the rough and remote country of the Wolf Recovery Area, the cause of death can be difficult to identify by the time livestock carcasses are found. It is not uncommon for livestock to simply disappear. The true costs of ranching in wolf country involve more variables than direct death losses. The program intensified conflict among the plurality of stakeholders rather than serving as a solution.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, depredation compensation programs are reactive in nature and provide no sustainable long-term incentive or operational mechanism for livestock producers to become more tolerant of wolf presence and activity within their shared landscapes. Based on the shortcomings of previous depredation compensation plans and first hand experiences of impacted ranchers, our approach more fairly addresses the costs to ranchers for coexisting with wolves. The Coexistence Council's program creates incentives for ranching in ways that promote self-sustaining Mexican gray wolf populations, viable ranching operations and healthy western landscapes – the three-legged stool that supports the Coexistence Council's long-term vision.

"The Mexican gray wolf reintroduction project is one of the most (if not the most) controversial and contentious species recovery efforts in the country; and the Mexican Wolf/Livestock Coexistence Council's construction of an appropriately incentivized and balanced model for working landscapes represents a truly vital step in the advancement of conservation efforts consistent with the group's stated vision of simultaneously supporting viable ranching, self-sustaining wolf populations and healthy western landscapes."

-Larry Voyles
Director
Arizona Game and Fish Department

More Information about Our Program

Our program is designed to reduce livestock/wolf conflicts and the need for management removals of depredating or nuisance wolves. In addition, our program will support livestock producers, the values embedded in the western landscapes, and the growth of wild Mexican gray wolf populations through natural reproduction and recruitment.

Landowners and livestock producers within and adjacent to the BRWRA can apply to participate in the program. This initial action also establishes an on-going relationship with the Coexistence Council. The Coexistence Council will administer the program and we will use our discretion in special circumstances - recognizing that there may be incomplete data at some wolf locations. The program's five components (strategies) are described in further detail in the following pages.

Core Program Strategies:

- *Strategy 1* - Funding for Wolf Presence
- *Strategy 2* - Funding for Conflict Avoidance Measures
- *Strategy 3* - Funding for Depredation Compensation

Outreach/Education and Evaluation Strategies

- *Strategy 4* - Coordination, Communication, Information and Education
- *Strategy 5* - Evaluation, Oversight and Program Modification

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Strategy 1: Funding for Wolf Presence

The program will provide funding to landowners and livestock producers for coexisting with wolves, especially livestock within a territory or the core area of a wolf pack. The funding will offset the business losses that livestock producers experience from having wolves on or near their livestock operations (e.g., undetected depredations, reduction of livestock weight, increased management costs). This funding is intended to reduce the need for management removals of wolves and to increase the number of wolves in a working landscape.

The amount available each year will be divided among eligible livestock producers who have applied to participate in the program. The Coexistence Council will consider the following factors to determine how the fund will be distributed among the applicants.

Factors

- Is the applicant's land or grazing lease in a wolf territory?
- Is applicant's land or grazing lease in a wolf core area (e.g. den or rendezvous area)?
- Are there wolf pups that survived to December 31 in the territory or core area? This factor recognizes that the survival of the pups is not dependent upon the rancher.
- Is the applicant implementing proactive conflict avoidance measures?
- How many livestock are exposed to wolf presence?

The Formula for each applicant will be tallied as follows:

- Step 1: *Core Area*/2 points per core area + *Territory*/1 point per territory + *Wolf Pups*/1 point per pup = **Subtotal A**
- Step 2: Subtotal A is multiplied by 2 if applicant is implement ing *Conflict Avoidance Measures* = **Subtotal B**
- Step 3: The *Number of Livestock* (cow/calf is 1; yearling is 0.5) that are exposed to wolves is divided by 100 = **Subtotal C**
- Step 4: *Subtotal B* is multiplied by *Subtotal C* = **Grand Total**

The grand total for an individual applicant will be divided by the sum of all grand totals received in a year to develop an individual percentage. The applicant will receive that percentage of the budgeted funds available in a given year.

The data for determining the wolf territories, wolf core areas, and the number of pups that survive to December 31 of the year of their birth will be derived from the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team's (IFT) annual monitoring as reported in the Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Annual Report (refer to Strategy 5). Eventually, as fewer wolves are equipped with radio collars and the recovery program moves away from such intensive management, ranchers' own reports of wolf sign, including photographs and trail camera images, will become more important in the calculation for wolf territories.

