



# News Release

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Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas) <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/>

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## **Wolf Biologist Receives the Jim McDonough Award**

The Wildlife Society announced this year's recipient of the prestigious Jim McDonough award is U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist and Mexican Wolf Recovery Program team leader, John R. Morgart, Ph.D. Morgart received the award Sunday at The Wildlife Society's annual meeting in Tucson.

The Jim McDonough award recognizes the "unsung heroes" who make significant contributions to wildlife conservation through the implementation of new approaches or techniques, with little or no praise for doing so. Only certified wildlife biologists are eligible for the award.

"John's leadership has been essential in our efforts to recover the Mexican Wolf in the Southwest," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southwest Regional Director Benjamin N. Tuggle, Ph.D. "It takes someone with exceptional abilities in both the biological and sociological sciences to work successfully with the diverse stakeholders involved in wolf recovery activities in New Mexico and Arizona. John has worked tirelessly with all interested parties to help ensure the success of the recovery program."

Morgart, who has spent more than 30 years in the service of wildlife, is well respected by his colleagues and coworkers. During his expansive career, Morgart has worked for the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Morgart has been a certified wildlife biologist since 1982. He has lived and worked in the southwest to Alaska and back.

As the team leader for Mexican Wolf Recovery Program, Morgart is responsible for overseeing the reintroduction and recovery activities for the endangered Mexican wolf in the southwestern United States. His biological expertise, coupled with and his ability to balance the concerns of a wide variety of stakeholders in managing the Service's Mexican Wolf reintroduction efforts, has earned him the respect of the scientific community, the landowners within the recovery area, and the many other government entities and interest groups involved in the recovery program.

Prior to coming to Albuquerque in 2004 to coordinate the Service's Mexican Wolf Recovery Program, Morgart led the Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery Team at Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Arizona.

The Wildlife Society, founded in 1937, is an international non-profit scientific and educational association dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. Its mission is to enhance the ability of wildlife professionals to conserve diversity, sustain productivity, and ensure responsible use of wildlife resources for the benefit of society.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 97-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 547 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 63 fish, wildlife management offices, and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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