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NEWS RELEASE

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Learn more about the Mexican gray wolf reintroduction in Arizona

PINETOP, Ariz. — Arizonans have a new opportunity to learn more about the reintroduction of the endangered Mexican gray wolf to the American Southwest. The Mexican gray wolf died out in the United States decades ago, but since 1998, the Arizona Game and Fish Department and five other agencies have been involved in the wolf's reintroduction to parts of Arizona and New Mexico. The group that manages the reintroduction will hold a two-day public forum in eastern Arizona on August 29 and 30.

The event, hosted by the Mexican Wolf Adaptive Management Oversight Committee, will focus on issues of interest to those who live in the areas where the wolves are being reintroduced. Others who are familiar with endangered species reintroductions will also find the program engaging.

"This will be a unique workshop drawing heavily on local expertise and experiences with the Mexican wolf reintroduction so far," says Terry Johnson, chairman of the Adaptive Management Oversight Committee. "The program will also feature several nationally renowned speakers."

Topics on the conference agenda include everything from wolf management techniques to disease, ecotourism, and the issue of Mexican gray wolves preying on livestock. Speakers will also talk about policy-making and the reintroduction's future direction. A question and answer session with project leaders will also be included.

The free conference will be held at the White Mountain Apache Tribe's Hon-Dah Resort and Casino, three miles east of Pinetop. Seating will be limited to 400 people, and those who plan to attend may want to reserve a room at the resort ahead of time. Attendees will have to pay their own hotel costs, but they may book a room as part of the Mexican wolf group by calling the resort at (800) 929-8744.

To view a detailed conference agenda, visit the Arizona Game and Fish Department Web site at azgfd.gov/wolf and click on the "2006 Mexican Wolf Management Conference Agenda" file in the "Downloads" column. For more information on the conference, call Bill Van Pelt, nongame mammals program coordinator for the Arizona Game and Fish Department, at (602) 789-3573.

The reintroduction of the Mexican gray wolf is a cooperative, multi-agency effort of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, White Mountain Apache Tribe, USDA Forest Service and USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services.