

## **Adaptive Management Oversight Committee/ Interagency Field Team Meeting**

10/17/07

1) **Attendees:** Luis Rios, John Oakleaf, Ellen Heilhecker, Shannon Barber-Meyer, John Slown, John Morgart, Dave Bergman, Bill Van Pelt, Dave Cagle, Chris Carrillo, Matt Wunder, Renae Held, Dave Case, Mark Herrington, Les Owen, Cathy Taylor, Mike Godwin, Krista Beazley, John Cooley, Kay Gale, and Hector Ruedas.

2) **Add to agenda:** *Cathy Taylor* – Forest Guardians intent to sue. John Oakleaf and Morgart – ITF recommendations to be included in agenda. *Dave Cagle* – Rabies protocol being developed. *Renae Held* – Communication process within IFT. *John Morgart* – Update on High Country News interviews by John Doherty, regarding wolf program and scoping process; has interviewed John Morgart, but would like to interview others.

3) **Draft notes from Directors Meeting August 28-30, 2007:** Bill Van Pelt – implement a 2 week review period. Send any comments to Bill Van Pelt by November 2, 2007. Matt Wunder suggested that we discuss any clarification of the notes tomorrow during other business.

### 4) **Announcements:**

Arizona Game and Fish Headquarters Moving Locations. They will be to the Ben Avery Shooting range, November 13 from the Phoenix office. The 942-3000 phone number will still be good and the extensions will work for a while, but the website will have information on how to contact staff.

Arizona Game and Fish Wolf Program Website. They recently had a hardware failure; they are working on reloading the pages. Bill Van Pelt asked everyone to send any electronic copies of the files from the website to him.

Harv Forsgren Leaving. November 7<sup>th</sup> will be Harv's last day with the Forest Service (FS), Corbin Newman will be taking his place as the FS Director for the Wolf Reintroduction Program.

New Signatory. Grant County has officially signed on as a cooperator.

### 5) **Discussion Items**

a) NEPA Scoping Meeting. DJ Case and Associates presentation on scoping process.....  
Please let me know how much detail you would like me to go into.

b) Catron County Letters (2). Events mentioned in the letters are being investigated by John Morgart.

c) Declaration of Wolf Week. Declared October 15<sup>th</sup> by Governor Richardson. This ties in with "Wolf Awareness" poster. No one on AMOC/IFT was notified before the news release went out. After AMOC was notified, the announcement was put up on ES updates. IFT reminded the group

that this has always been “Wolf Awareness Week”, but the governor had not recognized it previously.

**d) NM GAIN Tours.** AZGF recently conducted a watchable wildlife tour. News releases were posted by Shawna Nelson. The tour was a success with 25 of the 30 spots filled. J. Brad Miller gave a talk about depredations and Shawna tracked animals using telemetry.

Since AMOC was not notified, Renae Held asked what kinds of activities need AMOC notification. Cathy Taylor suggested that hands on activities should be run past AMOC, but agencies don’t need a permit, only commercial entities. She said that the FS would like to be notified. She also suggested looking into a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for wolf tours.

**Forest Guardians (FG) Tour.** FS said that they have applied for a special use permit after the FS informed them that they would need one, because this is a commercial venture. They will have up to 12 quests, 1 guide, and 4 FG staff members. They will be supplying 4-wheel drive vehicles and will purchase all the lodging and food in the area to help support the local economy. They will be driving on established trails; will be listening and walking less than a mile from the vehicle; and there will be no calling. FG didn’t apply to come to the IFT office, but did contact Shawna Nelson about it. Cathy also said that the FS suggested that FG contribute some of the \$1,000 fee to the incentives program, but said that they needed it to cover costs.

Cathy also mentioned that the Gila FS has permitted another operation recently to do wolf tours, though she doesn’t have details about this permit.

***AMOC Recommendations:*** Dave Cagle (AZ) said that the demand for these trips is there, that we need to have regulations in place to control these actions. Grant County suggested following the same process as outfitters; implement a fee for 5% of the cost of the trip. Matt Wunder (NM) suggested moving the permit approval forward as long as it didn’t affect the resource or the wolves and that we use the FS guidelines, not implement a new SOP. John Morgart (FWS) suggested we use the commercial guidelines. Dave Bergman (WS): use existing guidelines. Dave Cagle also said there is a concern that we don’t have the IFT staff involved in commercial endeavors. Hector Ruedas reiterated that and suggested that we need to also check the announcements that go out with the tours for accuracy.

