

**MEXICAN WOLF BLUE RANGE REINTRODUCTION PROJECT
INTERAGENCY DIRECTORS MEETING**

August 29-30, 2007

Location : Tal-Wi-Wi Lodge, Highway 191, north of Alpine, AZ
Date: August 29-30, 2007
Time: AZ Time: 0800 – 1700
Host: AGFD
Day 1 Participants: DIRECTORS – Duane Shroufe – AGFD, Bruce Thompson – NMGFD, Benjamin Tuggle – USFWS, John Caid – WMAT, Harv Forsgren – USFS, Jeff Green – USDA APHIS WS

AMOC Lead Agencies: AGFD – Terry B. Johnson (Chair), Jon Cooley, Shannon Barber-Meyer, Shawna Nelson, Colby Gardner, Dave Cagle and Mike Godwin; NMGFD – Matt Wunder, Renae Held, Ellen Heilhecker; USFS – Cathy Taylor and Don De Lorenzo; USDA APHIS WS - Dave Bergman; Allan May, Chris Carillo, J. Brad Miller, Sterling Simpson and Keel Price; USFWS – John Morgart, Brian Millsap, Jim Ashburner, Wally Murphy and John Oakleaf; WMAT – Cynthia Dale; and SCAT - Dewey Wesley

AMWG Signatory Cooperators: Greenlee County AZ - Hector Ruedas and Kay Gale; New Mexico Department of Agriculture - Bud Starnes; Sierra County NM - Jan Porter-Carrejo

AMWG Non-Signatory Cooperators: Graham County AZ - Drew John and Mark Herrington

NEPA Contractors: Ginny Wallace and Dave Case, both of D.J. Case and Associates

August 29

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

Terry Johnson started the meeting at 0801 MST. He noted these Summits occur twice per year, and he appreciates the Director's making this commitment of time.

B. Opening Remarks by Lead Agency Directors

John Caid said he appreciates everyone here and this is a good prelude for tomorrow's meeting. Bruce Thompson said we are a group of six agencies that want to work together and use adaptive management where appropriate. Benjamin Tuggle said he is anticipating a good discussion with AMOC and the IFT. He hopes to redefine our objectives collectively. Harv Forsgren said we are at a crossroads and he looks forward to making changes and having a dialogue to make these decisions. Duane Shroufe said the Directors

and signatories only meet twice each year, and it is interesting to use adaptive management processes to see where we have been and where we are going. He is looking forward to the next two days of discussion and working face to face on the issues. Jeff Green said it is good to meet people and make acquaintances and he hopes as we go forward we will be courteous and careful with each other. This is dangerous work; be careful. Be careful with each others' responsibilities and roles.

AMOC lead representatives gave updates next. John Morgart said there are tough issues out there and AMOC needs some Director level guidance. The agenda captures most of those issues. Dave Bergman said we have had our ups and downs, but we work well as a team. We need to use the developed SOPs and be more proactive on issues. Cynthia Dale agreed with Dave Bergman. Renae Held wants more of a proactive approach in the program and not so reactive. Cathy Taylor has been working with AMOC for a rather short period of time and is impressed with how well the agencies work together. However, there is a lot of room for improvement. We need to move program forward.

The IFT leads provided their comments next. John Oakleaf hopes as this group goes through the procedures we look at increasing growth of wild animals. Shannon Barber-Meyer grapples with having wolves on landscape and excited to see wolf population grow. Ellen Heilhecker also wants to see more wild wolves on ground.

C. Opening Remarks by Other Signatory Cooperators and SCAT

Bud Starnes said wants to see a huntable population of wolves, but does not want anybody hurt and does not want any ranchers to be forced out of work. Jan Porter-Carrejo said the wolf program has a huge impact in rural New Mexico. The family and financial impacts need to be considered when looking at this program. Hector Ruedas said some of his constituents live in the wolf recovery area. Hector and his constituents do not want the SOPs changed, especially SOP 13. We need more funding and resources. He is not an advocate of wolves, but recognizes we need to manage them appropriately. Graham County Representative Drew John said he echoes what Hector said and he does not agree that something be brought back that was removed in the past. He does not want ranchers pushed out. He is here to listen, learn and hopefully support.

D. Brief Review of AMOC Quarterly Meetings, Website Upgrades, and Other Items

Terry provided a briefing. Quarterly AMOC meetings normally occur a day prior to the AMWG meetings, and AMOC and the IFT meet for a day or two before the Directors Summit meetings. This mid-summer meeting will focus on scoping the 10(j) rule review. We will schedule 2008 meeting dates and locations. AGFD and USFWS are working on website upgrades, and have made substantial upgrades to make both systems more user friendly, and information more accessible.

A handout was passed out on AMOC contacts, which includes cell and home phone numbers. This will increase access to AMOC members when time critical responses are required. This sheet is only for internal use. The handout on SOP 0.C, which provides AMOC daily contacts, is the public's version. All cooperators need to be sure that changes in contact information are submitted to Terry to incorporate into these documents.

