

Jaguar Conservation Team (JAGCT)
Summary Notes for Meeting of March 13, 2008
Meeting Location: Lordsburg, New Mexico
Final: March 24, 2008

JAGCT Chair Terry B. Johnson, Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

1. Opening comments and ground rules

Ground rules were the same as previous meetings. Participants were asked to raise their hand to ask a question or state an opinion. Only one person is allowed to speak at a time, and side conversations must be kept to a minimum. This allows each person to be heard and keeps the meeting moving through the agenda. Also, attendees should turn cellular telephones and beepers off or set them to vibrate. In the event of a call, please leave the room before conversing with the caller.

Anyone attending today's meeting may comment on any agenda item and all are encouraged to do so.

2. Agenda Review/Additional Discussion Points

Copies of the agenda were provided during the meeting. No additional items were added to the Agenda at this time.

Information regarding jaguar conservation in the Southwest may be obtained on the JAGCT webpage at http://www.azgfd.gov/w_c/es/jaguar_management.shtml. To receive JAGCT's electronically distributed updates on jaguar issues, including public notices of JAGCT meetings, please visit <http://www.azgfd.gov/signup> and subscribe to the newsletter, *Endangered Species Updates*. Email to the JAGCT should be addressed to the Chair (teebeej@azgfd.gov) or to jaguar@azgfd.gov.

Action Item: Invite a member of the Society of Mammalogists to present information regarding their recent resolution for increasing jaguar conservation in North America. This is a past action item that has occurred. **Action Item:** As a follow-up, Michael Robinson (Center for Biological Diversity) will provide a copy of the formal resolution to Terry Johnson for posting with the meeting notes.

3. Update on AGFD-NMDGF Jaguar Conservation MOU and Framework, current MOU signatories, and action on any new requests for signatory status

There are 14 signatories to the MOU. This includes AGFD, NMDGF, USFWS; Graham (AZ), Greenlee (AZ), Cochise (AZ), and Luna (NM) counties; NM Department of Agriculture; Arizona State Land Department; USDA Wildlife Services; Santa Cruz NRCD and Whitewater Draw NRCD; and Deming and Hildago S&W districts.

Action Item: Terry Johnson will provide a revised MOU and list of signatories (posted on the web-site with the meeting notes).

It was noted that the Framework was removed from the web-site.

Action Item: Terry Johnson will ensure that the Framework is re-posted on the web-site and will re-distribute as necessary.

Terry reviewed the timeline for completion of the Framework. A small sample group representing the diverse make-up of the JAGCT received the first draft of the Framework and provided comments. AGFD compiled comments and sent a revised draft to the NMDGF for agreement. NMDGF will have 10-14 days to review. Once completed, both agencies will provide a final draft to the full JAGCT.

4. Update on draft final AGFD-NMDGF Jaguar Conservation Assessment

Terry Johnson reviewed the differences between the Assessment and the Framework. The Assessment provides information regarding the history of the JAGCT and our accomplishments and departures. The Framework provides an outline of tasks or plans of implementation for the future.

5. Discussion of any ESA petitions, legal challenges, etc. pertaining to borderlands jaguars (e.g. critical habitat, recovery planning)

The USFWS reviewed recent actions regarding jaguars. In December 2007, the USFWS finding was posted indicating that a full recovery plan, including critical habitat designation, was not warranted for jaguars in the U.S. Basically, their stance was that the bulk of recovery actions should occur south of the U.S.-Mexico border. Subsequent to this finding, there have been a couple of "Notice of Intent" to sue.

A discussion regarding the difference between Recovery Plans and Critical Habitat designation ensued. Basically, both actions require different processes. Recovery Plans are advisory documents with defined tasks for implementing recovery. Critical Habitat utilizes the rule-making process and is codified by law. Recovery Plans do not ensure that funding will be available for the species.

