

MEXICAN WOLF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE¹

SUMMARY NOTES FOR MEETING ON APRIL 14, 2009

NOTE: THIS IS A PUBLIC DOCUMENT

FINAL: MAY 7, 2009

Location: Conference Call
Date/Time: April 14 at 1300-1700 (AZ MST Time)
Convener: Arizona Game and Fish Department
Participants: Lead Agencies: AGFD, NMDGF, USFS, USFWS, and WMAT
Signatory Cooperators: NMDA; GRECO
IFT: USFS, USFWS, WMAT
OTHERS: None

1. Welcome, opening comments, and ground rules. Chair Terry B. Johnson (AGFD) welcomed all attendees. Matt Wunder advised all of Dave Holdermann having become his surrogate to AMOC, effective April 6. Terry reminded all that if an Acting Chair for AMOC is needed (as it was in the March 10, 2009 AMOC conference call), under the current MOU it must come from NMDGF or WMAT. No other opening comments were made and the usual ground rules were employed.
2. Agenda review, additional discussion points, and special announcements. No items were added to the agenda and no special announcements were made.
3. Discussion of Summary Notes from Previous AMOC and/or AMWG Meeting(s). All previous AMOC and AMWG Summary Notes have been finalized and posted to the Project Web site (<http://azgfd.gov/wolf>), so there was no discussion on this item.

Current Action Items

1. Ensure complete coverage of all FTE allocations to IFT (assigned 4/22/08). All Lead Agency Directors committed to ensuring that significant gaps in IFT coverage do not occur due to employee resignation, leave, and other priority assignments. However, some positions in NMDGF and USFWS have remained unfilled for months, and TDAs are not being used to fully cover short-term or other vacancies, resulting in gaps in IFT coverage and pressuring remaining IFT members to handle the workload.
 - a. Maggie Dwire (assigned 7/30/08): resolve gaps in USFWS backup coverage for John Oakleaf at field level (i.e. FPC, co-investigation, SCAT, and other field responsibilities) and TDA coverage for short and long-term vacancies in USFWS component of IFT.
Status: pending; issue referred to Directors in November 2008.

¹The Reintroduction Project is a state- and tribally-led collaborative effort among six Lead Agencies and five Signatory Cooperators. Lead Agencies are: Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD); New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services (WS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT). Signatory Cooperators are: Graham, Greenlee, and Navajo counties, Arizona; New Mexico Department of Agriculture; and Sierra County, New Mexico.

- b. Matt Wunder (assigned 7/30/08): resolve gaps in TDA coverage for short and long-term vacancies in NMDGF component of IFT. **Status: pending; issue referred to Directors in November 2008.**
2. Determine whether to establish a temporary holding facility for Project use (assigned 4/22/08). Various interim steps completed in May 2008 through January 2009, including AMOC discussion with Directors on July 30, but final decision package yet to be completed.
 - a. Cynthia Dale (assigned 4/23/08): work with IFTLs and FPC to add FAIR information to recommendation for temporary holding facility. **Status: pending; WMAT considering possible alternatives for FAIR.**
 - b. AGFD and USFS: reconsider siting the temporary holding pen on Sipe White Mountain Wildlife Area: **pending.**
3. 2006 NEPA Addendum to 2003 AMOC MOU (assigned 4/22/08).
 - a. Cynthia Dale (assigned 7/29/08): determine whether WMAT wants to become a NEPA Cooperator and apprise AMOC Chair of decision. **Status: pending; WMAT action deferred until (a) overarching NMDGF issues with 2003 MOU resolved and (b) USFWS responds to WMAT inquiry as to whether additional funding will be provided to cover WMAT participation in NEPA.**
 - b. Terry Johnson (assigned 7/29/08): convene AMOC conference call in September 2008 regarding acceptance of additional AZ and NM counties that have requested status as NEPA Addendum Cooperators under 2003 MOU. **Status: pending; discussion deferred until overarching NMDGF issues with 2003 MOU resolved.**
4. Resolve whether funding is sufficient to cover helicopter and fixed-wing flight support for Project in FY2009 (assigned 5/20/08). Update July 31: total projected need \$179,217 for fixed-wing and helicopter flights (including weekly monitoring, capture/removal, end-of-year count, and contingency flights). NMDGF providing at least \$47,000 and AGFD providing at least \$98,202, so minimum shortfall is \$34,015 and maximum shortfall would be \$85,217 if AGFD cuts back to \$47,000 (i.e. same level as current NMDGF commitment).
 - a. Terry Johnson (assigned 1/13/09): advise AGFD Director that per 1/13/09 AMOC conference call NMDGF will not commit additional funding for flights to meet its one-third share obligation (AGFD, NMDGF, WMAT [AGFD covers the WMAT share]) of the total annual costs; determine how AGFD will proceed; and advise AMOC of the AGFD decision in 2/10/09 AMOC conference call. **Status: pending; AMOC role completed but issue will be discussed when the Directors meet (no firm date set).**
5. IFT activity priorities and possible need for additional resources, including more personnel (assigned 5/20/08). Update July 31: AMOC discussed issue in April, May, June, and July. AMOC consensus: disagreements among Lead Agencies not resolvable at AMOC level.
 - a. AMOC representatives (assigned 7/30/08): discuss IFT FTE table with Director and report back to AMOC on guidance received. **Status: pending; AMOC unable to resolve conflicts; issue referred to Directors in November 2008.**
 - b. Lead Agency Directors (assigned 7/30/08): by September 15, provide guidance to AMOC on preferred solutions to disagreements. **Status: pending; issue referred to Directors in November 2008.**
6. Public comment periods for draft Project SOPs and Clarification Memos (assigned 5/20/08). Need to reaffirm Lead Agency Director consensus (or lack thereof) on AMOC providing public comment periods for all draft SOPs and Clarification Memos. Issue scheduled for July 2008 Directors Summit, but time constraints precluded discussion.
 - a. Terry Johnson (assigned 7/31/08): notify Directors that further guidance is needed for AMOC on whether “public comment periods” for Project SOPs and Clarification Memos

