

WOLF PUBLIC HEARING

6:00 p.m.
August 13, 2014
Civic Center
400 W. Fourth Street
Truth or Consequences, New Mexico

TRATTEL COURT REPORTING & VIDEOGRAPHY
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<p>1 OFFICIALS PRESENT: 2 HEARING OFFICER: 3 4 TRAVERS CONSULTING 5 125 College Drive 6 Casper, Wyoming 82601 7 BY: LESLEY TRAVERS, PhD. 8 307-268-2448 9 ltravers@caspercollege.edu 10 11 DR. BENJAMIN N. TUGGLE, 12 Southwest Regional Director 13 MS. SHERRY BARRETT, 14 US Fish and Wildlife Service's 15 Mexican Wolf Recovery 16 Coordinator 17 18 MS. TRACY MELBIHESS 19 Mexican Wolf Listing, 20 Recovery and NEPA Coordinator 21 22 23 24 25</p>	<p>1 (Applause.) 2 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: State Senator William 3 Soules, District 37. 4 (Applause.) 5 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: And Walter Armijo, 6 Sierra County commissioner. 7 (Applause.) 8 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: I would also like to 9 recognize the following representatives from the U.S. 10 Fish and Wildlife Service who are in attendance today. 11 Dr. Benjamin Tuggle, Southwest Regional Director. 12 (Applause.) 13 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Ms. Sherry Barrett, 14 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Mexican Wolf Recovery 15 coordinator. 16 Ms. Tracy Melbihess, Mexican Wolf Listing, 17 Recovery and NEPA Coordinator. 18 And the many Fish and Wildlife Service 19 officials from the Southwest Region and Arizona Field 20 Offices, Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge, and the 21 U.S. Forest Service that are staffing the hearing today. 22 Also assisting with this hearing is Deborah 23 Trattel, our court reporter from Trattel Court 24 Reporting. 25 At this point, I'll turn the floor over to</p>
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<p>1 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Good evening. On 2 behalf of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, I 3 welcome you to this public hearing regarding the 4 proposal to revise the Nonessential Experimental 5 Population Rule for the Mexican wolf and to seek comment 6 on the accompanying draft Environmental Impact 7 Statement. 8 My name is Lesley Travers. I will be your 9 hearing officer today. My company is Travers 10 Consulting, and I am not affiliated with U.S. Fish and 11 Wildlife Service, and I don't represent them. I 12 represent no point of view with respect to the proposal 13 that is the subject of this hearing. 14 My role is to conduct this hearing in an 15 orderly manner such that we receive your comments 16 accurately into the record. I would like to recognize a 17 number of people. 18 Crystal Diamond, Soil Water Conservation 19 District. 20 (Applause.) 21 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Jim Wood, Deming Soil 22 and Water board member. 23 (Applause.) 24 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Billy G. Garrett, 25 Dona Ana County commissioner.</p>	<p>1 Dr. Tuggle and Mrs. Barrett. They will provide opening 2 remarks, and Ms. Melbihess will give a brief PowerPoint 3 presentation that explains the proposal. 4 MR. TUGGLE: Good evening, everybody. My name 5 is Benjamin Tuggle. I'm the regional director for the 6 US Fish and Wildlife Service in the Southwest Region. 7 Our regional jurisdiction covers Texas, New Mexico, 8 Arizona and Oklahoma. I'm here tonight, along with 9 other service representatives, to give testimony and 10 receive comments for the proposal to revise the 11 nonessential experimental population of the Mexican gray 12 wolf, and also to solicit comments on the EIS, the 13 Environmental Impact Statement that's in the draft form. 14 The hearing tonight is the fourth of the many 15 hearings that we've had that we've scheduled here in the 16 Southwest to listen to your comments on the two proposed 17 rule revisions. 18 It is our intent that any final determination 19 resulting from the proposed changes to the Mexican wolf 20 Experimental Population Rule be as accurate and 21 effective as possible. And towards that end, we seek 22 the best scientific and commercial data available. We 23 will base our final decisions in part on the testimony 24 that we receive here tonight as well as written comments 25 that we receive.</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p> <p>1 On behalf of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, I 2 want to express my deepest appreciation to Sierra 3 County, and particularly the town of Truth or 4 Consequences, for allowing us to use this meeting room 5 here at the Civic Center. 6 I also want to thank all of you for attending 7 this meeting tonight. It is extremely important that we 8 hear what you have to say. As we move forward with our 9 efforts to recover Mexican wolves in Arizona and New 10 Mexico, we will retain the experimental nonessential 11 designation for this wild population of Mexican gray 12 wolves, and we're doing so in order to maximize the 13 management flexibility that we have as we recover this 14 species. 15 I want to turn the floor over now to Sherry 16 Barrett, who is our wolf recovery coordinator for the 17 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 18 MS. BARRETT: Thank you all for coming today. 19 I appreciate all the people that also were here earlier 20 this afternoon for the public information session, and 21 my comments are going to be turned over to Tracy 22 Melbihess, who will give the presentation. 23 MS. MELBIHESS: Good evening, and again, thank 24 you all very much for sharing your evening with us. My 25 presentation should take about 20 minutes.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p> <p>1 the United States and Mexico are independent efforts 2 that are occurring pursuant to the federal laws in both 3 countries. So they are coordinated, but independent 4 efforts. 5 So in 1998, when we initiated this 6 reintroduction, we published our final rule. And that 7 was a document that said, described the regulations we 8 would use to manage this population. Where we would put 9 wolves in the wild, how we would manage them on the 10 ground, including potentially removing them. 11 So those are the highlights of that. The 12 experimental population area is I-40 across Arizona into 13 New Mexico, down to I-10. Within that designation was 14 the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area here (indicating), the 15 Gila National Forest in New Mexico, and the Apache 16 National Forest in Arizona. 17 Then within that Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area, 18 we also designated the primary recovery zone and a 19 secondary recovery zone. The primary recovery zone was 20 where we would conduct the initial releases, which is 21 taking the wolves from captivity and putting them in the 22 wild, and they could then disperse into the secondary 23 recovery area. 24 Wolves also currently, in addition to the Blue 25 Range Wolf Recovery Area, inhabit the Fort Apache Indian</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p> <p>1 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been engaged 2 in the recovery of the Mexican wolf for going on four 3 decades. This is the subspecies of the gray wolf that 4 was extirpated in the US in the 1970s due to predator 5 eradication efforts. And at that time, the last wolves 6 in the wild were brought in to captivity at facilities 7 in Mexico and the US, and the captive breeding program 8 was established. 9 And the purpose of that breeding program was to 10 save the Mexican wolf from extinction, but also to breed 11 those wolves and their offspring over time, to 12 eventually produce wolves that could be reintroduced 13 into the wild. 14 In the mid-1970s, the Mexican wolves received 15 the protections of the Endangered Species Act, and that 16 stimulated our development of a recovery plan which we 17 finalized in 1982. 18 So in 1998, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 19 began the reintroduction of the Mexican wolves to the 20 wild in Arizona and New Mexico. More recently, Mexico 21 has also started a reintroduction program. 22 Mexico has its own federal endangered species 23 law and its own recovery plan for the Mexican wolf, and 24 its own plans for reintroduction in the country of 25 Mexico. The two reintroductions that are going on in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p> <p>1 Reservation. That's through a separate memorandum of 2 agreement with the White Mountain Apache Tribe. The 3 wolves that are in this area, our regulations stated 4 that they could not leave the area. So if they do, we 5 capture them and bring them back. 6 So, 16 years later, in terms of the 7 reintroduction, we have established a minimum population 8 of about 83 wolves in the wild, as of our most recent 9 year, end-of-the-year-population count. 83 wolves in 10 about 14 packs. 11 And the management of wolves on the ground has 12 developed into a partnership effort between a handful of 13 agencies: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the White 14 Mountain Apache Tribe, Arizona Game and Fish, the Forest 15 Service and Wildlife Services. 16 And collectively, we have all learned quite a 17 bit about the reintroduction of the Mexican wolf from 18 the biology of the wolves and what the population needs 19 to be secure, to the impacts that the wolves can have on 20 land owners and the communities that are co-existing 21 with the wolves, and also the clarity of our own 22 regulations and the efficacy in trying to implement 23 them. 24 And so, gathering all of that information, we 25 initiated a scoping period back in 2007. And we held a</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p> <p>1 series of public meetings at that time to talk to the 2 public and hear about their ideas and concerns related 3 to our reintroduction. 4 And last year, in 2013, we published a proposed 5 rule. That proposed rule would essentially be our 6 modifications to the regulations that we established in 7 1998. We also published a notice of intent to develop a 8 draft Environmental Impact Statement. 9 So, these are two separate documents that come 10 together in a process. The rule provides the 11 regulations, and the Environmental Impact Statement 12 analyzes the impact of our proposed action. 13 And so, from our public comment period, we 14 received about 7,000 comments that we used to do a 15 revision of that proposed rule. And along the way, the 16 development of the draft EIS, we have been joined by 17 about 27 cooperating agencies. And these were federal, 18 state, county and tribal governments that joined us to 19 develop a draft Environmental Impact Statement. 20 And so, all of this information then is used to 21 develop the rule and the draft Environmental Impact 22 Statement that was published a few weeks ago at the end 23 of July. 24 So the purpose of our overall action is that we 25 are trying to further the conservation of the Mexican</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p> <p>1 Some of the reintroduction sites in New Mexico 2 are less than a hundred miles from the border, and that 3 is a distance that is easily traveled by a wolf. And 4 so, between these various actions to modify the 5 geography and our management actions to address some of 6 these changes that are occurring in the reintroduction. 7 A couple of the big issues that came up during 8 scoping that are related to our actions but they are 9 outside of what we are trying to do right now, which is 10 to improve the existing population. Comments related to 11 recovery, recovery planning and the designation of 12 essential or nonessential. So I want to talk about 13 those briefly. 14 Recovery planning is something that U.S. Fish 15 and Wildlife Service does for most species that are 16 listed under the Endangered Species Act, and it's our 17 way to establish the big picture of what needs to happen 18 to improve that species' status so that eventually that 19 species can be delisted from the endangered species, 20 from the list of endangered species, because those legal 21 protections are not needed anymore. And so that is kind 22 of the umbrella document that guides many of the 23 activities that occur to conserve that species. 24 And so this action that we are currently taking 25 is one of those actions that will occur under the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p> <p>1 wolf by improving the effectiveness of our 2 reintroduction project. And there are several main 3 components of our action. 4 One is that we recognize we need to modify the 5 boundaries of the re- -- of the experimental area where 6 the wolves are. Second, we know that we need to modify 7 some of the management regulations that govern where we 8 put the wolves and how we manage them on the landscape. 9 And then we also need a tool that we can use to 10 manage wolves that may disperse outside of the 11 experimental population area. And so the reasons for 12 these three main components of our action, again, are 13 several. 14 One, is that we recognize certain things about 15 the status of the population. And two of the most 16 important things are we recognize that the population 17 needs to grow larger. And that in growing larger, it 18 will take up more space. 19 Another thing that we recognize is that the 20 genetic composition of the population in the wild is not 21 as robust as it could be, and we need additional space 22 to conduct initial releases. We also recognize that 23 with Mexico's reintroduction program, there is a 24 potential for wolves from Mexico to disperse across the 25 border into the United States.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p> <p>1 recovery program for the species, but it is a 2 subcomponent of the recovery program. 3 And then the essential and nonessential status, 4 these are designations that accompany the status of 5 experimental in the Endangered Species Act. And an 6 experimental population that is either essential or 7 nonessential, both contribute to the conservation and 8 recovery of a species, and in both designations we have 9 management flexibility. 10 The difference between these designations is 11 that from an essential population, when we've put those 12 animals back into the wild, they are essential for the 13 survival of that species. Meaning if they die, we're 14 facing extinction. 15 So when we designated the experimental 16 population area in 1998, we recognized that for the 17 Mexican wolf, we do have the captive breeding program, 18 several hundred wolves in about 52 facilities in the US 19 and Mexico. 20 So if the wolves in the wild died, we would be 21 able to use the offspring in the captive population to 22 put them back into the wild. So we made that 23 designation of nonessential experimental, and we are 24 maintaining that. 25 All right. So, here is alternative one. So in</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p> <p>1 a draft Environmental Impact Statement, we have a 2 proposed action that mirrors what you see in the 3 proposed rule. Then we also looked at two alternative 4 ways to achieve our purpose and needs. 5 We also analyzed the no action alternative. So 6 alternative one here, again, between New Mexico and 7 Arizona, the green and blue area is not any kind of 8 designation. This is what we think, based on the 9 scientific literature, is suitable habitat for the 10 Mexican wolves. These are mountainous, forested areas 11 with ungulate prey. 12 And so, we include those on the map so that you 13 can see our best estimate of where wolves would go on a 14 landscape. So this is an experimental population area 15 that would range from I-40 all the way down to the 16 international border, again, to expand the experimental 17 population area so that wolves from Mexico could be 18 managed as part of the experimental population area. 19 This is a three-zone management scheme. 20 Management, or unit zone one, is in the orange 21 highlighting there, and that's the current Blue Range 22 Wolf Recovery Area for the Gila National Forest and the 23 Apache National Forest. But it's expanded to also 24 include the Magdalena, the Cibola, the Picirus National 25 Forest and three ranger districts of the Tonto.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p> <p>1 to stay. If they did cause nuisance, depredations, we 2 would be quick to manage those situations. 3 Then in this alternative, it also includes this 4 permit that we would essentially issue ourselves. It's 5 a permit under the Endangered Species Act. That 6 describes how we would manage the wolves that would 7 potentially disperse outside of experimental population 8 area. So anywhere here (indicating). 9 And in those cases, we do intend to capture 10 those wolves and bring them back to the experimental 11 population area. The rationale for that is that, again, 12 we are trying to improve the genetic condition of the 13 population as well as the size. And so as these wolves 14 could potentially disperse very long distances out in 15 the landscape, we want to bring them back in so that 16 they have the potential to contribute to improving this 17 core population that we've already established in the 18 Blue Range Recovery Area. 19 Then our alternative one also includes some 20 broadening of our existing take measures. Take is the 21 ability to harm or harass or even kill a Mexican wolf. 22 And so, those instances are spelled out in the rule. 23 For example, right now, we have take provisions 24 related to if a wolf is in the act of attacking 25 livestock. And we're proposing on federal land right</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p> <p>1 The reason for the expansion of this area, is 2 that, as I mentioned earlier, the primary recovery zone 3 in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area is relatively small 4 and is relatively full. In other words, the wolves that 5 we have released there now occupy that area, and we are 6 unable to conduct additional releases. 7 And we recognize that in order to improve the 8 genetic robustness of this population, we need to 9 conduct more initial releases, so more of the wolves 10 from captivity that have genetic material that is not 11 currently represented in the wild need to be released. 12 This will give us some flexibility and options as to 13 where those releases could occur. 14 Then in zone two, encompasses most of the rest 15 of that suitable habitat that you see. This is an area 16 where wolves would be allowed to disperse into from Zone 17 1, and wolves do actually already inhabit Zone 2 there 18 on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. And so, they 19 would be able to disperse throughout this area. Wolves 20 could also disperse into Zone 3. 21 This is eastern New Mexico and western New 22 Mexico. As you can tell, there's not a lot of green and 23 blue over here, so there's not a lot of suitable 24 habitat, and therefore, if wolves disperse into that 25 area and did not cause a problem, they would be allowed</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p> <p>1 now, our current regulation specifies that in order to 2 be able to take a wolf on federal land, a permit could 3 be issued if there are six breeding pairs of Mexican 4 wolves in the population. 5 We are proposing to eliminate that stipulation 6 and instead offer those permits at our discretion; 7 therefore, being able to take into account not only the 8 status of the Mexican wolf population at that time, but 9 also the specific situations that that livestock owner 10 is facing. 11 On non-federal land, which would be state, 12 private and tribal land, we are proposing to broaden the 13 take measure related to wolves in the act of attacking 14 livestock to include dogs. And we are also proposing to 15 be able to issue a permit to those non-federal domestic 16 animal owners, which would be livestock and dogs, to 17 help us finish a removal action. 18 So this would be in a situation where a land 19 owner had already dealt with a depredation and a wolf 20 presence was still there that we would issue a permit to 21 help us implement the removal action. Then we're also 22 looking at changing the take provisions for unacceptable 23 impacts to wild ungulate herds. 24 So in this situation, state managed wildlife 25 agencies who manage ungulates would be able to come to</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p> <p>1 us if their data showed that Mexican wolf predation was 2 negatively influencing localized ungulate herds. And 3 that data and information would be subjected to peer 4 review and public review process, and then the Service 5 would have the discretion to issue a removal action for 6 that area. 7 There are a number of other take provisions 8 that currently exist that we are proposing to move 9 forward. So, for example, take in defense of human 10 life. Any person, at any time, may always take a 11 Mexican wolf in defense of their own life or the life of 12 someone that they are with. 13 People may opportunistically harass a wolf. 14 That would include a situation where you have a chance 15 encounter with a Mexican wolf, you are trying to scare 16 it away, throw rocks at it, make noise so that it leaves 17 the area. 18 We also have the ability to issue permits for 19 intentional harassment. This would be another case 20 where we have documented a wolf presence in an area and 21 would issue a permit to a person to be able to conduct 22 actions that could injure the wolf, but not likely kill 23 it. 24 A provision currently exists that we would also 25 move forward in the alternatives. Alternative 2.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p> <p>1 think that our proposed action will have any regional or 2 state-wide, state-level impacts. But there are two 3 areas where we recognize localized impacts could occur. 4 And one of those would be wild ungulates, specifically 5 elk. 6 We do not think our proposed action would 7 result in declines of native ungulates throughout the 8 region or throughout the states, but we do recognize 9 there may be localized herds where predation pressure 10 could be heavier. 11 And then specific to ranching and livestock 12 production, similarly, we do not think that our proposed 13 action would impact the regional economic sector, but we 14 understand that depredations can be significant for 15 individual ranchers. 16 And then we do not find any other significant 17 impacts in the other resource areas that we looked at. 18 So as you know, and that's why you're here, we're in the 19 middle of a public comment period. This will be over at 20 the end of September, on the 23rd, and everything 21 tonight that you say for testimony or that you offer 22 either in the comment boxes will be included with our 23 entire record. That also includes the opportunity to 24 comment on the Internet and through the mail. 25 We use all of the comments received from all</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p> <p>1 I'll breeze through these next couple. This 2 mimics everything in alternative 1, with the exception 3 that the Magdalena district or the Cibola districts and 4 the three Tonto ranger districts would not be in Zone 1, 5 they would be in Zone 2. 