

MEXICAN WOLF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
MEETING WITH THE INTERAGENCY FIELD TEAM AND DIRECTORS SUMMIT
Final Summary Notes for Meeting of December 8, 2005

Location: USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services, 8836 N. 23rd Avenue, Suite B-2, Phoenix, AZ
Date: December 8, 2005
Time: AZ Time: 0800 – 1300 (AMOC and IFT)
Host: Wildlife Services
Participants: AMOC Lead Agencies: AGFD – Terry B. Johnson (Chair), Bill Van Pelt, Jon Cooley, Dan Groebner, Sharon Hansen, Shawn Farry, Shawna Nelson, Janess Vartanian, Colby Gardner, and Laura Kelly; NMDGF – Chuck Hayes; USDA APHIS WS – Dave Bergman, Richard Grabbe, J. Brad Miller, ; USDA FS – Wally Murphy; USFWS –John Morgart, and John Oakleaf; and WMAT – Cynthia Dale and Krista Beazley.

AMWG Signatory Cooperators: Greenlee County AZ – Hector Ruedas and Kay Gale.

AMWG Non-signatory Participants: SCAT – Harold Nofchissey.

Note: some participants were not present for the entire meeting.

December 8

A. Welcome, Introductions, Ground Rules, and Agenda Review

Terry Johnson called the IFT meeting to order at 0820 local time. After a brief welcome and introductions, the agenda was followed.

B. IFT Monitoring Suggestions

Copies of the final draft *IFT Monitoring Suggestions* were distributed. Terry Johnson noted that he had reformatted and edited the previous IFT draft to conform to AMOC conventions.

The IFT suggestion is to change the Project's approach to Mexican wolf population monitoring, by incorporating use of a helicopter with fixed-wing support. After brief discussion, all AMOC representatives approved the suggestions.

Discussion then focused on whether funding is available for the new approach. Chuck Hayes said NMDGF could provide half the helicopter operational costs. John Morgart said USFWS might be able to pick up the other half of the helicopter costs and the fixed-wing costs. Wally Murphy said USFS might also be able to contribute funding.

Action Item: NMDGF, USFS, and USFWS will determine by December 16 whether they can contribute the necessary funds, so the new monitoring approach can be implemented by January 1, 2006.

Note: If sufficient funds cannot be provided, the old monitoring approach will be used until funds can be secured.

C. Draft IFT Annual Work Plan for Calendar Year 2006

The Draft Annual Work Plan Summary was distributed. Terry Johnson noted that he had reformatted and edited the previous IFT draft to conform to AMOC conventions. John Oakleaf said it was revised to address all concerns AMOC expressed in the November 21 conference call. Terry noted that WMAT is revisiting its Work Plan after an internal meeting, and any changes will need to be incorporated later. Krista Beazley said the revised WMAT plan will be completed by December 31, 2005. All AMOC representatives agreed that Item 6(b), inreach within agencies and counties, is a higher priority for 2006 than outreach to public groups.

AMOC approved the 2006 IFT Draft Annual Work Plan Summary without any modifications.

Action Item: Each non-Tribal agency (i.e. AGFD, NMDGF, USFWS, and USFWS) will now need to change its work plan by December 31, 2005, to reflect the Summary.

D. IFT Recommendation on Location Information Dissemination

AMOC's *Interim Guidelines on Dissemination of Wolf Locations to the Public* and the pilot map were distributed. Terry Johnson noted that he had reformatted and edited the previous IFT draft to conform to AMOC conventions.

The level of information to be available to the public was discussed. This item affects SOP 3: Public Outreach and Cooperator Inreach. AMOC members agreed on an interim strategy handle Catron County's request as Level 2, on a weekly basis (within 24 hours of each monitoring flight), and wait and see whether any other requests come in for equivalent information. Meanwhile, most public requests should be handled as Level 3. AMOC reaffirmed that once information has been given to any member of the public (i.e. anyone without special privilege under State and Federal law), it must also be provided to any other member of the public who requests it.

Location information pertaining to FAIR and SCAR will be treated as privileged and confidential; therefore, FAIR and SCAT information at the individual wolf level will not be made public.

Production of the map requires one FTE-day (1 person, 8 hours). AMOC directed the IFT to produce these maps monthly, and make them available via the AGFD and USFWS websites. The *IFT Monthly Update* will reference the maps and indicate where they are available.

AMOC decided the maps should be basic rather than complex, to facilitate printing. The background will be white, and footnotes will provide general (e.g. pack level) FAIR and SCAR location information as appropriate to Tribal sovereignty.

Action Item: The IFT will prepare a new draft map for inclusion in the January *IFT Monthly Update*, and will begin compliance with the AMOC guidelines approved today. Shawna Nelson will

E. SOP 9.0 and CWD

A revised SOP 9.0 was distributed, per previous AMOC discussion in conference calls and through email. Discussion ensued regarding carcass-hauling and the need for freezer purchases if more carcasses will be stored. AMOC decided to retain restriction to within-County use in AZ and NM, unless NMDGF indicates it will allow cross-County use if CWD tests come back negative.

