



GRAND CANYON WOLF RECOVERY PROJECT

2008 ANNUAL REPORT **FINDING WOLF TRACKS FOR TOMORROW** **Involving students and the general public in the NEPA process**

GRAND CANYON WOLF RECOVERY PROJECT MISSION:

The Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project is dedicated to bringing back wolves and restoring ecological health to the Grand Canyon region.

2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Our primary objective for 2008 was to positively influence the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) pertaining to the recovery of the Mexican wolf through direct action. We accomplished this goal by the following education and outreach events throughout Northern Arizona. We are pleased with the results and hope that 2009 is even more effective!

NEPA UPDATE:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that they were beginning a scoping process to gather input on potential modifications to the rules governing the Mexican wolf reintroduction in Arizona and New Mexico. Advocating for modifications to these rules is a crucial component of our work to restore wolves to the Grand Canyon region. There are important implications for future reintroductions and rule changes have the potential to eliminate the “boundary rule” that currently requires the removal of wolves that set up territories in habitats outside the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area. Should the boundary rule be removed, scientists expect that the Mexican wolves can eventually be expected to establish territories in the Grand Canyon region which connects with the Blue Range Area. Our first open house to educate the public about this opportunity for involvement was held in Flagstaff on November 26, 2007 in conjunction with the Fish and Wildlife Service open house. We had over **100 people**, including members, volunteers, and the general public in attendance at the Radisson Hotel. All attendees wrote comments for the scoping process with at least 10% of those comments coming from students at Northern Arizona University. We were successful in gaining citizen support for the Mexican wolf and in helping the attendees understand the value of reintroducing these top predators to the



Grand Canyon region. Phone banking occurred several days prior and was effective in getting people to attend the Scoping Open House. In total, the USFWS received over **14,000 comment letters**. The Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project and all of its Coalition Partners submitted comments in favor of Wolf Recovery focused on the **Conservation Alternative**, which included changing the Mexican wolf's designation from "nonessential experimental" to "experimental-essential" thereby granting the Mexican wolf much-needed protection. Our comments emphasized allowing wolves to expand their territory through the elimination of current restrictions to wolf dispersal to the Grand Canyon region, and by increasing the number of wolves in the wild population.

Unfortunately, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will not be released to the general public until 2011 for more public comments and the final draft is expected to be released sometime in 2012. This time line is much longer than we had anticipated but it has potential for change with a new administration in 2009.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH:

Spring 2008:

We participated in the Tres Rios Environmental Festival event in Phoenix, the AZ Game and Fish Department Outdoor Expo, and the Tucson, Arizona "Dia de los Lobos" celebration for the ten year anniversary of the reintroduction of the Mexican wolf. A presentation was given to over a **100 students at Sinagua High School** about the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project. Many students then wrote letters and postcards to Dr. Benjamin Tuggle, Southwest Regional Director of the USFWS, in response to the NEPA and EIS process.

Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project continued to develop a strong presence within the Flagstaff community. Our table and information display on Earth Day was a great success with **over 800 attendees**. We also visited Marshall Elementary School for Earth Day. Over **150 students from kindergarten to 6th grade** heard our message about the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project. Each grade spent 30 minutes at our table learning about the Mexican wolf and getting information packets.

At Northern Arizona University (NAU), guest lectures were presented to over **80 students in the Introduction to Sociology and the Population and Environment classes**. We have continued to make contacts with NAU professors and students. These efforts have resulted in recruitment of student volunteers for GCWRP activities and in additional interviews with students for other classes. A presentation was also given to approximately **30 students from Coconino Community College**.

In 2008, The Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project message went **international!** We were contacted by a class in **Wales, UK**



which was doing research on wolves in children's stories. They discovered that wolves weren't bad. The class of **25 students** was able to demystify the "Big Bad Wolf" syndrome with our help and guidance. We sent them a large box with our brochures, bumper stickers, poster, wolf masks and much more. Students wrote letters supporting our efforts in changing the status of the wolves in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area and the proposed action to bring wolves to the Grand Canyon region.

GRAND CANYON SUMMER CAMPAIGN:

We began our Howl for Wolves at the Grand Canyon Summer Outreach Campaign by training volunteers. Over 20 volunteers were trained and prepared with the necessary background and materials to educate visitors to the Grand Canyon about the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project and the current issues facing wolves. We also gave a face-lift to our postcard campaign to Dr. Tuggle of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Volunteers have the opportunity to take a volunteer-vacation with their families at the Grand Canyon, as we provide them with the park entrance permits, camping equipment, as well as food stipends. We continue to inform people of this important opportunity to volunteer for us through distributing fliers in Flagstaff, having weekly announcements in the AZ Daily Sun, through Volunteer Match and Craigslist, emails to our members, and our website.