6 So what this means is that zone 1 would be 7 smaller. It would be bigger than our current situation, 8 because we would be opening up both the primary and 9 secondary recovery zones of the current Blue Range for 10 initial release, but it would not give us as much 11 flexibility in choosing sites as alternative 1. 12 Alternative 3 also mimics alternative 1, except 13 in this alternative, we would not have the modified 14 provisions for take for wolves in the act of attacking 15 livestock. So this allows us to look at what the impact 16 of that broadening of take would have not only on the 17 wolves, also on the people who have the impact. 18 And then, alternative 4 is are nonactional 19 alternative. So in the draft Environmental Impact 20 Statement, we analyzed how our proposal could have 21 impacts to a number of different resource areas 22 including land use, wildlife, several economic sectors, 23 including livestock production, hunting and tourism, 24 health and human safety and environmental justice. 25 And essentially what we found is that we do not</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p> <p>1 sources to finalize our Environmental Impact Statement 2 and our rule. And so you should also have this 3 information on the little agenda sheet and potentially 4 the comment cards. It's also on the rule. And if you 5 don't have it in any of those, grab one of us and we'll 6 make sure that you get it. This is the address for 7 electronic submission of comments as well as mail. 8 So our time line for this, we're right about in 9 the middle right now, we're right past that. We do 10 expect to, after the submission of comments, finalize 11 these documents in January. And so again, we want to 12 thank you very much for being here and for providing the 13 testimony tonight, and we ask that you recognize what 14 we're trying to do right now. 15 It is our mission to conserve and recover the 16 Mexican wolf, and the proposed action is with that 17 intention in mind. But we are trying to do it in a 18 balanced way that shows responsiveness to the people who 19 are impacted by Mexican wolves, specifically in nuisance 20 and depredation situations. So thank you very much. 21 (Applause.) 22 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, Tracy, 23 Sherry, and Dr. Tuggle. This is a public hearing. 24 Notice of this public hearing was published in the 25 Federal Register on July 25, 2014, starting on Page</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p> <p>1 43358. 2 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will accept 3 comments and information on these proposals postmarked 4 on or before September 23. You may submit written 5 comments today. Written comments may also be submitted 6 to the staff at the registration and information tables. 7 They may be submitted electronically or mailed as a hard 8 copy. 9 After review and consideration of your 10 comments, and all of your information gathered during 11 this and other previous comment periods, the Service 12 will make a final determination. The purpose of this 13 hearing is to receive your comments on the proposal and 14 accompanying draft Environmental Impact Statement. 15 Both oral and written comments on all aspects 16 of the proposals are very important and will be 17 carefully considered. Because of the importance of your 18 comments, it is necessary that we follow certain 19 procedures during this public hearing. 20 If you want to present oral comments at this 21 hearing, please go to the registration tables outside of 22 this auditorium and sign up. When you register, 23 indicate the organization that you are representing in 24 your comments today. With the exception of federal 25 elected officials, tribal leaders, state Game & Fish</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p> <p>1 auditorium after you speak. This is an informal 2 hearing, and therefore, you will not be questioned in 3 connection with your comments. Your comments or 4 questions are being recorded by the reporter to preserve 5 them for the record. If you are called to speak and 6 choose not to speak, or provide short remarks, you may 7 not yield your time to another speaker. 8 Because the purpose of this hearing is to 9 receive your comments, the Service will presume any 10 questions are for the record. The Service's formal 11 response to questions and issues raised during this 12 comment period, including this hearing, will be 13 published in the final rule and final Environmental 14 Impact Statement. The Service will not respond to 15 questions at this hearing. 16 Please keep in mind that the reporter will not 17 record any statements from the audience or any 18 statements which are made to the audience. Comments 19 must be made directly into the microphone facing the 20 front of the room. I ask that you treat each speaker 21 with respect and refrain from making comments from the 22 audience. 23 Questions, comments, applause, jeers, 24 demonstrations from the audience will not be allowed, 25 and they take away precious time for others to speak. I</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p> <p>1 agency directors, all oral comment, registration cards 2 have been pulled, and will be drawn at random. 3 This process was implemented to encourage 4 attendance at this afternoon's information meeting, and 5 to provide for a fair process that allows us to receive 6 oral testimony from as many different perspectives as 7 possible within the allotted time frame. 8 The following process is designed to maximize 9 efficiency and provide speaking opportunities to as many 10 participants as possible. Periodically, throughout the 11 hearing, I will call groups of names for those 12 registered to provide oral comments. When your name is 13 called, please come forward and take a seat in the 14 reserved section at the front of the auditorium near the 15 microphones. 16 When it is your turn, please begin your 17 presentation by stating your full name, spell it for the 18 record, and indicate if you represent an organization. 19 If you are reading your comments, please take care to 20 read them slowly enough for the court reporter to 21 understand. 22 Also, if possible, the reporter would 23 appreciate a copy of the comments you read, and you can 24 deposit them in the box near the microphone. 25 Please return to your original seats in the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p> <p>1 appreciate everyone's cooperation in minimizing 2 distractions. 3 Out of respect for speakers, I ask that you 4 please refrain from photographing individuals as they 5 present their comments. Videotaping is only done along 6 the side aisles, and no cameras are allowed in the 7 center aisle or in the front of the room, no video 8 cameras. 9 In the interest of all who chose to provide 10 verbal testimony and to prevent unreasonable disruption 11 during this public hearing, we would like you to inform 12 you that Dalene Hadnot of New Mexico Farm & Livestock 13 Bureau and Angela Kocherga of Gannet Broadcasting will 14 be video recording today's proceedings. If you wish to 15 obtain contact information for either of them, please 16 visit the registration desk. 17 Because of the number of people expected to 18 speak, strict adherence to a two-minute time limit is 19 necessary by all speakers. I will let you know when 20 time is up, and I will call five-minute breaks as needed 21 to allow the court reporter to rest. 22 I will now call the first group of names. 23 David Richmond, Jan Thompson, Dan Lorimier, Senator Bill 24 Soules, David Carbajal, Kerrie Romero, Oscar Sampson, 25 John Saridan and Kyrstie Wear.</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p> <p>1 Written comments will be given the same 2 consideration as oral comments presented here today. At 3 this point, we are ready for our first speaker. Please 4 come forward to the microphone, state your name. It 5 doesn't have to be in any particular order. Thank you. 6 SENATOR SOULES: Thank you. I'm Senator Bill 7 Souls. I represent District 37 in Las Cruces, New 8 Mexico, and -- should I start over? I'm a public school 9 teacher, so I have a pretty good teacher voice anyhow. 10 But I am a state senator from Las Cruces, and thank you 11 for holding the hearing. I appreciate the information. 12 I've learned a lot watching that information. 13 I'm here to encourage that we continue to make 14 sure that the Mexican gray wolves have a strong presence 15 in New Mexico, continue to do that, continue to have 16 great biological diversity. I was pleased to see that 17 actually the proposals increased the size of the area 18 for that. 19 I do have some concerns about the increased 20 methods for removing wolves when they become predators 21 of livestock and other things. I think that that is a 22 serious concern. I would much rather see Fish & 23 Wildlife work towards compensating ranchers who may have 24 losses rather than to allow the removal of wolves in 25 other areas.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p> <p>1 immediately throughout the Blue Range Recovery Area to 2 prevent the loss of valuable genetic diversity and speed 3 recovery. That's all I have that say. Thank you. 4 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. Next 5 speaker. 6 MR. CARBAJAL: Hello. My name is David 7 Carbajal. I'm from Las Cruces, New Mexico. 8 Mexican gray wolves deserve protection that 9 respects the value they bring to the ecosystem. We need 10 to open our eyes and our hearts to eliminate the 11 boundaries of the wolves' movements. 12 These lands belong to all of us. We can't 13 ignore science, logic and reality. There are less than 14 83 Mexican gray wolves in the wild today. We need to 15 act and educate and prevent extinction for one of the 16 most divine, beautiful and valuable creatures of the 17 land. We need to restore, rebalance the wild places and 18 the wildlife of New Mexico and Arizona. Let's make the 19 right choices to see a beautiful future. Let's welcome 20 home the most endangered land mammal in North America, 21 and not mistake. 22 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 23 speaker, please. 24 MS. THOMPSON: Good evening, my name is Jan 25 Thompson. I too am from Las Cruces, and I speak from my</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p> <p>1 For all of my life, I spent a lot of time 2 hiking, camping in the Gila Wilderness. I hope that 3 sometime in my life I get to experience wolves and hear 4 them in the wild. 5 I look forward to hearing the other people 6 speak. I can say that my constituents in my district, I 7 have had numerous people contact me, that they want to 8 make sure that we have a strong wolf presence in New 9 Mexico. I have had no one in my district contact me 10 with the other point of view. Thank you. 11 (Applause.) 12 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Please, 13 no applause. All right. Next speaker. 14 MR. SARIDAN: My name is John Saridan. I'm 15 from T or C. My name is John Saridan. I'm from T or C. 16 I represent myself. The U.S. Forest Service should 17 eliminate boundaries for the wolves' movement. The U.S. 18 Forest Service needs to quit stalling and complete a 19 comprehensive recovery plan before changing the current 20 rule. 21 The U.S. Forest Service should not continue the 22 fiction of designating Mexican gray wolves as an 23 experimental nonessential population. This ignores 24 science, logic and reality. They are essential. 25 Captive bred Mexican wolves need to be released</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p> <p>1 religious background of the Unitarian Universalist 2 Church. We are a noncredal church, but we covenant to 3 promote and defend the inherent worth and dignity of all 4 people, and also to support the interdependent web of 5 all existence of which we are a part. 6 The reintroduction of the wolves to the land 7 that was theirs is recognizing that interdependent web. 8 We rely on each other, and that includes our animal 9 friends, our animal relatives. We need one another. We 10 need it to be in balance. 11 The wolf will bring back that balance. Wolves 12 don't carry passports. They can't -- they don't 13 recognize I-40, and I think the expansion is certainly a 14 good idea, but the expansion needs to be even broader 15 than it is. And to traumatize these wolves through the 16 capture and return to specific areas is unnecessary, in 17 my opinion, and I think scientists would also agree that 18 that is traumatizing and unnecessary. 19 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 20 speaker. 21 MR. LORIMIER: Thank you very much. I 22 appreciate the opportunity to talk to you. My name is 23 Dan Lorimier, L-O-R-I-M-I-E-R. I'm a 40-year resident 24 of Sierra County, and I'm the conservation coordinator 25 for the Rio Grande chapter of the Sierra Club. I would</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p> <p>1 like to speak to you briefly about common sense. 2 Common sense tells us to use the tools 3 available to us, to make the wisest and most 4 comprehensive and long-reaching decisions. This is one 5 of those decisions. I urge U.S. Fish and Wildlife 6 Service to use the concept of common sense while making 7 this decision. I'm a strong advocate of the 8 reintroduction of Mexican gray wolves in New Mexico. 9 Common sense tells us that this is a key 10 element in the hierarchy of wildlife in New Mexico. 11 Thank you very much. 12 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. Next 13 speaker. 14 MR. SIMPSON: Hello, my name is Oscar Simpson. 15 I am a state chair of the New Mexico chapter of 16 Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. I'm a resident of New 17 Mexico, life long resident of New Mexico. 18 I've hunted and fished all of my life here in 19 New Mexico. I've seen a lot of changes and a lot of 20 habitat changes. My organization and I consider the 21 Mexican gray wolf a critical keystone species that needs 22 to be fully protected, not in limited protection as you 23 have now. 24 In the past 20-some-odd years of managing the 25 Mexican gray wolves, you have had a lot of mistakes and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p> <p>1 MR. LORIMIER: Thank you very much. 2 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: I'm going to read ten 3 more names while the next speaker comes up to the 4 microphone. John Kucera, Sanford Schemnitz, Phil 5 Cantas, Chad Smith, Charles Cummings, Jean Ossorio, Joel 6 Alderete. I'm sorry, I'm killing names here. Cody 7 Jackson and Crystal Diamond. 8 MR. RICHMAN: I'm David Richman, R-I-C-H-M-A-N, 9 of which I've got a lot of problems with over the years. 10 I'm a retired professional biologist. I have worked 11 primarily in applied ecology, insects as well as in 12 other areas. 13 I am aware of the position held by top 14 predators such as the wolf in the ecosystem's structure. 15 If we remove top predators, we often produce untended 16 and often serious consequences, including overabundance 17 of prey species such as deer, and the resulting 18 starvation which has happened before in the Everglades. 19 Overutilization of plants by prey species, 20 disaltering and affecting numerous species of both 21 plants and animals, as in elk populations at 22 Yellowstone. Increased or emergence of animal-borne 23 diseases such as Lyme disease, transmitted by deer ticks 24 in the northeast US. 25 These alterations of the ecosystem can be</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p> <p>1 basically, in my opinion, you let the politics run this 2 reintroduction and recovery plan. You've identified 3 those as in this morning's brief summary. 4 We need to expand the recovery area beyond and 5 include the Grand Canyon area. We need to allow -- you 6 also need to introduce wolves in all of these areas so 7 you can have the first population. The key to this 8 thing, and the key to hunters especially is critical 9 habitat for both ungulates and wolves. That is another 10 deficiency that, in my opinion, is overlooked. 11 You haven't really required the BLM and Forest 12 Service and other federal agencies to really make sure 13 that we got good quality habitat so the deer and the 14 ungulates are prey species that the wolf can survive and 15 have. In other words, we want healthy populations of 16 deer, and what we consider the Mexican gray wolf would 17 depredate on those. 18 If you have good healthy populations of deer 19 and elk and other prey species, then you'll have minimal 20 impact. I disagree strongly with the Game Department's 21 ability to remove wolves on certain conditions. That to 22 me reeks of politics, and whatever administration in 23 there you won't see a lot of fluctuation, and based on 24 what you've done on the other gray wolf species -- 25 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p> <p>1 seriously detrimental to our own interests in the long 2 run. The modern world throws us in contact with the 3 wilderness as we intrude into it. In my opinion, it is 4 necessary to make the best accommodation that we can, 5 lest we deplete our planet's biodiversity even more than 6 what we already have. 7 It is a vital to restore as much of the natural 8 food web as he can, including such top predators as 9 wolves. I support a modified wolf alternative 3 of the 10 draft Impact Statement to expand release areas without 11 expanding loopholes for killing and trapping wolves. 12 Thank you. 13 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Next speaker. 14 MS. WEAR: My name is Kyrstie Wear, W-E-A-R. I 15 represent the Sierra County Farm and Livestock Bureau, 16 as well as my family who ranches here in Sierra County. 17 The main problem that I see with the current 18 alternatives and also the Environmental Impact Statement 19 is there is a lack of valid research and statistics to 20 support the claim that there would be little to no 21 impact on our economic industry and also on the families 22 that are impacted by these changes. 23 The main point of these alternatives and 24 expanding the recovery area has been reiterated today, 25 that you wish to improve the species and the biological</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p> <p>1 or the genetic diversity of the species. There has been 2 no biological or scientific research or proof that a 3 gene pool that came originally from seven Mexican gray 4 wolves could somehow be improved by expanding near the 5 area without bringing in fresh genetic material. 6 My second point would be that from an economic 7 standpoint, there has been significant evidence that 8 there is an impact of the Mexican gray wolf on property 9 values, and Sierra County's most profitable industries, 10 which are agriculture, hunting and tourism. I find the 11 fact that none of the alternatives or the Environmental 12 Impact Statement include this information to be 13 problematic. 14 And the final problem that I see is that from 15 an accounting standpoint, if the funding is not 16 available for the program as it is, and has not been 17 approved for an expanded program, I see no feasibility 18 for it to be expanded. Thank you. 19 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 20 speaker. 21 MS. ROMERO: Good evening. Kerrie Romero, 22 K-E-R-R-I-E, Romero. I'm speaking on behalf of the New 23 Mexico Council of Outfitters and Guides. We advocate 24 for the hunting industry in this state. 25 Tonight, I speak on behalf of the 300</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p> <p>1 wildlife if it's found that over time the wolves have 2 more of an impact than the Fish and Wildlife Service 3 originally thought. 4 We would appreciate a continued effort to work 5 with the individuals who are living and operating within 6 wolf country and respect a genuine effort to listen to 7 the organizations who have people who spend upward of 8 nine months in the Gila Wilderness back country 9 annually. Thank you. 10 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 11 speaker. 12 MR. KUCERA: Hi, my name is John Kucera, 13 K-U-C-E-R-A. I'm from Las Cruces, New Mexico, and thank 14 you for being here tonight. And I was going to ask you 15 guys to please complete a new recovery plan for the 16 Mexican gray wolves, one which is up to date and meets 17 the current standards of not any of us or our opinions 18 and feelings, but that of science and that wildlife 19 biologists deem to be what's necessary for their 20 survival. 21 The wolves do not know nor care about politics, 22 give some, take some, or trying to please everybody. 23 They do not own maps and are oblivious to the imaginary 24 changeable boundaries that we have set up for them. 25 These need to be removed completely if the Mexican gray</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p> <p>1 outfitters, 1,500 guides and 25,000 resident and 2 nonresident hunters that contract with an outfitter 3 annually. 4 Our industry provides over 36 million in 5 tourist dollars, the majority of which go back directly 6 to the rural economies. We would first like to thank 7 the Fish and Wildlife Service for their efforts to keep 8 the Mexican wolf as a nonessential experimental 9 population, and also providing an avenue for management 10 in the event of a wolf attack on a hunting dog. 11 Our main concern is that this program is going 12 to turn into what the gray wolf debacle has turned into 13 in Montana, Wyoming and Idaho. During the 14 question-and-answer-session earlier, you defended the 15 draft EIS assumption, that the Mexican wolf will have a 16 minimum impact on ungulate herds, by stating that we 17 don't have the predator pressures that the states like 18 Wyoming and Montana do, but it seems that you neglected 19 to recognize that we do have predator presses like the 20 mountain lion, black bear and coyote. 21 We have also environmental pressures from 22 prolonged drought and wildfires. We feel that not 23 enough consideration has been given to these pressures, 24 nor has there been a clear directive about what the Fish 25 and Wildlife Services will to do to mitigate damages to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p> <p>1 wolf is to survive. But what the wolves do know is what 2 the best habitat is for themselves. Scientists also 3 know this, and say at least two additional populations 4 of Mexican gray wolves are necessary for the wolves' 5 recovery. 6 In the change to the current recovery plan, the 7 boundaries set would prevent the wolves from ever 8 accessing these habitats and from ever meeting up with 9 other Mexican wolf populations. And that would 10 completely go against the very same recovery efforts 11 that we've been working towards. The big bad wolf isn't 12 so bad after all and there are no reliable reports to 13 suggest that a free-ranging Mexican gray wolf has ever 14 harmed a human. 15 Depredation caused by the Mexican gray wolf has 16 accounted for only an extremely small percentage. I 17 know that the numbers are different across the board. 18 The numbers we have are from the USDA and they say it's 19 less than 1 percent. 20 So while attacks on healthy lifestocks are 21 rare, when it does happen, I do sympathize, but there 22 are precautionary measures that can be taken to prevent 23 such situations from occurring in the first place, not 24 to mention the reimbursements offered by certain 25 agencies for the case of any lost cattle.</p>

