

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA  
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COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
Subcommittee on Water and Power  
Subcommittee on Parks, Forests and  
Public Lands – *Ranking Member*

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE  
Subcommittee on Early Childhood,  
Elementary and Secondary Education  
Subcommittee on Higher Education and  
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June 7, 2012

The Honorable Kenneth L. Salazar  
Secretary of the Interior  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

I am writing to follow up on a scientific integrity complaint filed earlier today by The Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). The complaint filed documents alleged attempts to alter the scientific findings of the Science and Planning Subgroup of the Mexican Wolf Recovery Team.


Following reports of struggling population levels, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in 2010 convened the Science and Planning Subgroup of the Mexican Wolf Recovery Team to compile the best available science and support a new management plan that would guarantee Mexican wolf recovery. After two years of work, they determined that recovery meant three distinct populations of between 200-350 wolves. They also found suitable habitat for reintroduction included areas in Utah and Colorado.

The scientific integrity complaint filed today claims that political pressure from within and outside FWS has derailed the ongoing progress of the Mexican Wolf Recovery Team. Attempts to change scientific findings because of political preferences should not be part of the process. These allegations deserve fair treatment from your agency, and I write to urge you to take seriously the need for a full and fair investigation.

I hope that this request – unlike similar past requests – initiates an independent review of the process and alleged wrong-doings. Mexican wolves deserve the protection of the Endangered Species Act, and that means a management based on sound, verifiable evidence. The future of this species should not be determined by politics.

Please update me periodically on the status of the investigation and the future of the Mexican Wolf Recovery Team. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Very sincerely,

  
Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

cc: Daniel M. Ashe, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Dr. Benjamin Tuggle, Southwest Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service