

Wolf Recovery Survey – New Mexico

June 2008

Research & Polling, Inc.



Methodology

Research Objectives:	This research study was commissioned by conservation and wildlife organizations, including the New Mexico Audubon Council, Arizona Zoological Society and the Southwest Environmental Center to assess voter attitudes and opinions toward the Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Program.
Data Collection Method:	Telephone interviews
Total Sample Size:	n=507 New Mexico Registered Voters
Field Dates:	April 25, 2008 – May 11, 2008
Margin of Error:	$\pm 4.4\%$ at 95% confidence level

Key Findings

❖ New Mexico voters support wolf reintroduction by more than a three-to-one margin. Nearly seven-in-ten New Mexico voters (69%) say they generally either *strongly support* (37%) or *somewhat support* (32%) the reintroduction of the Mexican gray wolf into the Apache and Gila National Forests, while 21% are opposed to reintroduction in these areas. (Slide 12)

❖ When asked in unaided, open-ended manner, the primary reasons that voters give for supporting reintroduction include: (Slide 13)

belong in nature (14%)

help balance nature (12%)

are an endangered species (10%)

Those who are opposed are most apt to say wolves

kill/danger to livestock (10%)

are a danger to humans (5%)

❖ The majority of New Mexico voters (57%) support giving wolves more protection under the Endangered Species Act to ensure their population rebounds, compared to 25% who are opposed to giving wolves greater protection. (Slide 19)

Key Findings (continued)

- ❖ There is a moderate level of knowledge about the Wolf Recovery Program. (Slide 11)

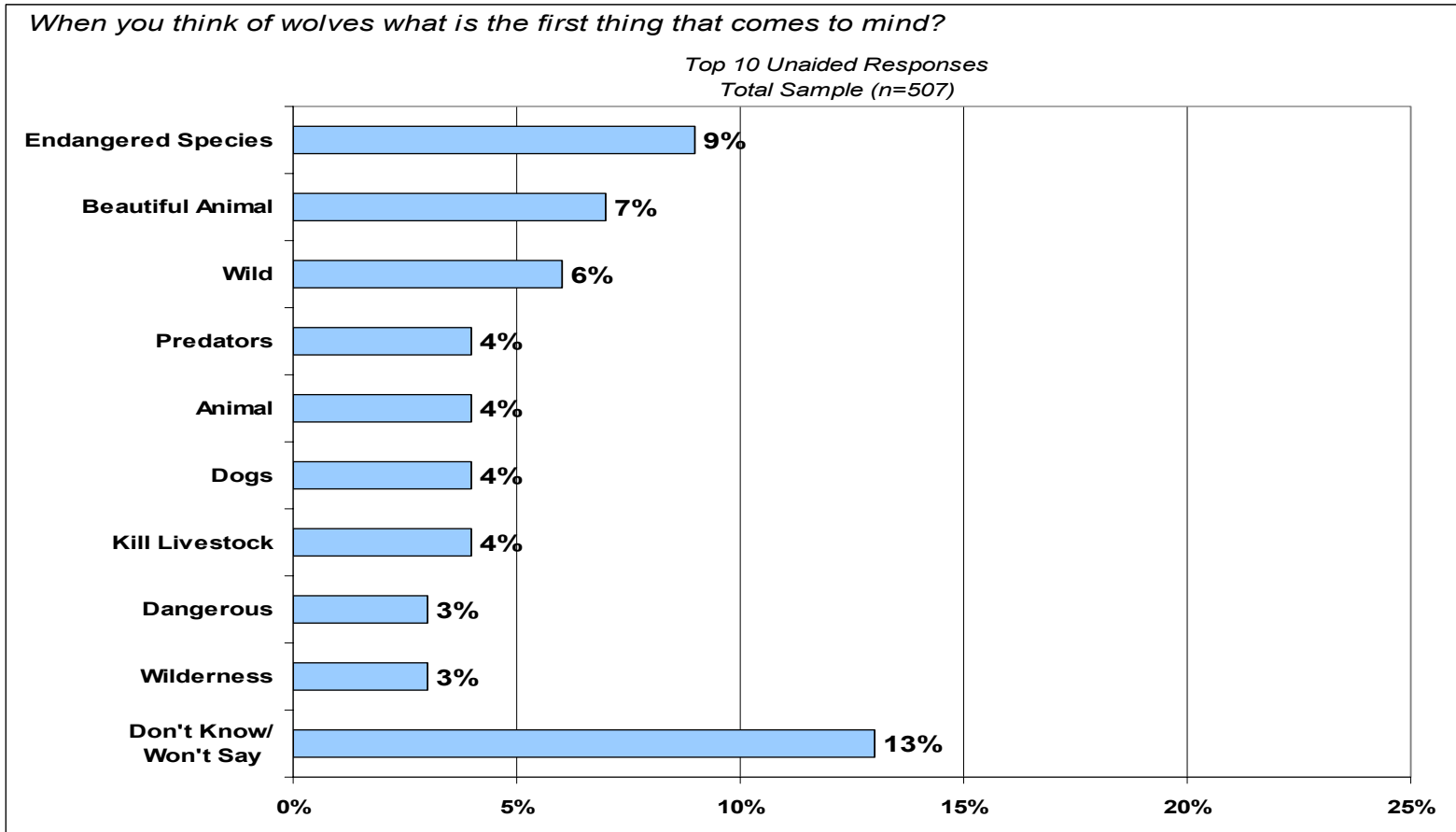
31% have heard *a lot* about the project