Strategy 2: Funding for Conflict Avoidance Measures

Though the Coexistence Council expects U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to continue to improve its efforts to manage the wolf populations especially in circumstances of escalating conflict, we will provide funding assistance to livestock producers for implementing wolf/livestock conflict avoidance measures. Sharing the experiences of ranchers and wildlife managers who have been living with wolves will help improve the capacity of communities and individuals to better manage wolves and livestock to reduce conflicts.

Tools and techniques such as increased human presence, timed calving, range riders, use of alternate pastures, supplemental feeding and turbo-fladry are just a few approaches that have proven effective in individual situations to keep both livestock and wolves safe. It is important to note that no particular approach will be effective in every situation. While the livestock producer will determine the best approach for his/her ranch, the Coexistence Council will make the final evaluations on funding for that approach based on discussions with the applicant and available funds. Up to 50% of the yearly budgeted funds will be available for implementation of conflict avoidance measures. Eligible applicants are those with Mexican gray wolf presence.

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"By working together where our interests overlap we will turn this long-standing conflict into an asset to help ensure a future for imperiled wildlife and for those who assist with their return."

-Craig Miller
Senior Southwest Representative
Defenders of Wildlife

Strategy 3: Funding for Wolf Depredations

The program will continue to provide compensation for livestock death or injury in instances that are not addressed in Strategies 1 and 2. Livestock producers already in the program may also apply for depredation compensation if they require immediate reimbursement. However, the reimbursement amount will be subtracted from the member's Strategy I – Pay for Presence allocation.

To be eligible to receive depredation compensation from the Coexistence Council, USDA Wildlife Services needs to determine the loss as "confirmed" or "probable." (refer to USDA Wildlife Services Criteria for Classification of Reported Depredation Incidents, page 20). Payment amounts will be established by the Coexistence Council based on market value.

The Service will forward the depredation report and request for compensation to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for payment from the Interdiction Fund directly to the livestock producer. Probable depredations will be paid at a rate of 50 percent of confirmed depredations. Injured animals may also be compensated at the discretion of the Coexistence Council. If livestock other than cattle or sheep are depredated by wolves, compensation will be based on the class of livestock depredated. Working dogs that are depredated by wolves may also be compensated. The request for compensation must be accompanied by the same information that is required for cattle depredations.

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Strategy 4: Coordination, Communication, Information, and Education

The dynamic and adaptive nature of the plan demands a high level of coordination, collaboration, and communication among partners. While the Coexistence Council will remain the core body to share and discuss information and issues, this effort will need a Program Coordinator to be successful. The Program Coordinator will work with the Coexistence Council, agencies, and livestock producers to help oversee the implementation of conflict avoidance measures, communicate with livestock producers regarding the management of wolves in their area, disseminate accurate information to all involved parties, seek funding for the continued implementation of our program, and assist the Coexistence Council in conducting annual assessments including an annual report evaluating the success of the plan and recommending appropriate modifications.

We all agree, maybe for the first time ever. We're in this together for three things: viable ranching, self-sustaining wolf populations, and healthy western landscapes."

-Sisto Hernandez
Chair
Mexican Wolf/Livestock Coexistence Council

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Strategy 5: Evaluation, Oversight, and Program Modification

Evaluation, oversight and program modification form the backbone of any successful program.

The Coexistence Council will assess the program on a yearly basis to:

- Annually set the budget for the amount of funds to apply to Strategies 1-3
- Monitor payments to determine whether changes are needed to improve the fairness of the formula
- Determine if the program is achieving its goals

The Coexistence Council will consider the following as it works to refine and improve its program related to its three interactive goals: *self-sustaining wolf populations, viable ranching, and healthy western landscapes.*

Self-Sustaining Wolf Population Program Evaluation

Throughout the year the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team (IFT) monitors Mexican gray wolves in the BRWRA. In January of each year, the IFT conducts a thorough population count. The monitoring data in the annual report includes the minimum number of wolves in the BRWRA, the number of packs and breeding pairs, the area of each pack's territory, and core area and the minimum number of pups that survived to December 31 of the year of their birth. These data will be used to determine the allocation of funds to each eligible applicant, according to the formula in Strategy 1. The annual reports can be found at http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/.

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The annual monitoring data is a measure of the success of the Mexican gray wolf population in the BRWRA, as well as the success of the Coexistence Council's program. Several metrics should be tracked by the Coexistence Council, including removal rate of wolves due to cattle depredations, population size, pup survival rates, mortality rates and the rate of missing of wolves. Any one of these metrics should not be considered as a definitive answer as to whether the program is working, but collectively they could help paint a picture of one of the important components of our program (Self-sustaining Wolf Populations). We would compare these numbers to a five-year average prior to the initiation of our program (e.g. 2009).