**ACTION ITEM: Cathy Taylor will draw up stipulation on a permit, using the rule by November 17<sup>th</sup>. AMOC would also like to add the stipulation that the field team members will not be involved.**

**f) IFT Recommendations – Durango Pack Translocation.** A summary of the recommendation was read by John Oakleaf.

“Within the IFT, the following agencies recommend attempted capture of, with a temporary stay in captivity, and translocation of the Durango Pack (consisting of AM973, one pup, and possibly F1047 from the Luna pack) from New Mexico to a site in the BRWRA: AZGFD, NMDGF, USFWS, NM-WS, and WMAT. USFS is not represented on the IFT. AZ-WS was not reached prior to this recommendation. This could result in different site selection for the proposed translocation of the 1028/1008. A full translocation proposal will be prepared by the IFT and submitted to AMOC based on the current scenario.

WMAT representation on the IFT offered an alternative recommendation to the NMDGF recommendation (see below).

Several factors led to the majority IFT recommendation: (1) AM973 and the pup have increased their use of private land near a residence outside of the BRWRA, (2) the private

landowner will not allow hazing on the private land but will allow trapping for translocation or removal, (3) the reported interactions are not beneficial for AM973 or the pup to develop appropriate wild behavior, (4) the translocation may allow for a breeding pair to be formed for 2008 and several years in the future, (5) the newly established potential pair bond between AM973 and F1047 may create a different dynamic in the pack with decreased potential for nuisance behavior (potentially in the current area or the translocated area) given the history of F1047 (see below).

Minority IFT Recommendation. TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

The nuisance problems by the Durango Pack were on private land. The IFT has suggested moving the translocation to April, to address WMAT concerns. The animals would be moved into captivity and released in April. John Oakleaf said that the basis of the 20 days is that the behaviors are outside of the matrix, but within 30 days.

John Morgart expressed concern that the FWS only has one open pen in captivity. Dave Bergman recapped the statement from Ben Tuggle at the Directors meeting that the FWS said it will take care of any wolves after AMOC sends a directive to remove them. John Morgart that the FWS only feels comfortable taking animals in at this point if they are assured they will go back out eventually. Matt Wunder said that NM was OK with the original recommendation that the animals would be moved immediately, with the concern that nuisance behavior may be caused by previous captivity. John Morgart also said that we need to move forward with the removal re: the 10-J rule and the SOP's and that they are 90% sure that there is a pair bond ????? and that they have a female in captivity to be translocated with 973. John Oakleaf said an alternative is to move the animals immediately to NM.

*AMOC Recommendations:* John Morgart (FWS) – follow field team recommendation, but want assurances that if another pair goes into captivity, they must eventually go back out into the wild. Dave Bergman (WS) - All three should be pulled out, and AM 973 should never go back into the wild. No recommendation on the other two wolves. Krista Beazley (WMAT) – follow the IFT recommendation. Cathy Taylor (FS) – comfortable with current proposal; FS was not comfortable with the original proposal in regards to the WMAT concerns. Matt Wunder (NM) – take the animals down to Ladder Ranch immediately for translocation in NM – catch all three if possible.

Shannon Barber-Meyer asked what AMOC wants to do if we catch only the male and pup. Bill Van Pelt only feels that the male is translocatable with a female in conjunction, that it is not a viable candidate for translocation if it is not already paired up. Dave Bergman stated that it will be hardest to capture 973 because it has already been captured twice. Bill Van Pelt asked if there are other animals to pair up for contingency incase only a single animal is caught. John Morgart suggested that if we catch the female only, it be released; if one male is caught there is a female to pair up with, but the female can only be translocated to the primary recovery area. The direction from the field team is to initiate trapping, bring the animals into captivity, then start the translocation process.