E. Current Summary of Costs-to-Date for Wolf Program

Handout passed out depicting running log of estimated expenses associated with the Wolf Recovery and Reintroduction Programs (dated October 28, 2005). This document will be updated when the affected agencies provide the new expense information.

Action Item: Terry needs more information from AGFD, and will update the expense sheet within the next week and disseminate it with the most recent expense information.

F. Paradise Pack Permanent Removal Order (PRO)

Terry presented the unanimous decision yesterday from AMOC that the captured male (M1043) be considered part of Paradise Pack, that all strikes against that Pack be marked against him, and that he be permanently removed from the wild. The remaining Paradise pack would be exonerated of all depredation incidents. Cease trapping efforts, but continue and increase hazing efforts. On September 2, the PRO will be allowed to expire. However, if another depredation incident occurred before September 2, AMOC and the IFT would then look at extending PRO and reinstating removal efforts.

Duane Shroufe commented that future PROs should not be directed at specific packs but be a more general wolf removal order. Bruce Thompson asked why the PRO is not terminated, since the situation apparently has been reconciled. Terry replied that only three days remain on PRO. The original order was for removal of two animals, and with it in place removal efforts could start immediately if another depredation occurred before September 2. Harv Forsgren requested a process for making decisions. John Oakleaf provided background information on relevant depredation history. Benjamin Tuggle said we used objective data to make a decision. Benjamin is satisfied that AMOC and the IFT used good wisdom and science and made a good decision, and he will support the decision. Jeff Green asked if current SOP 13.0 is formatted to allow for these exceptions. Terry said there is an allowance for AMOC to structure exceptions when situations dictate their use when applying SOP 13.0.

Action Item: Benjamin Tuggle requested a summary paragraph be provided so he can use as background when he talks with the affected livestock operator. Dave Cagle and Terry Johnson will provide this document.

G. Over-Arching Issues – Lead Agency Guidance

Terry passed out the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (dated October 31, 2003), and the Summary of Over-Arching Issues for Lead Agency Directors to Resolve (August 8, 2007).

On July 23, 2007 an AMOC meeting occurred in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Out of that meeting came a list of over-arching issues, which included possible need to update some project SOPs and to address some communication/partnership issues among AMOC, Directors, and the IFT.

Benjamin Tuggle said this over-arching issues list is very important. Challenges can bring out potential rifts among the groups. Benjamin fully appreciates the work and dedication of AMOC and IFT. He is fully comfortable with AMOC's decisions 97% of time. However, he said the Directors have another filter – politics – to consider. He does not want SOPs as written to drive the program; there must be flexibility. We need to keep recovery objectives as the prime focus. AMOC and IFT are the best experts to implement this program. Understand when we have resistance that the Directors need to take responsibility. If AMOC's recommendations are deviated from 2 to 3% of the time at the Director's level, do not take personally. In addition, the Directors did not ask AMOC to change any SOPs. They simply wanted AMOC and the IFT to look at them to see if they are helping us achieve our objectives. Benjamin's expectation is not to change the SOPs. Benjamin has a great level of confidence in group. Bruce Thompson said it is time for this review. We have seen the signals. Duane Shroufe said it is good business to review where we are. We would be remiss if we do not periodically review the MOU and over-arching issues. It is a good review even if we do not change any items. Many players are relatively new and it is also good to review these items for their benefit.

1. MOU discussion: Terry provided background on the MOU, which brings in participating agencies and emphasizes re-introduction of the Mexican Wolf. Harv said the Directors do not need further engagement for 98% of AMOC's business, but we need more Director engagement in three areas 1) where decisions will have significant political ramifications; 2) where departures from SOP are recommended; and 3) where there are significant differences of opinion within AMOC that cannot reasonably be brought to consensus. Bruce Thompson said he believes that all the Directors support the MOU. However, the MOU does not specify how AMOC works and its relations with Directors.

2. Philosophical differences between cooperating agencies at the Director level and empowerment of AMOC, and identifying those core issues: Benjamin Tuggle said discussion needs to be brought up on where we are trying to move with recovery. The next year will be a step forward to better identify recovery parameters. Bruce Thompson asked are we on reactive or proactive side? Terry replied we are mostly in a reactive mode, primarily because of a lack of resources on the IFT side. Harv said there are questions on how IFT work is

assigned. Bruce said there will be more resources, but the Directors do not have a good picture of resource needs. What are proactive resource needs? Bruce added, since we are in a reactive mode we have not been able to predict proactive needs. Terry replied that he disagrees; there are identified proactive needs. AMOC and the IFT have identified them for several years now through the Annual Work Plan process. This may be AMOC's single greatest failing, that we have not worked with the Directors to increase project resources with additional staff, re-directing current employees to work partially on wolf recovery (i.e. outreach, landowner relations personnel), and possibly bringing in other agencies as cooperators.

3. Director(s) losing confidence in AMOC representative(s)

This is not an issue for the Directors. They have confidence in AMOC and their individual representatives.

4. Make sure that sufficient interaction occurs between Directors and AMOC leads:

Duane is comfortable with Terry as his AMOC representative. He and Terry talk just about every day about all aspects of the program, and Terry represents Duane's positions accurately. Bruce sees this item as an issue of whether quality time is spent and whether we are communicating good information that is fully understood on both sides. We need to ask the correct questions and relay the relevant information.