48% have heard a *little*

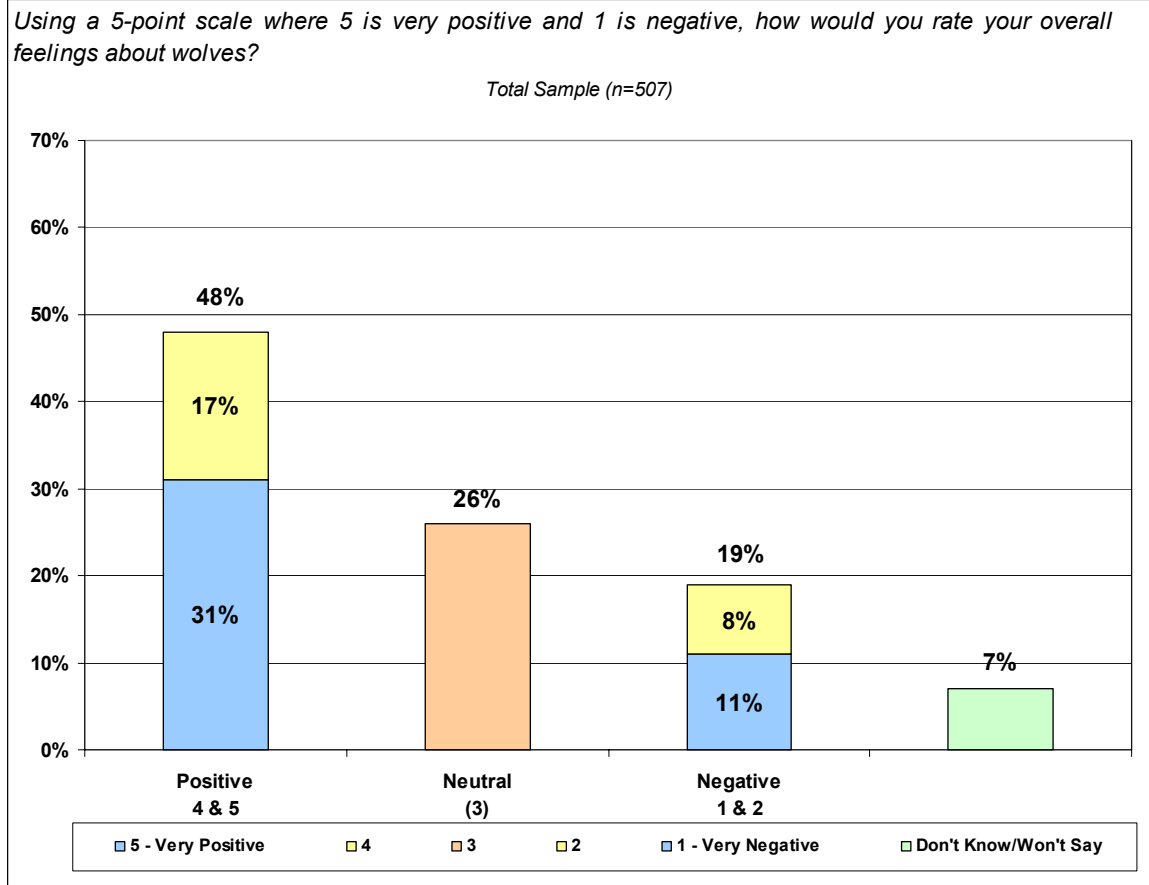
20% have heard *nothing at all*

- ❖ When asked which two statements they agree with more, nearly two-thirds of New Mexico voters (64%) feel the wolf is a benefit to the West and helps maintain the balance of nature. In comparison, 21% feel the wolf kills too many elk, deer and livestock and does more harm than good. (Slide 14)
- ❖ When it comes to how taxpayer dollars should be spent in managing wolves, 72% of New Mexico voters would prefer helping ranchers prevent or reduce conflicts with wolves, compared to 18% who would prefer removing and killing wolves that come into conflict with livestock. (Slide 16)
- ❖ Voters are largely split on the issue of killing or removing a wolf that has three predations of livestock over the course of a year. The plurality (36%) are opposed to requiring the killing or removal of wolves that prey on three or more head of livestock over the course of a year. However, an almost equal percentage of voters (33%) do support the killing or removal of wolves that prey on three or more head of livestock over the course of a year, while 25% have a neutral opinion. (Slide 17)

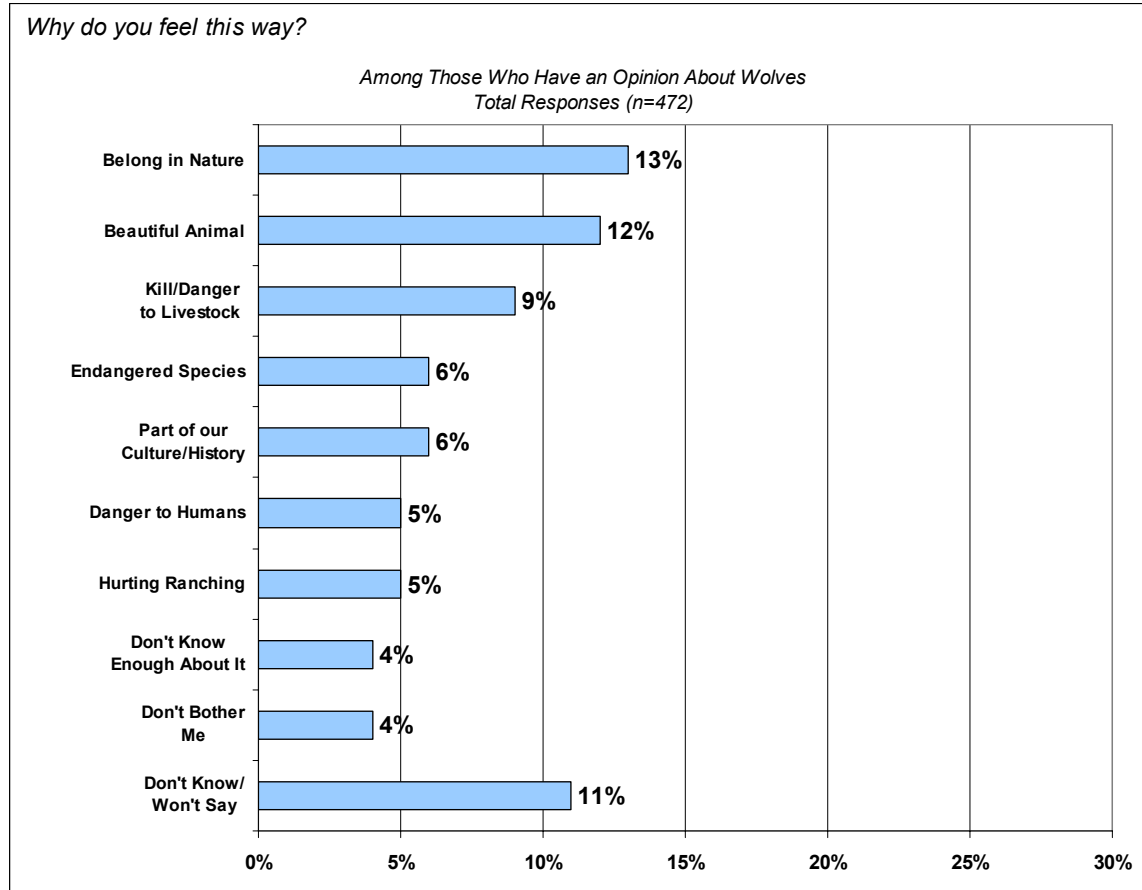
First Things That Come to Mind When Thinking About Wolves



