



**Arizona Office**

738 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 206

Tucson, AZ 85705

fax: (208) 475-4702

email: [arizona@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:arizona@westernwatersheds.org)

web site: [www.westernwatersheds.org](http://www.westernwatersheds.org)

---

*Working to protect and restore Western Watersheds and Wildlife*

May 27, 2022

**Secretary Deb Haaland**  
**Department of Interior**  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20240  
[Deb\\_Haaland@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Deb_Haaland@ios.doi.gov)

**Secretary Tom Vilsack**  
**Department of Agriculture**  
1400 Independence Ave, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
[Tom.Vilsack@osec.usda.gov](mailto:Tom.Vilsack@osec.usda.gov)

**Director Martha Williams**  
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW – MIB Room 3148  
Washington, D.C. 20240  
[Martha\\_Williams@fws.gov](mailto:Martha_Williams@fws.gov)

**Regional Director Amy Lueders**  
**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
Southwest Region  
P.O. Box 1306  
Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306  
[RDLueders@fws.gov](mailto:RDLueders@fws.gov)

**Re: Mexican wolf recovery being hampered by faulty investigations**

Dear Secretary Haaland, Secretary Vilsack, Director Williams, and Regional Director Lueders,

The undersigned conservation organizations and individuals are deeply concerned with the findings reported in a recent *The Intercept* article, “Cry Wolf: Endangered Mexican wolf recovery is being ‘sabotaged’ by ranchers who claim the canines are killing cattle – and the federal employees who sign off on reports.” (Published online May 24, 2022: <https://theintercept.com/2022/05/24/mexican-gray-wolf-endangered-wildlife-services-fraud/>). The article confirms many of our worst suspicions about Wildlife Services’ role in Mexican gray wolf management, and underscores the problem of allowing the U.S. Department of Agriculture – an agency with an agenda of serving agricultural interests – to have any role in the Mexican wolf recovery program.

We are asking for immediate action to remedy this pervasive problem with the recovery project. The evidence that Western Watersheds Project has gathered, and that the *The Intercept* has now exposed, demonstrates the need for:

- The use of rigorous scientific methods in determinations as to the culpability of wolves in livestock deaths;
- The use of trained wolf biologists as secondary reviewers to serve as an unbiased backstop against fraud or negligence;

- A policy against using third party determinations, i.e. county wolf investigators, in any federal investigations;
- A review of depredation investigations since Mexican gray wolves were released into the wild in 1998 and a report on how these investigations have resulted in the removal of wolves from the wild;
- The release of any captive wolves who were unjustly implicated in depredation events;
- An inquiry by the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Department of Justice into the extent of illegal activities among the employees of Wildlife Services and project cooperators in Arizona and New Mexico; and
- An immediate suspension of any depredation-related Mexican gray wolf removals.

The American public deserves answers about the extent to which these questionable investigations led to the lethal removal or permanent captivity of imperiled Mexican gray wolves, and the wolves themselves deserve to be returned to the wild.

We look forward to hearing of your plans to remedy these injustices.

Sincerely,



Greta Anderson, Deputy Director  
**Western Watersheds Project**  
 738 N. 5th Ave, Suite 206  
 Tucson, Arizona 85702  
[greta@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:greta@westernwatersheds.org)

Sandy Bahr, Director  
**Sierra Club – Grand Canyon Chapter**  
 514 W. Roosevelt St.  
 Phoenix, AZ 85003  
[sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org](mailto:sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org)

Michael Dax, Western Program Director  
**Wildlands Network**  
 2400 Camino Capitan  
 Santa Fe, NM 87505  
[michael@wildlandsnetwork.org](mailto:michael@wildlandsnetwork.org)

David Parsons, Wildlife Biologist  
 Former Mexican Wolf Recovery Coordinator  
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Retired**  
 Albuquerque, NM  
[ellobodave@comcast.net](mailto:ellobodave@comcast.net)

Michelle Lute, PhD, Conservation Director  
**Project Coyote**  
 P.O. Box 5007  
 Larkspur, CA 94977  
[mlute@projectcoyote.org](mailto:mlute@projectcoyote.org)

Betsy Klein, Founder  
**Plan B to Save Wolves**  
 1785 W SR 89A, Suite 3A  
 Sedona, Arizona 86336  
[b@planb.foundation](http://b@planb.foundation)

Kate Scott, Co-Founder/Director  
**Madrean Archipelago Wildlife Center**  
 141 Page Lane  
 Elgin, AZ 85611  
[madreanwildlife@gmail.com](mailto:madreanwildlife@gmail.com)