5. Directors withdraw decision-making authority given to AMOC:

This was discussed and covered earlier, as Directors feel comfortable with AMOC making decisions in 98% of the situations. AMOC just needs to recognize when it is operating in that 2% area in which the Directors need to be consulted/involved.

6. Directors guidance to AMOC down to IFT:

AMOC needs to know that all Directors concur when guidance is given by one. Bruce Thompson asked if there is a spokesperson for the Directors. Terry said no, but the Directors can change that if they wish. This is why a Director communicating a request or guidance to AMOC needs to let AMOC know whether they have the other Directors' concurrence.

7. Directors agree to confer with each other:

AMOC sees a need to defer to the Directors if outside parties try to influence AMOC. When an outside party (i.e., commissioner, Governor) tries to influence the program through one Director, he needs to confer with the other Directors before providing any guidance to AMOC. What one Director does can and will have repercussions for others. The Directors agreed that they need to confer with each other more often and more effectively, so they direct AMOC as a common body.

8. MOU limits signatory cooperators and participation in AMOC versus AMWG and other limits to governmental employees

Harv Forsgren said he has a potential concern on how governmental entities are represented in AMOC. Representation is limited to employees, but what is the reasoning for that limitation? Terry responded that he will check to see if a designee could be selected instead of an employee. Representation has been limited to employees to ensure accountability for participation and confidentiality, and compliance with state open meeting laws and FACA. Harv Forsgren believes more partners could participate if we opened the membership to a designee. Benjamin Tuggle added a need for an element of consistency between employees and designees; designees would need to make commitment to work with AMOC and follow up with their responsibilities. Benjamin Tuggle also wants his representative to understand which 98% of items that he can handle without Benjamin's input. His AMOC representative must identify where those 2% of issues need to be brought up to Benjamin's level. The Directors do not want to slow process down, but we must be clear with expectations. Bud Starnes wants to keep it restricted to employees. Dave Bergman would want any AMOC representative to be empowered to make all appropriate decisions. Bruce Thompson believes in empowerment, and each AMOC representative needs to know when that minority of decisions need to be brought up to the Director's level.

9. Dealing with absent AMOC representatives:

Some decisions must be made when an individual agency/representative is not present in an AMOC meeting or conference call. As Chair, Terry tries to ensure in such circumstances that he or someone else represents that agency's known interests in the issue. However, the standard approach has been for AMOC to make necessary decisions with the representatives who are present in a given meeting or on a given conference call, or via email by a specified deadline for response. The Directors need to appreciate that their interests are covered if their AMOC representative is not there, but decisions must be made.

10. Do Directors agree with AMOC recommendations?

AMOC strives for consensus and frequently achieves it, but it does not demand consensus on all issues. In most decisions a majority is achieved and is adequate. If major differences remain unresolved, then AMOC defers to the representatives of the Directors of the agency of jurisdiction and USFWS.

11. Do Directors agree that SOPs structured and applied across agency jurisdictional boundaries?

We always strive for consistency, and our stakeholders expect that consistency. There are situations where exceptions are justified, and the agency of jurisdiction and the USFWS need to work through those exceptions. We also need to respect Indian Reservation sovereignty.

12. Do Directors want strict compliance of SOPs?

Look at program objectives as a facet when looking at potential deviations from SOPs. The SOPs are guidance, not a strict road map. The exceptions component provides for departures in pre-approved areas.

13. Do Directors desire to move away from a focus on managing individual depredation and more toward addressing chronic problem areas/livestock operators?

Duane Shroufe said this proactive measure might not guarantee more wolves on ground. Harv Forsgren said this might contribute more toward overall objectives, but might cause a reaction from political angles. Bruce Thompson agrees with what Harv said. We need to focus on how proactive measures might influence other parties. Benjamin Tuggle says we need to blend resources into more proactive approaches, but we can not abandon reactive activities. However, where is the balance in bringing on more proactive activities within the constraints of our limited resources?

14. Do the Directors agree that the Interdiction, Incentives and Compensation Program needs to be further funded?

Not discussed, see program presentation immediately below.

H. Update on Proposed “Interdictions, Incentives, and Compensation” Program

Benjamin Tuggle made a presentation titled, “Mexican Wolf - Livestock Interdiction Pilot Program: A Concept.” He stressed that this program is still a concept in progress, and not a functioning program. From 1998 to 2004, an estimated direct economic impact from \$40,000 to \$200,000 resulted from loss of livestock due to wolf depredation. The desire is to develop a flexible program to address economic components, by looking at three angles: 1) Interdiction is a proactive means to keep wolves away from livestock, 2) Incentives would pay livestock operators up front to have wolves present in their livestock operation and pay for potential losses, and 3) Compensation is the outright payment for verified livestock losses. We would develop a Program Management Group to determine what are appropriate decisions to handle, and how much to pay livestock operators for various compensations. This group would not directly involve USFWS. Possibly have groups such as the Arizona or New Mexico Cattle Growers select their own members for this local group. This group should be a mix of voluntary citizens, local and state government, tribal and others. Wolves that depredate on participating operators would not be subject to strict adherence to permanent removal under current SOP 13. Objectives include advancing wolf recovery and eventual recovery. Benjamin recommends establishing a fund of \$5 million to \$8 million and using the interest to run this program. Administrative costs would be taken off the top to set up the financial account.