10 (Pages 34 to 37)

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p> <p>1 So without taking such measures and personal 2 responsibility, including the removal of any livestock 3 carcasses that may attract -- 4 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Sir, thank you, sir. 5 Next speaker, please. 6 MS. OSSORIO: My name is Jean Ossorio, J-E-A-N, 7 O-S-S-O-R-I-O. Sunday night, I spent my 375th night 8 since 1998 camping in a tent in Mexican wolf home 9 ranges. Currently, I must travel at least 150 miles in 10 order to see Mexican wolves, hear packs howling in 11 chorus, or find their tracks in mother snow. 12 Soon, dispersing wolves may visit Dona Ana 13 County where I live only two miles from the edge of the 14 newly designated Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National 15 Monument. The possibility of seeing or hearing the rare 16 and iconic lobo will be an added attraction for monument 17 visitors from around the country and the world. 18 For me, the prospect of having Mexican wolves 19 right in my own backyard is one I've looked forward to 20 since I saw my first wild lobo in 1999. It is 21 encouraging that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 22 provides alternatives 1, 2 and 3 for connectivity with 23 potential populations to the south, especially in the 24 light of recent news of a wild born litter of pups in 25 Sonora.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p> <p>1 reproduction of elk and deer and other wild big game 2 species. 3 So we hope that the area that the wolves can 4 occupy, as proposed, is expanded, and we would be 5 disappointed with the relatively slow increase in the 6 wolf population. Thank you. 7 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Next speaker. 8 MR. CUMMINGS: My name is Charles Cummings. 9 Last name is C-U-M-M-I-N-G-S. I'm from Albuquerque. 10 I'm grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this 11 hearing. Thank you for hearing my voice and my opinion. 12 First, I'd like to acknowledge Sherry Barrett, 13 Maggie Dwyer and their team for their hard work in 14 protecting Mexican gray wolves. Their dedication is 15 inspiring and appreciated. 16 I'm a native New Mexican. I speak in support 17 of the reintroduction of the Mexican gray wolves in the 18 Southwest. I am grateful the Mexican gray wolf has 19 federal protection, but I advocate for more protection. 20 Our government has sponsored a long lasting program of 21 predator eradication. 22 It's time for our government to take a stronger 23 position on protecting a species that it has spent so 24 much time and money trying to eliminate from the 25 American landscape. Thank you.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p> <p>1 Unfortunately, not one of the alternatives in 2 the draft Environmental Impact Statement allows for 3 dispersal of wolves to the north of Interstate Highway 4 40, where any scientifically-based recovery plan is 5 likely to call for at least two more populations with 6 connectivity to the current Blue Range population. 7 If it were not for that glaring omission, I 8 would support alternative 3, which holds expansion of 9 take of lobos. 10 In addition to my own comments, state 11 representative Jeff Steinborn, District 37, asked me to 12 convey the following: He supports a modified 13 alternative 3 and a requirement that the population meet 14 projections before any increase take is allowed. Thank 15 you. 16 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 17 speaker. 18 MR. SCHEMNITZ: My name is Sanford Schemnitz. 19 I'm the chair of the Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen. 20 Our organization consists of 50 various wildlife 21 sporting clubs in Dona Ana County, and we have been a 22 supporter of the wolf introduction program. 23 We would like to see the boundaries increase. 24 We recognize that wolves are enemies of coyotes, and 25 coyotes are a serious problem in maintaining</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p> <p>1 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 2 speaker. 3 MR. CARTER: Hello. Thank you, Madam Hearing 4 Officer and personnel with U.S. Fish and Wildlife 5 Service for having me out and everyone out. My name is 6 Phil Carter, P-H-I-L, C-A-R-T-E-R. I'm the Wildlife 7 campaign manager for Animal Protection of New Mexico. 8 I'm here representing over 3,000 members and many more 9 supporters across the state. 10 We have members in every single county of New 11 Mexico, and based on this, Animal Protection of New 12 Mexico does not endorse any artificial boundaries on 13 wherever wolves may roam within our state. If they have 14 a chance to thrive, then they should be able to be 15 allowed there, wherever that is in New Mexico or across 16 the Southwest. 17 Additionally, we do not support any increased 18 methods of take allowable within Mexican wolf 19 management. We believe that this is a population of 20 large mammals that has been stressed and demonized and 21 overall made pariahs and had a difficult road throughout 22 their entire existence, since the latter half of the 23 20th century. We want to see these wolves have a chance 24 to thrive. Thanks very much. 25 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p> <p>1 speaker.</p> <p>2 MR. JACKSON: Hello. I am Cody Jackson,</p> <p>3 J-A-C-K-S-O-N. The fact that you are hearing me speak</p> <p>4 right now is a truly great thing. So many people in</p> <p>5 this world simply do not care about anything, and it is</p> <p>6 nice to address people who do.</p> <p>7 The future will come and that is an inevitable</p> <p>8 fact. But how that future will look is completely</p> <p>9 dependent on the choices we make at present. I want a</p> <p>10 future full of hope and opportunity, a future that is</p> <p>11 better than the past. We have the ability to do so, and</p> <p>12 conservation to me is a commitment to our future, a</p> <p>13 commitment to preserve what we have and a commitment to</p> <p>14 right the wrongs that we have made.</p> <p>15 The Mexican gray wolf is endangered -- is an</p> <p>16 indigenous species that we have made endangered and that</p> <p>17 is a fact. We know what it will take to grow their</p> <p>18 population and that is effort. We must be willing to</p> <p>19 work to obtain the future that we desire, which for me</p> <p>20 is a world that is improved by men, not destroyed.</p> <p>21 I cannot bear the thought of our future</p> <p>22 generations asking why you did not do more to protect</p> <p>23 this beautiful creature. This is our duty. It may not</p> <p>24 be the easiest thing to do, but it is right and it is</p> <p>25 necessary. Thank you for your time.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p> <p>1 the backyard stalking an Australian shepherd, it's easy</p> <p>2 to imagine the toddler on the swing set is next.</p> <p>3 Ranchers in the original Blue Range Wolf</p> <p>4 Recovery Area were told the boundaries defined in the</p> <p>5 original plan would be permanent. Now we're told there</p> <p>6 needs to be more expansion, more wolves. When will the</p> <p>7 expansion end?</p> <p>8 What are the ranchers, outfitters and tourism</p> <p>9 service providers such as restaurant and gas station</p> <p>10 owners supposed to do after the wolves have taken away</p> <p>11 their livelihoods? How will we recover those jobs,</p> <p>12 rebuild the economic engine? Again I ask, when is</p> <p>13 enough enough. Thank you.</p> <p>14 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next</p> <p>15 speaker.</p> <p>16 MS. DIAMOND: Hello. My name is Crystal,</p> <p>17 C-R-Y-S-T-A-L, Diamond, D-I-A-M-O-N-D. I'd like to</p> <p>18 begin by thanking Sherry Barrett and John Olsen for</p> <p>19 their efforts in moving this public hearing from</p> <p>20 Albuquerque to a region of the state that's been</p> <p>21 directly impacted since the beginning of the New Mexico</p> <p>22 wolf recovery program.</p> <p>23 Also, thank you to the City of Truth or</p> <p>24 Consequences, Commissioner Ruben Olivas and city staff</p> <p>25 for quickly providing this event center free of charge</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p> <p>1 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. I'm going</p> <p>2 to call ten more names while the next speaker comes up.</p> <p>3 Robbie (inaudible), Rowan Baxa, Nancy Kaminski, Janes</p> <p>4 Tyler Boyd, Kaisa Lappalainen, Dee Wear, Bill Weddle,</p> <p>5 Cheryl Hastings, Roxane George and James Ross.</p> <p>6 Next speaker, please.</p> <p>7 MR. SMITH: Good evening, and thank you. My</p> <p>8 name is Chad Smith, C-H-A-D, S-M-I-T-H. I am a CEO for</p> <p>9 New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau. The 18,000</p> <p>10 members of my organization want to ask when will it</p> <p>11 stop.</p> <p>12 When will the number of wolves be adequate to</p> <p>13 achieve your goals for the reintroduction? That has not</p> <p>14 been clearly defined, and the New Mexico ranchers need</p> <p>15 to know when enough is enough. When will the</p> <p>16 depredation stop?</p> <p>17 Ranchers have tried many methods to keep wolves</p> <p>18 from killing their livestock, but the devastation</p> <p>19 continues. It's an all-out assault on these ranchings</p> <p>20 families. Many are already at the brink of going out of</p> <p>21 business. This new proposal is sure to push many more</p> <p>22 off their land.</p> <p>23 When will the fear stop? These families live</p> <p>24 in daily fear of losing the family dog, their favorite</p> <p>25 horse, or worse, a child. When a mom finds a wolf in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p> <p>1 as a service to the citizens and neighbors who have</p> <p>2 carried so much of a burden for this program.</p> <p>3 I serve my community on the board of</p> <p>4 Supervisors of Sierra Soil Water and Conservation</p> <p>5 District, elected by registered voters within my</p> <p>6 district. Each of the 47 districts are independent</p> <p>7 subdivisions of state government, federally classified</p> <p>8 as local government and entitled to recognition as such</p> <p>9 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.</p> <p>10 In a letter dated June 23 [sic], 2013, Fish and</p> <p>11 Wildlife Service regional director Benjamin Tuggle</p> <p>12 denied conservation districts the opportunity to</p> <p>13 participate as cooperating agencies. The decision to</p> <p>14 include or exclude local government in this process is</p> <p>15 not the agency's to make. Federal law mandates that</p> <p>16 Fish and Wildlife Service to include local government</p> <p>17 participation.</p> <p>18 Not doing so was a clear violation of NEPA, yet</p> <p>19 the Fish and Wildlife Service unlawfully proceeded in</p> <p>20 drafting and issuing this draft EIS. Our county manager</p> <p>21 provided your agency with the detailed economic impacts</p> <p>22 this program and boundary expansion is having on Sierra</p> <p>23 County, the poorest county in one of the poorest states</p> <p>24 in our nation.</p> <p>25 Our primary income is derived from farming and</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p> <p>1 ranching and the hunting industry, all of which have 2 suffered dramatically as a result of the Mexico wolf. 3 This data has been completely disregarded. 4 You have ignored the pleas of our people, you 5 have disregarded the law, and this seems to be common 6 practice within our federal government and specifically 7 this agency. 8 I ask your agency to reconsider the proposed 9 boundary expansion of this nonessential wolf and a 10 program that is clearly a failure on all aspects. 11 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Could you please give 12 your writing to the court reporter, because I know she 13 was having a tough time. 14 Next speaker. 15 MR. ALDERETE: My name is Joel, J-O-E-L, 16 A-L-D-E-R-E-T-E. I'm with New Mexico Farm and Livestock 17 Bureau, representing the southern counties of New Mexico 18 Farm Bureau. Today we're going to submit some oral 19 comments, and of course we'll be doing written ones. 20 We are firmly opposed to EIS and any expansion 21 of the New Mexico wolf program. It is a complete 22 failure. Millions have been spent on this 23 reintroduction program and every step of the way you 24 have failed to protect those who live with it in any 25 manner, shape or form.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p> <p>1 depredations, wolf habitation, wolves stalking our 2 children? 3 Where is the science studying why New Mexican 4 wolves will so quickly drink with the ranchers' dogs and 5 the resident coyotes? How many litters have you 6 destroyed? We are tired of the Fish and Wildlife 7 Service trying to get the radical agendas through. We 8 are tired of you picking whatever is the best available 9 science. 10 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 11 speaker, please. 12 MS. HASTINGS: My name is Cheryl Hastings, 13 H-A-S-T-I-N-G-S. I'm from Datil, New Mexico, and I 14 would like to read something that I found in a 15 publication by a Wild Earth Guardians, an organization I 16 do not belong to. But I believe there are things we can 17 learn from the return of the gray wolf at Yellowstone. 18 Since the wolf's returned, elk populations are 19 back in balance. Because elk and deer are now on the 20 move, aspen and willow have regrown, providing habitat 21 for beavers, and shade and streamside habitats for 22 native fish species and songbirds. 23 Biologists refer to this phenomenon as atrophic 24 cascade. Like creek water rushing over a waterfall, the 25 benefits of the return of an apex carnivore cascade</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p> <p>1 We are definitely opposed to any individual 2 releasing wolves on their property without the written 3 consent of every neighbor surrounding them. They will 4 be responsible for the burden of any costs that comes 5 with those wolves. You have failed to incorporate any 6 type of mitigation dealing with on-the-ground problems 7 our members are having, from livestock losses to 8 habituated wolves stalking our children. 9 You continually state that this is 10 insignificant to the recovery of the wolves. Actually, 11 we believe this is the most significant part. Without 12 the support of those who live with the wolves, you will 13 never have a successful recovery program. 14 You spend millions of dollars trying to ram 15 this program down the throats of those who live with it, 16 but don't put any effort into seriously helping those 17 people, and then you are surprised when the program is 18 not accepted. Start putting some money on the ground to 19 help psychologists to help the children who are having 20 nightmares about wolves. 21 Start putting some money into putting a team on 22 the ground that will show up to the wolf calls 23 immediately and address problems whether it's real or 24 not. Where are the studies paid by the agency doing the 25 research and finding the science of the wolf</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p> <p>1 through an ecosystem. And that's it. Thank you. 2 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 3 speaker. 4 MR. BAXA: Hello. My name is Rowan, R-O-W-A-N, 5 B-A-X-A. I am a proud New Mexican resident. I live in 6 Dona Ana County in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and I'm a 7 film maker. My primary abilities are to film landscape 8 and wildlife. I spend many days out in the field, Rocky 9 Mountains, White Sands, photographing and doing 10 videography on several areas. I have seen many 11 different species, including gray wolf, and I must say 12 it is a beautiful sight. 13 There is nothing about this wolf that is 14 nonessential. It is a very, very, very essential part 15 of the planet, because if we lose the gray wolf, then we 16 have increased a population of deer and elk, and then we 17 have a decrease in crop and plant life, which then 18 results in decrease in life in general. 19 It is an important thing for our ecosystem and 20 we should greatly consider broadening our horizon toward 21 the fact that they were there first. You may forget 22 about that concept because we have a road and our giant 23 buildings, but the birth was here and they were here 24 first. We took over. We are the invaders. We should 25 give them their space and respect the fact that they are</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p> <p>1 the ones who were here. Thank you. 2 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 3 speaker. 4 MS. WEAR: My name is Dee Wear. I represent 5 the Sierra County Farm and Livestock. D-E-E, W-E-A-R. 6 I just wanted to highlight the facts that 7 planning needs to define a number of wolves to allow the 8 public to understand clearly what the intentions are. 9 Knowledge is power, and by delaying these decisions, you 10 take the power away from the people to make decisions 11 responsibly, and that is isn't right no matter what side 12 of the fence you sit on. 13 It suggests deception, and it suggests a lack 14 of integrity. And those are two things that the U.S. 15 Fish and Wildlife Service does not want to suggest to 16 the American public. 17 With that said, my next point is the economy. 18 This expansion will be a devastating blow to ranchers 19 and individual ranch families, especially if you're only 20 that 1 percent or 10 percent. 21 With that said, I'd like to see sound science 22 that represents a substantial impact that our ranching 23 and our agriculturing industries have on our economy and 24 how the wolf will detrimentally impact that in the 25 heartbeat of American society, agriculture. Thank you.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p> <p>1 violent imagery of that is an affront to the public 2 integrity and also your integrity as commissioners. 3 Thank you for allowing me to speak, and I hope 4 that we can come together to create a plan that will 5 expand genetic diversity and also the recovery and the 6 reintroduction of a keystone essential species. Thank 7 you. 8 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 9 speaker. 10 MS. LAPPALAINEN: My name is Kaisa Lappalainen, 11 L-A-P-P-A-L-A-I-N-E-N. I'm here because I was asked to 12 read a letter from a Commissioner Hancock, Wayne 13 Hancock, Dona Ana County Board of Commissioners, 14 Commissioner, District 4. 15 "As a commissioner for Dona Ana County, New 16 Mexico, I thank you for today's opportunity to comment. 17 The recent designation of the Organ Mountain Desert 18 Peaks National Monument and measures for increasing the 19 Mexican wolf population protect the scenic beauty and 20 iconic wildlife of southern New Mexico. 21 "And I am pleased that the draft Environmental 22 Impact Statement creates zones in Dona Ana County where 23 wolves may be allowed to naturally disperse and occupy. 24 "Tourism is an important part of the future of 25 our county. As public officials, we are challenged to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p> <p>1 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 2 speaker. 3 MS. BOYD: Hello, my name is Janes Boyd. I 4 represent myself. That's spelled J-A-N-E-S, B-O-Y-D. I 5 am not a public speaker. I am very terrified at this 6 moment. But I wanted to make the point that I believe 7 wolves are an essential species. 