Overall Feelings About Wolves

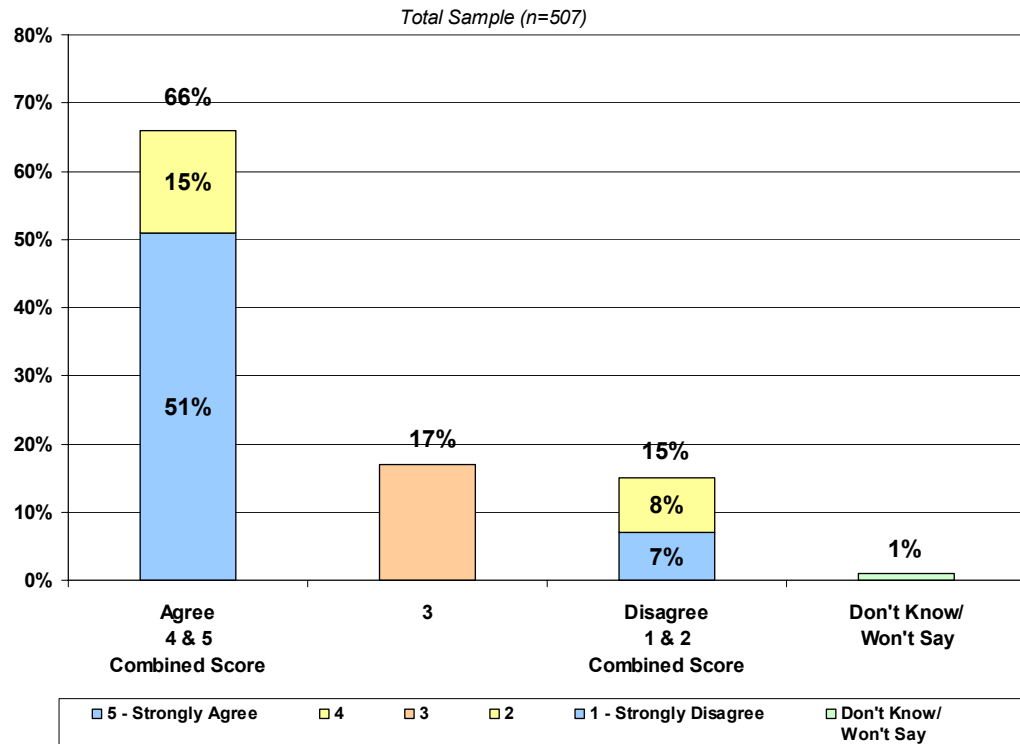


Underlying Reasons for Feelings About Wolves



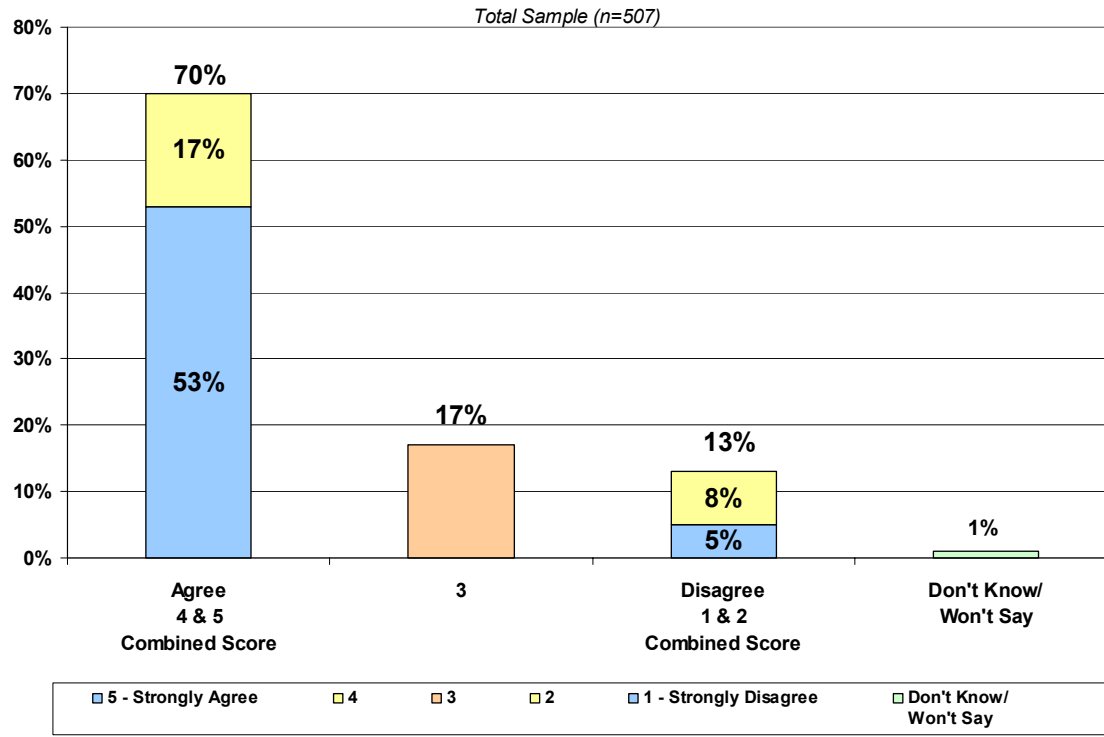
Need to Do More to Protect Endangered Species

I would like to read you several statements and for each one ask you to rate how strongly you either agree or disagree using a 5-point scale where 5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree: **We need to do more to protect endangered species**



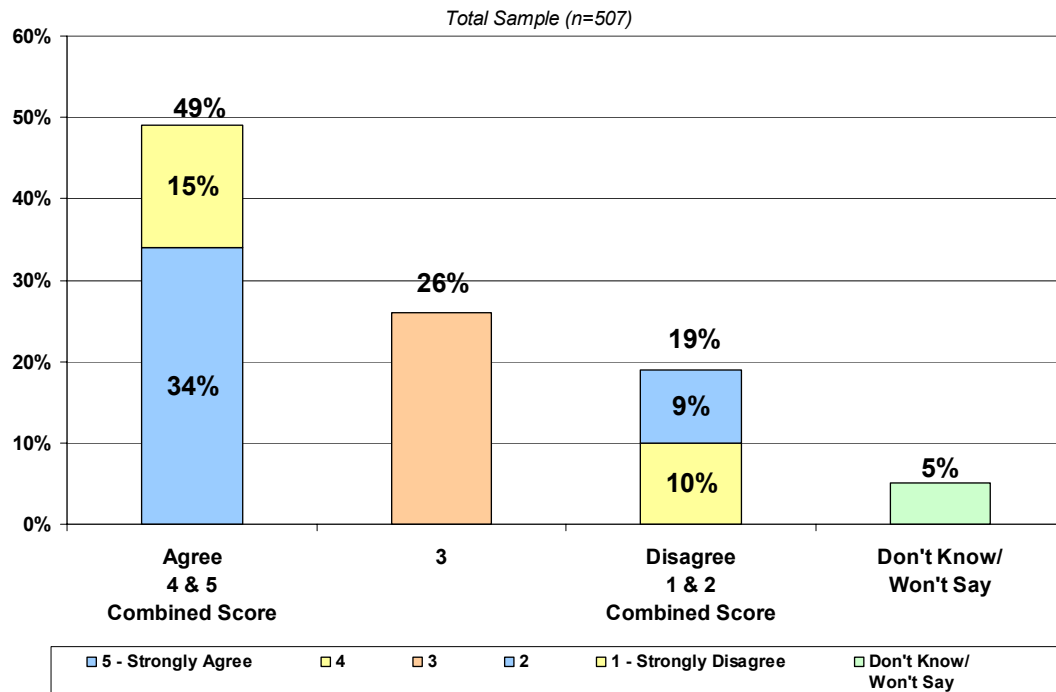
Feel a Strong Emotional Bond with Animals