The JAGCT (and Assessment & Framework) is a state-lead process for conserving jaguars in absence of formal Recovery Plan. Signing and agreeing to participate in this state-lead effort has nothing to do with recovery planning. With that said, both state agencies agree that Critical Habitat designations are not necessary for jaguar conservation actions in the U.S. In addition, both agencies feel that local collaboration, etc. is a better way for developing partnerships and funding for conservation efforts. Unlike a formal Recovery Plan, our goals are conservation, not recovery.

6. Discussion of cooperating agency staff commitments to JAGCT

In the past, the AGFD has provided most of the administrative costs, in terms of staff time, for conducting the meetings and taking and distributing notes. AGFD will be looking for NMDGF to step-up and commit to assisting with these efforts. In addition, both state agencies will be looking for increased participation from signatory agency staff, especially regarding implementation of elements identified in the framework.

7. Reconstitution of JAGCT Committees and appointment of Chairs and Co-Chairs: Depredation, Education, Habitat, Monitoring, Outreach, Research

Action Item: If interested in chairing, co-chairing, or participating on one of the committees, please submit a written response to Terry Johnson by **April 13**. The committees and chairs will be announced at the next JAGCT meeting.

8. Discussion of funding requests for support of JAGCT and related activities

Current funding levels were briefly discussed. To date, there has been little to no monies identified. The USFWS, BLM, USFS have contributed small amounts of funding to help maintain the Borderlands Jaguar Detection project. AGFD has contributed to this effort and has also paid for administration of meetings, etc. There has not been a tally of private citizen contributions, but these should also be recognized. With little to no designated funding source, the group continues to chase monies where we can. Unfortunately, most of these monies are on a competing basis with other species groups.

9. The Secure Border Initiative: briefing by Department of Homeland Security, followed by discussion of Homeland Security issues along the US-MX border that are relevant to jaguar conservaiton

Shem Peachey, DHS El Paso Sector, and Patrick Musante provided a briefing on SBI-net. Discussions included plans for pedestrian fence, vehicle barriers, forward operating base (FOB), and use of foot and horse patrols. Shem also discussed the experimental problems with the Project 28 cameras used in Arizona (Sasabe). A general question and answer period was provided.

Action Item: Invite DHS Arizona Sector to participate in a future JAGCT to provide an Arizona perspective of border issues/plans.

10. Updates on jaguar monitoring and reported sightings (including Charouleau Gap, AZ)

New Mexico – No new sightings have been reported.

Arizona – No Class I or II sightings have been reported. We received 6 Class III (unverifiable) reports, including a reported cell phone picture of a jaguar from Charouleau Gap (near the

town of Catalina). The cell phone photo was confirmed to be a previously photographed jaguar taken in Mexico and posted on the Northern Jaguar Project web-site. We are monitoring chat-rooms to ensure that this report does not escalate further.

Borderlands Jaguar Detection Project – No new photographs since July 2007. One set of new tracks has been confirmed in an area without cameras. AGFD was able to receive permission from the private landowner/permittee to place additional cameras in the area. No jaguars have been photographed with these new camera placements. In addition, the BJDP has received a GPS collar, equipped with a periphery zone alarm. Also, the BJDP has noticed increased human activity and vandalism to cameras in remote areas of the border, possibly a result of border fence placements and SBI activities.

11. Discussion of tentative dates and locations for the next JAGCT meetings: April 24, Douglas AZ; July 24, Lordsburg NM; October 23, Tucson AZ

Because of the postponement of this meeting to March, it was decided that the next meeting of the JAGCT will take place July 24 in Douglas, AZ.

12. Other Business

Mexico – AGFD is attending a meeting in Mexico regarding border and wildlife issues. These same discussions continue through the Trilateral Committee, which will have their next meeting in May. It is likely that the Director of Mexico's equivalent to the USFWS will send a representative to participate in our next JAGCT meeting.

AGFD has also had continuing conversations with the Tohono O'odham regarding signature status and representation at JAGCT meetings.

Action Item: The jaguar habitat report for NM (specifically the Center for Biological Diversity report) is no longer on the JAGCT web-site. Terry Johnson will re-post the report.

13. Close Meeting

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:30 pm.