Viable Ranching Program Evaluation

To develop a full picture we also need to evaluate our viable ranching goal. We recognize that a variety of factors may play into viable ranching operations, just like a variety of factors influence self-sustaining wolf populations. Several core factors to consider will be the number of new applicants, participants who continue in the program, wolf depredations per 100 wolves, and participants using conflict avoidance measures. The Coexistence Council could also conduct periodic operation surveys to assess, over time, the number of cattle exposed, weight, and calf crop of participating ranchers. The Coexistence Council may also use county tax revenue data to track trends in revenue from livestock. Finally, the Coexistence Council may count/evaluate the number, quality and veracity of wolf reports by ranchers.

Healthy Western Landscapes Program Evaluation

Self-sustaining wolf populations and viable ranching are vital components of healthy western landscapes. We may also consider trends in subdivision applications, prevalence of wildfire and pervasiveness of invasive species.

Financial Justification

The Coexistence Council will need to hire a Program Coordinator to raise program funds, conduct outreach, and coordinate the work of the Coexistence Council. This budget reflects our needs for year one – getting the program up and running and setting the stage for future growth.

Project Budget Need - Year 1	
Payments for Wolf Presence	$250,000
Conflict Avoidance Measures	$250,000
Program Coordinator Salary	$50,000
Travel	$9,000
Monitoring	$4,000
Administration	$12,000
Outreach	$10,000
Fundraising	$10,000
Communication	$8,000
Coordination	$6,000
Compensation	$25,000
Year 1 Total	$634,000

Summary: Our Three Legged Stool

Our program is a unique performance-based approach developed by stakeholders most affected by wolves and vested in the success of the program. It recognizes and attempts to address the costs to ranchers for hosting viable populations of wolves while supporting livestock management practices to reduce conflicts. It also facilitates the sharing of information from wildlife managers and ranchers with experience in wolf/livestock conflict avoidance.

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AT A GLANCE

This chart briefly lays out the key program strategies, the issues that they address, and the tangible results of our three legged stool: ***Self-sustaining Wolf Populations, Viable Ranching, and Healthy Western Landscapes.***

	Self-Sustaining Wolf Populations	Viable Ranching	Healthy Western Landscapes
Program Strategies	Funding is provided for: • Wolf presence • Conflict avoidance measures • Depredation Compensation	Funding is provided for: • Wolf presence • Conflict avoidance measures • Depredation compensation	Funding is provided for: • Wolf presence • Conflict avoidance measures • Depredation compensation
Issues Addressed	Reduces: • Wolf/livestock conflicts • Wolf removals • Social intolerance of wolves	Reduces: • Impacts to livestock (depredation, weight loss, etc.) • Economics impacts to livestock operations	Reduces: • Fragmentation and degradation of healthy western landscapes
Tangible Results	Increases: • Breeding pairs • Pup survival • Intact packs	Reduces: • Ranching instability	Supports: • Large, open areas • Improved forage production for elk (the primary food source for wolves and for livestock) • Improved adaptive management of wolf populations in balance with livestock and wildlife populations • Promotes delivery of ecosystem services

DEPREDATION COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in cooperation with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, established the Mexican Wolf /Livestock Interdiction Trust Fund (Trust Fund) on September 23, 2009. The objective of the Trust Fund is to generate long-term funding for prolonged financial support to livestock operators within the framework of cooperative conservation and recovery of Mexican gray wolf populations in the Southwest. Funding will be applied to initiatives that address management, monitoring, and other proactive conservation needs for Mexican gray wolves as they relate to livestock, including alternative livestock husbandry practices, grazing management alternatives, livestock protection, measures to avoid and minimize depredation, habitat protection, species protection, scientific research, conflict resolution, compensation for damage, education, and outreach activities.

In April 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service appointed an 11-member Mexican Wolf/Livestock Coexistence Council, which has the authority to identify, recommend, and approve conservation activities, identify recipients, and approve the amount of the direct disbursement of Trust Funds to qualified recipients. The Coexistence Council has developed these Depredation Compensation Guidelines to compensate livestock producers for wolf depredations.