*I would like to read you several statements and for each one ask you to rate how strongly you either agree or disagree using a 5-point scale where 5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree: **I feel a strong emotional bond with animals***



Livestock Grazing is Good for the Environment

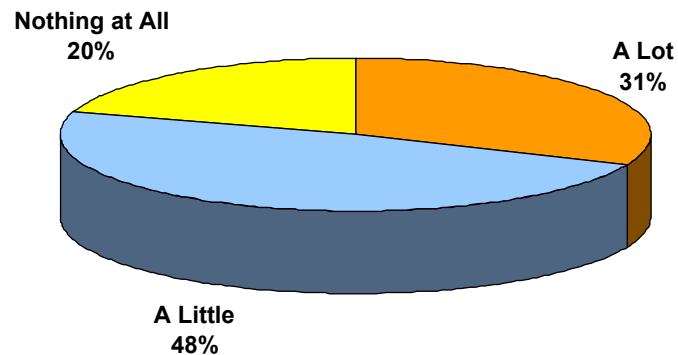
*I would like to read you several statements and for each one ask you to rate how strongly you either agree or disagree using a 5-point scale where 5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree: **Livestock grazing is good for the environment.***



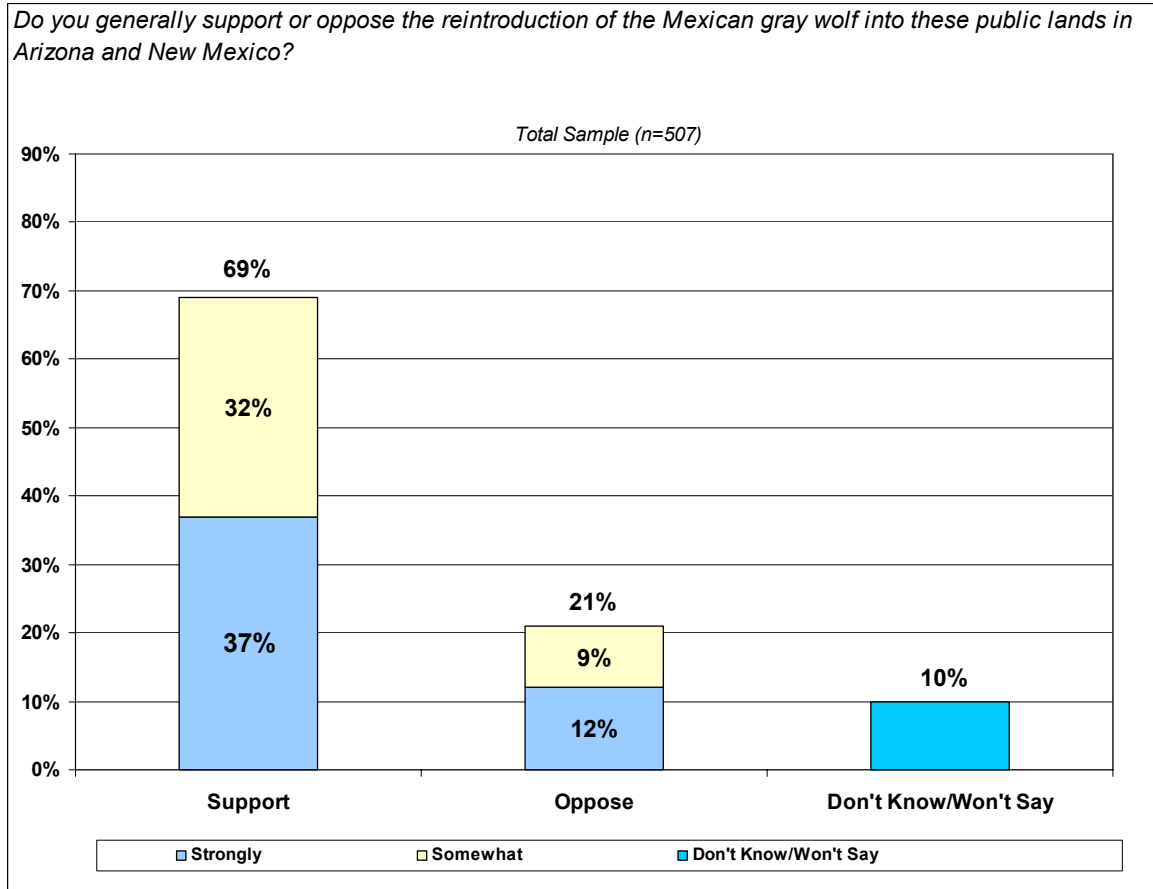
Knowledge About the Wolf Recovery Program

In 1998, wildlife officials began a project to restore Mexican gray wolves to the wild in the Southwest by releasing wolves in the Apache and Gila National Forests in southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico respectively. Would you say you have heard a lot about this, a little about it, or nothing at all about the wolf recovery program?