8 When you want to go ahead and take into effect 9 the accountant, in the economics of it, when it comes 10 right down to it, we have seen the devastation that 11 Yellowstone National Park and parts of Wyoming were 12 devastated by eradicating the wolf populations. 13 We saw that with the proper implementation of a 14 recovery and reintroduction of the wolves in that area, 15 the Yellowstone National Park has become the keystone of 16 America and represents what American wilderness should 17 look like. We should thank the reintroduction and 18 recovery plan for that. 19 So in that regard, I would like to point out 20 that wolves are an essential species. Instead of 21 limiting, we should have no boundaries, or very wide 22 boundaries for the Mexican gray wolf. And as far as 23 integrity, I would like to point out that there has not 24 been one testifiable account of wolves stalking children 25 or attacking a human being, and that I find that the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p> <p>1 plan for long-term achievements, with clear and 2 quantifiable milestones along the path to success. 3 "That is why I oppose alternative 1 and support 4 an enhanced version of alternative 3. The Service's 5 alternative would remove important protections, which 6 under the present rule ensure a specific measurable 7 level of reproductive success before increased removals 8 and killings of wolves is permitted. 9 "The Service knows that recovery of the wolves 10 will probably require at least three distinct but 11 genetically linked populations of 200 to 350 each. 12 Neither the DEIS nor any of the alternatives provides 13 any numerical targets or time line for achieving them. 14 "In conclusion, I urge the Service to adopt an 15 enhanced alternative 3 by retaining present limitations 16 on removing and killing wolves until the number of 17 breeding pairs is" -- 18 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 19 speaker. 20 MS. KAMINSKY: My name is Nancy Kaminsky, 21 K-A-M-I-N-S-K-Y. I'm the president for the Southwestern 22 New Mexico Audabon chapter, the oldest chapter in New 23 Mexico. Thank you so much, Dr. Tuggle, for joining us 24 again. It's good to see you. It has been a long time, 25 so it seems.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p> <p>1 I also support alternative 3, modified, 2 altered, however you want to put it, because I believe 3 the northern boundary should also be extended. It seems 4 that when we're picking up wolves lately and bringing 5 them back, they're always at the north end of the 6 boundaries. 7 And of course, I'm also against more take. 8 We're still losing wolves to illegal shootings. We just 9 picked up a dead wolf last month. They're dying out 10 there. With the rules we now have in place, further 11 take will only make that worse, especially if it's dogs. 12 I'm sure we all understand how canids are wolves' 13 natural enemy. A canid in wolf territory threatens 14 their family and their home, and they'll kill them 15 whether it's a dog or a coyote, so I would not expand 16 the take for dogs. 17 Sorry to say that, because I love dogs, but it 18 just is their natural enemy. It doesn't seem like it 19 would promote the reintroduction. 20 A healthy ecosystem requires all the puzzle 21 pieces, especially at the top predators. So I'd like to 22 see them further protected. I also was a little 23 concerned about the southern boundary just because there 24 has been a lack of education and outreach to the local 25 population in Luna and Hidalgo Counties.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p> <p>1 well aware that scientists from the recovery planning 2 team have said a reduction in human caused mortality 3 must occur for the lobos to achieve recovery. Likewise, 4 the scientists have published peer review articles that 5 state we must have at least two more populations north 6 of I-40 with movement between the three for recovery to 7 occur. 8 Yet, your proposal makes this impossible. It 9 makes it impossible for Mexican wolves to occupy or move 10 in and out of the best remaining suitable habitat north 11 of I-40. The expanded area for releases is the only 12 completely good thing in your proposal for the wolves 13 and it is long overdue. Otherwise, many of the proposed 14 changes contradict the best available science on lobo 15 recovery and demonstrate an appalling weakness in the 16 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services leadership, whose job it 17 is to recover endangered species instead of political 18 kowtowing to special interests -- 19 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 20 speaker. 21 MR. WEDDLE: Hello. My name is Bill Weddle, 22 W-E-D-D-L-E. So we are to understand that it is okay 23 and an acceptable price to pay that people are be 24 maimed, mauled and killed as a result of your efforts 25 and our government turning wolves loose on us? You hide</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p> <p>1 I'm in Grant County. I have a ranch in Grant 2 County and there are plenty of opportunities to go to 3 meetings in Hidalgo and Luna County, so I have firsthand 4 experience at those meetings with their take on the 5 Mexico wolf, and it is not positive -- 6 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 7 speaker, please. 8 MS. GEORGE: Good evening. My name is Roxane 9 George, G-E-O-R-G-E. I live in Arizona. I lived there 10 most of my life. Mexican gray wolves are intelligent 11 beautiful animals who are essential to restoring balance 12 and healthy function to our southwest wild lands. 13 It is clear to me that the small wild 14 population of Mexican wolves is also essential to the 15 survival and recovery of their species. They are the 16 only Mexican wolves in the world with up to five 17 generations of experience living in the wild. 18 To waste that experience and those wild 19 families of wolves and all of the hard work that the 20 species survival plan captive breeding facilities and 21 the biologists on the ground have done for so many years 22 would be criminal. 23 The expanded provisions and allowances for 24 killing, trapping and removing these important animals 25 from the wild is unacceptable, especially when you are</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p> <p>1 behind the use of wildlife for what would otherwise be 2 felonies. 3 Last year in Minnesota, a 16 year old was 4 attacked by a wolf, biting him in the head and in the 5 back. Wolves killed two people in Alaska and Canada 6 last year. You won't see any difference. It is 7 comparable to behavior of feral dogs. 8 Margaret Salcedo was killed by four dogs in 9 2011 just a few minutes from this room. In 2012, a nine 10 year old was mauled by dogs; in El Paso, a man was 11 mauled; in Taos, a 12 year old; in Valencia County, a 12 woman was killed by dogs; in Dona Ana, five German 13 Shepherds mauled a 12 year old. Mix wolves with it, how 14 will it turn out? 15 Wolves were never endangered here, they just 16 didn't live here anymore. The behavior and end result 17 of the attacks isn't different whether it's a dog or a 18 wolf that did the biting and chewing. 19 Wolves are nonessential. We got by without 20 them for at least the last 70-plus years. It's 21 questionable how many of these wolves are part dog. 22 Early on, a black Lab bred with wolves. How many dogs 23 and wolf combinations are out there now, and what is to 24 stop them from more? 25 This is arid country, not a great source for</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p> <p>1 food like some of the far northern parts. It's only a 2 matter of time before people, someone's child, are 3 killed by wolves. Why should we put up with it not 4 being safe anymore to camp, enjoy our public lands 5 without the threat of being attacked by wolves? 6 The diseases wolves bring is horrible. Hydatid 7 disease, a communicable disease of cysts on the lungs of 8 many animals and transfers onto humans alike. Our 9 grandfathers eradicated the wolf because they didn't mix 10 with people, same as grizzlies. We eradicated polio and 11 smallpox -- 12 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. 13 We're going to take a five minute break. 14 (Recess taken from 7:21 to 7:27 p.m.) 15 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Karen Nichols, 16 January Roberts, Joseph Cavosie, Allan Sauter, Jean 17 Gallagher, Rachel Carnes. 18 First speaker, please. 19 MS. ROBERTS: Good evening. January Roberts. 20 I'm from T or C. I'm a business owner, I'm a voter, and 21 I'm a taxpayer. I would like to see this program 22 continue and follow through. I don't have an opinion 23 about what is the right program or not. I'm not a 24 genius here. I expect other people to know that. 25 I'm sorry that it's causing so many problems</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p> <p>1 lands is ignored. Known facts are distorted. 2 Proponents of all these new mandates, in almost all 3 scenarios, never see out of the offices they're typing 4 the regs in. 5 Saving our public domain just for the sake of 6 preservation just cannot and does not outweigh creating 7 wealth and economic growth while maintaining the 8 resources. The use of biodiversity and conservation 9 biology and today's policy formulation is based more on 10 a well-funded political agenda than on true science. 11 Most of this is based on myth. 12 So no one argues the need to protect 13 biodiversity. The question is, how much and at what 14 human cost? There are uncertainties, but we must find 15 the best way to protect the lives and economic viability 16 of our counties in the State of New Mexico, Arizona, big 17 Ben, Texas, etc. And I thank you for your time. Thank 18 you. 19 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 20 speaker. 21 MR. HYATT: My name is Jim Hyatt, J-I-M, 22 H-Y-A-T-T. I'm from Luna County. It's my opinion here 23 as the reason that we've had so much failure in the 24 reintroduction of the wolves is to start a -- to try to 25 look for genetic purity with beginning with only seven</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p> <p>1 for other individuals in our state. I'm hoping that 2 somebody will have the insight to help them and work 3 with them so that we can all work together. I've always 4 lived in a state where there were wolves: Minnesota, 5 Montana, Wyoming and Idaho. 6 I cannot imagine a country without wolves. 7 That would be like saying let's go kill all the 8 elephants because they're so funny looking. This 9 doesn't make sense, folks. We just have to find a 10 better common ground and work together and be careful 11 and sensible. It's really important. It's important 12 for all of us to be here. 13 Other states have worked together with the 14 wolves. We're pretty dang smart down here. I think we 15 can do it too. That's really all I have to say. Thank 16 you. 17 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 18 speaker. 19 MS. NUNN: Good evening, my name is Lauren 20 Nunn. We ranch in several counties in the State of New 21 Mexico with several generations and four now on our 22 ranches. 23 As current business owners, county employees or 24 retirees, this is an important issue facing every single 25 one of us. Our customary and established uses of our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p> <p>1 wolves, there's no way to expand the gene pool. 2 The thought that by spreading them to a larger 3 area will improve the genetic quality of the wolf is -- 4 that's just not genetic science. You can't just move 5 them somewhere and the genes change. 6 I feel like probably these wolves here are -- 7 never have been pure, and that's probably why you're 8 having so much trouble getting them to adapt, as a wolf 9 is completely different than a dog. And I feel like 10 probably these are crossed up with a dog and that's why 11 you only get a 20 percent or less survival rate in your 12 pups. 13 Other than that, I don't have, and I think some 14 -- probably some scientific research should be done as 15 far as the purity of your -- even your first established 16 or collective wolves. Thank you. 17 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 18 speaker. 19 MS. NICHOLS: my name is Karen Nichols, 20 N-I-C-H-O-L-S. I'm the education assistant at the 21 Endangered Wolf Center. 22 In 1971, the Endangered Wolf Center in 23 St. Louis was established by Dr. Marlin Perkins to save 24 the endangered species focusing on the Mexican wolf. 25 The center is the birth place of 172 Mexican wolf pups.</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p> <p>1 The captive breeding program, although highly effective, 2 does not exist in a vacuum. 3 It is not a continuous or permanent solution 4 for the recovery of an endangered species. Being at 5 maximum population capacity for several years in the 6 United States and Mexico has hindered the captive 7 breeding program. With only one new release into the 8 wild in the last five years, this forces us to only 9 allow a few pairs to breed annually, and so, no new 10 genes are introduced into the wild, thus harming an 11 already bottlenecked population. 12 Reduced breeding in captivity will also mean a 13 loss of vital genetic information. This is 14 irresponsible management. As of today, we have saved 15 only 80 percent of the original genetic diversity. If 16 the decline continues, the species won't be viable. 17 Our center supports alternative 3 as the best 18 option of the proposal. However, maintaining the 19 designation of nonessential is relying on an older 20 captive population that does not have room to expand. 21 The Endangered Wolf Center wants to support the Service 22 in meeting its recovery goals, but we are at a critical 23 juncture now, and we need a Service that uses the best 24 science available to make its decisions. 25 We need a Service that understands that without</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p> <p>1 wolves are. If you could capture the single wolves who 2 are causing trouble, and instead of moving them to 3 another location, take them out of their equation and 4 put them into the breeding -- the breeding -- the 5 captive wolves, and put -- take one of the captive 6 wolves out and put it back into the population, and this 7 will get new genetic material into the wolf pack. 8 But also try to put them, release them, in an 9 area where there are sufficient wolves and they can find 10 another pack. Thank you. 11 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 12 speaker. 13 MS. PODOLINSKY: Hi, my name is Megan 14 Podolinsky, M-E-G-A-N, P-O-D-O-L-I-N-S-K-Y, from Las 15 Cruces. I'm originally from Montana, but have lived in 16 Las Cruces, New Mexico for about a year. 17 Growing up in Montana near where the 18 Yellowstone wolf range introduction took place, I've 19 seen wolves as an extremely polarizing issue. Although 20 I didn't see the actual first days or even years of the 21 reintroduction, I've witnessed the result. 22 Not only have the wolf reintroduction programs 23 succeeded in increasing the habitat of the wolves, it 24 has contributed to the beauty of the area. Plain 25 species have proliferated and increased, especially the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p> <p>1 remediating the release side of the recovery effort, the 2 current captive breeding program is unsustainable. We 3 need a Service that's willing to listen to the 4 overwhelming consensus of biologists engaged in a 5 recovery effort, and we need a Service that will protect 6 the health of these ecosystems by opening up enough 7 protective wild space for this wolf to truly recover 8 itself. Thank you. 9 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Could you please 10 leave your comments for the court reporter? Thank you. 11 MR. CAVOSIE: My name is Joe Cavosie, 12 C-A-V-O-S-I-E. 13 It's my understanding that there's two types of 14 wolves in the wild. There's a wolf that belongs to a 15 pack, and there's a wolf that is alone, trying to find a 16 pack. The pack is under the control of two alpha wolves 17 who are the smartest and the toughest, and they control 18 the pack. And wolves are very smart. 19 They would be able to accommodate any type of 20 prey, whereas a single wolf by itself that is looking 21 for a pack would not be able to take out many of the 22 larger animals that a pack could. 23 I surmise that much of the predation is by 24 single wolves. I don't know that, but I suspect that. 25 And that wolf packs are not nearly the trouble single</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 65</p> <p>1 willow, with the presence of a major predator in the 2 area, reducing browsing of flora. Predators are 3 necessary in a natural system to ensure the balance 4 between all elements. 5 Without this link in a chain, the balance is 6 easily disrupted. Seeing these results firsthand of the 7 successful reintroduction and management program, makes 8 me believe the same can be achieved in New Mexico. I 9 support a recovery alternative that expands boundaries, 10 limits take provisions, and leaves the wolf as an 11 essential species. 12 I hope to see expanded gray wolf populations 13 become a reality in the Southwest. Thank you. 14 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 15 speaker. 16 MS. CARNES: My name is Rachel Carnes, 17 R-A-C-H-E-L, C-A-R-N-E-S. I'm here on behalf the 18 California Wolf Center. Thank you for this opportunity 19 to comment. 20 We would like to recognize the Fish and 21 Wildlife Service for their dedication in recovery of the 22 Mexican wolf in the face of many diverse interests. We 23 support the Fish and Wildlife Services' proposal to 24 increase the area in which Mexican wolves can be 25 released and disperse and occupy, and to push the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p> <p>1 southern boundary of the experimental population area to 2 the US/Mexican border. 3 However, we have some major concerns about 4 certain other components of the plan, most notably the 5 allowance for state agencies to request the removal of 6 wolves in order to maintain their self-determined 7 ungulate population. 8 There are currently only 83 Mexican wolves in 9 the wild, and the research shows that this is not enough 10 to maintain or to be called a self-sustaining population 11 given the genetic context of this species, so we would 12 like to urge the Fish and Wildlife Service to reconsider 13 the alternatives in order to construct a plan that does 14 not increase the lethal take of this very rare 15 subspecies. 