- are mandatory or discretionary. **Status: pending; issue referred to Directors in November 2008.**
7. Revision of draft Clarification Memos for SOPs 11.0 and 13.0.
 - a. Terry Johnson (assigned 7/31/08): submit AMOC-revised draft Clarification Memos to Lead Agency Directors for consideration and further guidance to AMOC. **Status: pending; AMOC role completed when final draft memos forwarded to Directors on 11/22/08 but no decision by Directors yet.**
 8. Update Mexican Wolf BRWRA Project and Recovery Program summary of costs-to-date.
 - a. AMOC Lead Agency Representatives: by October 31, 2009 provide revised final information for 2008 and 2009 and projected information for 2010 to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - b. Terry Johnson: update Project costs-to-date summary and re-post on Project Web site by January 31, 2010. **Status: pending.**
 9. Complete AMOC white paper on management response to Mexican wolf population losses (assigned 9/16/08).
 - a. AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperators: discuss agency head comment in AMOC meeting on October 28-29 and determine course of action. **Status: pending; final draft forwarded to Directors on 12/10/08 and awaiting their action.**
 10. Renewal of 2003 MOU for BRWRA Reintroduction Project (assigned 9/9/08).
 - a. AMOC and Signatory Cooperators: provide update on their Director's perspective (or decision) on renewal in the October 28-29 AMOC meeting. **Status: pending; AMOC unable to resolve NMDGF conflicts; issue forwarded to Lead Agency Directors for resolution and awaiting their action.**
 11. Submit revisions as appropriate for the three Project contact information summaries: Directors, AMOC, and SOP 0.C.
 - a. AMOC, IFT, and Signatory Cooperators submit update information to AMOC Chair as changes occur (i.e. ongoing assignment). **Status: ongoing.**
 - b. AMOC Chair disseminates updated contact lists to AMOC, Signatory Cooperators, IFT, Lead Agency Directors, and Project Web site on the first of February, April, June, August, October, and December. **Status: ongoing.**
 12. Discussion of possible improvements in proactive outreach on field activities (assigned February 10, 2009).
 - a. IFT to discuss issue in context of AMOC comments in February 10 conference call and provide recommendations to AMOC on or before March 10, 2009. **Status: pending IFT response; discussed in February 10 conference call but no IFT comment received subsequently.**
 - b. Matt Wunder to discuss issue with NMDGF Director Stevenson in context of AMOC comments in February 10 conference call and provide recommendations to AMOC on or before March 10. **Status: pending NMDGF response.**
 13. Discussion of handling of Mexican wolves during capture through translocation.
 - a. NMDGF determination on whether public contact (including educational display) will be allowed during wolf capture or transport on lands within its jurisdiction. **Status: pending; NMDGF has not communicated its decision on this issue.**
 - b. Wally Murphy to (i) check on whether members of the public can handle and release wolves that are accidentally captured on private lands, and then (ii) apprise AMOC of the USFWS position. **Status: pending.**
 14. Preparation of Annual Report.

