



# Volunteers prepare homes for rescued wildlife

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Pepper (a raccoon) and Mesquite (a coyote) were illegally being kept as pets before they were rescued and brought to the [New Mexico Wildlife Center](#) in Española. Because of their domestic upbringing, they cannot be returned to the wild, but now they can go on to live life to the fullest at the center, thanks to the help of volunteers from the Laboratory.

On Sept. 13 and 14, ten Lab volunteers worked to finish putting together these ambassador animals' new enclosures.

The tasks included building a walking path to the new enclosures, laying wire fencing underground to prevent animals digging out or in, and building a den and ramps for Mesquite's new home.

*Lab volunteers working on the enclosures.*

Now they are settled in their abodes, Mesquite and Pepper will help visitors understand more about their behaviors, habitat needs, diet and interactions in the environment.

"We are so grateful to have had the help of the Los Alamos National Laboratory employees," said Melissa Moore, executive director at the Center. "We were all very dusty, hot, and dirty by the end of the days, and so we couldn't thank them enough for all their help!"

The New Mexico Wildlife Center runs education and outreach programs and events, and also operates a wildlife hospital treating between 650 and 800 injured and orphaned wild animals of more than 120 species every year, returning as many as possible to the wild.

You can see Mesquite and Pepper, and the results of the employees' hard work during the Center's regular hours, Monday through Saturday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

**Los Alamos National Laboratory**

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