16 The Service has stated that they want to 17 continue wolf reintroductions while being responsive to 18 the local communities. We completely agree that we need 19 to be cognizant of and sensitive to the local 20 communities, but this is no reason to increase lethal 21 measures, because nonlethal techniques have been very 22 successful in the Southwest. So we would like to use 23 our resources instead to try and increase our 24 (inaudible) for nonlethal techniques -- 25 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p> <p>1 As a 19-year veteran of local law enforcement 2 here in the Sierra County area, I have spent my career 3 in protecting and serving the community here. I would 4 request that under take provisions, that you keep those 5 in the (inaudible), and give the public, the people who 6 are affected by this, the opportunity to protect 7 themselves, their property, their lives, and their 8 family. Thank you. 9 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. I'm going 10 to call ten more names. And I also want you to know 11 that we have more speakers than we'll have time for this 12 evening. I also received the late registrations and 13 those names will not be called, the ones that were 14 registered after 6 o'clock. So I just want to give you 15 a heads up on that. 16 Randy Lack, Billy Garrett, Mary Ray, Steven 17 McLoon, McAloon, Parry Larsen, Bob MacPherson, Skeeter 18 Leard, Casey Hampf, M. Fry, Kim Chesser. 19 Next speaker, please. 20 You're going to have to write up -- just keep 21 up here. You know the people that -- 22 THE COURT REPORTER: May I get your name, sir? 23 MR. BLACK: Randy Black, B-L-A-C-K. What I 24 hear is a lot of these people don't live with it. We 25 live in the middle of it; we deal with it daily. We</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p> <p>1 speaker. 2 MR. HAMILTON: My name is Glenn Hamilton, 3 G-L-E-N-N, H-A-M-I-L-T-O-N. I thank you for the 4 opportunity to address you here tonight. In reviewing 5 your EIS, it appears as though the Fish & Wildlife 6 Service has taken a regional look at this expansion 7 rather than looking at the impact that it's actually had 8 on the local communities. 9 In the PowerPoint, it indicated that on a 10 regional line that it was not going to have the economic 11 impact or severe economic impact as much as it would on 12 small isolated and local areas. 13 Two, your lack of funding for the current 14 project right now concerns me. And now we're looking at 15 expanding this operation. Our nation is 17 trillion in 16 debt, and yet we have government agencies that are now 17 asking for more money for nonessential programs, in my 18 opinion. 19 Lastly, and my third point, just like the plan 20 in 1998 to reintroduce the Mexican gray wolf into the 21 area, amidst strong opposition, the plan was put in 22 place anyway. I suppose that this is probably -- this 23 expansion is probably going to go into effect too. I 24 would only ask that if you do expand your program, that 25 you adopt the plan one.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p> <p>1 have people in Catron County, the kids are living in 2 cages to catch the school bus to get off of it. Are you 3 all aware of that? Your great little endangered wolf 4 that you want? It's ridiculous. 5 The economical impact that it's going to have 6 on our wildlife and our livestock. You guys act like 7 there's deer everywhere. There are coyotes and lions 8 will eat it up. They're gone. 9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're not allowed to 10 talk to the audience. 11 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Sir, I don't 12 appreciate your comments. If those continue, I'll ask 13 you to leave. He has a right to his comments, and I 14 expect you to respect that. Thank you. 15 MR. BLACK: Now give me my time back, okay, 16 please? You know what, people? You know it's our job 17 is to protect our natural resources and management. 18 This is a perfect example of a government overreach. 19 The Endangered Species Act? Look at our courts. They 20 have a national -- every year, you watch the news, 21 you've got more and more forests burning, record forests 22 burns. You know why? Because of the spotted owl. You 23 take the wildlife out, and your cows out of it, you take 24 the logging out of it, and we allow this wolf, 25 devastation.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p> <p>1 What it does, is not that we don't like the 2 wolf. It's nature. It kills for fun. It can go and 3 kill 200 sheep and not eat any of them. It's not that 4 we don't like the wolf. We don't like its nature. 5 That's why the government eradicated them the first 6 time. 7 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. 8 Thank you. Next speaker, please. 9 MR. LARSEN: Yes. Thank you for this 10 opportunity. My name is Parry Larsen, P-A-R-R-Y, 11 L-A-R-S-E-N, resident of Sierra County. I'm a retired 12 professor of wildlife biology. 13 I want to speak to a central issue. Words are 14 important. Mr. Regional Director, I wish you'd pay 15 attention to this. Words are important. We talk 16 greatly about essential and nonessential. This is an 17 important distinction. There's another important 18 distinction. Species. 19 Sherry Barrett, in her introduction comments 20 and her written text there, referred to Mexican gray 21 wolves. She did not say canis lupus baileyi. I'm sure 22 you would acknowledge that's the subspecies we're 23 talking about. She referred to it as a species. 24 Several times your professionals referred to this as a 25 species.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p> <p>1 If you actually cared about the wolves, you 2 would make wolves essential and not allow them to be 3 unethically taken. Let's not pretty up the word "take." 4 What you mean is that more people can kill, or easily 5 kill, the animals you supposedly protect. 6 Keep your integrity and do the job you're 7 funded for. Thank you very much. 8 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 9 speaker. Next speaker. 10 MR. MacPHEARSON: My name is Bob MacPherson. 11 I'm a retired scientist from Santa Fe, and I'd like to 12 just address the rule. 13 There are some provisions in the proposed rule 14 that will promote the conservation of the Mexican gray 15 wolf. These are required by the Endangered Species Act. 16 The expansion to a much larger MWEPA will help. The 17 expanded area for release of wolves, including in New 18 Mexico, will also help. 19 However, there's some changes in the proposed 20 rule that will not promote the conservation of the 21 Mexican gray wolf. The proposed rule loosens the 22 guideline for take on Mexican wolves in this new area. 23 We've been there before with loosening of the 24 rule, and this will not help. Wolves will not be 25 allowed to disperse out of the MWEPA to other suitable</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p> <p>1 Sir, you have highly trained wildlife 2 biologists on your staff. I would insist that they 3 always refer to this as a subspecies. Many of the 4 people that spoke from the floor talked about endangered 5 species, the poor wolf, the endangered species. It is a 6 subspecies. And I think it's imperative that in all 7 future written and all oral testimony that you refer to 8 it as such, a subspecies. Thank you. 9 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Next speaker, please. 10 MS. HAMPF: Hi, my name is Casey Hampf, 11 H-A-M-P-F, and I represent the State of Colorado. 12 The wolves don't want to harm us. There has 13 only been two fatalities in the past 60 years due to 14 wolves, and never Mexican grays. Yet, we continue to 15 slaughter them and we call it a solution to the cattle 16 rancher's problem. However, wolves only account for a 17 tenth of one percent of all cattle thefts. If that 18 statistic does not satisfy you, then change your cattle 19 ranching methods. Treat the carcasses with lime or 20 remove them from your homes. 21 Your solutions are expanding the wolves into a 22 territory where they cannot survive, not taking 23 advantage of the forested area above the recovery line 24 shown on the map earlier, that scientists and you 25 yourselves deemed as a suitable area for them to live.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p> <p>1 habitats. There was a draft recovery plan that was 2 leaked where it called for three subpopulations of about 3 250 each as a minimum for viability in the future. 4 The nonessential designation is retained in 5 this proposed rule and the designation is contrary to 6 fact. This does not help either. In summary, the 7 proposed rule is unlikely to conserve the Mexican gray 8 wolf as required by the ESA. Thank you. 9 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 10 speaker. 11 MS. RAY: My name is Mary Kathryn Ray, R-A-Y. 12 I'm a wildlife chair for the Rio Grande chapter of the 13 Sierra Club. My family lives in the outback of Socorro 14 County and what I hope becomes part of the zone one of 15 the Mexico wolf experimental population area. 16 I hike frequently, and one of my favorite 17 places is a cottonwood park on national forest land. 18 The cottonwoods are all old, and every year a few more 19 die. There are no cottonwood seedlings to replace them. 20 Within a couple of decades, at most, these trees will 21 all be dead. 22 I like cottonwoods because they harbor so many 23 different kinds of birds. There is new document 24 research that indicates the presence of wolves in 25 ecologically effective numbers can give trees like</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 74</p> <p>1 cottonwoods a reprieve from herbivores so the seedlings 2 can grow. Restore the wolves and you can save the 3 trees; save the trees and you save the birds. 4 Enlarging the places where wolves can roam and 5 be released is a positive step, but it's negated if the 6 result is they are killed anyway because of lax rules 7 that allow more killing. 8 The state game agencies, in true 1900 Century 9 fashion, do not want wolves and have demonstrated their 10 hostility toward them. In fact, next week the New 11 Mexico Game Commission may vote on giving themselves 12 permission to disallow the release of any predatory 13 animal for the purpose of reintroduction. It does not 14 further the conservation of wolves to hand their fate 15 over to these entities or to anyone who just wants them 16 dead. 17 The only alternative that will not bring 18 Mexican wolves to extinction again is alternative 3, but 19 you can do better. Write a new recovery plan that 20 reflects the best available science, not what was 21 available 30 years ago. Declare this lobo population in 22 the wild to be essential -- the wild born population 23 could not be replicated -- and require a good-faith 24 effort from livestock operations to use nonlethal 25 solutions to avoid conflict before allowing wolves to be</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 76</p> <p>1 based on the best available science. And more 2 importantly, where data is subject to alternative 3 interpretation where good data is missing, our decisions 4 must give the benefit of the doubt to the wolf. 5 We can always pull back if the recovery is 6 successful and new information supports changes of 7 management, but if we are too conservative and wolf 8 recovery fails, we cannot bring the species back. I 9 understand that the recovery program will directly 10 affect more people in our region, more specifically 11 ranchers, hunters and rural residents. 12 To minimize impact of wolf recovery on these 13 people, the rule should provide measures to mitigate 14 adverse impacts where they can be demonstrated. And 15 more importantly, the affected communities should be 16 provided with opportunities to actively participate in 17 the recovery process. 18 In looking at the conflict between wolves and 19 humans, we must understand the fragile condition of the 20 wolves and the -- 21 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. If 22 you would present your comments. Thank you. Okay. 23 I'm going to read some more names. 24 Steve MacAloon, Skeeter Leard, M. Fry, Kim 25 Chesser, Allan Sauter, Jean Gallagher.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 75</p> <p>1 killed. 2 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 3 speaker. 4 MR. GARRETT: My name is Billy Garrett, 5 G-A-R-R-E-T-T. I'm a third-generation New Mexican, and 6 a retired National Park Service manager. I'm currently 7 the chair of the county commission of Dona Ana County. 8 As a policy maker, I support a modified version 9 of alternative 3, because in my opinion, that option 10 does the best job of addressing the biological factors 11 involved in wolf recovery. To be successful, the wolf 12 population must be large enough to avoid the problems of 13 inbreeding and must have a territory large enough for 14 the packs to sustain themselves. 15 In addition, consideration should be given to 16 strengthening the protected status of the Mexican wolf, 17 and in developing nonlethal programs that will minimize 18 the conflicts with other range issues. The fundamental 19 choice involved in this ruling is whether or not the 20 American people want to slowly kill off this animal or 21 ensure its future. 22 If our choice is to save the wolf, then we must 23 have the courage and wisdom to put measures in place 24 that will achieve that intent. If our choice is to save 25 the Mexican wolf, the rule under consideration must be</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p> <p>1 All right. Next speaker. 2 MS. FRANK: My name is Ann Frank. I'm from New 3 York. I don't know anything about ranching or really 4 wildlife, ultimately, but I speak as -- I would like to 5 speak for myself as a human being in a world that is, as 6 we all know, falling apart. And probably one of the few 7 opportunities that we have to protect what is left of 8 this world is to I guess observe the fact that we're not 9 here alone, that there other species like us that need 10 to be here for obvious reasons, and that we have almost 11 lost our opportunity to be here with dignity. 12 I think ranching is going to be outdated 13 probably in 10, 15 years. We can't continue eating meat 14 the way we're eating meat, and the wolf has to eat as 15 well as any other animal. I was going to say that I'm 16 for the release of these amazing animals in the universe 17 that we live in. 18 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. I'm going 19 to read ten more names. Caren Cowan, Noralyn Warren, 20 David Farrell, Jack Diamond, Elisabeth Dicharry, Jose 21 Lopez, Zachary Riley, Bob Brister, Wendy Spencer, Drew 22 Kerr, and Audon Trujillo. 23 Next speaker, please. 24 MS. WARREN: Good evening. Thank you, Sherry 25 Barrett and Tracy Melbihess and Fish and Wildlife</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p> <p>1 Service for providing this opportunity for input. 2 Noralyn, N-O-R-A-L-Y-N, Warren, W-A-R-R-E-N. 3 The Fish & Wildlife Service is of course 4 charged with preservation of the Mexican wolf. From its 5 important role in the balance of nature in the wild to 6 its spiritual role in the lives of many, it's a valuable 7 species. 8 Expanding the recovery area is important. 9 North of I-40 would be even better. I'm sure that the 10 extra opportunities for taking wolves that the proposed 11 rule provides will negate the progress. And I still 12 don't understand why there is nothing mentioned about 13 keeping ranches clear of inviting carcasses. So 14 cleaning up ranches would seem to be important to be 15 mentioned. 16 The Fish and Wildlife Service needs to allow 17 serious science to guide you to do the work necessary to 18 conserve the species and due to inbreeding pressure, 19 time is of the essence. 20 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 21 speaker. 22 MR. FARRELL: David Farrell, F-A-R-R-E-L-L. 23 I've lived in Hillsboro, Sierra County for the last 28 24 years and I was an early advocate of the reintroduction 25 of the Mexican gray wolf. Back then, I also advocated</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p> <p>1 should be expanded. Polls show a large majority of New 2 Mexicans do too. 3 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 4 speaker. 5 MS. DICHARRY: Good evening. My name is 6 Elisabeth Dicharry, and it's D-I-C-H-A-R-R-Y. My home 7 for the last 30 years has been in Valencia County. 8 I do live in zone two of the proposed wolf 9 recovery area. My property is along the Rio Grande, 10 which is designated by the Western Governors Wildlife 11 Council as crucial habitat. We also have land in 12 Mountainair, also in zone two and crucial wildlife 13 habitat. 14 I support the expansion of the wolf recovery 15 area and the latest draft is a step in the right 16 direction. Studies of wolf dispersal patterns should 17 determine whether the zone should be expanded north of 18 I-40. A larger area may actually reduce conflicts. We 19 are livestock owners: goats, horses and chickens. We 20 are farm to table, so to speak, which means we butcher 21 and eat our own chickens. 22 We've chosen this lifestyle. We've had losses 23 and we've taken specific action to prevent losses. We 24 will take action to keep your animals and family safe 25 from direct attacks, but we would -- we do not advocate</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p> <p>1 at public meetings with Fish and Wildlife Service to 2 work with the ranchers and to address their concerns. 3 But I've been disappointed that the politics of 4 an anti-wildlife minority has trumped science as the 5 recovery program progressed. So at this point, I urge 6 and beg you to let science guide you in decision-making 7 and in forming policy. 8 I support a modified alternative 3, but believe 9 it is still too restrictive and limited to saving a 10 large viable population of the Mexican wolves. Bottom 11 line, expand the range into northern New Mexico, 12 southern Colorado and southern Utah. 13 I think a good economist would tell you that 14 too much attention has been put onto the negative 15 economic effects to ranchers by the Fish & Wildlife 16 without seeing the equal positive effects. 17 The wolf can benefit small businesses through 18 eco-tourism. I've had guides and ranchers tell me that. 19 With a change of attitude, the wolf could help create 20 more small businesses and wolf-related businesses. 21 Eco-tourism. You have to be creative. 22 Most folks where I live in the Hillsboro and 23 Kingston area support the wolf being in the Gila 24 National Forest. I have land within the Gila National 25 Forest. Most residents there believe that the range</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 81</p> <p>1 the extinction of a species to protect our property or 2 our livestock. 3 The species cannot recover unless human-caused 4 mortality decreases. And that means protect wolf 5 populations, their recovery areas; ban trapping on 6 public lands; and do not issue the depredation permits 7 without rigorous efforts to resolve conflicts using 8 nonlethal strategies. 9 We know wolves and wild carnivores are killed 10 because they are hated and feared and not necessarily 11 because of a direct attack. There must be rules and 12 consequences in place to prevent the reckless and 13 unnecessary killing of wolves. 14 Let's give wolf recovery a real chance. And by 15 the way, I'll volunteer to help monitor the wolves. 16 Thank you very much. 17 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 18 speaker. 19 MS. COWAN: My name is Caren Cowan. I'm here 20 tonight representing the New Mexico Wool Growers, 21 Incorporated, the oldest trade organization for 22 livestock in the State of New Mexico. 23 There are some items in option one that appear 24 promising. We haven't finished our evaluation of the 25 entire document. But some of the things that appear</p>