**g) Permanent Removal Order for Aspen Pack.** Summary as follows by John Oakleaf:

“Within the IFT, the following agencies recommend permanent removal via lethal control of two wolves (AM863, F1046) of the Aspen Pack: AZGFD, NMDGF, USFWS, and WMAT. AF667 will be translocated via trapping if it establishes a territory wholly outside of the boundary. The ranch foreman for the private land has requested that this wolf be removed from his land that is outside the boundary. USFS is not represented on the IFT. Should AF667 have another depredation incident

following the removal of AM863 and F1046, then AF667 will be permanently removed via lethal control.

WS representation on the IFT offered an alternative recommendation to the NMDGF recommendation (see below).

Several factors led to the majority IFT recommendation: (1) this is the third depredation incident within 365 days on the Aspen Pack members AM863, AF667, and F1046 (See history below), (2) the removal of these two individuals has the potential to disrupt the current pack depredation behavior, (3) this will leave one marked individual within the pack to help raise remaining pups and maintain the IFT's ability to trap and collar pups, (4) there is no space available in the pre-release facility for permanently removed captured wolves, and (5) lethal control is a more efficient method of permanently removing the animals than trapping.

Minority IFT Recommendation. WS staff recommends that all three of the adult Aspen wolves (AM863, F1046, and AF667) be permanently removed via lethal control. Additionally, the WS staff are concerned about their ability to distinguish between F1046 and AF667 (both wolves would be adult-sized females with black collars), if one is identified for lethal take while the other is not. An alternative discussed by the IFT was to lethally control AM863 and either one of the two other wolves (AF667 and F1046). However, the majority of the IFT recommended that the alpha female remain because of its' history of not depredating prior to this year. Another alternative would be to trap and lethally remove the individual based on its identity following capture. Additional IFT personnel may be available to assist WS with telemetry during lethal removal.

Assignment of Depredation Incident: The latest depredation incident took place on private land and was assigned based on the majority view of the IFT. AZGFD, USFWS, WMAT, and WS suggested all three wolves be assigned the incident for the current incident based on the investigation by WS documenting many different sized bite marks, presence of AF667, AM863, and F1046 in the area, and based on the amount of the carcass that was consumed (2/3 of the carcass was consumed). The depredation took place in the evening of 14 October 2007 or the early morning of 15 October 2007. The WS investigation occurred on 15 October 2007. NMDGF presented a dissenting opinion that only AM863 and F1046 be assigned the depredation incident. Their opinion was based on information provided from several reports by the rancher. On the evening of 14 October 2007, the rancher observed two wolves (AM863, F1046) less than two miles from the depredation site. AF667 was not observed. Also, the rancher in the area reported seeing only two sets of tracks and hearing only AM863 and F1046 on the telemetry receiver. The rancher reported to the WS investigator in the afternoon that he had forgotten to search for AF667, and that he had not been checking for that wolf all week because it had not been around in the previous week."

Matt Wunder said that NMGF will not support a removal at this time. Barring looking at the SOP's with the memos of clarification, NM will not support any removals. Bruce Thompson expressed discomfort with the speed with which the recommendations are made and the need for written confirmation. **They feel that temporary removal was conducive to the wolves' survival** and the Department wants to keep wolves on the ground. He also said that the Directors had agreed at the last meeting to look at the SOPs. Bruce Thompson's feeling is that SOP 13 needs to be reviewed and that changes may need to be made, that the process needs to be more deliberative, and

that the letter of the law application of SOP 13 is not in the adaptive management spirit of SOP13. The governor has also expressed the opinion that he doesn't want to see anymore removals.

Dave Cagle stated that if NM is not willing to remove the animals, then we should tell the landowner so we can haze. IFT said that the landowner is not amenable to hazing at this time because he is hosting elk hunters on his property and doesn't want to disturb them. Bill Van Pelt stressed that in light of the IFT recommendation that all 3 conditions for assigning a depredation have been met. John Morgart said that we agreed at the last meeting to look at SOP 13, but would scrutinize the recommendations and that SOP 13 would not be suspended. Greely County stated that they feel we should follow SOP 13 to the letter. Dave Cagle expressed concerns about AZGF and FWS having to work on the PRO instead of NM and that NM should be the primary author of PROs for NM. Matt Wunder stated that NM was concerned about the number of hours of comp time Ellen was accruing by being our only biologist from NM out in the field and that is why we asked for help.

