



**SIERRA COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
RESOLUTION NO. 2025-68**

**DECLARING A PUBLIC SAFETY DISASTER IN SIERRA COUNTY DUE TO THE THREAT OF INJURY  
AND DAMAGE FROM MEXICAN WOLVES**

**WHEREAS**, the Sierra County Commission met upon notice of a duly noticed regular County Commission Meeting on August 19, 2025, at 10:00 A.M. in the Sierra County Administration Building, 1712 N. Date Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901; and,

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to NMSA 1978, Section 4-38-1 (1884), the powers of a county as a body politic and corporate shall be exercised by a board of county commissioners; and,

**WHEREAS**, NMSA 1978, Section 4-37-1 (1975) provides that all counties are granted the same powers that are granted municipalities, except for those inconsistent with statutory or constitutional limitations, including those powers necessary and proper to provide for the safety, preserve the health, promote prosperity, and improve the morals, order, comfort and convenience of any county or its inhabitants; and,

**WHEREAS**, Sierra County is home to a robust and historically significant agricultural and ranching community whose livestock, hunting opportunities, and property interests have long been impacted by the federal government's Mexican Wolf Recovery Program; and,

**WHEREAS**, recent confirmed depredations within Sierra County include the killing of two adult cows and three calves, with an additional probable depredation, and these events are part of a pattern of increased wolf activity in the County; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Quartz Pack (including wolf F2754 "Asha" and her mate, along with five pups) was recently released only four miles from the Daugherty Ranch, in close proximity to ranching operations and private property; and,

**WHEREAS**, an estimated 20 uncollared wolves roam Sierra County without tracking collars, making management and deterrence difficult, and large ranches and rugged terrain limit visibility and early detection; and,

**WHEREAS**, wolf predation and presence have significantly reduced deer fawn and elk calf survival, diminishing hunting success and adversely affecting the County's hunting economy; and,

**WHEREAS**, the release and movement of wolves into populated and ranching areas present an immediate and continuing danger to the safety, health, welfare, and livelihoods of Sierra County residents, their pets, and their livestock; and,

**WHEREAS**, all locally available public and private resources to mitigate these threats are inadequate to address the scope and urgency of the situation, and additional resources, authority, and coordinated action are required to protect citizens and property; and

**WHEREAS**, Dale Skidmore, a lifelong hunter, testified that wolves are increasingly present on both sides of the Continental Divide, recounting personal encounters in which wolves pursued elk, horses, and cattle, caused injury and trauma to his animals without effective response from federal authorities, and displayed no fear of humans, leading him to abandon traditional hunting areas; and further noting that wolves congregate at waterholes, prey on calves and elk, sometimes killing multiple animals without consuming them, creating unsustainable pressures on ranchers and wildlife, especially in drought years; and

**WHEREAS**, Susan Swaim testified that the federal government's wolf recovery policies have disproportionately impacted families in the Gila region, contributing not only to livestock losses but also to broader harms including wildfires, floods, and destruction of the watershed, leaving residents burdened by debt and economic hardship; and she urged that there be no further wolf releases in Sierra County; and,

**WHEREAS**, Jack Diamond shared multiple first-hand experiences, including a wolf chase while gathering cattle on Cline Mountain, the presence of wolves killing elk and deer near his home, and the stress and danger wolves bring to ranching and outfitting operations. He testified that elk and deer populations in the Gila have collapsed compared to historic levels, diminishing both the hunting economy and residents' enjoyment of wildlife. He further observed that the community pays gross receipts tax to support local government and should not be forced to endure policies that undermine the very resources on which the county depends; and,

**WHEREAS**, Bruce Swingle testified regarding the negative economic impacts of the wolf recovery program, explaining how it undermines the local culture and long-standing ranching traditions that sustain Sierra County families and communities; and,

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Rabinaux testified about the public safety risks, recounting a personal experience following the Black Fire in which she was surrounded by wolves, including recently released pups, while on foot in rugged terrain. She described the situation as extremely dangerous, requiring her to fire warning shots to escape. Her testimony illustrates that Sierra County residents can unexpectedly encounter wolves in threatening situations that jeopardize their lives and property; and,

**WHEREAS**, Laura Schneberger testified that since 2019 her family has endured constant wolf presence from multiple packs, forcing her to invest in large guardian dogs, cameras, and other costly measures exceeding \$40,000 annually. She recounted specific depredations, including cattle killed in November 2024 and March 2025, where the animals died in extreme distress. While

guardian dogs reduced depredation losses, they did so only at great personal expense, further underscoring the untenable burden placed on ranching families.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that, pursuant to the authority granted by the All Hazard Emergency Management Act, NMSA 1978, Sections 12-10-1 et seq., and particularly NMSA 1978, Section 12-10-5 (2007), the Board of County Commissioners of Sierra County authorizes the use of all available County resources to respond to and mitigate the danger posed by Mexican wolves within Sierra County.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that, by virtue of the County's general powers and the authority provided by the New Mexico Civil Emergency Preparedness Act (NMSA 1978, §§ 12-10-01 to 12-10-11), the Board of County Commissioners hereby declares the threat from Mexican wolves to be a public welfare emergency/disaster for the purposes of exercising necessary emergency powers, expending available resources, and requesting aid, assistance, and relief programs and funds from the State of New Mexico and the Government of the United States.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this emergency/disaster declaration shall remain in effect until the Board determines that the threat to public safety, property, and economic stability has been adequately addressed.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board requests the Governor to:


1. Direct the Department of Finance and Administration to make available emergency financial resources to the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in accordance with NMSA 1978, Sections 12-11-23 to -26, and 12-10-14 to -15, to be expended for resources and services necessary to remove or mitigate the threat and economic harm resulting from Mexican wolves in Sierra County; and,
2. Direct the Adjutant General to order into service such elements of the New Mexico National Guard or State Defense Force as may be necessary to support civil authorities in eliminating the emergency threat and damages from Mexican wolves pursuant to NMSA 1978, Chapters 20-1 through 20-5.
- 3.

**APPROVED, ADOPTED, AND PASSED** on this 19th day of August, 2025.

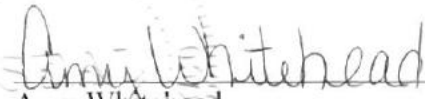
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF SIERRA COUNTY**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Travis Day, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James Paxon, Vice-Chair

  
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Hank Hopkins, Commissioner

Attest:

  
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Amy Whitehead  
Sierra County Clerk