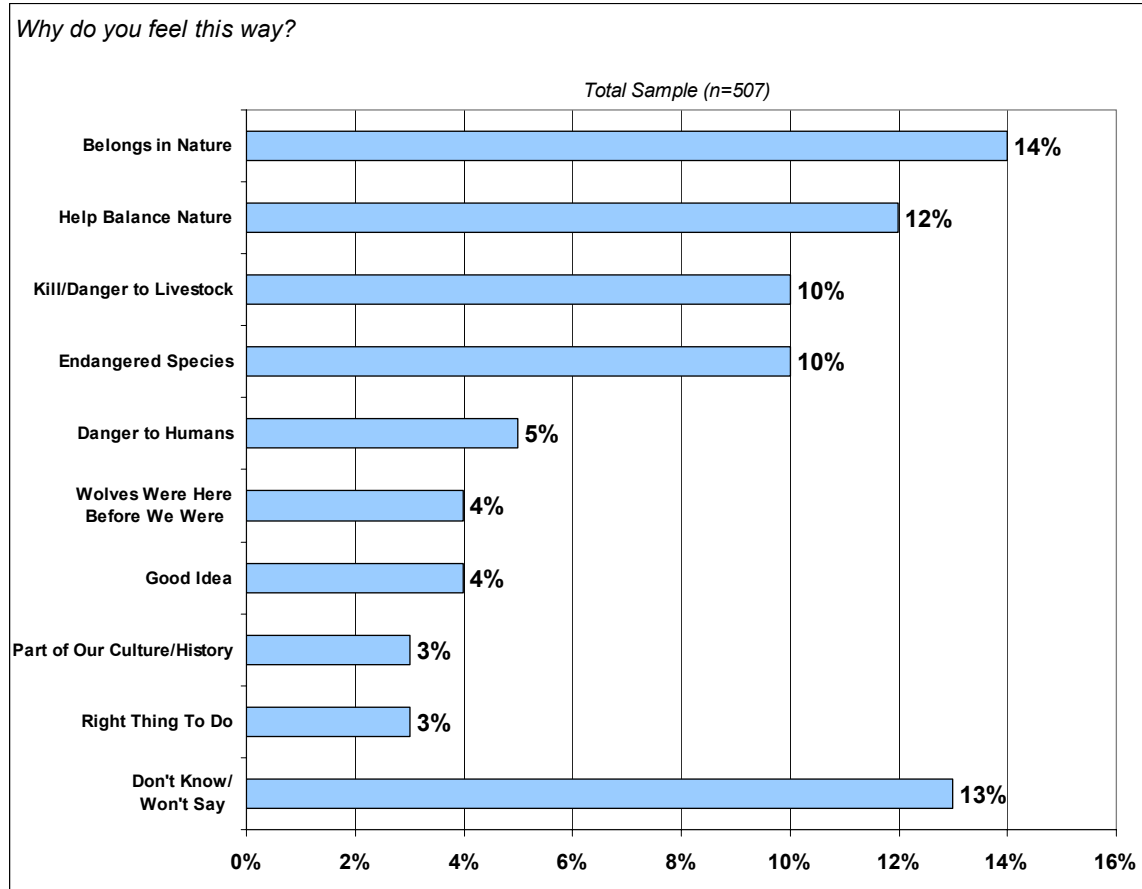
Total Sample (n=507)



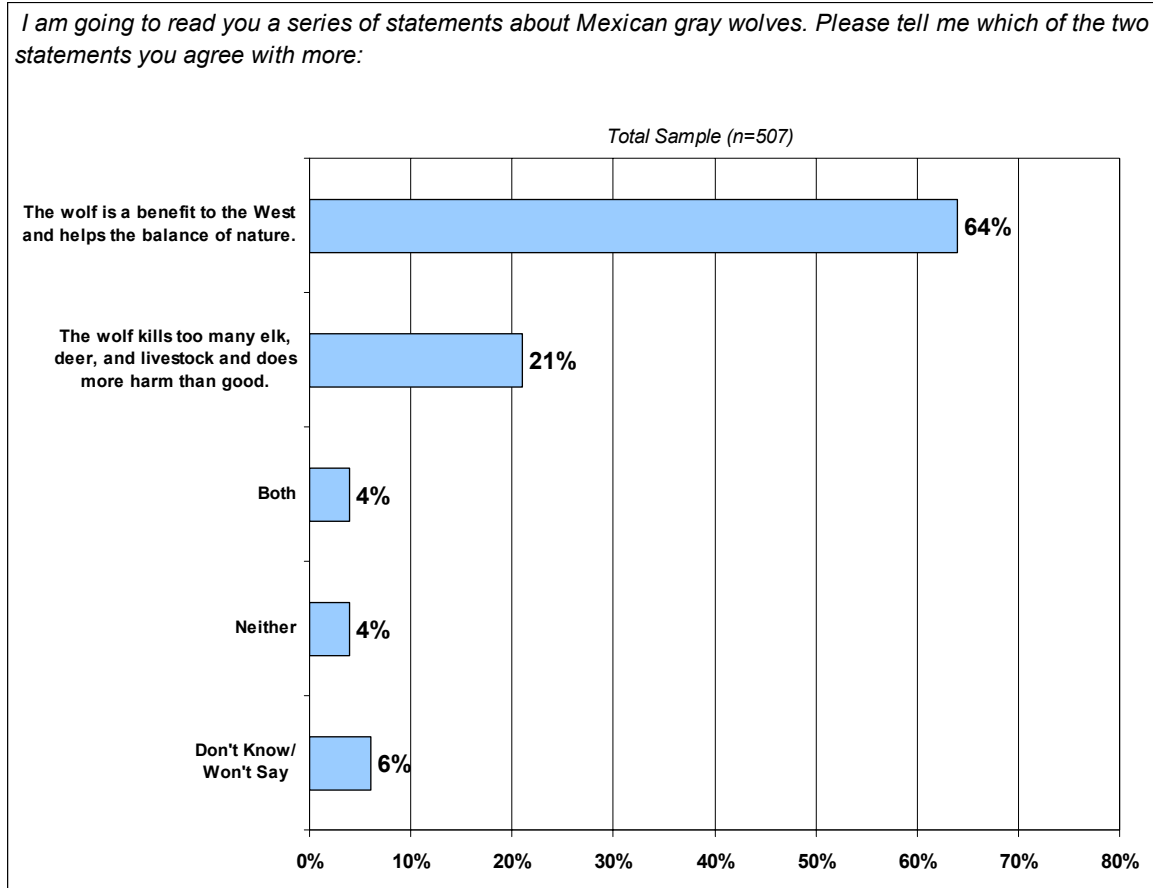
Reintroduction of the Mexican Gray Wolf into Public Lands in Arizona and New Mexico



