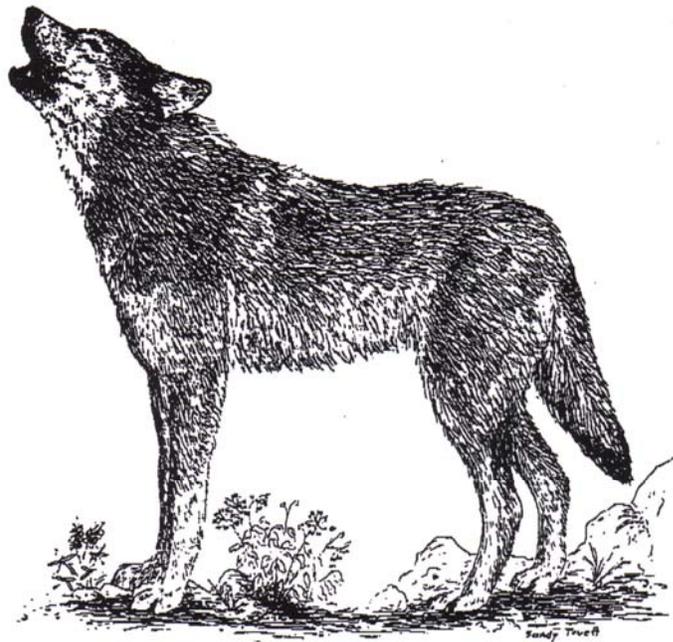


# THE MEXICAN WOLF :

Biology, History, and Prospects  
for Reestablishment in New Mexico



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

1988

ENDANGERED SPECIES REPORT 18

THE MEXICAN WOLF: BIOLOGY, HISTORY,  
AND PROSPECTS FOR REESTABLISHMENT IN NEW MEXICO

INTRODUCTION

Data dealing with the behavior, ecology, and other aspects of the biology of the Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) essentially do not exist. Prior, primarily historical treatments of the Mexican wolf, locally referred to as the "lobo" (Brown 1983); relied on a mixture of folklore, anecdotes, and the impressions of persons dedicated to the extermination of the wolf. Recent chronicles outlining the control efforts that led to the extinction of this species echo the historical beliefs of wolf hunters and trappers, but provide almost no supporting data (for example see Brown 1983).

In this paper, I present data gathered from populations of northern wolves that are relevant to the biology of the Mexican wolf. These data were used to develop several simple models that may be helpful in making reasonable predictions about the lobo's behavior and ecology. This document should provide a basis for a well-planned program to conserve this species. Models and deductions proposed here are hypothetical, based on logical extensions of existing scientific data. These scenarios are educated guesses, and data are required before these models can be evaluated, refined, or refuted. This next step can be achieved only by the close monitoring of experimentally released wolves in an appropriately isolated "island" habitat in the southwest.

No viable populations of the Mexican wolf are known to persist north of Mexico (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1982). Dispersing wolves from extant remnant populations in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico may still occasionally wander into parts of the southwestern United States. Although these animals are officially protected, the probability that lone wolves will successfully avoid predator-control measures directed at coyotes and mountain lions, find a mate, and locate suitable habitat where livestock and man are infrequently encountered is infinitesimally small.

McBride (1980) suggested that less than 50 pairs of wolves inhabited Mexico in 1977. Based on his observations of human use and development in remote mountain habitats, he believed that the extermination of wolves was imminent. McBride's (1980) prognosis for the species in Mexico was that extinction will occur before the year 2000. Currently, there are no reliable data on the present status of this species in Mexico (Julio Garrera, pers. comm.). Mexican biologists are concerned about the survival of the species and hope to locate and protect viable populations of wolves (Martinez 1987). Although I am in firm support of conserving wild

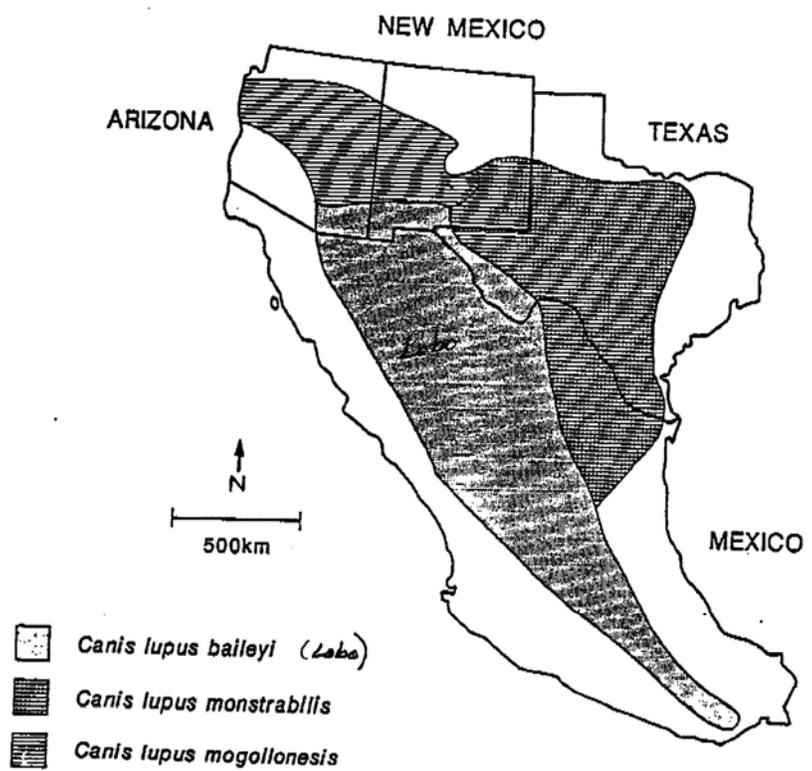


Figure 1. Historical distribution of *Canis lupus baileyi*, *C. l. monstrabilis*, and *C. l. mogollonensis*. Taken from Young and Goldman (1944).

1988



*How did this range grow from the original Scientific study report?*

*(Sent letters but never received response other than this is it.)*

*This was submitted as Attachment with public notice dated October 1995 from Dept. of Interior,*  
**MAP 1: HISTORIC RANGE OF THE MEXICAN WOLF**

1995