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Process:

If livestock owners suspect they have incurred a livestock death or injury due to wolves:

- We recommend that you protect the evidence. Agency experts suggest covering the remains when possible and keeping the site undisturbed by other animals/people to preserve evidence in the area.
- Contact a local USDA APHIS-Wildlife Services (Wildlife Service) field representative, Tribal investigator, or the Interagency Field Team, who will coordinate an investigation, including meeting the livestock owner at an appropriate time and place. The Investigator will provide a completed Depredation Report Form to the owner/manager of the animal. The Depredation Report Form should provide a reasonable and complete record of evidence based on the Wildlife Services' "Criteria for Classification of Reported Depredation Incidents."

    - NM Wildlife Services: 575-533-6252
    - AZ Wildlife Services: Sterling Simpson: 928-322-1125
    - Interagency Field Team in Alpine, AZ: 888-459-9653 or 928-339-4329
    - White Mountain Apache Tribe: Cynthia Dale: 928-338-4385 or Sisto Hernandez: 928-338-1404 or shernadez@wmat.us
    - San Carlos Apache Tribe: 928-475-2343 or Dewey Wesley: 928-200-0565

- If the Investigator verifies in the Depredation Report Form that wolves were the cause, or probable cause, of the depredation (death or injury), the livestock owner can seek compensation from the Coexistence Council by submitting the following information:

(1) A completed copy of the Depredation Report Form that was prepared by Wildlife Services, a Tribal investigator, or a member of the IFT that determines that the death or injury was confirmed and/or probable wolf depredation.
(2) The requested claim for depredation compensation
(3) Complete contact information for the livestock owner including phone number, mailing address, Tax Identification Number, and best time to contact in case we have questions.

- Please submit the information above within 6 months of receiving your Depredation Report Form from the Investigator.

Payment will be as follows (may change based on market value):

Domestic Cattle		*Domestic Sheep*	
Calf:	$ 800	Lamb:	$225
Yearling:	$1,200	Ewe:	$225
Cow:	$1,450	Ram:	$750
Bull:	$2,500		

- Claims for compensation that differ from the market values provided above will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Coexistence Council. The claim should be accompanied by a rationale and documentation for the different value.
- Probable depredations of cattle and sheep will be compensated at a rate of 50 percent of confirmed depredations.
- Injured cattle and sheep may also be compensated at the discretion of the Coexistence Council.
- If livestock other than cattle or sheep are depredated by wolves, compensation will be determined at the discretion of the Coexistence Council, based on the timing of the depredation event and class of livestock that was depredated. The request for compensation must be accompanied by the same information that is required for cattle and sheep depredations and sent to the Mexican Wolf/ Livestock Coexistence Council at the address below.
- If pets are depredated by wolves, compensation will be determined at the discretion of the Coexistence Council and based on the claim and estimated value of the animal. The request for compensation must be accompanied by the same information that is required for cattle and sheep depredations and sent to the Mexican Wolf Recovery Coordinator at the address below.

Send Information to:

Mexican Wolf/Livestock Coexistence Council
2105 Osuna Road NE
Albuquerque, NM 87113
Phone: (505) 761-4748
Email: Info@CoexistenceCouncil.org

The Depredation Report Form and claim request will be submitted to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for payment from the Trust Fund directly to the livestock producer.

Other available programs:

- *Defenders of Wildlife Compensation Program*: Compensation payments from Defenders of Wildlife ended September 11, 2010 when funds were transferred to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for use at the discretion of the Coexistence Council. Funds for proactive (e.g. preventative) projects are still available to livestock producers. Contact Craig Miller at 520-623-9653 x 101.
- Mexican Wolf Fund. Private funds/grants are available for proactive projects. This program funds proactive measures, but does not compensate for livestock losses related to the Mexican gray wolf. Contact Patrick Valentino at http://mexicanwolfconservationfund.

GLOSSARY

Core Area: An intensively used activity center (inclusive of dens and rendezvous sites) of a wolf or wolf pack within a territory. We will use the area with a 0.50 probability of occurrence (density contour of a fixed kernel home range estimator) to define a core area for territorial wolves.

Territory: A routinely used area that a wolf or wolf pack has a 0.95 probability of occurrence within during a calender year based on aerial telemetry or GPS-collar locations and aggressively defends from other wolves. Single wolves that are dispersing or moving randomly across the landscape do not have a territory. We will use the 0.95 density contour of a fixed kernel home range estimator to define this area.

Turbo Fladry: Electric fence with red flagging installed around livestock holding pastures and private property to discourage wolf utilization inside the perimeter.

Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area

Mexican Wolf/Livestock Coexistence Council
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