Lunch Break

I. NEPA Scoping for Possible 10j Rule Revision

NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION presented “Mexican Wolf Public Involvement Process Public Involvement Planning Assistance – Phase I.” Their report evaluated comparing different public meeting scenarios. They recommended an Open House format where various listening stations are placed throughout the meeting location. Public comment is gathered and questions answered at these various listening stations.

Discussion followed the presentation. Terry Johnson said there is a meeting precedence from past Mexican Wolf public meetings following a stand and deliver format, and the public may expect the group to follow a similar format. In a previous round of public meetings, AMOC had to repeat the entire process because some stakeholders in New Mexico objected to the Open House format and wanted opportunities to stand and deliver. Whatever approach we use, we need to know that the agencies will stand behind it this time. Benjamin Tuggle said that we need to move forward to gather needed public information. Maybe we should not just select option A, but in any case we will suffer from rhetoric (any process will draw some objections). Members of the public who are dissatisfied with the Open House process can provide their comment in other means, such as letters and email. We will need another form of public comment gathering to collect this information to move us toward our objectives. Terry Johnson commented about public meetings AGFD held in the early years of exploring possible wolf reintroduction. They had some basic ground rules, such as only inviting certain groups to a specific meeting (e.g. not inviting environmentalists to a cattle growers meeting and vice versa). This approach was manpower intensive but a good method to gather focused public comments. It seemed to result in more open comment, as people could speak without being rained on by the “other side.” Brian Millsap said in Florida they had the public write down their own comments on an 8.5x11 sheet of paper, which reduced conflicts that occur when someone else records their comments. John Morgart said 12 meetings are planned, with 6 in each state. Several meeting locations are in the wolf recovery area, each of which might attract 100 or more pro-wolf or anti-wolf participants. It would be a challenge to have enough listening stations in places like Reserve, NM, where facilities are limited. Other venues such as Phoenix might attract 300 to 500 people, but meeting facilities are better able to handle this size of crowd. David Case said larger meetings can make it challenging to hear all participants who want to make a comment. Perhaps we could make a 5 minute presentation every hour or so, while the various listening stations stop recording comments. Benjamin Tuggle said to think about incorporating various approaches in gathering public comment. He would be criticized for using a variety of meeting approaches than relying on one traditional scenario for all meetings, if we think that a variety would serve our purpose better. Brian Millsap said they had placed informational posters in Florida, which provided more background. Davis Case said you can answer easy questions, but to be fair you must allow all to ask questions, which can get contentious. Terry Johnson said they only encountered three ugly incidents while

conducting the early public meetings; most participants complimented AGFD on its approach. Terry believes that people need (want) to be heard by their peers and colleagues as well as by the agencies, and the recommended Open House format might not be the best approach for achieving that. Benjamin Tuggle recommended a “hybrid” meeting approach (a non-traditional meeting process), but defers to AMOC on the final decision. He understands it may be more labor intensive, but it may be more productive. Look at option A (listening stations) and retrofit (e.g. stand and deliver) where AMOC thinks it appropriate to do so. The public meetings start November 26, 2007 and run back to back except for Sundays. Meeting locations are: Flagstaff, Hon-dah, Alpine, Grants, Albuquerque, Socorro, Alamogordo, Las Cruces, Glenwood, Safford, Tucson and Phoenix. Discussions followed on where to hold traditional versus non-traditional meetings, but no decisions were made.

Terry Johnson said the 10(j) rule is much more than just boundaries, and there is a great deal of information to cover during these public meetings. The burden on setting up and conducting these meetings is AMOC and not the IFT. The IFT has on-the-ground issues to handle, which are their priorities. The NEPA meetings are primarily USFWS meetings. However, other meetings (AMOC and AMWG) should run in tandem with these NEPA meetings where appropriate, for logistical efficiency.

Terry Johnson said we had around 17,000 comments from the last round of public meetings. However, it looks like we can expect around 200,000 comments this time, in the email era. David Case said there is software available to search for similar/identical email letters which helps facilitate the public comment analysis.

Terry reminded everyone that an EIS will be developed in the future, and resources must be identified and committed to producing it. Dave Bergman said Dave Hayes out of Montana will be his agency lead in NEPA process. John Morgart said John Slown will be USFWS lead for this NEPA process. He has an in depth experience in writing EISs but does not have much experience with 10(j).