21 (Pages 78 to 81)

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 82</p> <p>1 promising, like recovery removal when wolves are 2 transgressing outside their areas, we've been told that 3 before. It hasn't happened. And unless and until the 4 Fish and Wildlife Service can work with the people on 5 the ground, and understand that they have to be able to 6 live there, this program is going nowhere. 7 The utter disdain that we feel is the document 8 and the stuff that was shown up on the screen, that 9 losses are insignificant, our livestock losses are 10 insignificant. If somebody's taken 1,200 to \$3,000 out 11 of your bank account 20 or 30 times a year, tell me 12 that's insignificant. 13 And terming the population -- saying that the 14 populations of concerns aren't being harmed by this? Do 15 you have any idea how insulting that is to the people 16 sitting in this room? You've got to figure out a way to 17 work with us in a believable manner if anything is going 18 to go forward positively. Thank you. 19 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 20 speaker. 21 MR. TRUJILLO: A-U-D-O-N, Trujillo. I'm a 22 fifth-generation New Mexican from Sierra County. I've 23 had the opportunity to live abroad and in countries 24 where, in Latin America, in countries where one would 25 think you'd see a lot of wildlife and you see none.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 84</p> <p>1 learned today that two breeding pairs -- you need ten 2 wolves to have a breeding pair of two. What is killing 3 them? I mean, if we're really poaching them, we've got 4 to do something about that too. Thank you. 5 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 6 speaker. 7 MR. BRISTER: My name is Bob Brister, 8 B-R-I-S-T-E-R. I'm an organizer for Wild Earth 9 Guardians, a western regional conservation organization. 10 I have a couple of concerns. One is at what 11 point will recovery planning and essential designation 12 issue going to be addressed? If it's not going to be 13 addressed at this point in the planning process, when is 14 it going to be? 15 It seems to me we need to know where we're 16 going with this process, and the way to do that is to 17 have an end goal. And how are we going to get to that 18 end goal without defining it is not clear to me. 19 My second concern is that you talked about 20 unacceptable impacts for an ungulate herds and the 21 possibility of killing the wolves for that purposes. 22 Why not let carnivores and prey find their own balance? 23 Wolves and other -- wolves and ungulates lived together 24 for millennia in balance. They can do it again. Just 25 let them find their balance. We don't need to kill</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 83</p> <p>1 So I really value what Fish & Wildlife does in 2 this country, both at the state and national level, and 3 we need to do a little bit more in Sierra County. There 4 was a hundred when I left here in about 1970, went to 5 college and I came back in 2003. The deer population in 6 Sierra County has really been reduced drastically. 7 I think I've got -- the drought is really a 8 huge cause. We also have got a good deal of poachers, 9 and we also have a problem with the federal and state 10 government. 11 This side of the Continental Divide maintains 12 two watering holes for wildlife. I found this out from 13 the biology person that -- up the street here, the 14 Forest Service for the Black Range. But on the west 15 side of the Continental Divide, there are 200 watering 16 holes. 17 Now, why do I mention that? It's because if 18 you have that kind of a disparity, those wolves when 19 they come here, what are they going to do? They are 20 going to go after the rancher's cattle. That's going to 21 be what their feed is. So why not help the deer 22 population, the elk population, by having more water 23 locally by having habitat improvement? 24 One of the biologists who spoke here talked 25 about habitat. I think it's extremely important. We</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 85</p> <p>1 wolves. Thank you. 2 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 3 speaker, please. 4 MR. KERR: Good evening. My name is Drew Kerr, 5 D-R-E-W, K-E-R-R, and I am the carnivore advocate for 6 WildEarth Guardians, speaking on behalf of our 40,000 7 members and supporters. 8 Guardians works to protect and restore 9 wildlife, wild places, wild rivers and health of the 10 American West. We strongly oppose your classification 11 of the only wild Mexican wolves in America as 12 nonessential. How can the only wild population of an 13 endangered species, which represents over 20 percent of 14 the entire population, be nonessential to that species' 15 recovery? If this rule revision revises the 16 experimental nonessential designation rule, how can the 17 Service justify taking redesignation as experimental 18 essential off the table? 19 The only DEIS alternative which approaches 20 improving management of Mexican wolves enough to ensure 21 their survival and recovery is alternative 3, which 22 expands the wolves' available range while continuing the 23 more stringent legal protections and safeguards for the 24 reintroduced wild population against take. 25 We urge you to adopt a revised alternative 3,</p>

22 (Pages 82 to 85)

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p> <p>1 including the expanded available range, throughout the 2 entirety of the species' historic and current available 3 habitat, and granting wolves essential status. 4 Finally, please revive the draft 2012 recovery 5 plan, set clear and defensible recovery objectives, and 6 base management on that instead of a woefully inadequate 7 1982 plan still in effect. 8 Recovery is the goal and purpose of the 9 Endangered Species Act. How can the Service manage or 10 propose to manage a listed species toward that goal with 11 that purpose with no articulated and identified recovery 12 goal? How can you say this population is a component of 13 recovery if you don't know what recovery is? 14 The Service claims this program is intended to 15 achieve conservation and recovery, and you propose to 16 revise the 10 J rule to improve conservation of the 17 species, but completely ignore recovery in contravention 18 of the ESA. This betrays the law, your mission, and 19 does a disservice to an imperiled species. 20 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 21 speaker, please. 22 MR. RILEY: Good evening. My name is Zac 23 Riley. I speak on behalf tonight of the New Mexico Farm 24 and Livestock Bureau. I'd also like to point out that I 25 am a fifth-generation rancher located in southern New</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p> <p>1 eventually stalk or go among people. 2 Expansion of the habitat area of this size will 3 far over encroach upon those species that are already 4 imperiled themselves; i.e., the prairie chicken. You 5 were present, you were asked the same question about 6 this wolf and the expansion of this area. And 7 furthermore, this will diminish the efforts on behalf of 8 the ranches to provide -- 9 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. Next 10 presenter. 11 MR. DIAMOND: Hello, my name is Jack Diamond, 12 J-A-C-K, Diamond. I do live in the Gila, which is in 13 the reintroduction area. I also do support sound 14 science. 15 You have some major issues here. We talked 16 about the genetics. That's your first major issue. 17 Your next one is a small ecosystem. Your third is an 18 ecosystem with people that live in that ecosystem. 19 I'm not against the wolves. I think there's a 20 place for wolves. I think they do belong in Alaska, 21 Canada, where there's no people. But you cannot put 22 them in a place such as New Mexico or Arizona where 23 there is people that live there, and livelihoods that 24 are at stake, industries that are at stake. It will not 25 work.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p> <p>1 Mexico as well. 2 And tonight I want to speak on behalf of a 3 demonized industry that has been made a social pariah. 4 This industry has been told to produce more product to 5 feed a greater number of a growing population. These 6 people are responsible for feeding the US, while also 7 being good stewards of the lands and the wildlife within 8 them, all the while contending with the ever increasing 9 number of predators, including those present who wish to 10 do away with them. 11 Every one of these stewards would go out of 12 their way to properly care for any animal. These people 13 understand the importance of predacious species and 14 their place. They understand that this experimental 15 nonessential wolf population has its place in the wild. 16 But their place is not amongst species that any and all 17 defensible characteristics have been bred out of. 18 Nor is their place amongst people. These 19 habituated captive raised domesticated canines are a 20 threat to the population. I do not understand how much 21 proof there needs to be for a wolf approaching a child 22 or stalking a family. This is a master predator, you've 23 all admitted that. This master predator being released 24 into a population area, or a highly populated area, 25 doesn't need proof that it will habitually and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p> <p>1 This is a failed program. Sometimes things 2 don't work, people. We tried this. I think it's time 3 just to say Look, we've done everything we could to try 4 to get this to work. It has not worked, so let's just 5 drop it and let's move on. 6 If it's another species, let's move on. But 7 this species here will not work in New Mexico or Arizona 8 due to the people that live in the communities, or the 9 people that are there, the hunting industry, the 10 ranching, it will never work. 11 So I think you guys need to back up and say 12 it's not your fault, you've done all that you could, but 13 this program is not going to work. It will never work. 14 You can keep trying, you can expand the boundaries. 15 That's not going to do it. 16 These people from Las Cruces, they're decent 17 people, and all the other people that have spoke for the 18 wolf are decent people. They do not understand that 19 wolves in Las Cruces will not make it. They're going to 20 get into neighborhoods, they're going to prey on dogs 21 and people's livestock -- 22 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. 23 Thank you. 24 MS. SPENCER: Hi. Wendy Spencer, 25 S-P-E-N-C-E-R, Wolf Haven International. When we talk</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p> <p>1 about stakeholders in this program, what generally comes 2 to mind are the livestock producers, sportsmen and 3 conservation groups. 4 However, there is an another faction that is 5 often overlooked, and that is the facilities that house 6 and maintain the captive population for the Service. 7 Wolf Haven has been a dedicated partner in the New 8 Mexican wolf SSP for 20 years. And as such, we have 9 played a vital role in both the captive and wild 10 components of this population. 11 We serve as both a captive breeding facility as 12 well as one of only three prerelease breeding facilities 13 in the US. Over the years, we have housed dozen of 14 wolves, and we've seen the release of two family groups. 15 The Hawk's Nest pack, which was part of the initial 16 reintroduction in 1998, and later the Cienega pack in 17 2000. 18 Wolf Haven spends over \$10,000 annually on the 19 Mexican wolves in our care and SSP-related activity. 20 All of these activities are funded by the individual 21 institution, and for small nonprofits, participation in 22 this program is a considerable expense. But we do so 23 because we recognize and appreciate the value of this 24 program and how critical the captive component is to the 25 system and the eventual biologically self-sustaining</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p> <p>1 what the actual policy and what these different 2 alternatives might cause, but what it might force in 3 Luna County. 4 There's no water in Luna County. There's no 5 natural water. So any water that is available is going 6 to be made by someone. So there's a rancher, there's a 7 farmer, we're inviting the wolf to come to us. So 8 anything that happens in Luna County, we're asking the 9 wolf to come to our back door. 10 So the interactions that are going to happen is 11 going to be around water. And the corridor from the 12 Mexican wolves to the northern boundaries are -- if 13 they're going to come through Luna County, they're going 14 to have interactions with humans. 15 What's the economic impact going to happen is 16 what are they going to eat? Everybody's talking about 17 the ungulate population, and I'd like to see the 18 ungulate population in Luna County. We don't have any. 19 There's no elk, very little deer. What do they eat? I 20 don't know. But we're inviting them to our back door. 21 Are we going to feed them? Fish & Wildlife going to 22 feed them? What are we going to do? 23 So the economic impact, if they do prey on any 24 of the cows, anything that -- any of our wildlife, pets, 25 it's going to cause a huge impact on the population. We</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p> <p>1 population of the Mexican wolves on the landscape. 2 As you know, limited gene diversity, high mean 3 kinship values and inbreeding pressures are impediments 4 to this program. The biggest hindrance, however, is 5 space. Expanding the Mexican EPA and releasing more 6 wolves with suitable genetics and behavioral 7 characteristics will not only improve the genetic 8 fitness of the free ranging population, but it will also 9 free up valuable space in captivity. 10 We ask the Service to consider alternative 3 as 11 its preferred alternative. Wolf Haven feels that this 12 alternative is the only current option that will help 13 the Service achieve its recovery goals of this 14 critically endangered animal. 15 We thank the Service and the IFT for their 16 continued commitment and dedication to this program. 17 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. And if 18 you would leave your comments for the court reporter, I 19 would appreciate it. 20 Cindy Norris, Adrienne Seltz, John Waugh, Jim 21 Wood. 22 Next speaker, please. 23 MR. PEARSON: My name is Ira Pearson, 24 P-E-A-R-S-O-N. I come from Luna County, New Mexico, 25 right on the Mexican border, and I want to speak about</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p> <p>1 only have 25,000 people in our whole county. 2 If they devastate a herd of cattle, how's that 3 going to -- where's the economic impact going to happen 4 all the way throughout Luna County? It's a huge impact 5 on us. We can't afford it. We don't want to have it 6 happen to us. We don't need any more -- we are a poor 7 county and we don't need more devastation. 8 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. Next 9 speaker. 10 MR. WAUGH: My name is John Waugh, W-A-U-G-H. 11 I'm from Dona Ana. Thanks for being here. 12 I support the option 3, the expanded version of 13 option 3. After 16 years of the previous recovery plan, 14 83 wolves is not a recovery. There's many captive 15 releases from other places for the Mexican wolf. The 16 territory needs to be expanded and the gene pool needs 17 to be expanded. As a keystone species, they do extend 18 biodiversity. We've seen that in Yellowstone, the 19 northern Rockies. The hunting is better, the elk herds 20 are better. 21 Also, remove the nonessential experimental 22 population classification. And I do not think that they 23 should expand the takes and kills. It's like bringing 24 back standard operating procedure 13, which allows more 25 removals. And you know, with all these wolves in these</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 94</p> <p>1 captive breeding areas, they need to be released. 2 When you continue to breed wolves in captivity, 3 they can't be released into the wild. So they need to 4 be released into the wild to expand the gene pool 5 because it's crashing as it is. I think they are an 6 essential part of the environment. The time I've spent 7 in the Gila, I can see that, and in Yellowstone and 8 elsewhere in the northern Rockies. 9 And the wolf recovery have been successful in 10 other areas. It's only when Fish & Wildlife turns these 11 over to state agencies and game agencies to regulate 12 that problems have arisen. In the last few years, over 13 1,200 wolves have been killed in the northern Rockies. 14 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. 15 Thank you. Next speaker. 16 MR. KING: Christopher King from Albuquerque, 17 New Mexico. The traditional spelling for both. 18 Wolves are beautiful, intelligent, playful, 19 graceful, powerful, and they deserve our protection. 20 They play a vital role in the health of our southwestern 21 ecosystem in a myriad of ways known and yet to be 22 determined. 23 Speaking for myself, I support a modified 24 version of alternative 3 so that we have an expanded 25 release area without expanding the loopholes for killing</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 96</p> <p>1 about the wolves, but I just wondered how many of these 2 wolf hunters out here are associated with PETA. Because 3 you know, all them, they oppose every kind of killing 4 there is like horses and dogs and things. One of the 5 last -- I read a documentary about the last wolf that 6 was killed over in eastern New Mexico and this ranch 7 hand went out there and found this big old steer that a 8 wolf had cut the hamstring on. Most people don't know 9 what a hamstring is. It's the bleeders that lead down 10 to the hind leg. 11 Drag around the wolf, kept eating on his back 12 end for days and days. You can see where he just drug 13 him all over the place there. And anyway, anybody that 14 has any heart for anything, a whole lot of suffering 15 goes on in them kind of deals. 16 And then one of the things that I'd like to say 17 before I give up here, my mom just told me about an 18 incident down in Texas. Getting to be 101 here pretty 19 quick. And she said that down here, there was a family 20 that three kids, and two big ones and a little kid went 21 out there and they buried the little baby in the leaves, 22 and a big wolf showed up there and the kids run, all of 23 them, the big ones, up the hill. The mama says they run 24 to the house. 25 And so, Where's the baby? He's buried out</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 95</p> <p>1 and trapping wolves. The modifications also to include 2 further expansion of territory for the Mexican gray wolf 3 northward up to the Grand Canyon and south to the 4 Mexican border. 5 And also, designation of the Mexican gray wolf 6 as an essential species. I'm grateful for the U.S. Fish 7 and Wildlife Service for the good work that you've done 8 to this point in promoting recovery of the Mexican gray 9 wolf. Now we have the opportunity to move forward. 10 Thank you for the work that you've done, and for 11 providing this excellent forum for communication. 12 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 13 speaker. 14 MR. WOOD: My name is Jim Wood, W-O-O-D. I 15 represent Deming Soil and Water Conservation District. 16 We represent the people in our district and we'd like to 17 express our opposition to any expansion or rule changes 18 to the Mexican wolf program. We thank you. We've sent 19 our comments in. We hope you take consideration of 20 those comments in your decision-making. Thank you 21 again. 22 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 23 speaker. 24 MR. CHATFIELD: My name is Harvey Chatfield. 25 One of the first things I'd like to say, maybe it's not</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 97</p> <p>1 there in the leaves. Well, there's a big wolf went over 2 there and looked at them. He went up on the hill and 3 howled, and so mama ran out there and grabbed the kid 4 and run back to the house, and the wolf got out there 5 and a big old pack showed up there, and there wasn't any 6 kid to eat, so they killed the wolf that called them in 7 and ate him, so. 8 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 9 speaker, please. 10 MR. LYON: Hello. My name is Ken Lyon, 11 L-Y-O-N, from Sierra County. I'm a former Sierra County 12 commissioner. I want to go on record as presenting an 13 ordinance that is on the books. It was passed February 14 3, 1994. I was instrumental in helping pass this. It's 15 an ordinance that says if a wolf is released in Sierra 16 County, it is against the law, and there is a punishment 17 that goes with that of \$30 fine, 90 days in jail, or 18 both. 19 I do, with no disrespect, to the people from 20 California, the people from New York, the people from 21 Valencia County, Dona Ana County, when we pass this 22 ordinance, we passed it for Sierra County. And this 23 represents the will of the people of Sierra County. 24 More important, it represents a vital part of 25 the economy of Sierra County, the ranching business. So</p>