Underlying Reasons for Supporting/Opposing Reintroduction

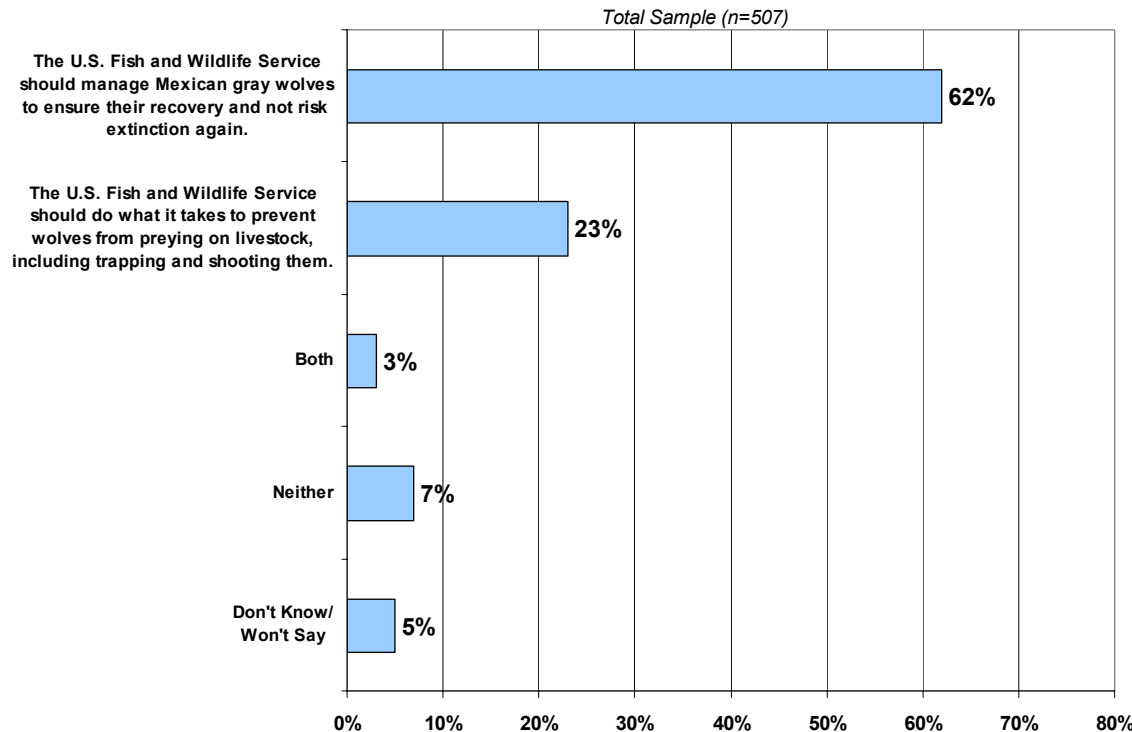


Paired Statement About Wolves: Benefits to West vs. Does More Harm Than Good



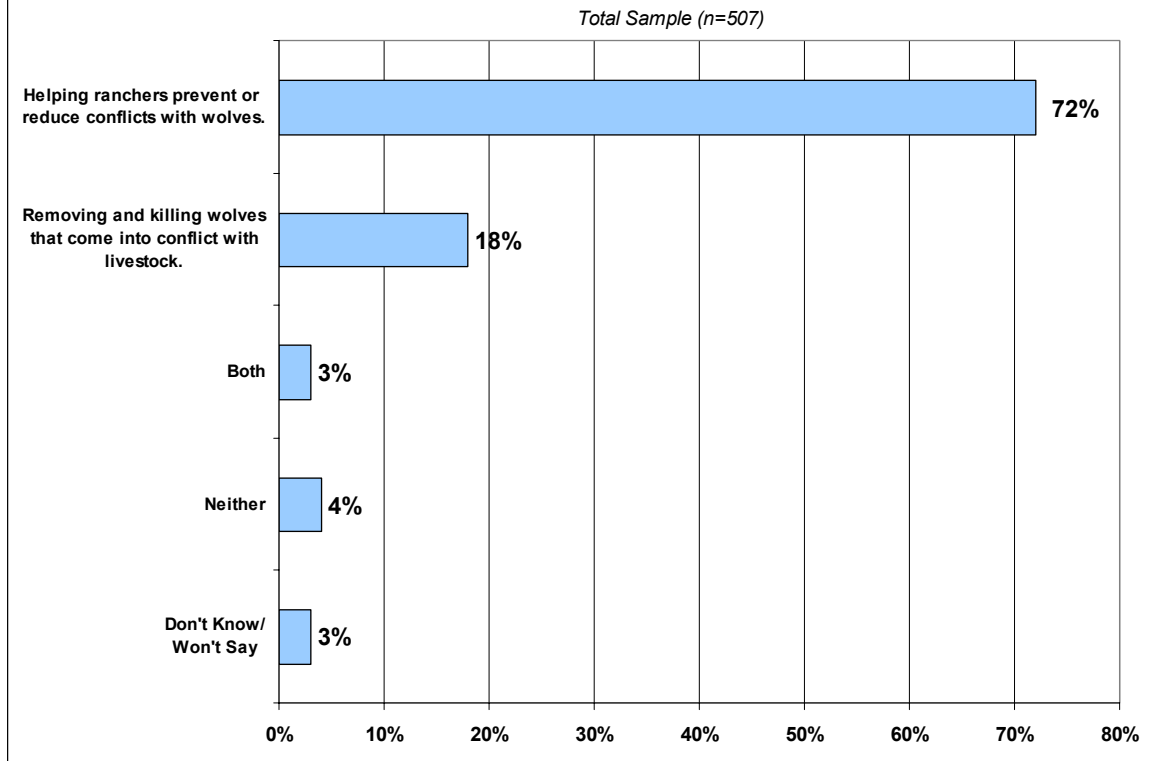
Paired Statement About Wolf Management: Ensure Survival vs. Do What It Takes to Prevent Preying on Livestock

I am going to read you a series of statements about Mexican gray wolves. Please tell me which of the two statements you agree with more:

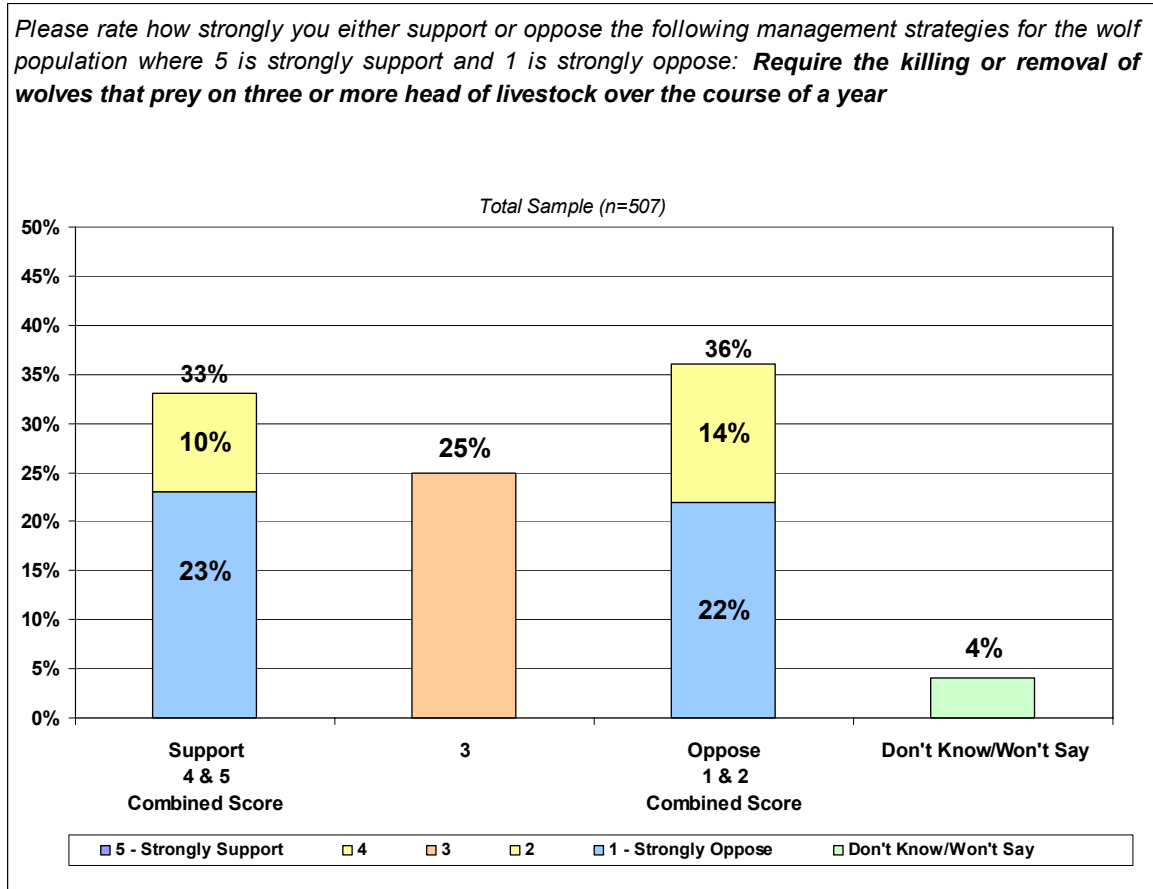


Paired Statement About Tax Dollars: Prevent/Reduce Conflict with Livestock vs. Kill or Remove Wolves

I am going to read you a series of statements about Mexican gray wolves. Please tell me which of the two statements you agree with more: When it comes to taxpayer money in managing wolves, which would you prefer...

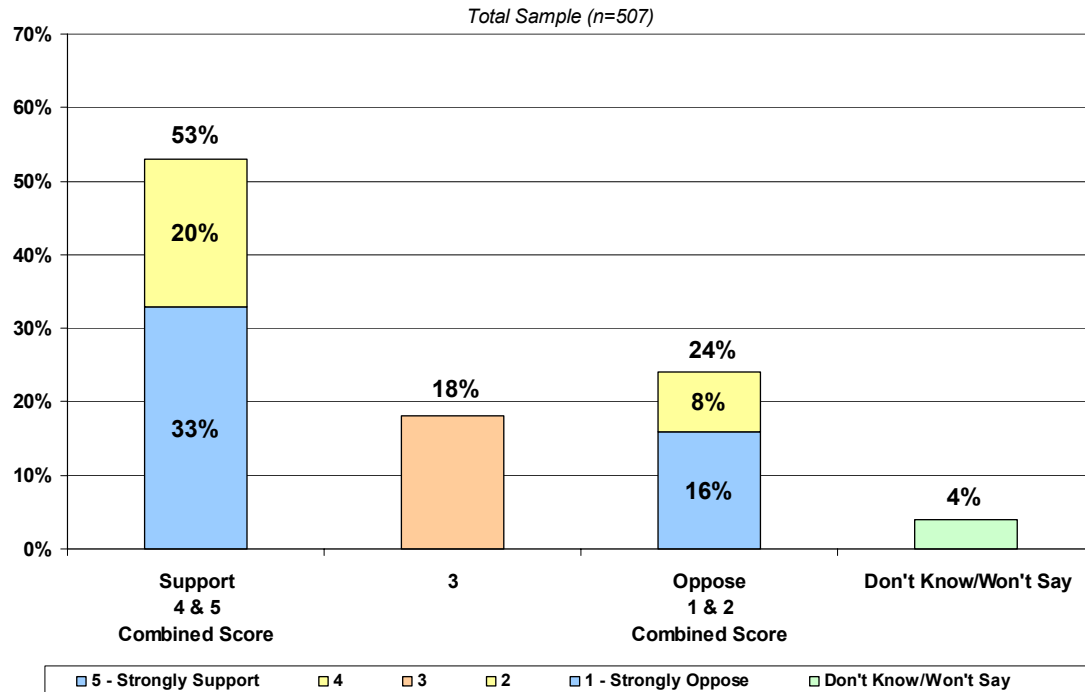


Support or Oppose: Require the Killing or Removal of Wolves That Prey on Three or More Head of Livestock Over the Course of a Year



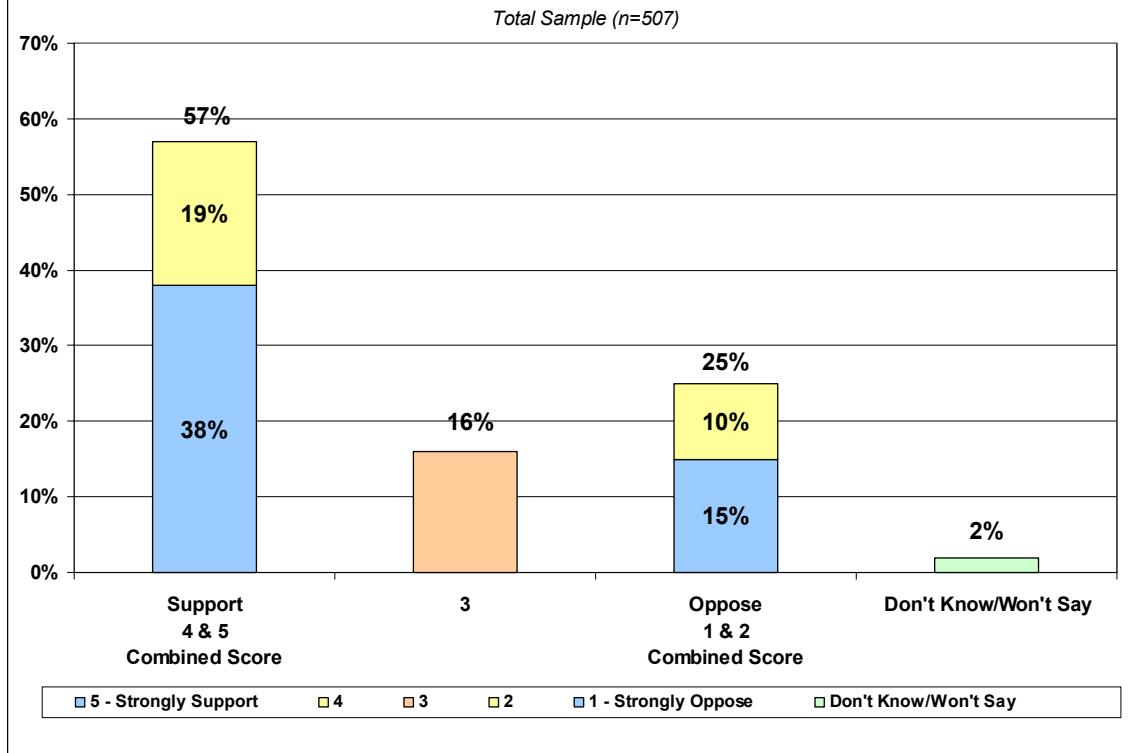
Support or Oppose: Allow Wolves to Migrate to Suitable Habitat in Arizona and New Mexico