J. Less-Than-Lethal-Projectiles (LTLP) Permit Programs

Terry provided a status update. AGFD has developed a project that allows local residents to use LTLP to respond immediately to problem and nuisance wolves. This program may change wolf behavior early in the process and thus possibly reduce subsequent permanent removals. Permits would be issued to allow local citizens to participate in this program. Ammunition would be provided to permitted citizens who would use their own weapons (shotguns and paint ball guns). NMDGF has adapted the Arizona proposal to meet its own needs. Since New Mexico’s over-arching Section 6 project document is less open-ended than AGFD’s, it might need to be amended to allow New Mexico to participate in a LTLP program. The Arizona and New Mexico documents are modeled after the Northern Rockies LTLP program. This program is scheduled to be initiated in both states prior to September 30, 2007. Cynthia Dale asked how WMAT can participate, because

many WMAT cattle growers want to participate in such a program. She was advised that once the AGFD and/or NMDGF project has been approved she could adapt that project to WMAT needs. However, John Morgart said LTLP use must be reflected in a USFWS 10.a.1.a. permit. Cynthia Dale replied that WMAT does not manage endangered species under any USFWS permits. Perhaps the WMAT wolf management plan and MOU with USFWS could be modified to provide for LTLP.

K. New Mexico GAIN Program: Wolf Monitoring

Bruce Thompson said several months ago there was an idea to use the “Gaining Access Into Nature Program” (GAIN) with the wolf program. Bruce said this idea was reviewed by AMOC and others and was supported. This program evolved into selected members of the public going in the field with a wolf biologist (Ellen Heilhecker) to monitor wolves for a day. This new project is now the most popular GAIN program. Terry Johnson said that AMOC had not reviewed this project prior to its inception, and that was not consistent with the interagency MOU. Bruce Thompson said he thought there was still enough time for AMOC to review and comment, and it is a good example to illustrate the public interest in the wolf program. Terry replied that the concern is not about the program, as its major elements have been used in previous efforts by the cooperators. The concern is about process. Discussion followed on pros and cons of program. Shannon Barber-Meyer had concerns about the activity in denning season. Benjamin Tuggle said the program needs to benefit wolf recovery, and it may be a good idea, but we need to control this activity. Harv Forsgren said to look forward and be thoughtful in managing this activity. This demand may grow in the future. Renae Held said they took denning concerns into consideration. Terry Johnson recommends that New Mexico should take these comments into consideration when implementing this new and potentially controversial program. John Morgart said he has been approached by several people to conduct wolf based ecotourism. There is a great opportunity out there to promote this program, and for the program to generate some income.

L. New Mexico “Concept for Beneficial Actions re: Mexican Wolf”

Bruce Thompson sent out an email and attached Concept Statement (August 19, 2007), which was passed out to group. This concept statement requested input from email recipients by September 4, 2007. Terry again noted that it caught AMOC by surprise, and it was not clear how, if at all, the NM effort meshed with the previously approved AMOC 5-Year Review Recommendations, some of which address the same issues. Duane Shroufe asked questions about the funding request for Section 6 money. Arizona spends essentially all of its Section 6 money to fulfill recognized AMOC priorities, such as monitoring flights. How did New Mexico prioritize its wolf needs to fund these recommendations? Bruce Thompson replied that he has not prioritized funding in regard to this concept statement. This concept statement is a New Mexico solicitation of comments, and is outside AMOC.

M. AMWG Meeting Tonight -- Background

Terry Johnson will start AMWG at 1800 MST. The meeting will be run the same as previous AMWG meetings. Comments from public will be addressed to the AMOC Chair, unless they are directed to a specific AMOC member by public. The Directors will be observers, and will not have to personally answer any questions. The primary topics/questions should be NEPA review and SOP review. The meeting will end no later than 2100 MST.

N. The Day 1 meeting adjourned at 1545 MST.

August 30, 2007

Time: AZ Time: 0800 – 1700
Day 2 Participants: DIRECTORS – Duane Shroufe – AGFD, Bruce Thompson – NMGFD, Benjamin Tuggle – USFWS, John Caid – WMAT, Harv Forsgren – USFS, Jeff Green – USDA APHIS WS

AMOC Lead Agencies: AGFD – Terry B. Johnson (Chair), Jon Cooley, Shannon Barber-Meyer, Shawna Nelson, Colby Gardner, Dave Cagle and Mike Godwin; NMGFD – Matt Wunder, Renae Held, Ellen Heilhecker; USDA FS – Kathy Taylor and Don De Lorenzo; USDA APHIS WS- Dave Bergman; Allan May, Chris Carillo, J. Brad Miller, Sterling Simpson and Keel Price; USFWS – John Morgart, Brian Millsap, Jim Ashburner, Wally Murphy and John Oakleaf; and WMAT – Cynthia Dale; SCAT - Dewey Wesley

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AMWG Non-Signatory Cooperators: Graham County AZ – Jim Palmer and Terry Cooper

NEPA Consultants: Ginny Wallace and Dave Case, both of D.J. Case and Associates

August 30

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

Two new participants from Graham County were present, with most of the August 29, 2007 participants still present.

Terry Johnson started the meeting at 0800 MST. The August 29-30, 2007 agenda was again followed.

Terry provided a brief review of the August 29, 2007 AMWG meeting at the old Alpine School. The meeting was rather typical, with environmentalists and one normally outspoken cattle grower being more quiet than normal. The Directors complimented AMOC on the meeting, and agreed it was productive. They also noted that some of the questions asked and answered have been asked and answered since the wolf reintroduction discussions began more than 20 years ago.