25 (Pages 94 to 97)

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p> <p>1 folks, this is not just the will of Sierra County, it's 2 the law of Sierra County. We expect it to be respected. 3 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 4 speaker, please. 5 MR. NEWTON: Kannan Newton, K-A-N-N-A-N, 6 N-E-W-T-S-O-N. The Land of Enchantment is widely 7 regarded as one of the great natural wonders of America. 8 Everything we can do to maximize the health and growth 9 of the Mexican wolf population in New Mexico will 10 greatly enhance that reputation. 11 Of the alternatives addressed in the U.S. Fish 12 and Wildlife's draft, EIS, alternative 3 with some 13 modification would be an excellent start. These 14 modifications should include expanding the wolf release 15 area, eliminate boundaries to wolf movements and permit 16 movement north of I-40 into northern New Mexico and 17 southern Colorado, and redesignate the wolves as 18 essential. 19 Let us make the Mexican wolf a star of the New 20 Mexico show. Thank you. 21 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 22 speaker. 23 MS. SCHAFER: Hi, my name is Nicole Schaffer. 24 N-I-C-O-L-E, S-C-H-A-F-E-R, and I'm a current resident 25 of Las Cruces. I'm in support of the science that is</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p> <p>1 what I want to say today is I don't really know why 2 we're here doing this without that recovery plan. I'm 3 just adamant about the fact we're changing the rules, 4 again allowing for more destruction of this very 5 threatened species that should definitely be essential. 6 There is no way that you can replace four or five 7 generations of wild animals that have been born in the 8 wild from any captive breeding facility. This is an 9 essential population. 10 I am also adamantly opposed to any kind of 11 turning over to either state Game and Fish Commissions 12 who expressly have already decided that they're going to 13 get rid of them and they'll never survive. 14 So that happens when the species is recovered. 15 Up until that point, this is Fish & Wildlife. Issue a 16 mandate to recover and conserve these species, not 17 hyper-manage them. That's why we don't have as many as 18 we should have right now. They've been killed, they've 19 been removed by you, they've been killed by wildlife 20 services mistaking them for coyotes, they've been killed 21 with collars destroyed and smashed and disappeared. 22 That has to stop. 23 We have got to stop killing them. So I am in 24 support of modified, again, alternative 3, but I think 25 that we have got to -- we're expanding to the east and</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p> <p>1 necessary for the recovery of Mexican wolves. I favor 2 the recovery alternative 3 with modification. 3 For this endangered species to recover, I ask 4 the Fish and Wildlife Service to eliminate northern 5 boundaries that restrict wolves from the best suitable 6 habitats for their recovery. The likelihood of recovery 7 increases with multiple diverse populations, and the 8 I-40 boundary decreases the distances wolves can travel 9 to establish new populations. 10 The Mexican wolf has the right to their native 11 land. Thank you. 12 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 13 speaker. 14 MS. SELTZ: Hello, my name is Adrienne Seltz. 15 I'm from the Sandia Park, New Mexico. A-D-R-I-E-N-N-E, 16 S-E-L-T-Z. First, I want to thank Fish and Wildlife 17 Service for the work you have done. I've met and 18 interacted with a lot of the biologists on the ground. 19 I am also a volunteer. Although I am speaking 20 for myself today, I volunteer with Wild Spirit Wolf 21 Sanctuary, so I have hand raised, bottle fed, grown with 22 wolves, worked with wolves. I have trapped and captured 23 and sedated Mexican wolves and examined them. So I'm 24 intimately familiar with these animals. 25 Mostly, they are really scared of people. But</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 101</p> <p>1 west, into some not so good territories -- Luna 2 County -- there's no food -- when they can go up north. 3 I think there's rumor of promises to Colorado and Utah 4 not to have wolves. So they got to go worth -- 5 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you very much. 6 Guy Dicharry, Scott Chandler, Patricia Snyder. 7 Next speaker, please. 8 MR. DICHARRY: Good evening. My name is Guy 9 Dicharry, D-I-C-H-A-R-R-Y. I'm a 30-year resident of 10 Valencia County and I support the expansion of the wolf 11 recovery program. 12 I'm also a member of Backcountry Hunters and 13 Anglers. The eastern border of our property in Valencia 14 County is the bosque along the Rio Grande. We raise 15 chickens for eggs and meat. We have goats and horses 16 and dogs. We will be in zone two on that land as well 17 as the land in Torrance County where we sometimes graze 18 our horses. 19 I know what it's like to find my animals 20 slaughtered by other animals, but in our case, it's 21 always been domestic dogs. But over the years, I've 22 learned how to protect my animals. 23 The Western Governors Association Wildlife 24 Council has identified areas of crucial habitat and 25 wildlife corridors in New Mexico. The project</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 102</p> <p>1 identifies the Rio Grande as a major wildlife corridor. 2 The expansion of the recovery area to take advantage of 3 this corridor is needed if the Mexican gray wolf is to 4 have any chance of achieving the necessary genetic 5 diversity that's consistent with survival. 6 Also, the expansion of the recovery area means 7 that the risk of predation will no longer be borne 8 solely by those in the current recovery area. I don't 9 want to lose my animals to predation, but I also 10 understand that no undertaking is risk free. I cannot, 11 nevertheless, condone the intentional extinction of an 12 important species simply because of the risk of 13 predation. 14 We as humans caused the near extinction of this 15 species and it's up to us to give them their chance for 16 survival. Thank you. 17 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Next speaker. 18 MS. SYNDER: My name is Patricia Snyder, 19 S-N-Y-D-E-R. Thank you for the opportunity to comment 20 today. I'd like to start by saying that I also support 21 a modified version of alternative 3. Scientists have 22 been sounding the alarm on the genetic diversity crisis 23 that the Mexican wolf is facing for years, and you know 24 that scientists agree recovery in groups of three 25 interconnected populations. It's imperative to the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 104</p> <p>1 wolves in the wild are absolutely essential to the 2 survival of the subspecies as a whole. To continue the 3 this -- 4 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you very much. 5 Next speaker. 6 MS. RENN: Hello, my name is Emily Renn, 7 R-E-N-N, and I am the executive director of the Grand 8 Canyon Wolf Recovery Project, which is a nonprofit based 9 in Flagstaff, Arizona. I also received both my 10 bachelor's and master's in wildlife biology from 11 Northern Arizona University. 12 When I review this draft EIS, I see an archaic 13 way of zone management that looks like it could be from 14 a textbook out of the 1960s. It doesn't represent the 15 most current wildlife biology that we know about Mexican 16 wolves and how much genetic information has changed in 17 the last 30 years. 18 This approach to the zone management does not 19 represent the best biology for a wide-ranging mammal. 20 We know that it's actually kind of tying your own hands 21 and putting these endangered subspecies at risk. Every 22 time you suggest that you're going to capture a wolf and 23 take it back and translocate it into the recovery area, 24 it puts that animal at risk. 25 I represent, as I said, a Grand Canyon Wolf</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 103</p> <p>1 survival of these wolves in the Southwest to release 2 more wolves into the wild. 3 I do support the expansion of releasing and 4 roaming areas. Our native Southwest top predator 5 deserves more land to roam. I do vehemently oppose the 6 boundary of I-40 to the recovery area, and I urge U.S. 7 Fish and Wildlife Service to eliminate boundaries to the 8 wolves' movements. Some of the best remaining habitats 9 for wolves would be shut off with these boundaries. 10 And the best available science shows that in 11 order to recover the Mexican wolf, additional 12 populations are needed, along with the ability for 13 individual wolves to move between populations. 14 I'd also like to say that I vehemently oppose 15 the expanded provisions for take of Mexican wolves in 16 the draft EIS. The scientists agrees that removing 17 wolves from the wild is contrary to the goals of the 18 reintroduction program and has been a major factor in 19 the Service's inability to meet its objectives. 20 It doesn't take a scientist to understand that 21 expanding the ability to remove critically endangered 22 wolves in the wild is the wrong direction. We need more 23 wolves and less politics, not the other way around. I 24 oppose -- I also oppose the continued designation of 25 experimental nonessential of the wild wolves. The 83</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 105</p> <p>1 Recovery Project, and we are doing the work of building 2 a base of support in Coconino County in the Grand Canyon 3 region. I believe that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife 4 Service should stop bowing down to special interests and 5 actually listen to the majority of residents in both 6 Arizona and New Mexico who support the expanded recovery 7 of Mexican wolves. 8 And thank you. 9 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Next speaker. 10 MR. CHANDLER: Hi. My name is Scott Chandler. 11 I'm from Luna County. My family ranches here in Sierra 12 County and I have a ranch in Otero County as well. 13 First, I'd like to say we are opposed to any 14 expansion and have been opposed to it from the 15 beginning. I think that this is an action that takes no 16 consideration to what the founding fathers had for our 17 country and it runs all over private property rights, 18 our right to the sovereignty of our state, and the 19 county, and you know, I was kind of flabbergasted when 20 our county commissioner got up and said about the laws 21 that have been passed against wolves in this county and 22 I didn't see that in any presentation. 23 It was all just everything just good and 24 satisfactory. They do not take into account the locals 25 and the people -- I mean, predominantly, I guess polling</p>

27 (Pages 102 to 105)

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 106</p> <p>1 here, Dona Ana County has been pretty well represented. 2 I think it has been a hundred percent overwhelming that 3 they are for wolf reintroduction, but let's all be 4 honest. 5 I don't think the wolves would do very well in 6 Las Cruces, or even in the Organ Mountains. So it falls 7 back into the communities here, and we are not in a 8 place that the wildlife can sustain this. The people 9 that live out there, the people that work out there 10 know. And people say the ranchers will be taking. 11 Most of the time we don't see what's killed. 12 We already deal with losses from bears and lions. And 13 most of those losses go unaccounted for. It's very 14 remote country. The likelihood of you coming across 15 carcasses is almost impossible. So that's just 16 something to placate everybody and say, "Oh, everybody's 17 going to pay you." 18 That doesn't happen. That is not reality. And 19 in a country where our vets are dying in the hospitals 20 because we don't have appropriate deals, we have 21 homeless people wandering around, and we're spending 22 money on this kind of thing, we ought to be ashamed of 23 ourselves. 24 Our country, the first 150 years wasn't founded 25 on this. If we were run like the last 20, we would be a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 108</p> <p>1 Finally, I'm a little frustrated by the 2 attitude toward predators, that it seems that some think 3 there should be no predators. Nature has predators. 4 That's just the way it is. So, are we going to have a 5 nature with predators or some alternative big zoo? 6 Thanks. 7 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Next speaker, please. 8 MR. WEAR: Mike Wear, Hillsboro. Last name, 9 W-E-A-R. I'm a 27-year retired law enforcement officer. 10 I'm also a fifth-generation rancher from the state of 11 Arizona. I currently have a ranch in Hillsboro. 12 You people are passing policies which are in 13 conflict with local law, of which a sheriff will come in 14 and be able to take care of such. You people need to 15 ensure that you get all these things clear before you 16 start doing these. 17 In other words, you need the good graces of the 18 people. Otherwise, like the previous gentleman who 19 stood up here and said if you don't have the people 20 behind you, your program's not going to -- it's not 21 going to go. It's just there. It's a fight that you 22 can't win. You'll continue to fight it. 23 So you need the ranchers. You really do. I'm 24 not against the wolf. I think it has a place, just not 25 in my backyard where I pay taxes. I have a Second</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 107</p> <p>1 Third World country. 2 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 3 speaker. 4 MR. HINCHMAN: Eric Hinchman, H-I-N-C-H-M-A-N. 5 I wanted to say that I've been a supporter of the 6 reintroduction program since it happened 16 years ago. 7 I've also been frustrated with the lack of releases and 8 what I see to be a lot of half measures. It seems like 9 as one gentleman earlier had said, that the program just 10 isn't working and it won't work. It can work, but it 11 just seems like there's been a lot of half measures 12 taken where you can go here if you're a wolf, but you 13 can't go there if you're a wolf. You can do this to a 14 wolf, but you can't do that to a wolf. 15 So I think that if you want to go forward and 16 save this species from extinction, you need to do 17 something a little bit stronger. Either go forward with 18 this program if you're going to do it. It just seems 19 like keeping less than a hundred wolves just out there, 20 is -- I'm not sure what the -- I'm not sure what the 21 goal of that is. It's not really accomplishing much. 22 I'm encouraged by the expansion of the 23 boundaries; however, making it easier to kill wolves and 24 saying you can't go north of I-40 doesn't make a lot of 25 sense either.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 109</p> <p>1 Amendment right, a Fourth Amendment right, to protect 2 property, to bear arms. I have all of those things. 3 And we -- you people need to look at that too. 4 I have to pay the taxes for people to cross my property 5 to go to the fort. Do you think the Fish and Wildlife 6 Service is going to have an open hand to go there? I 7 don't know. That's a good question. But you need to 8 really look deep at everything that you're looking to. 9 I am in support of a no action alternative. I 10 believe that where the wolf is, leave the wolf there. 11 Leave him there. Don't do more. Leave it as it is. 12 You've already got all the protections in place. See if 13 you can continue. Make the wolf do it on its own 14 without you people throwing him carcasses and blaming 15 the carcasses thrown back on the ranchers. That's 16 absurd. 17 Where does that come from, that we would go to 18 throw a valuable animal to a wolf? No. That don't 19 happen. And I don't know where these allegations come 20 from, but I think they -- 21 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 22 speaker. 23 MS. NORTH: Hi, my name is Therese North, 24 T-H-E-R-E-S-E, North, N-O-R-T-H. Many people travel to 25 the Land of Enchantment to enjoy our wild lands and the</p>