Roz Switzer, Sonoran Broadband Co-Leader  
**Great Old Broads for Wilderness**  
 12454 N Lang Rd  
 Florence, AZ 85132  
[Switzerroz@gmail.com](mailto:Switzerroz@gmail.com)

Peter M. Ossorio & Jean C. Ossorio  
 525 Lost Padre Mine Rd.  
 Las Cruces, NM 88011  
[peterossorio@centurylink.net](mailto:peterossorio@centurylink.net)

Emily Renn, Executive Director  
**Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project**  
 P.O. Box 233  
 Flagstaff, AZ 86002  
[emily@gcwoolfrecovery.org](mailto:emily@gcwoolfrecovery.org)

Maggie Howell, Executive Director  
**Wolf Conservation Center**  
7 Buck Run  
South Salem, NY 10590  
[Maggie@nywolf.org](mailto:Maggie@nywolf.org)

Sally Paez, Staff Attorney  
**New Mexico Wild**  
317 Commercial Street NR, Ste 300  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
[Sally@nmwild.org](mailto:Sally@nmwild.org)

Tom Hollender, President  
**White Mountain Conservation League**  
PO Box 72, Nutrioso, AZ 85932  
[twhollender@gmail.com](mailto:twhollender@gmail.com)

Mary Katherine Ray, Wildlife Chair  
**Rio Grande Chapter Sierra Club**  
2215 Lead Ave. SE  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
[mkrscrim@gmail.com](mailto:mkrscrim@gmail.com)

Michael J. Robinson, Senior Conservation Advocate  
**Center for Biological Diversity**  
P.O. Box 1727  
Silver City, New Mexico 88062  
[michaelr@biologicaldiversity.org](mailto:michaelr@biologicaldiversity.org)

Chris Smith, Southwest Wildlife Advocate  
**WildEarth Guardians**  
301 N Guadalupe, Suite 201  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
[csmith@wildearthguardians.org](mailto:csmith@wildearthguardians.org)

M.R. MacPherson, Scientist  
Santa Fe, NM  
[nrlmrm@gmail.com](mailto:nrlmrm@gmail.com)

Kirk Robinson, PhD, Executive Director  
**Western Wildlife Conservancy**  
1021 Downington Ave.  
Salt Lake City, UT 84105  
[lynx@xmission.com](mailto:lynx@xmission.com)

Oscar Simpson, State Chair  
**New Mexico Sportsmen**  
3320 12TH ST NW  
Alb. NM 87107  
[oscarsimpson3@yahoo.com](mailto:oscarsimpson3@yahoo.com)

Oscar Simpson, Public Lands Chair  
**Rio Indivisible, NM**  
3320 12TH ST NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87107  
[oscarsimpson3@yahoo.com](mailto:oscarsimpson3@yahoo.com)

Kelly Burke, Executive Director  
**Wild Arizona**  
P.O. Box 40340  
Tucson, AZ 85717  
[kelly@wildarizona.org](mailto:kelly@wildarizona.org)

Nina Eydelman  
**Animal Protection New Mexico**  
P.O. Box 11395  
Albuquerque, NM 87192  
[nina@apnm.org](mailto:nina@apnm.org)

Jessica Johnson  
**Animal Protection Voters**  
P.O. Box 11651  
Albuquerque, NM 87192  
[jessica@apvnm.org](mailto:jessica@apvnm.org)

Cc:

Senator Martin Heinrich - [dominic\\_saavedra@heinrich.senate.gov](mailto:dominic_saavedra@heinrich.senate.gov)  
Senator Ben Lujan - [graham\\_mason@lujan.senate.gov](mailto:graham_mason@lujan.senate.gov)  
Senator Mark Kelly - [Nick\\_Matiella@kelly.senate.gov](mailto:Nick_Matiella@kelly.senate.gov)  
Representative Raul Grijalva - [norma.salazar@mail.house.gov](mailto:norma.salazar@mail.house.gov), [glenn.miller@mail.house.gov](mailto:glenn.miller@mail.house.gov)  
Representative Ann Kirkpatrick - [christian.walker@mail.house.gov](mailto:christian.walker@mail.house.gov)  
Representative O'Halleran - [adam.finkel@mail.house.gov](mailto:adam.finkel@mail.house.gov)  
Dr. Brady McGee, USFWS Mexican Wolf Recovery Coordinator, [brady\\_mcgee@fws.gov](mailto:brady_mcgee@fws.gov)  
Keith Wehner, APHIS Wildlife Services [keith.p.wehner@usda.gov](mailto:keith.p.wehner@usda.gov)  
Jon Grant, New Mexico State Director - APHIS Wildlife Services, [jon.l.grant@usda.gov](mailto:jon.l.grant@usda.gov)