B. SOP Review – Over-Arching Issues

Terry Johnson passed out copies of a “Summary of Issues on Which AMOC is to Provide Recommendations to the Lead Agency Directors for Possible Modification for SOPs 5.0, 6.0, 11.0 and 13.0.”

Terry then circulated copies of SOP 5.0 Initial Wolf Releases with track changes. Terry told the Directors that AMOC and IFT recommended a memo of clarification to accept three changes to SOP 5.0. These changes are: 1) expand the area of notification, 2) contact the affected USFS District Ranger(s) early in the initial release scoping process, and 3) also contact a New Mexico Cattle Producer Representative (NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION) and an Arizona Representative (NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION) early in the recommendation process.

Harv Forsgren asked why ten miles was selected instead of the original five mile radius area of notification, and stated that a tool for providing clarification is necessary to better define policy. If we are actually changing policy, then the best way is to change the SOP outright, and not in a memo format. It was discussed that the recommendation to expand the notification area was at the request of the ranchers and is adaptive management in action.

Duane Shroufe said of the three items we discussed above, the only one that is a real change is expanding the notification area to ten from five miles. He is in favor of opening this SOP if we want to make the recommended change. Open each SOP on its own merits if the recommended changes are justified.

Hector Ruedas thought the ranching community has a much improved communication network, and the ranchers will let affected ranchers know about wolf movements.

Benjamin Tuggle said a memo of clarification may be more suitable to adopt the three recommended changes. The SOP has the same process with the three recommended changes.

Discussion followed on the question of opening the SOPs when the NEPA for the 10(j) rule is opening in tandem for public comment. Will these simultaneous actions confuse the public?

Bruce Thompson recommended keeping the five mile radius with the ability to expand the area as the IFT sees fit, and contact the selected cattle grower representative, and reach out to the environmental community to inform them about the initial release. The directors supported this recommendation. This recommendation would also apply to SOP 6.0 (wolf translocations).

C. SOP 13.0 – Introduction to Control of Mexican Wolves

Benjamin Tuggle recommended going straight to SOP 13.0 while the group is still fresh, rather than building up to 13.0. The group agreed to do so.

Terry Johnson noted that various parties, including some cooperators, have asked that the current SOP 13.0 should not be changed now. He noted that in December 2006 the Directors and AMOC had agreed not to change SOP 13.0 in 2007, but to review it beginning in December 2007 and decide then whether experience to date indicates a need for change(s). However, events in New Mexico in July 2007 led to a speeding up of that timetable. Thus, we are now exploring the need for change, but changes might or might not be made.

Terry said AMOC recommends that henceforth the term “strike” should be dropped and replaced with “depredation incident.” AMOC also recommends that a clarification memo be used to ensure that three elements are addressed and documented as part of the PRO development and decision process: 1) affirm lawful presence of livestock, 2) confirmation of a wolf kill, and 3) reasonable ability to associate depredation incidents with a particular wolf or wolf pack.

SOP 13.0 has been re-drafted into four sections. The new draft 13.0 provides background information. SOP 13.A addresses nuisance wolves. SOP 13.B addresses problem (depredating) wolves and SOP 13.C addresses development of PROs for wolves.

Benjamin Tuggle said he is sensitive to other factors in place that support no change to SOP 13.0. However, if there is a real identified need to make changes then we should go forward.

Bruce Thompson said there may be a need to make adjustments to this SOP. The 30 day review time frame should be dropped and ample time be allocated to allow for further in depth discussion. Terry Johnson said the 30 day time comment period was set in order to produce a set of recommendations reviewed by IFT, AMOC and the directors by the mid-October AMWG meeting. Benjamin Tuggle is not as concerned about time lines versus the need to analyze and possibly change process.

Harv Forsgren asked if it might be productive to discuss SOP 13.B. Terry said this is a good opportunity to go through each of the draft SOPs 13 components.

Discussion on draft SOP 13.0.

Terry Johnson said draft 13.0 adds some information such as expanding the purpose statement, prioritizing actions, to establish philosophical background to establish a recovered population and to address confirmed depredation activity. John Morgart said the reasoning to breakdown SOP 13.0 into four new SOPs was to reduce complexity of this important portion of wolf recovery.

Review of “purpose” section:

Bruce Thompson asked why in item number 4, the alpha male was not incorporated with additional concerns about breeding female with pups. Bruce thought the breeding unit was important. Terry said the preferred animal to retain was the female, but there have been cases where the female is gone for whatever reason and the alpha male has raised the pups. Harv Forsgren said there maybe specific situations where the alpha female needs to be removed. Questions to ask include: are there additional members in that pack to raise those pups?

Harv Forsgren commented that if we are not doing enough hazing actions because of IFT resource limitations, we may be creating a loophole where the IFT is not held accountable enough for their lack of hazing activity.

TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

Benjamin asked if these recommended changes to SOP 13.0 are major deviations from the original SOP or are they more of a clarification status. Terry Johnson thought that purpose 4 (do not remove lactating females) for example is a major change. Even most cattle growers that AMOC has spoken with are uncomfortable about removing lactating wolves and leaving dependent pups behind.