One of our best days at the Grand Canyon was on June 7th, 2008. We had a Service Learning group from **Futures for Children**, an organization that empowers Native American Youth to remain in school and make changes in their lives. They attended NAU for a Youth Summit. All the students had been chosen by their community leaders to participate in the Summit. This year's Futures for Children included a Service Learning Project. Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project was approached to see if we were interested in participating and working with the students. What a great opportunity to work with and collaborate with a new group to help convey our message! Before the students participated in their Service Learning activity, project director Paula Lewis went to the NAU campus to give them a presentation about the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery

Project. The service learning component included a field trip to the Grand Canyon where each student had the opportunity to practice doing wolf outreach at information sites and to educate visitors to the park. The groups rotated and spent an hour at each station: they went on a nature walk with a park ranger, they learned how to operate the outreach table and talk about wolf recovery, and then they used their creative talents to paint, sketch, and write poetry about wolves.



Another Service Learning Project took place with the Cross Country students from the **Bosque High School in New Mexico**. The students were divided into several groups. These groups rotated and spent over an hour at each station: they went on a nature walk with Park Ranger, Scott Kraynak; they learned how to table and convey the message

about wolf recovery with Paula Lewis. Roxane George provided her talents again by providing creative opportunities for expression about wolves through painting, sketching and poetry, and Stacey Hamburg from the Sierra Club also contributed by talking to students about how to be an activist.

Our **Summer Campaign** had a strong ending in August with over **300 new people** having joined our mailing and email lists along with over **1000 postcards signed** and sent to Dr. Tuggle. In addition, we also raised approximately \$1,200 in donations.

Late Summer 2008:

We participated with our table display at the **Pickin' in the Pines** bluegrass festival community event again this year. The event provided great exposure for us as an organization, and we had many inquiries about our work. We also gained approximately **50 new members** to our mailing lists.

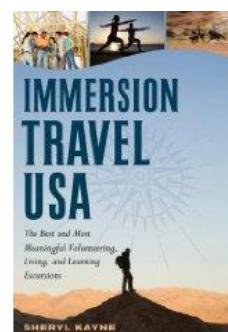
Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project also participated in the **Flagstaff Festival of Science**. This consisted of tabling at the Science in the Park fair and going into local K-12 classrooms to share our efforts to restore the natural balance of the Grand Canyon through the reintroduction of wolves. The Science in the Park fair took place at Wheeler Park, where our table was constantly surrounded by inquisitive kids, parents, and teachers. It was one of our more successful outreach events. Our wolf costume was a huge hit with the crowd- both young and old!



We spoke to almost **400 students** from seven **different schools** within the school district during the Flagstaff Festival of Science. All students wrote on the postcards we provided them and several classes wrote to Dr. Tuggle sharing their concerns for the Mexican grey wolf population along with their desire to see wolves in the Grand Canyon region.

PUBLICITY:

USA TODAY had an article about a new book called *Immersion Travel USA: The best and Most Meaningful Volunteering, Living and Learning Excursions*. The Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project was listed as one of the more “unusual” listings in the book. Project director, Paula Lewis has been working with the author, Sheryl Kane since the summer of 2007 on this. Check the article out here:



http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2008-09-04-immersion-travel-book_N.htm. We encourage you to buy a copy of the book!

On June 16th, 2008, Paula Lewis was interviewed about our work on the Flagstaff radio station the **EAGLE 103.7**. Check out the following link or visit the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project website at www.gcwolfrecovery.org to listen to the pod cast:
<http://eagle.podshowcreator.com/podcasts.aspx?feedid=1773>.

MEETINGS:

Stephanie Nichols-Young provided training to our members about interactions with the AZ Game & Fish Commissioners. We had approximately a dozen people who attended this training. The following day we were given the opportunity to speak to the Commissioners. Several of our members and volunteers participated by sharing their thoughts about the current Mexican wolf program and current issues facing them. Our members and volunteers are continuing to take action by participating in these important monthly commission meetings with the AZ Game & Fish Commissioners.

