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From: Martinez, Elizabeth (USANM)
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Subject: TWO MEN PLEAD GUILTY TO FEDERAL MISDEMEANOR CHARGES RELATED TO KILLING OF MEXICAN GRAY WOLVES



*U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales
District of New Mexico*

PRESS RELEASE

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**TWO MEN PLEAD GUILTY TO FEDERAL MISDEMEANOR CHARGES
RELATED TO KILLING OF MEXICAN GRAY WOLVES**

ALBUQUERQUE – On September 28, 2011, in Las Cruces federal court, two men entered guilty pleas to federal misdemeanor charges arising out of separate incidents during which each man killed a Mexican gray wolf. Each man was charged with taking or possessing a Mexican gray wolf that was part of the Mexican Gray Wolf Experimental Population Area without a permit, a Class B misdemeanor.

Jack Bruton, 60, of Magdalena, in Socorro County, N.M., was cited for killing a Mexican gray wolf on April 15, 2010. Court records reflect that Bruton shot and killed a wolf after misidentifying the wolf as a coyote. After realizing that he had killed a Mexican gray wolf, Bruton transported the wolf to his residence where he removed the GPS collar worn by the wolf. After burying the wolf in a remote location, Bruton destroyed the GPS collar and buried it in a different remote location. On April 28, 2010, law enforcement officials interviewed Bruton after recovering the buried wolf's remains. Bruton cooperated and assisted the officers in locating the destroyed GPS collar. After Bruton entered his guilty plea, a United States Magistrate Judge imposed a \$250 fine on Bruton, and ordered him to pay \$4,095 in restitution, including \$2,095 to cover the value of the destroyed GPS device.

Ron Rains, 57, of Reserve, in Catron County, N.M., was cited for killing a Mexican gray wolf on December 2, 2010. According to the citation, while driving through the Apache National Forest near his residence, Rains shot and killed the wolf after misidentifying it as a coyote. After realizing that the dead animal

was a wolf, Rains reported the incident to law enforcement. Court records reflect that, two days earlier, Rains had been notified that a wolf was in the vicinity of the area in which he killed the wolf. The Magistrate Judge imposed a fine of \$250 on Rains, and ordered him to pay \$1000 in restitution.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the cases were investigated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, and were prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jacob Wishard.

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