

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES - TERRESTRIAL

A PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVE TO ENHANCE CONSERVATION OF WOLVES [™]

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The Turner Endangered Species Fund is a private, non-profit charity dedicated to conserving biodiversity. We concentrate our efforts on carnivores, grasslands, plant-pollinator complexes, and species that historically ranged onto properties owned by R.E. Turner. As such, one of our priorities has been to advance wolf conservation. We are

working as the only private permittee of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on wolf recovery. In cooperation with the USFWS and Wildlife Services we tested electronic training collars on depredating packs of wolves held on the Flying D Ranch, Bozeman, Montana. These wolves were released and advanced recovery by siring pups. We assist the USFWS with trapping, monitoring and management of wolves in southwest Montana. We proposed a plan for developing a wolf experience center at the Vermejo Park Ranch that would improve the survival potential of captive-born Mexican wolves before they are released to the wild. In cooperation with the USFWS, we developed the Ladder Ranch Mexican Wolf Pre-release Captive Facility in 1997 where we have annually held 4 to 20 wolves. We have produced 5 litters of pups and released 15 individuals to the wild. As in Montana, we also have provided a biologist who routinely assists with the monitoring and management of Mexican wolves. We participated in the Southern Rockies wolf restoration population and habitat viability analysis and workshop. Private stewardship of biodiversity is new and difficult, but we intend to contribute by establishing a new measure for large carnivore conservation.