

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2025**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Executive Conference Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Frank Antenori, Chairman; Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman; Kathleen L. Gomez, Supervisor

Staff Present: Sharon Gilman, County Administrator
Joe Casey, Deputy County Administrator
Dylan Hendel, Civil Deputy County Attorney
Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and and possible direction regarding a proposed resolution expressing opposition to the current implementation of the Mexican Gray Wolf Reintroduction Program and recommending reforms including enhanced state-level authority, improved compensation for livestock losses, and development of response protocols.

Mr. Hendel explained that his office reviewed the draft resolution while preserving the original intent of its authors. He stated the only legal revision suggested was in paragraph eight on page three, clarifying how the Endangered Species Act allows the county to coordinate with agencies on wolf-related matters. He stated the change supports federalism principles and aims to align with Congressional intent.

Chairman Antenori emphasized the need for the sheriff's office to investigate wolf-related incidents in order to gather data that could support a potential federal lawsuit. He suggested the county consider funding training for deputies to enhance their wildlife investigation skills, regardless of whether the federal government formally recognizes the training.

Mr. Hendel confirmed the Sheriff supports having ranch patrol involved in the wolf related investigations and is open to collaborative efforts. Chairman Antenori stated funding for training, tools, and administrative costs would be considered to support these activities. Mr. Hendel clarified the difference between "investigating" and "reporting" to avoid legal issues. Chairman Antenori emphasized the Sheriff's authority to act within his county as the chief law enforcement officer. Mr. Hendel suggested that using the word "report" achieves the desired outcome, allowing for data collection and the sheriff's involvement without overstepping the legal boundaries. Mr. Hendel stated this would ensure the sheriff's role is appropriately framed while acknowledging that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is

ultimately responsible for enforcement under the Endangered Species Act.

Vice-Chairman Crosby proposed including both the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments in the discussion, as they both emphasize the protection of life, liberty, and property without due process of law.

Mr. Hendel confirmed that additional provisions could be added, including resources for training the sheriff's staff.

The Board and staff agreed that the sheriff would be expected to visit areas of concern, potentially investigate, and then provide formal reports to the Board for recordkeeping. Supervisor Gomez raised a question about requiring an updated prey analysis. Ms. Gilman clarified that the resolution already prohibits further wolf releases in Cochise County.

Mr. Hendel noted that an existing memorandum of understanding between other eastern Arizona counties, Arizona Game and Fish, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife could offer enforcement support. Cochise County is not yet part of that agreement, but entering it could help resolve some of the current concerns.

Supervisor Gomez and Mr. Hendel agreed to separate the Pet and Livestock Protection Act from another provision for clarity. Mr. Hendel stated that the act calls for removing the Mexican wolf from the endangered species list, nullifying related final rules, and separating recovery criteria for U.S. and Mexican populations. Mr. Hendel confirmed the addition will be made to the resolution.

Ms. Gilman confirmed a work session will be held on Thursday to review the updated draft of the resolution. She stated the purpose is to finalize language and ensure clarity before the vote and the final version will then be placed on the Board's agenda for Tuesday, 22nd of July, 2025.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

APPROVED:

Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board