We attended a meeting with **Steve Martin**, Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park on September 22, 2008. We addressed the Backcountry/Resource Stewardship Plan and issues about carnivore conservation and our intent to work with them on issues related to our mission. We discussed our plan for a carnivore and herbivore workshop in the summer of 2009. We want to bring scientists, park administration, and conservation groups together to address the full range of management options to resolve impairment of natural resources due to a variety of factors including the extirpation of large carnivores (and other strongly interactive species) into the Grand Canyon. Our meeting with Steve Martin shows how our relationship with the Grand Canyon National Park administration is growing. It was a successful discussion with follow-up meeting taking place in a couple of weeks.

WOLVES, WOLVES, AND MORE WOLVES!

Fall 2008

October was full of events for the Grand Canyon Wolf Recover Project!

We started the month of activities with our **Wolves in Art Exhibit** at the Flagstaff Coffee Company, curated by our intern Elle Huftill. This event coincided with the Flagstaff First Friday Art Walk on October 3, 2008. Our exhibit included several local (and non-local) artists donating paintings, sketches, and photography. Our artists consisted of Scott Kraynak, Ali Levinson, Dave Lash, Richard Belzar, Lucas Belzar, and Justin Begay. The **Flagstaff Coffee Company** also created several specialty drinks for the event. The “Lobo Latte” was simply delicious as was the Mexican Chai. The coffee shop became full very quickly. We were told by the Manager



that at no other Art Walk had the place been filled to capacity like it was during our exhibit.

We also participated in the **Blessing of the Animals** hosted by the Shared Earth Network on Oct 4th, 2008 on St. Francis Day. This gave us an opportunity to educate the faith-based community of our work and efforts. We encouraged them to be proactive, engaged and to take action in the EIS process on behalf of wolves.



Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project kicked off **National Wolf Awareness Week** with our **WOLF BREW** event by collaborating with the **Flagstaff Brewing Company** and several bands: the **Wiley One** and **Sick Finger Guru**. We received media attention on the EAGLE 103.7 with a discussion about how great the WOLF BREW would be and what an easy way to contribute to our efforts in bringing wolves home to the Grand Canyon. The cold weather didn't keep those loyal wolf supporters from drinking beer.

Also during Wolf Awareness Week, Paula Lewis was invited to several classes within the **Flagstaff School District** and spoke to approximately **200 students** to celebrate wolves in the Southwest.

We ended Wolf Awareness Week with our **2nd Annual “Wolves without Boundaries”** fundraiser. This event was very well attended with much discussion about the need for a bigger venue to fit all the people! We raised \$5,000. The food was incredible and the chocolate fountain was a hit once again. We had amazing silent auction items donated by local artists Shonto Begay and Dave Lash. Thanks to Patagonia, Animal Defense League of Arizona, The Phoenix Zoo, Arizona Wilderness Coalition for donating gift baskets to our silent auction. We also had items donated from following businesses that also contributed to our event: Black Diamond Equipment, the Arboretum of Flagstaff, Dakine, Dagoba Chocolates, Sundara, Harkins Theatres, Crystal Magic, Trader Joes, Seasoned Kitchen, Arizona Specialty Systems, and many, many more. We can't forget to thank French Rabbit Wine for their donation to us again this year, along with Flagstaff Brewing Company for providing drinks for the event. We also must thank our coalition partner, Habitat Harmony, Inc.'s board member Sherry Golden for her hospitality in opening her home for the event again as well! Chuck Cheesman delighted us with his music and gave us a special performance with his fantastic voice! Our intern, Elle played a crucial role in this event by gathering all of our silent auction items. It was fantastic to have her during this time of year and she was amazing in her creative flare and style!

IMPACT OF PROJECT:

Our long term goals aim to alter current wolf management policies, to establish the role of wolves as an essential, desirable part of the landscape in the public consciousness, and to see wolves succeed in their historic habitat, including the Grand Canyon region. Our

success during the NEPA process, as well as our other outreach and education opportunities helped us advance our goals. We were able to partner with like-minded organizations, student groups of diversity ages and backgrounds, and faith-based communities to better coordinate our efforts. Additionally, we bolstered our local community to support wolf issues prior to the NEPA process and while waiting for the EIS draft (2011). We executed a community outreach campaign centrally focused on middle, secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, but also aimed at a wider audience including local citizens, businesses, and lead agencies through our events. Within the schools, we worked with teachers and professors to incorporate wolf education, particularly policy-making processes, and to provide their classes with presentations by members of our coalition. The general public and international visitors to the Grand Canyon were also informed of wolf-related issues and were given the tools and knowledge to advocate for the Mexican wolf during the NEPA and EIS comment periods through direct action.

