

# Strategizing a Comeback



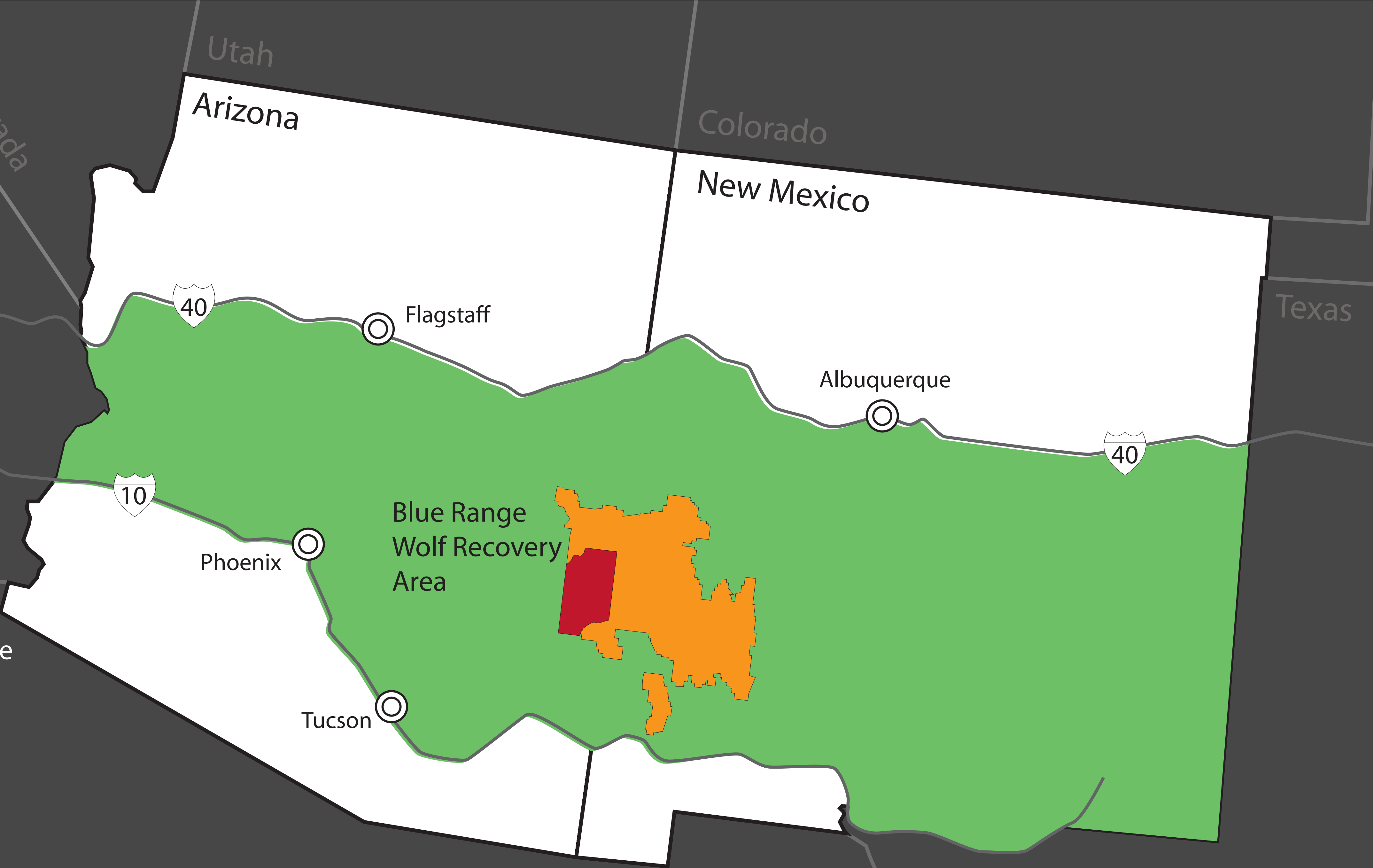
The re-introduced population of wolves in the Mexican wolf experimental population area is designated as “nonessential, experimental.” This means that the federal protection these wolves receive is less restrictive than protection of species with “endangered” status. Therefore, wolves may be harassed, injured or killed (called “take”) in circumstances as defined in the 1998 10(j) Rule governing the reintroduction.

Six state, federal and tribal agencies, as well as five signatory cooperators manage the Mexican wolf reintroduction process. These entities make up the Adaptive Management Oversight Committee (AMOC). An Interagency Field Team works under the guidance of AMOC, using a series of 26 Standard Operating Procedures to guide daily management of wolves. Citizens are also involved -- the Adaptive Management Working Group is comprised of members of the public who identify local issues and citizen concerns.

All the wolves initially released into the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (not including translocations) are captive-bred. Since they have not lived in the wild, it may take them awhile to learn to hunt for their own food. The current population includes both released wolves and their wild-born offspring.

*All wolves in the program are descendants of seven wolves. Five of the seven were wild-caught in Mexico before 1980, and two were selected from captive populations. Today's captive breeding program includes more than 300 wolves in 47 zoos and sanctuaries across the United States and Mexico.*

- Primary Recovery Zone
- Secondary Recovery Zone
- Experimental Population Area Boundary



*The Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area encompasses the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest and the Gila National Forest, and is divided into primary and secondary recovery zones. This is the area where the re-established Mexican wolf population is managed and maintained.*

In 1982, U.S. and Mexican wildlife agencies adopted the Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan, which called for maintaining a captive breeding program and re-establishing a population of at least 100 Mexican wolves within a small portion of their historic range.

Experimental Population Area Boundary

This is part of Arizona and New Mexico south of Interstate 40 and north of Interstate 10, as shown. Wolves that move outside of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area are considered part of the “nonessential, experimental” population as long as they stay within the Experimental Population Area boundary. If a wolf is captured in this area but outside of the BRWRA, it will be re-released within the recovery area or put into the captive population. The Service will NOT release wolves outside of the designated Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area into this larger Experimental Population Area. Wolves found outside of the Experimental Population Area Boundary are afforded full protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (BRWRA)

The re-established Mexican wolf population is managed and maintained within this boundary. Wolves moving outside this boundary are captured and released back into it. The Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area is divided into Primary and Secondary Recovery Zones.

Primary Recovery Zone

This area, in Arizona, is the only part of the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area where captive-bred wolves (with no experience in the wild) may be released. Captive-bred wolves with wild experience can be translocated into the Secondary Recovery Zone.

Secondary Recovery Zone

This national forest land next to the Primary Recovery Zone is an area where wolves are allowed to disperse. Wolves with experience in the wild, as well as those born in the wild, may also be moved to and released in this zone.



**Signatory Cooperators:**  
Graham County, AZ  
Greenlee County, AZ  
Navajo County, AZ  
New Mexico Department of Agriculture  
Sierra County, NM