*AMOC Recommendations:* Dave Bergman (WS) – All three animals need to be removed, but all tools available should be used (trapping and lethal). All three be assigned strikes. John Morgart (FWS) use any or every tool. Agrees with IFT recommendation. Recommends that if in our trapping process we live capture animals that lethal control in the field should be used. Dave Cagle (AZ) – Agrees with written recommendation of IFT and wants to use any tool available. Krista Beazley (WMAT) – agrees with IF recommendation. Cathy Taylor (FS) – Needs to check with director, but agrees with IFT recommendation. Matt Wunder (NM) – recommends leaving all wolves in the wild at this point. *Cooperators recommendations:* Graham County, Ag Department, and Greely County would like to see all three animals removed (WS recommendation).

Dave Bergman asked how the IFT would ID the animals. IFT responded that AM863 has distinct characteristics; the females would be more difficult to determine, but you could confirm their ID in the trap. Bill Van Pelt asked the likelihood of survival of the 4 pups with a yearling female. The IFT responded that it shouldn't matter, though AF 667 has been in the wild longer and is more attached to the pups. Mike Godwin asked for clarification on why the IFT was recommending incremental removal, the IFT responded that it would facilitate the pups learning proper behavior in the wild.

Bill Van Pelt reiterated that the majority opinion is to move forward with permanent removal of wolves incrementally by any methods possible with focus on 863 and 1046, with dissents from NM and WS. If behavior does not change and more depredations occur, then we would remove 667.

**h) NMGF Concept Statement.** Matt Wunder reported that NM got back 5-6 comments varying from “we don't want our name associated with this” to qualified support. Matt stated that there were no comments from AMOC. **ACTION ITEM: Have Matt get comments from Bruce Thompson on where he wants to go from here. Have AMOC get any comments into Bruce or Matt by November 9, 2007.**

**i) Less Than Lethal Projectiles or Less Than Lethal (LTL)** - FWS and the states put forward a proposal similar to the Rockies Less Than Lethal Projectiles program. FWS is trying to work the program through Section 6 and their 10A1A permit, with the states being subpermittees. They can then authorize individuals as an agent of the state. The proposal has met with positive reviews on the biological issues. It then went to the FWS solicitors for review. **Given the 10-j rule, they are convinced that issuing munitions (rubber bullets) there was a risk since there was a level of**

incidence where they had killed people. Legally we would be subject to shut down of the program. The director suggested a step-wise approach – paintballs. Paintballs are being tested more and more for wildlife and the program has tested them and they are less likely to kill. This will eventually be brought back to the state Directors for comments. The program would test-case evaluate for 1 year, and depending on results, move on from there.

John Cooley asked if cracker shells have been used before in the program. John Oakleaf said that they have used cracker shells. Renae Held also stated that because of fire risk, staff are sometimes unable to use cracker shells. Mike Godwin said that rubber bullets are a concern with bears as they have killed bears at 30-40 feet. He asked if pepper spray balls are being considered. John Morgart said that the solicitors didn't talk about capsicum balls, but he thought there would be liability concerns about this method also. Luis Rios asked if other projectiles had been considered. John Morgart said yes: bean bags, batons, etc. and they had the same concerns. Bill Van Pelt asked what the timeline for the process of issuing permits was. John Morgart stated that they expected to have everything finalized by the end of the month. Matt Wunder suggested that they look at "truly" less than lethal options. John Morgart said that as long as people were trained, injury/death was an acceptable risk. Guns will cost \$100-250, the states will provide munitions, but not weapons. Matt asked if slingshots and target round for pistols were looked at. John Morgart said that under 10-j slingshots are not an option and that the range of calibers for pistols might vary widely. Matt said he is concerned that LTL is being constrained. John Oakleaf said that if you look at the limited distance that LTL is traveling that 40 yards is actually when people may feel threatened for their life by a wolf. It is legal to use lethal methods of deterrent at that point.

Bill Van Pelt asked if 10A1A has to go to the federal register and John Slown asked if it has to go to the commissions in each state. The answer was no for all of the above.

