

Mexican Wolf Adaptive Management Oversight Committee Meeting

June 6, 2003

Springerville, Arizona

Present: **David Bergman (USDA APHIS-WS)**, Dan Groebner (AGFD), Alex Thal (WNMU), Adam Polley (Sierra County, NM), Bud Starnes (NMDA), Auggie Shellhorn (Catron County, NM), Hector Ruedas (Greenlee County, AZ), **Chuck Hayes (NMDGF)**, **Colleen Buchanan (USFWS)**, Joy Nicholopoulos (USFWS), **Wally Murphy (USDA FS, Region 3)**, **Terry Johnson (AGFD)**, John Oakleaf (USFWS), **Alex Puglisi (WMAT)**, Bill Van Pelt (AGFD)

Introduction and ground rules

Meeting started approximately 10 am. Participants introduced themselves.

Terry Johnson reviewed the primary purpose of today's meeting: to review the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Mexican wolf reintroduction project and possibly having the counties sign on as signatories. Other governmental entities are also interested in the MOU and are being kept apprised of its progress (e.g. BLM, State Land Departments, AZ Agriculture Dept.).

This was not a public meeting. This meeting is for governmental entities interested in signing onto an MOU for Mexican wolf reintroduction. Apache and Navajo counties in Arizona have been notified numerous times but have not yet participated in any meetings. We still hope they join the discussion.

A presentation of the Mexican wolf reintroduction project was given to a joint meeting of the Arizona Game and Fish and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish commissions on May 16 in Safford, Arizona. The Arizona Commission gave its Department direction consistent with the September 2002 direction. Feedback from the meeting has been positive. The collaborative process being implemented is being viewed as a good thing.

Before discussion of the MOU began, an inquiry was made about the recent fire in the reintroduction area. The Thomas Fire, ca. 16 miles south of Alpine, does not seem to be a threat to the project.

The AGFD Mexican wolf list serve is up and running. Meeting participants were encouraged to tell people to go to the AGFD website <http://www.azgfd.com> and sign up for the list serve.

Currently, six entities are involved with reintroducing the Mexican wolf in Arizona and New Mexico. The MOU is intended to address issues as they pertain to the reintroduction and adaptive management process. The draft MOU reviewed today was dated June 3, 2003 (Draft 09).

It was agreed that the participants would review the MOU page by page to stimulate discussion and ensure agreement of MOU content by meeting participants.

Page 1 - Enabling and authorizing information. The USFWS provided its information since the last

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draft. Adam Polley informed meeting participants that he will speak for the counties. However, each county will provide its own enabling language. Some counties will include information from their land use plans and the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo.

Action item: Counties are to provide enabling information to Terry Johnson by June 13.

Page 2- a discussion of the Purpose statement took place. The counties do not support reintroduction but want to participate in the adaptive management process for the reintroduction effort. The counties had alternative language for the purpose statement. The counties also requested adding an objective for the human dimension. It was also agreed it would be stated in the MOU that the objectives are not prioritized; the numbers associated with them are for sequencing purposes only (Johnson noted that this is true of the entire MOU).

Action item: Counties are to provide alternative language and human dimension language to Terry Johnson by June 13 for incorporation into the MOU.

Action item: Counties are to provide Whereas statements to Terry Johnson by June 13.

Page 3- add statement “if they so choose” for the Tribes

Page 4- A discussion regarding the definition of stakeholder took place as a result of number 2 on this page. Counties are more than just the general public and have a different status. It was agreed that a global search would replace Stakeholder with “federal, state, county, and other governmental entities.” [Note: subsequently this was changed to Lead Agencies (not Primary Cooperators) and Cooperators (not Stakeholders)]

Make language consistent with definition under NEPA.

Page 5- Under number 1 in parentheses add one or more. Also strike out everything after project. Under number 2 change collaborate with cooperate, communicate, coordinate, and consult.

Action item: Terry Johnson is to provide resources for Adaptive Management and Collaborative Conservation to cooperators by June 13.

Under number four the FACA information needs to be clarified. A discussion took place regarding possibly having a second MOU for counties and other governmental agencies to sign. The counties are concerned that currently the Primary Cooperators do not take into consideration human dimensions. The counties consider themselves experts in the social and cultural aspects within their areas and would like to have the opportunity to have this considered in the reintroduction project. The counties view primary cooperators as Lead Agencies and stakeholders as Cooperators. This

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language is consistent with NEPA.

Page 6- Define the composition of the field team under number six. It would be helpful to have a glossary of terms. In lieu of a glossary, the group agreed to reference a particular dictionary.

Page 7- The proposed language change for number 13 is confusing. Some of the federal agencies like Wildlife Service can raise their own funds.

Action item: Wally Murphy will pursue clarifying language specific for the USDA FS.

Page 8- Accepted strikeouts as proposed on the draft.

Page 9- strikeout language from WMAT number 2 to be consistent with other cooperators. Change language for Stakeholders to an elected official or designee under number 2. Strike number 1, because it is redundant.

Page 10- Carryover from stakeholder section, strike number 3. Change collaborate in number 4 to the 4 Cs. Wordsmith number 5, for terminating participation in the MOU. As it sounds now, the entire MOU can be terminated by a single signatory.

Page 11- County and State have different FOIA (Public Records) language. Do we need to include Public Records language for other cooperators?

Action item: Wally Murphy is to check for redundancy in proposed language in numbers 3 and 4 by June 13. This is to allow the MOU to have only one Mutually Agreed upon section.

Page 12- Nothing to change

Page 13- Need to include signatory title for other cooperators

Terry Johnson agreed to structure two approaches by the next (July 8) meeting: a single MOU model, and a two-MOU model. One topic of the meeting will be whether one or two MOUs will be needed. Several participants indicated preference for a single-MOU approach, if feasible.

The next Cooperators meeting will be in Glenwood, New Mexico, on July 8 (1-5 pm NM time) and continuing on July 9 (8 am -12 pm). The AMWG meeting will take place July 9 (1 pm -5 pm).

Subsequent to the MOU discussion, a discussion took place regarding roles and responsibilities of field team members. Participants agreed that protocols must be finalized as quickly as possible to reduce confusion of field team members.

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Meeting adjourned approximately 2:30 pm.

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