Harv Forsgren talked about purpose Number 3: prescribed management and control actions must be initiated and given an opportunity to work before elevating management responses to each depredation or nuisance incident. If we elevate management and control activities prior to permanently removing wolves, the onus is placed on the IFT and the livestock operator to take appropriate actions. It thus becomes a requirement. The word “must” was then discussed, since it restricts Number 5 (permanent removal will primarily be conducted via non-lethal control) and creates an expectation that permanently removed wolves will primarily not be killed. Purpose Number 5 may create false expectations. Discussion followed regarding the availability of sufficient captive facilities to permanently house wolves captured with PROs.

The IFT/AMOC recommendation from their August 28 meeting is for lethal control when permanent removal is approved. However, the 10(j) rule states that killing problem wolves is a last resort, and that the agencies will remove from the wild wolves exhibiting consistent livestock depredation (three or more times per year). Terry Johnson noted that permanent removal also applies to repeated nuisance activity, under the 10(j) rule.

Duane Shroufe said that excerpts from the 10(j) indicate the SOP is more liberal in removing wolves after three depredations instead of two.

Bruce Thompson asked for interpretation and background on making permanent removal decisions. John Morgart said the 1996 EIS took data from the Northern Rockies to come up with three depredation incidents in a year as a threshold for removal.

Benjamin Tuggle thinks purpose Number 5, which emphasizes non-lethal permanent removal is a major deviation. A bad wolf needs to be removed. There are circumstances where lethal control is practical. We do not want to handicap ground personnel. We need to keep the flexibility referenced in the original EIS. The importance of an animal (i.e. genetics, etc) should be considered in making lethal/live capture decisions. Jeff Green noted that Duane Shroufe said at a prior meeting that released wolves are subject to the 10(j) rule, and are considered expendable. AMOC and the IFT need to bring that recommendation about live capture for important animals within the PRO instructions/recommendations. The ultimate decision about killing a wolf in any given case should be with USFWS, since they manage the captive program. Discussion continued on consideration of animal behavior and genetics in making a decision on recommending type of permanent removal.

Subsequent discussion resulted in allowing AMOC and the IFT to have another opportunity to further edit SOP 13.0. There is a scheduled AMOC meeting for October 15, 16 and 17, 2007. Terry recommended having directors review the edited version before the mid-October meeting.

Action Item: AMOC and the IFT will review and edit draft SOP 13.0 and associated drafted procedures and provide comments prior to the mid-October 2007 meeting.

SOP 13.0. "Exceptions and stipulations:"

Number 1 (AMOC and directors communicating effectively): Discussion by the Directors was consistent that each AMOC lead is working well with their associated Director. Bruce Thompson had concerns that judgments may be made without complete and current data. Give due deliberation on how to make judgments versus a filtered version.

Number 6 (Reducing time period to document three depredation incidents to recommend PRO from 365 to 183 days): Harv Forsgren was concerned regarding consistency on what rule says versus reducing period for three depredations to 183 days from 1 year. The

data provided by the IFT suggests this would keep 20% of wolves out there. He has concerns about compliance with the rule, and public perceptions. Bruce Thompson wanted to look at the rule regarding three depredation incidents, and is that point considered a threshold or a point?

Number 7 (Increasing number of depredation incidents to five from original three before initiate permanent removal efforts if number of breeding pairs does not exceed six): Harv Forsgren has concerns with the whole balance issue comparing increasing number of wolves, but also work positively with ranchers. Bruce Thompson wanted a review of rule regarding the three depredation incident number.

Numbers 11 (Maintain lactating females in wild, if captured during implementation of PROs release individual on site) and 12 (Release lactating female if pups can not be located and removed): Bruce Thompson had issues allowing AMOC to release lactating females on site.

SOP 13.0 "Procedures" section:

Bruce Thompson stated that intentionally feeding wolves in New Mexico is an illegal activity. Procedure 3.a.(2)(4) on page 8 of 10 should reflect that law. Number 4 of 6 is illegal in NM.

Procedure 3.a.(2)(3) on page 9 should provide a provision to add a statement to maintain full disclosure of depredation incident assignments. Any discrepancies should be added to PRO and is subject to a full review.

John Caid, Duane Shroufe, Benjamin Tuggle and Jeff Green all supported allowing more time to allow AMOC/IFT make another review and edits of the drafted SOPs. See action item under SOP 13.0.

D. SOP 13.A – Nuisance Wolves

New spin off from original SOP 13.0. Reviewed draft document. No Directors had any comments.

E. SOP 13.B – Depredating Mexican Wolves and Human Safety

Terry Johnson noted that SOP 13.B is the document where most substantive recommended changes to original SOP 13.0 are located.