### 10/18/07

j) Directors Briefings. Bill Van Pelt gave an update on the Director Briefings for yesterday's IFT recommendations. AZ – Duane Shroufe has been briefed and is waiting for a phone call from Ben Tuggle (FWS). FWS – Durango, Ben is comfortable with the original briefing; in regard to the new information, he wants to call Bill Aymar with Catron County and the affected landowner; in light of the dynamics and behavior he would like to see if they would be willing to let us haze aggressively. Aspen, they are still awaiting comments. WS – their director has been contacted and they are awaiting Ben's call. NM and FS – same as WS.

k) High Country News. John Morgart has been contacted by the external affairs department of "High Country News". They called last night and interviewed him for about 2 hours. They would also like to talk to others on the ground and may be contacting people in the future. Bill Van Pelt asked that when the assessment is to copy that he be emailed and Terry Johnson be ccd.

l) NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION Depredation Study (Dave Bergman). This study started as a result of the depredation that was occurring by the NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION, with one ranch in particular being hit hard. The study was lead by Stewart Breck at The Fort Collins Research Center from 2003-2006. They radio-tagged 682 calves which was 93-96% of the available calves. There were 44 mortalities: 40 tagged, 4 untagged. Of

those 34 were attributed to predators, 4 were stillborn, 2 unknown, and 2 died from disease. Of the predator deaths 23 were mountain lions, 3 Mexican wolf, 3 bears, and 1 coyote. They also tested how efficient the producer was at finding the dead calves. It was a blind study; the producer was not told what was found by the researchers. Results showed that the producer found 79% of the calves (I had predators written down in the notes, but I don't think that's right). The producer was 79% accurate determining wolf kills. The study found that wolf predation was insignificant (the problem pack pulled out, but others could have moved in). This was an intensive management system with an experienced rancher and ranch hands, and cattle dogs.

There is the same study going on in NM but the ranch is more "middle of the road" in regards to management, the ranchers are not out everyday with the cattle. TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION. They plan to wrap up all three of the studies together to capture all the management styles. They want to wait to give updates on the other two studies until they are completed. John Morgart said that TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION. They are waiting for peer review until all the studies are done.

Matt Wunder asked if there will be an assessment of the different management styles vs. producer profit (e.g. # of calves to market). John Oakleaf said that might be difficult to tease out because of many variables that go in to profit. Cathy Taylor said that if your selling calves that the median eight or % of calf survival might work. TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

**m) Elk/wolf population model (Matt Wunder).** RJ Kirkpatrick of the New Mexico Game and Fish Wildlife Management Division was tasked several months ago by the NM Director Bruce Thompson to develop a simple model to inform the public about wolf/elk interactions. The model is an excel spreadsheet with affecting variables. The end product will show how those variables will affect the elk population. Preliminary results show an insignificant affect, until you get to 150-200 wolves. This is a region wide model and cannot at this time be used to look at individual Game Management Units. The model was presented at two public meetings at Reserve, NM and Beaverhead, NM and was variably received. The Department will be using fall flights and hunter info to test the model. RJ and his staff also met with AZ Game and Fish staff recently to present the model to them. They provided AS with survey and hunt information. AZ also supplied a list of changes or things they would like to see incorporated into the model (e.g. bear depredation, climate factors, etc.). This program will eventually morph into a joint AZ-NM venture.

**n) Hiring.** AZ – A Specialist 1 position is open (replacing Janess Vartanian) interviews took place on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>. They expect the person to start the end of December – beginning of January. Their wolf technician position is closing soon and they expect to have it filled not long after the Specialist 1 position. FS – They are trying to hire an IFT position for the Apache-Sitgreaves area office. They have funding guaranteed for only one year and are trying to determine if this will be a term or permanent position. Transformations of the Service have decreased regional office funding (or should this be staff) by 25% and their hiring process has changed. FS is still working on a position description and they hope to have someone in place by the end of the year. FWS – Has two positions open: Assistant Coordinator (replacing Santiago Gonzales) and a Biologist position (replacing Dan Stark). They have received position authorization for the biologist position and are putting together a package. They are also looking to bring new people at lower levels with in the agency into the program using their "step program", on the ground. FWS will also be putting out their volunteer announcement soon. WMAT – No hiring. NM – Still working on hiring an IFT coordinator.