Please rate how strongly you either support or oppose the following management strategies for the wolf population where 5 is strongly support and 1 is strongly oppose: **Allow wolves to migrate to suitable habitat in Arizona and New Mexico, even if it is outside of the zone where wolves are currently allowed**



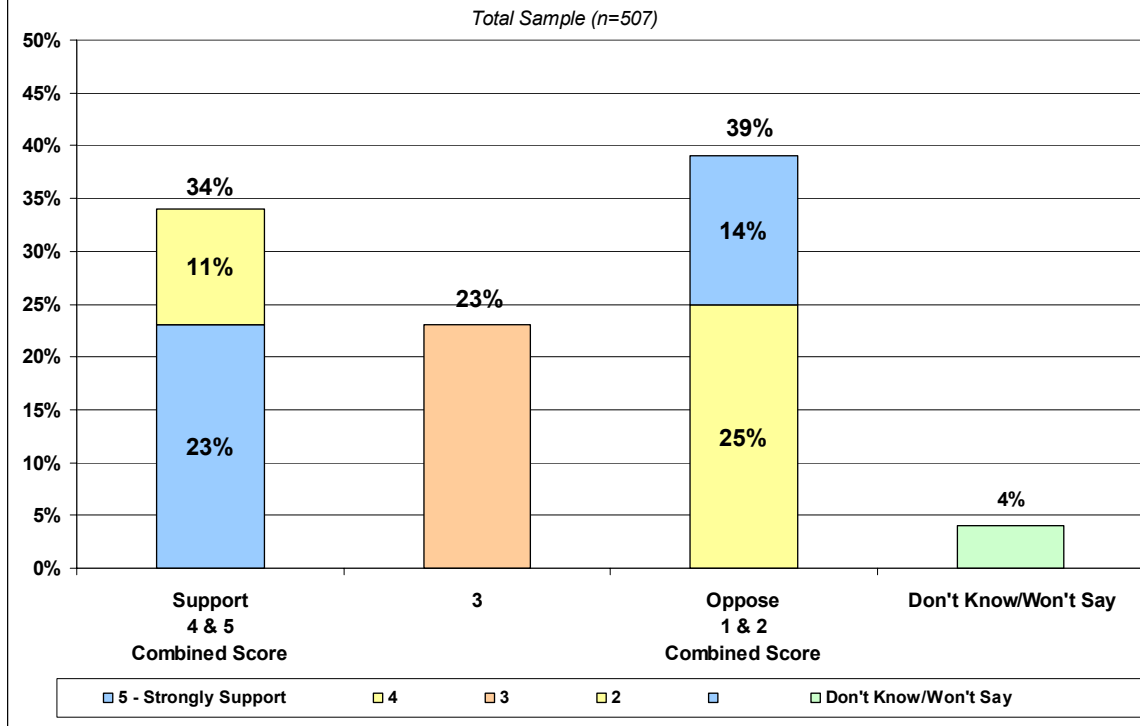
Support or Oppose: Give Wolves Greater Protection Under the Endangered Species Act

Please rate how strongly you either support or oppose the following management strategies for the wolf population where 5 is strongly support and 1 is strongly oppose: **Give wolves greater protection under the Endangered Species Act to ensure the population rebounds**



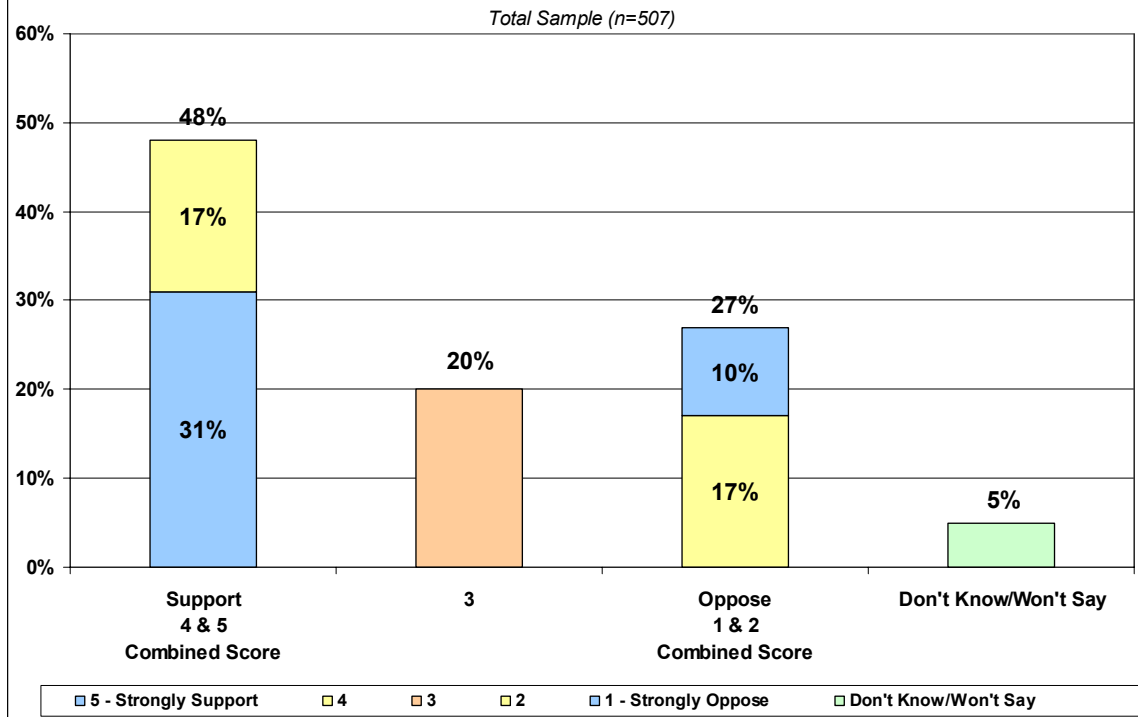
Support or Oppose: Give Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Program Priority Over Livestock Grazing on Public Lands

Please rate how strongly you either support or oppose the following management strategies for the wolf population where 5 is strongly support and 1 is strongly oppose: **Give Mexican gray wolf recovery priority over livestock grazing on public lands to ensure wolf numbers rebound**



Support or Oppose: Reimburse Ranchers Who Volunteer to Give Up Their Grazing Leases

Please rate how strongly you either support or oppose the following management strategies for the wolf population where 5 is strongly support and 1 is strongly oppose: **Reimburse ranchers who volunteer to give up their grazing leases and permanently remove their cattle from public lands in the wolf recovery area to prevent conflicts between wolves and cattle**



Support or Oppose: Require Ranchers to Remove or Make Inedible Cattle

Please rate how strongly you either support or oppose the following management strategies for the wolf population where 5 is strongly support and 1 is strongly oppose: Require ranchers to remove or make inedible cattle that die of non-wolf causes, for example by applying lime, so wolves are not drawn to nearby live cattle