Action Item: Chuck Hayes will determine whether NM would allow carcasses to be distributed to other counties by December 31, 2005, and notify Terry Johnson. Terry will then make the appropriate changes (if any) in the SOP and distribute the revised final version to AMOC, the IFT, and to the public via the AGFD website.

F. January 2006 meeting with conservation community

Terry Johnson reiterated that the conservation community wants to meet with AMOC representatives, but has been unable to come to internal agreement on an agenda, date, time, or location. Consequently, Terry has informed them that a January 26 or 27 meeting is not possible. They will re-huddle and approach AMOC again when they have a plan, including a few possible dates.

This means the previously scheduled January AMOC and AMWG meetings will be left as is (AMOC January 26, 8 am to 3 pm; AMWG January 26, Safford, 4-8 pm, and January 27, Silver City, Noon to 4 pm).

Action Item: Terry Johnson will inform the conservation community of today's discussion and decision, and ask them to inform AMOC when and if they have agreed upon the basics of a meeting with AMOC.

G. August 2006 Mexican Wolf Management Workshop

Terry's draft outline for the proposed Mexican Wolf Management Workshop concept was distributed. The Workshop is scheduled for August 29 – 31, 2006. Per previous AMOC discussion, this will be a non-labor intensive meeting (i.e. no banquets, awards ceremonies,

field trips, tradeshow), with invited presentations. It will replace the Directors Summit for August 2006.

Cynthia Dale, who is handling the Hon-Dah hotel/conference arrangements, provided an informational packet on the facility. Cynthia was directed to reserve 60 rooms for 3 nights starting August 28-30), and one big room (150 people maximum, theater style seating) for August 29-30 and one smaller room (50 people maximum, round table [= square circle] style seating) for August 31. AMOC anticipates that approximately 150 people will attend.

We will probably need pre-registration to prevent turn-aways during the event. Perhaps we can do that via a website of a cooperating agency or an appropriate NGO.

A Steering Committee was formed to flesh out the Workshop. It includes Kay Gale and Wally Murphy, with Dave Bergman as Chairperson. John Morgart and Terry Johnson also offered to help the Committee.

Action Item: AMOC and the IFT will provide additional comment to the Committee by December 31 on Terry's draft concept. The Committee will bring a polished revision to the January 26 AMOC meeting for final discussion.

H. Mexican Wolf Research

Dave Berman distributed a list of publications on *Neospora caninum*, and provided the wildlife research update. Stuart Breck has on-going research, with the New Mexico portion starting in 2006. **TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION**. WS and the Centers for Disease Control are partnering on rabies research on how wolves are converting their rabies vaccines. The CDC, WS and Colorado State University will be conducting a rabies challenge on wolves. WS has also arranged for its Research Center to take an economic impact look at potential wildlife kills on cattle.

As AMOC approved in November, Stuart Breck is convening a group of researchers interested in wolf issues, to coordinate among themselves to enhance cooperation, and to provide AMOC with expert feedback on research issues.

Dan Groebner provided a copy of the 1998 "wolf research" conference results on recommended research topics. Dave Bergman will ask Stuart Breck's group to look it over for possible ideas.

Dan Stark provided an update on his GPS study of wolf depredation.

Action Item: Prior to the January 26, 2006 AMOC meeting, Dave Bergman will provide AMOC with 1-page summaries of each research topic underway.

I. Confidentiality Issues

AMOC again instructed the IFT that NGOs assisting the IFT must not have access to AMOC deliberations, whether in open discussion, email, or hard copy. We must maintain a bright line here to ensure that one outside group does not enjoy special privilege not made available to all. All present agreed with this, and the IFT will make sure the distinction is maintained.

Action Item: The IFT will coordinate internally to ensure all members and volunteers maintain the required separation between non-agency assistants and deliberative issues.

J. Mexican Wolf Mythbusters Document

AMOC briefly discussed Chuck Hayes' draft document entitled *Concerns Expressed About Mexican Wolf Field Activities*. It was prepared as follow-up to the August 2005 Directors Summit. The intent is to place the final document on the AGFD and USFWS websites, and make it available to the public via the Endangered Species Updates newsletter. Terry Johnson noted that this is the first step, because the document eventually needs to be expanded to address myths that pertain to subjects other than IFT field activities.

Action Items: AMOC and the IFT have until December 31 to provide comment to Chuck, so he can send the final to Terry by January 10 for dissemination.

K. 5-Year Review Recommendations

Two documents were distributed: the 120 recommendations in the draft 5-year Review, and the draft final 40 AMOC Recommendations AMOC is considering were distributed for discussion. The 10(j) map was also reviewed. Printing and website loading of final documents will occur by December 31, 2005. Closure with the AGFD Commission will occur on December 9, 2005, and on December 16, 2005 with the NMDGF Commission.

Discussion focused on clarification issues pertaining to the "Final 40." This occupied all the remaining time, so AMOC approval of content was deferred to the afternoon session.

L. Closing Remarks

With no other business, closing remarks were made and the meeting adjourned at 1259.