**o) IFT update -**

**Breeding Pairs**

- Paradise – 2 + pups
- Bluestem – 2 + pups
- Lofer – 2 + pups
- Rim – 1 +pups, no alpha male
- Hawks Nest – no evidence
- Bacho – no pup count, but they were denning
- Aspen – 4 pups, removal of the breeding pair??
- Durango – 1 pup
- Middle fork – wilderness, no pups (not a long observation)
- Luna – no pups
- San Mateo – no male/no pups
- 992-923 – no pups

The helicopter count will occur in January.

**Current Depredation/management issues**

- No Arizona depredation incidents
- San Mateo – 1 incident
- 973 – 1 incident
- 992 – 2 incidents, 4/11/07 drop off
- Aspen pack – 667 – 3 incidents
  - 863 – 3
  - 1046 – 3
  - 1038 – 1
  - 1039 – 1
  - 1040 – 1

**Draft IFT Plans**

- NM and AZ have draft plans, the deadline is November 2.
- The IFT has requested clarification on flight money (may need to cut flights); NM is scheduling 15 flights and FWS does not have money at this time.

**p) Volunteers** – Renae Held asked if FWS volunteers could be used for hazing efforts. John Oakleaf said they would consider using volunteers only if they are more seasoned and would be able to make independent decisions on the ground in regards to hazing.

**q) Initial Releases** – John Oakleaf said that there are some candidates for initial releases and that the IFT will be working on proposals.

**r) Rabies Control** – Dave Cagle said that there have been 4 potential exposures and that hospital bills can cost up to \$17,000 for post exposure shots. The AZ field team will get pre exposure shots and AZ is working on a rabies protocol. The protocol will allow them to let wolves go if the wolf does not exhibit signs of rabies.

s) Fiscal Year information – The fiscal year information table is updated twice a year. **ACTION ITEM – Bill Van Pelt will send out the report in email form and put it on the website.**

t) Rewards – John Morgart said the information on rewards needs to be updated. **ACTION ITEM – Morgart will put all the reward information in an email summary.** AZ law enforcement supervises the fund.

u) Recap of Directors Summit (Feedback) - Kay Gale – having the public meeting in the middle of the meeting so the Directors could participate was appreciated. Shannon Barber-Meyer – suggested that we needed a larger facility. Cathy Taylor – three days of meetings was a lot, but overall it was a very good meeting with honest discussions. Hector Ruedas – enjoyed having the Directors present, thought there was a lot of direction from the AMWG and Directors meetings. Dave Bergman – Their director appreciated being able to go to the AMWG meeting, it gave him a better understanding of demands. Hector Ruedas also wanted to say that the IFT is doing an excellent job handling their large work load.

v) SOPs - An action item from the Directors meeting is to review the SOPs. **ACTION ITEM – Distribute clarifying memos from the Directors meeting, date to be determined.**

SOP 25 Media – Vicki Fox was working on this SOP, though currently there is no work being done on it. **ACTION ITEM – John Morgart will work on a summary by November 2 of where we are with this SOP.**

SOP 19 Winter Wolf Monitoring - John Oakleaf gave a summary: The IFT is looking into the use of GPS collars vs. the intensive winter mortality flights and believe that they will get similar information from each. The GPS collars are more cost effective and they give better information. Right now 863 has a GPS collar. This information is also being put into the NM elk/wolf model. FWS stresses that the winter population flight is separate from the intensive winter mortality flights and that the population flight is absolutely critical.

The group discussed the availability of planes and pilots and the general consensus was that all agencies had aging aircraft. John Morgart said that FWS has a plane and a pilot available. Shannon Barber Meyer announced that the Springerville airport will be shutting down and we will need to make other arrangements for refueling our planes. Matt Wunder said that NM has requested money for plane replacement and it was not provided. Dave Cagle said we should look at future revenues and that we should table the issue. He also asked what the reliability and life of the GPS collars was: John Oakleaf responded - ½ of the life of a standard VHF and about 2 years. Oakleaf also said that they need to capture only one extra wolf/year and during the helicopter flight last year we caught five.