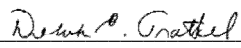

28 (Pages 106 to 109)

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 110</p> <p>1 animals that inhabit it, wolves included. I think there 2 would be people who would love to see a wolf. I know I 3 would. 4 My husband and I have been living here in 5 Silver City for seven years. We hike the Gila a lot. 6 It is a wonderful, wonderful place. I am in support of 7 proposal 3 modified without any more -- taking any more 8 wolves' lives, and I would suggest a couple other places 9 for you way up north, like the Pecos Wilderness would be 10 a great place for wolves. Thank you. 11 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 12 speaker. 13 MR. DIAMOND: Good afternoon. My name is John 14 Diamond, spelled J-O-H-N, D-I-A-M-O-N-D. I'm going to 15 read from page 58, chapter 4, no peer reviewed studies 16 have been conducted and no significantly collected data 17 available to make an evaluation as to whether the 18 reintroduction of wolves into the Black Range or Blue 19 recovery area has or has not had a positive, neutral or 20 negative psychological affect on children living in 21 rural communities within proximity to the recovery area. 22 However, it is noticed in the five-year review, fear and 23 not necessarily a fact, data, or logical based emotion. 24 An abstinence of a factual or logical foundation for 25 fear does not make the personal impact any less real.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 112</p> <p>1 from Las Cruces. M-C-K-I-M-M-I-E. 2 I ask you to follow the intention of the 3 Endangered Species Act. The ESA was originated about 4 the same time the Southwest lobo disappeared from the 5 wild. Nearly lost forever, the Mexico wolf might now 6 have a chance in spite of its many obstacles. Yes, it 7 is a predator, and predators are essential parts of a 8 healthy ecosystems. Wolves can also be part of healthy 9 economies. 10 Fully recover this animal. Try to reduce 11 handling, capture and recapture. Poaching wildlife is 12 bad enough, but illegally killing endangered species is 13 a high crime, so come down hard and fast on poachers. 14 And do not relax lethal control rules. 15 Expand the Mexican wolf's territory clear up 16 into the Four Corners region, thereby reducing the loss 17 of animals that wander out of the currently very limited 18 range. 19 The wolf population in the wild is absolutely 20 essential for the species' survival, and should be 21 classified as essential. Expand and release 22 opportunities will improve chances for recovery. 23 Mexican wolf recovery is what most people want and what 24 the ESA demands. I wish you success. 25 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 111</p> <p>1 Fear is a personal thing. Some people will 2 fear wolves no matter what the facts are. Others will 3 fear wolves no matter what the facts are. But whether 4 this goes true with the facts that people fear sexual 5 predators. Because that's how I feel these wolves are. 6 I had two encounters with wolves with my two 7 little girls and my wife that are documented. You guys 8 know and are fully aware of these encounters. My 9 children fear wolves and they have a reason to fear 10 wolves. 11 The human safety concern should be your number- 12 one consideration when you guys are developing a 13 recovery plan or this draft EIS. And if it's not, 14 you're going to hear from me over and over and over 15 again because we've lived it. 16 On a second note, you guys have a constitution, 17 to uphold the constitution to protect the human safety 18 and well-being of the general American public and that 19 should be your number-one concern. Thank you. 20 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. I'm going 21 to read some more names. Tim McKimmie, Gene Whetton, 22 Rita Gentry, Jessica VanDerVean, Leona Wear, Jeff 23 Richter, and Michael Robinson. 24 Next speaker, please. 25 MR. McKIMMIE: My name is Tim McKimmie. I'm</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 113</p> <p>1 speaker. 2 MS. VANDERVEEN: My name is Jessica VanDerVeen, 3 V-A-N-D-E-R-V-E-E-N. I'm a transplant from Oregon, and 4 I just received my Master's degree in agricultural 5 extension and education, and I'll admit I didn't know a 6 whole lot about the wolves until I came down here. 7 I support a modified alternative 3 with more 8 protection, expanded boundaries and populations, as well 9 as classifying the wolves as essential. The wolves need 10 a bigger area to live and reproduce, as well as to 11 connect with other wolves. The wolves need a suitable 12 habitat and relocation area, and how are we to know what 13 is exactly suitable for them? 83 wolves are a step, but 14 not enough. 15 I do agree with reimbursing the ranchers for 16 losses instead of killing wolves. Ranchers need to 17 dispose of carcasses appropriately. Our children and 18 future generations need to know about the species. Once 19 they are gone, they are gone forever. 20 We need to relocate the wolves instead of using 21 lethal management techniques until there is a balanced 22 population, since they are endangered and it is our 23 fault. Wolves cannot read maps or man-made boundary 24 lines. 25 Wolves were here first and don't know how to</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 114</p> <p>1 follow our man-made laws and deserve our respect for 2 their place in our economy -- I'm sorry. In our 3 ecosystem. 4 Conservation is vital to our future as a 5 society. Wolves are essential to help keep the 6 ecosystem balanced, and there has been research showing 7 this. Even if you don't believe the research at this 8 point, look at the results in Yellowstone. If evidence 9 proves us out later and wolves are gone, how are we 10 going to bring them back? 11 We need to look to the future and acknowledge 12 the past without staying locked in the past. Thank you 13 for your time. 14 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 15 speaker. 16 MR. RICHTER: Good evening. My name is Jeff 17 Richter. I'm not fussy about the spelling. 18 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Can you speak a 19 little -- 20 MR. RICHTER: Good evening. My name is Jeff 21 Richter. I'm not fussy about the spelling. Start my 22 time over. 23 I attended the session this afternoon, and I 24 want to thank the Service for their slick presentation 25 and their canned responses to our questions. The</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 116</p> <p>1 members and supporters throughout the United States. 2 Our organization under a different name was the 3 original -- was one of the original organizations to sue 4 the Fish and Wildlife Service to compel you to follow 5 the Endangered Species Act and re-introduce the Mexican 6 wolf into the wild, as per the 1982 recovery plan. 7 And I'm happy to be at this hearing because I 8 was also the author of the petition for rule making in 9 2004, which we submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife 10 Service to get expanded release areas, expanded areas 11 for wolves to roam without boundaries and taking care of 12 the livestock carcasses that over and over again are 13 correlated with wolves switching their hunting behavior 14 from elk and natural prey to domestic livestock, thereby 15 causing the very problems that turn into a cycle of 16 conflict and scapegoating the wolves. 17 And these recommendations were made in the 2001 18 report, a scientific report commissioned by the U.S. 19 Fish and Wildlife Service. So we support alternative 3, 20 with modifications. 21 Designating the wolves as experimental 22 essential; you will not be able to persuade a federal 23 judge that you do not have to consider whether or not to 24 designate them as experimental essential. 25 Protect the wolves from scavenging on</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 115</p> <p>1 answers to our posed questions, both pro and con, were 2 short on substance and long on (inaudible). 3 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is just 4 another example of the increasingly lawless federal 5 government acting in spite of the constitution, NEPA, 6 ESA, and all the other acronyms you can think of. The 7 true not so well hidden intent of this introduction 8 expansion of this recovery area is to drive us from the 9 land, destroy us economically, and with total 10 destruction of our private property rights. 11 It's interesting listening to the comments here 12 tonight. The people that are pro, the people that 13 support the expansion of this recovery area, are those 14 people who have the least to risk. Their livelihoods 15 are not at risk and their private property rights are 16 not at risk. 17 In my estimation, there's very few places for 18 the wolf on this earth. Let's say perhaps Alaska, 19 Canada, a zoo or two, Grimm's Fairy Tales, or hanging on 20 the wall. Thank you. 21 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: I'm going to call a 22 couple more names. Michael Robinson. 23 MR. ROBINSON: Michael Robinson, M-I-C-H-A-E-L 24 R-O-B-I-N-S-O-N. I represent the Center for Biological 25 Diversity and our over three-quarters of a million</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 117</p> <p>1 livestock; by holding them blameless if they're allowed 2 to scavenge and then subsequently depredate. 3 Remove the telemetry receivers from private 4 hands that you have imprudently lent out. You have 5 admitted, your agency has admitted in the El Paso Times 6 several years ago, in 2008, I believe, that you had 7 given out telemetry receivers and had not kept track of 8 who you had all given them to, which is stunning 9 irresponsibility from a federal agency given that these 10 tools strip the wolves of their anonymity and their 11 ability to hide and survive. 12 And for recovery to take place, you have to 13 reduce the mortality not just from the federal 14 government and not just from the private sources, but 15 also not increase mortality. Thank you very much. 16 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 17 speaker. 18 MR. ANDRADE: Good evening. My name is Lynn, 19 L-Y-N-N, A-N-D-R-A-D-E. I just want to start with a 20 couple of comments. I think it's grossly unfair of the 21 people from the Service to put up such intelligent 22 professional and obviously thoughtful people. How can 23 we hate you? There's just no way. 24 A little bit about myself. I'm a 25 third-generation Arizonan. My grandparents were all the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 118</p> <p>1 born in the 1800s. My grandfather was a rancher. He 2 was riding his cutting horse, moving cattle until two 3 weeks before he died. So I have very strong roots in 4 the Southwest and in the industry. 5 I have a military background and a high tech 6 background. I am an Arizona native as well. I want to 7 say I'm completely in favor of alternative 3, with 8 expanded provisions. I also want to say that we need 9 ranchers, and we all need to work together. 10 Besides that, there is something that explains 11 far better than a person at the mic could. There's a 12 very short film you can see on the Internet called "How 13 Wolves Change Rivers," and all you need to do is go to 14 YouTube and look at it. It's extremely enlightening. 15 And with that, I want to thank you for your time. 16 Thanks. 17 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 18 speaker. 19 MS. LaRACK: My name is Danielle LaRack, 20 L-A-R-A-C-K and I am from Colorado. I came here today 21 to be a voice for the voiceless in the face of the 22 proposed rule changes surrounding the Mexican gray wolf 23 recovery program. 24 I am aware that a large concern regarding the 25 management of the Mexican gray population has to do with</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 120</p> <p>1 with others to conserve, protect, enhance, fish, 2 wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing 3 benefit of the American people. I am asking you to 4 provide the Mexican grays the protection and resources 5 they not only need but truly deserve. Thank you. 6 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: I'm going to call one 7 more name. Joe Bill Nunn. 8 MS. BOONE: Hi. My name is Velma, V-E-L-M-A, 9 last name Boone, B-O-O-N-E. Thank you for allowing us 10 this opportunity. And I don't want to speak on facts 11 and figures, but I do want to speak on emotion. 12 We've heard a lot of that this evening and this 13 is a personal account of an encounter with a pair of 14 wolves on our property in Sierra County. I was not 15 aware that we were able to seek assistance or should 16 report, and so this is my opportunity. 17 I have three small grandchildren, a son that 18 has received the Purple Heart and served 38 months in 19 Iraq. 20 He came home at Christmastime, brought his 21 three daughters a new puppy. And two months later, they 22 drove up to our property on the Animas Creek, and mom, 23 puppy and one daughter unloaded, and two wolves came out 24 of the creek bottom and took it right in front of all 25 three of the girls and killed it.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 119</p> <p>1 the interests of cattle ranchers, and I understand that 2 ranching is a way of life in this area. However, there 3 have been proven successful nonviolent methods of 4 co-existence between ranchers and wolves that have been 5 implemented in other areas of this country which can and 6 should be implemented in the Mexican gray territory in 7 this area. 8 Despite the misunderstandings and 9 misconceptions that surround wolves, now is the time to 10 forget the big bad wolf stories and wake up to the 11 reality that these are essential predators that our 12 ecosystem is in desperate need of. 13 These proposed rule changes not only are the 14 best available science, but also gives in to anti-wolf 15 hysteria, greed and political agendas. I never will 16 understand how it is to hard to give a small group of 17 wolves back a mere fraction of what we have taken from 18 them, their land and their freedom. 19 I cringe at the thought of having to point to a 20 picture in my book to show my future children what a 21 Mexican gray wolf was. It hurts my heart that yet 22 another group of animals could perish at the hands of 23 the human race. 24 I'm asking you, though, U.S. Fish and Wildlife 25 Service, to adhere to your mission statement to work</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 121</p> <p>1 The father chased that pair, and chased them up 2 on a hill, and that one wolf turned around and came 3 right back down toward the family. And that is a real 4 experience, truthful in every detail. And all of you 5 that are defending the wolf, I would ask to consider 6 there is more to this than emotion. This is a truth of 7 what can happen in a family and to small children. 8 And to this day that mother -- I roamed that 9 creek and ran up those mountains the whole time I was 10 growing up, and now that mother refuses to let her three 11 daughters do that because she is from a city and saw 12 that for the firsthand, and won't allow it. 13 And so, it's had a severe impact on our family. 14 And I just want to thank you for your time and 15 opportunity to tell you a real account, and if you have 16 a moment I'd like to speak with you afterwards. 17 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you. Next 18 speaker, please. 19 MR. NUNN: My name is Joe Bill Nunn, N-U-N-N. 20 I am president of the Southwestern New Mexico Grazing 21 Association. Our membership comes from the seven 22 southwestern counties in New Mexico. We are the ones 23 bearing the brunt of the wolf population and the 24 depredation by the wolves. 25 I was present at one of the very first</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 122</p> <p>1 educational meetings that Fish and Wildlife Service 2 sponsored back in the 1990s at the inception of the 3 program. I think that meeting was in Silver City, New 4 Mexico. 5 Your representatives from the U.S. Fish and 6 Wildlife Service told us that -- made it very clear that 7 100 wolves was the target. And there was no reference 8 was ever made to the possible expansion of the initial 9 recovery area or the increase in the number of wolves 10 above 100. It was also made clear by the forest -- Fish 11 and Wildlife Service personnel that if the program was 12 unsuccessful, if it didn't work over a reasonable period 13 of time, that the Fish and Wildlife Service would be the 14 first to terminate a program. 15 The program was -- has obviously been 16 unsuccessful. After 16 years, it is time for you to 17 recognize your original promise and honor your original 18 promise of ending the program. If you continue the 19 program, do not expand the initial recovery areas. 20 The problem with depredation of privately owned 21 livestock, including horses, working cow dogs, hunting 22 dogs and family pets and cattle is only going to get 23 worse. 24 Owners of those domestic animals or their 25 agents should be allowed to take the wolves, if they are</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 124</p> <p>1 IN RE: 2 Wolf Public Hearing - August 13, 2014 3 4 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE 5 6 I, DEBORAH E. TRATTEL, CCR #153, DO HEREBY 7 CERTIFY that on August 13, 2014, the Proceedings in the 8 above-captioned matter was taken before me, that I did 9 report in stenographic shorthand the Proceedings set 10 forth herein, and the foregoing pages are a true and 11 correct transcription to the best of my ability. 12 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither employed by 13 nor related to nor contracted with (unless excepted by 14 the rules) any of the parties or attorneys in this case, 15 and that I have no interest whatsoever in the final 16 disposition of this case in any court. 17 18 19 20  21 Deborah E. Trattel, CRR, RPR, 22 Certified Court Reporter #153 23 License Expires: 12-31-14 24 25 </p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 123</p> <p>1 found attacking their privately owned livestock or pets 2 without a permit, and regardless of whether that attack 3 is taking place -- 4 HEARING OFFICER TRAVERS: Thank you, sir. 5 Thank you. It is now 9 o'clock p.m. On behalf of the 6 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we appreciate your time 7 and effort you took this evening to present your 8 comments. They have been very informative and will be 9 fully considered in their final decision. 10 Again, as a reminder, written comments may be 11 submitted to the staff at the registration table or they 12 may be submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife Service by 13 September 23, 2014. The hearing is closed. I show the 14 time to be 9:01. Thank you. 15 (The hearing was concluded at 9:01 p.m.) 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p>	

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