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August 16, 2012

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COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
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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
Workforce Training

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS,
Co-Chair

Dr. Benjamin Tuggle
Regional Director, Southwest Region
U.S Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 1306
Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306

Dear Director Tuggle,

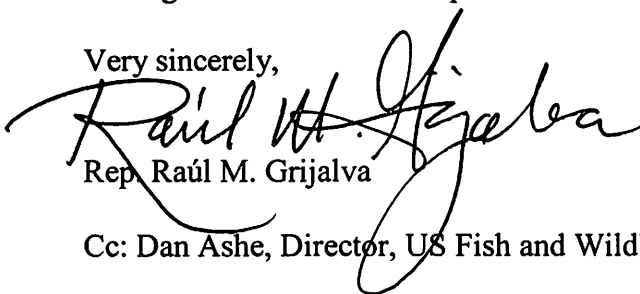
Thank you for reconsidering the original plan lethally to remove the Fox Mountain alpha female Mexican gray wolf. Your flexibility and responsiveness is appreciated, but I still have serious concerns about the ecological impacts of permanently removing this wolf.

The presence of the Fox Mountain alpha female is critical to rearing offspring this year. There are few wild wolves in this area. Leaving them in place is critical for their recovery. I am concerned that her removal could result in death or injury for her, her pups, or other adults in the pack. Even a few months' delay would decrease the chances of capture myopathy and increase the pups' chance of survival. My understanding is that there are few livestock and plenty of elk where the wolves have relocated. I cannot see any pressing reason for the Service to act now.

If the Service feels it needs to remove the Fox Mountain alpha female, it should refrain from doing so until it has a solid plan in place to release more wolves. Absent a firm commitment to improving the genetic health of the wild population through new releases, I am concerned that the Service is removing wolves without a plan to enhance the overall population. Releasing captive wolves to mitigate the loss of the Fox Mountain female and all the other wolves lost this year is an important part of recovering this species. What is the Service's plan to release more wolves in 2012? How will the Service prevent lethal harm or injury to this wolf or others in the Fox Mountain pack?

I appreciate your prompt response to these questions, and I sincerely hope you will consider leaving the Fox Mountain alpha female in the wild at this time.

Very sincerely,



Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva

Cc: Dan Ashe, Director, US Fish and Wildlife Service