*AMOC Recommendations:* John Morgart (FWS) – Agrees with IFT recommendation, but would like to table the item until the budget is finalized. Dave Bergman (WS) – SAA. Dave Cagle (AZ) – SAA. Krista Beazley (WMAT) – SAA. Matt Wunder (NM) – SAA, but would like to implement if at all possible this year. Cathy Taylor (FS) – supports recommendation, would like us to modify the SOP and have it ready to implement.

w) Mexican Wolf IFT informational poster - The poster is being reviewed and changed and has been run through AMOC for comments. This is a replacement of previous posters. The IFT is also

looking into designing new metal signs. **ACTION ITEM – Shawna Nelson will get cost estimates for the signs – printing costs and # of signs needed – the IFT will change out the signs gradually. ACTION ITEM – AMOC will review the final version by November 2 and send comments directly to Shawna Nelson.**

x) Roles and Responsibilities - There will be a discussion today about what the document function should be and when comments should be sent. Cathy Taylor suggested that AMOC review it today and make preliminary comments. In general she wanted to comment about the roles of AMOC vs. the IFT with AMOC handling the political aspects of the program and the IFT the biological aspects. Bill Van Pelt expressed a desire for organizational structure. John Morgart would like to look at the Lead Agency Directors roles and responsibilities – How engaged do they want to become, when/where? – using information from the Directors’ meeting. Shannon Barber-Meyer asked that we incorporate an administrative component into the Outreach Specialist position.

Cathy Taylor asked whether or not political issues should come out in the IFT recommendations. John Morgart suggested a different level of input from each of the agencies; NM opinion of IFT may be different from AMOC, AZ has more of a line authority. Bill Van Pelt suggested that a recommendation for the SOPs is to take into consideration social, political, and socio-economic factors. Shannon Barber-Meyer said this is not just an issue in the application of SOPs. Renae Held thinks that we should try to have more separation between the IFT vs. the AMOC/Directors decisions since we are looking at biological vs. political respectively. Ellen Heilhecker said that we risk decisions becoming only AMOC recommendations if IFT input is not considered. John Morgart would like to know what the IFT biological recommendation is, but with acknowledgement of political issues; that we should show awareness of political factors and use all the information at our disposal.

Matt Wunder suggested incorporating political situations into the IFT recommendations, but at a local politics level; state and directorate level politics should be more an AMOC consideration. John Oakleaf said that differences between agencies on these issues should be okay. Krista Beazley said that she communicates closely with Cynthia Dale and doesn’t see an issue in their group. Dave Bergman said that their staff communicate between both states and keep AMOC informed; if they are in the minority they give background for the decision. Kay Gale said that the IFT can’t work in a vacuum, but she sees local politics as more important. Dave Cagle supports with IFT, with AMOC input; he felt that with 924 there was a lack of communication. **ACTION ITEM – Review roles and responsibilities document and provide comment by November 2<sup>nd</sup>.** John Oakleaf requested digital copies of all documents and that track changes be used for edits.

y) Directors Summit – Will be December 11,12, and 13 with the Directors meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be at Seville National Wildlife Refuge and there will be no AMWG meeting. **ACTION ITEM – AZ chair will put together an agenda for the Directors meeting.**

z) Proposed AMOC/AMWG Schedule for 2008 – Dave Cagle said that the proposed movement of AMWG meetings to the weekend has not been popular. We will be changing the April meeting to the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the AMWG meetings will still be in the evenings. John Morgart suggested that we move the AMWG agendas to the first days of the meetings. Bill Van Pelt said that if we need products for the meeting, we should schedule it on the second day, 5-7pm, no later than 8.

Cathy Taylor suggested looking at the format of the AMWG meetings, possibly breaking out into groups. Hector Ruedas would like to extend the meetings; that the most important part of

the meeting is the IFT report and they don't want change. John Oakleaf and Shannon Barber-Meyer suggested looking at changing the timing of the IFT report to the middle or end of the AMWG meeting. Dave Cagle suggested using a PowerPoint presentation for the IFT report. Shannon Barber-Meyer recommended using a handout summary of the IFT report.