- a. AMOC and Signatory Cooperators return comment to IFT no later than April 6. **Status: completed.**
- b. IFT to provide final draft to Terry Johnson by April 20 for final quality control: **Status: pending.**
- c. Terry Johnson to release final report to the public by April 28. **Status: pending.**
15. AMOC and Signatory Cooperator consideration of changes in Annual Report format and content.
 - a. Paula Capece to provide draft template to Terry Johnson by April 30. **Status: pending.**
 - b. Terry Johnson to disseminate draft template to AMOC and Signatory Cooperators by May 7 for discussion in May 27-29 AMOC meeting. **Status: pending.**
16. Consideration of new mechanisms by which to increase recruitment of wild-born pups.
 - a. AMOC and Signatory Cooperators to provide comment to John Oakleaf by March 24. **Status: completed.**
 - b. IFTLs to provide revised draft to AMOC for reconsideration (no deadline established). **Status: completed 4/6.**
 - c. AMOC to discuss draft proposal: **completed 4/14.**
 - d. AMOC and Signatory Cooperators to provide comment to John Oakleaf by April 17: **pending.**
 - e. IFT to submit project “concept statement” to Terry Johnson by April 27 for consideration in May 28-29 AMOC meeting: **pending.**
17. AMOC meeting scheduled for April 14 at 1 pm AZ Time (conference call).
 - a. Terry Johnson: by 4/21, disseminate draft Summary Notes for AMOC and Signatory Cooperator review. **Status: completed 4/14.**
 - b. AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperators: by 4/28/09, submit review comments on draft Summary Notes to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - c. Terry Johnson: by 5/5/09, disseminate final (approved) Summary Notes and post them to Project Web site. **Status: pending.**
18. AMOC meeting scheduled for 1300-1500 on April 28 (San Carlos AZ): **meeting canceled on 4/9.**
19. AMWG meeting scheduled for 1600-2000 on April 28 (San Carlos AZ): **meeting canceled on 4/9.**
20. AMOC meeting scheduled for 1300-1500 on May 27, 0800-1700 on May 28 (Directors attending this session), and 0800-1500 on May 29 (Pinetop AZ).
 - a. AMOC, IFT, and Signatory Cooperators: by 4/27/09, submit agenda recommendations to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - b. Terry Johnson: by 4/28/09, disseminate agenda to public via *ES Updates*. **Status: pending.**
 - c. Terry Johnson: by 6/5/09, disseminate draft Summary Notes for AMOC and Signatory Cooperator review. **Status: pending.**
 - d. AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperators: by 6/12/09, submit review comments on draft Summary Notes to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - e. Terry Johnson: by 6/19/09, disseminate final (approved) Summary Notes and post them to Project Web site. **Status: pending.**
21. AMWG meeting scheduled for 1600-2000 on May 27 (Pinetop AZ).
 - a. AMOC, IFT, and Signatory Cooperators: by 4/27/09, submit agenda recommendations to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - b. Terry Johnson: by 4/28/09, disseminate agenda to public via *ES Updates*. **Status: pending.**

- c. Terry Johnson: by 6/5/09, disseminate draft Summary Notes for AMOC and Signatory Cooperator review. **Status: pending.**
 - d. AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperators: by 6/12/09, submit review comments on draft Summary Notes to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - e. Terry Johnson: by 6/19/09, disseminate final (approved) Summary Notes and post them to Project Web site. **Status: pending.**
22. AMOC meeting scheduled for December 8, 0800-1500 on December 9, and 0800-1500 on December 10 (Directors attending this session) (Truth or Consequences NM).
- a. AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperators: by 11/10/09, submit agenda recommendations to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - b. Terry Johnson: by 11/10/09, disseminate agenda to public via *ES Updates*. **Status: pending.**
 - c. Terry Johnson: by 12/17/09, disseminate draft Summary Notes for AMOC and Signatory Cooperator review. **Status: pending.**
 - d. AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperators: by 12/24/09, submit review comments on draft Summary Notes to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - e. Terry Johnson: by 12/31/09, disseminate final (approved) Summary Notes and post them to Project Web site. **Status: pending.**
23. AMWG meeting scheduled for December 9 (Truth or Consequences NM).
- a. AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperators: by 11/10/09, submit agenda recommendations to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - b. Terry Johnson: by 11/10/09, disseminate agenda to public via *ES Updates*. **Status: pending.**
 - c. Terry Johnson: by 12/17/09, disseminate draft Summary Notes for AMOC and Signatory Cooperator review. **Status: pending.**
 - d. AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperators: by 12/24/09, submit review comments on draft Summary Notes to Terry Johnson. **Status: pending.**
 - e. Terry Johnson: by 12/31/09, disseminate final (approved) Summary Notes and post them to Project Web site. **Status: pending.**
24. USFWS and USFS to provide information to AMOC and Signatory Cooperators on current litigation regarding compliance with NEPA, ESA, and APA.
- a. USFWS to provide copy of March 31, 2009 Federal court decision: **completed 4/14.**
 - b. USFWS and USFS to determine whether agency court briefs pertaining to the March 31 Federal court decision are public documents and, if so, provide copies of same to AMOC: **pending.**
 - c. USFWS to ascertain whether ongoing NEPA pertaining to possible 10(j) changes is affected by the March 31 Federal court decision or the ongoing litigation.
25. AMOC meeting scheduled for May 12 at 1 pm AZ Time (conference call): **pending; contingent on AMOC, IFTLs, FPC, and Signatory Cooperator submittal of agenda items to Terry Johnson by April 27.**