Bill Ban Pelt suggested that changes in the AMWG meetings would come under SOP review. Hector Ruedas recommended asking the public as part of an agenda item what they would like to see in AMWG meetings. John Oakleaf suggested that if we have a need for comment we could break into groups as needed. Renae Held said that if we do that we might need to publicize it so the public is prepared for that format. John Morgart reiterated that the purpose of the AMWG meetings is to have face to face updates. Greely County thinks that we need to get input from the public, that people don't think that the agencies care what they think; their input makes them feel valued. John Oakleaf said we need to take into consideration polarized views. Cathy Taylor suggested using facilitators.

AMOC decided that the starting time of the first day of AMOC meetings should be 10:00am, to make travel easier.

**aa) IFT Meeting schedules** – John Oakleaf said that the IFT feels that monthly IFT meetings may be too much; they would like to propose changing them to bimonthly meetings. John Morgart suggested that this be left up to the IFT and AMOC agreed.

**bb) Implementation of #15 recommendation in 5 year review (Project Databases)** – The IFT would like to have the database accessed remotely through a the FWS server. John Morgart said that there is a risk of possible shutdown of the site. **TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION**. Wildlife Services doesn't have a strong opinion on this issue. NM had previously preferred using their own web based system. John Oakleaf said that database will be domino based. Matt Wunder said that NM is OK with using the FWS site. It was recommended that the IFT implement the # 15 recommendation.

**cc) Population Monitoring SOP** – Bill Van Pelt suggested that we table this until the next meeting. John Oakleaf suggested we get external review. **ACTION ITEM – AZ will have internal discussions by November 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**dd) IFT Updated Communications Plan** – Bill Van Pelt asked if the IFT has come up with exact IFT communication plan needs. John Oakleaf said that this has been a continuous process since there has been a delay in AMOC review. Shannon Barber-Meyer said that we have also has budget cuts that we need to take into consideration. Bill Van Pelt said that if the process is that fluid that we should attach it to the work plan and address these as needs separate from budget concerns. All agencies agreed to attach it to the work plan.

**ee) Concept Proposal for IFT Range Riders** – There is a current proposal for Range Riders by a local landowner that is up for review. **ACTION ITEM - send the proposal to AMOC for review at conference call or next meeting.**

**ff) Notice of Intent to Sue** – Cathy Taylor said that the forest service was recently served a notice of intent to sue by Forest Guardians and Sinapu. The notice alleges that the FS is in violation of section 7.a.1. of the Endangered Species Act (Recovery). They say that the current range program

ignores the needs of the Mexican Wolf. The FS is in the process of pulling together information from all the districts regarding wolf programs and adaptations of their programs. John Oakleaf said that the FS is requesting a lot of info about allotment review from the IFT. Cathy Taylor said that the FS IFT representative will take that on when they are hired. John Oakleaf said that the IFT just needs more notice to deal with these requests in the future.

Kay Gale said that the Counties side with FWS on the Jaguar litigation.

**gg) Note Check from August** – Matt Wunder said it would be helpful to have the AMOC notes before the next meeting. That it would be productive to recap key points of discussion; especially the Directors comments and any direction they gave. Cathy Taylor and John Morgart agreed that it would be beneficial. John Oakleaf expressed the concern that we have been too dependent on one person to get this information out in the past and that things slowed down when Terry Johnson was out. Bill Van Pelt said we should either change the chair or rotate.

**hh) Other Business - ACTION ITEM – TWS information from the research group will be forwarded to AMOC, John Morgart.**

Matt Wunder brought up the PRO procedure; that there is a concern about having written documents for AMOC and the Directors to approve.

John Oakleaf wanted to draw attention to the Mexican Wolf Conservation Fund. The Fund is a private group that gives out grants for non-lethal management and they have worked through the IFT in the past. They are looking into LTL munitions, fladry, hay programs, 4-wheelers, and fencing. He also talked about the California Wolf Center; they are a political group that has funded cameras and collars. There is no match and “no strings attached” to be eligible for funding.

Kay Gale said that she recently attended Washington D.C. delegation and staffer meetings about Ben Tuggle’s Interdiction program and said that there is congressional support. John Morgart said he has recently talked with a reporter about the program.