Harv Forsgren had the same issues identified in SOP 13.0 about the number of breeding pairs to show consistency. Do incremental depredation incidents count if ranchers show due diligence and need to look at context to show mechanisms to remedy situation? Harv Forsgren also wanted more livestock input in evaluation of grazing options when livestock depredations are occurring. On procedure 2.i.(1), he believes this is now taking

place by having some level of discussions with the livestock operator to reduce future losses. If jurisdictional IFTL and USFS agree alternative grazing options available, also need more livestock permittee input since they are more familiar with costs, etc on adjusting grazing regime. He also thinks we need to look at what can be done up front in using existing processes of Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) determinations and AMP revisions. Without using all current tools, making corrective changes during grazing season is almost punitive to operators who have to modify grazing patterns during the growing season. John Caid agreed that this recommendation puts too much burden on the livestock operator.

Benjamin Tuggle asked if an illustrated table could be developed outlining the step-by-step process of evaluating second depredated wolves removed into captivity for future relocation as noted on procedure 2. ii. (2)(b) page 4.

Action Item - USFWS will prepare this requested table, since they have primary responsibility for captive wolves.

Bruce Thompson had a question for procedure 2.iii.(b) on Page 5 of 8, requesting more background on what information is used as a trigger for consideration when the IFTL makes a recommendation on what specific animal to remove. He also recommended removal of "his" in procedure 2.iii.(e).

F. SOP 13.C – Permanent Removal Orders for Mexican Wolves

No comments from Jeff or Duane or Benjamin

Bruce Thompson had a sense that verbal conveyance of recommendations is not effective communication. In order to capture understandings at multiple levels, verbal is not effective. We need greater clarity in communication. Discussion followed about the necessity to relay verbal communication from IFT personnel in the field to maintain timely dissemination of recommendations. One recommendation is to read back written statements to the person in field to check for accuracy between verbal and written record.

Bruce Thompson had a question about the 24 hour deadlines, and is that ample time to adequately gather, formulate and disseminate information?

Action Item - Harv Forsgren wanted to add an affirmation that four issues 1) legal presence of livestock, 2) depredations confirmed/probable as being caused by wolves, 3) a particular wolf or wolves can be identified as the offender(s), and 4) [??? **Terry, I do not know the fourth issue?**] implemented by a clarification memo.

G. SOP 6.0 – Wolf Translocations

Exception 1 – Discussion on the option to immediately (same day) translocate a wolf in certain situations (i.e., replace a removed wolf, etc). Directors support this exception.

However, Benjamin Tuggle wants to be sure that AMOC and the Directors know the action took place along with justification soon after relocating that wolf.

Action Item – When wolves are translocated the same day they are captured, the IFT will provide a briefing to AMOC and the Directors on this activity within 12 hours of releasing the animal.

Bruce Thompson found a typo in the background section page 2, first paragraph twelve line. It appears some words are missing. Bruce also wanted more restrictions when considering the release of a two time livestock depredator.

H. SOP 11.0 – Depredation on Domestic Livestock and Pets

Several Directors recommended developing a clarification memo. However, Benjamin Tuggle wants to make sure that we make changes correctly; a clarification memo may not be sufficient. Our constituents need to know the entire process and responsible parties, and a revision of this SOP maybe more appropriate.

Discussion on dropping “possible” finding from Depredation Report Form. This term adds confusion to the investigation, since almost anything is possible. AMOC recommends maintaining confirmed, probable and unknown investigator findings.

Bruce Thompson had comments on page 3, number 3 regarding the 24 hour deadline to respond to depredation reports, page 3 number 4: we need to clarify the number of WS or IFT investigators; page 4b 24 hour deadline -- is it too short? Page 4, 7.a.ii.: “verbally” providing a summary report may cause dissemination of misinformation.

Recommended edits include: Under procedures 7. Reports.a.ii, delete last portion of the last sentence. Delete “and what the management response under SOP 13.B should be.” Under procedure 7.Reports.c, recommend adding at end of sentence “,unless tribe or landowners stipulates otherwise.”

Discussion on deadlines if go forward with revisions; possibly we should do this after NEPA public comments are due.

Action Item: Terry will develop a Clarification Memo covering the following: 1) identify lawful presence of livestock, 2) confirm if a wolf kill, 3) identify a particular depredating wolf or pack of wolves, 4) identify non-WS IFT investigation responsibilities and limitations. 5) Drop “possible” from depredation form. 6) Extend response time from 24 hours to 48 hours for WS investigation determination, and 7) determine a deadline date to produce this memo.

I. Budgets

Updated Information for Reintroduction Project Cost Estimates sheet passed out.

Terry led discussion on budget. Duane Shroufe made comments that level of IFT service is not what it was in the past. The AGFD IFT component is overcommitted and I have assigned Temporary Duty Assignments to fill vacant positions. Our FT is asked to do a job they can not do with the available resources. Our total state tax revenues have been going up considerably annually, but Duane cannot increase the AGFD budget. AGFD will lack about \$50,000 for pilot and plane time for the wolf project this year. Flights are taking place other than in Arizona. Duane needs help from other Directors to make sure the IFT staff is up to par, and to make sure we accomplish the things we have planned to accomplish. We need to improve our ability to put more wolves on ground, and be more successful.

Terry Johnson said AGFD established an Outreach Coordinator at AMOC request to work across the recovery area, except for WMAT. Hopefully the proposed Less Than Lethal Projectiles program will be coming on line, and with it comes more responsibility. The agencies are not evenly represented at the Alpine Wolf Field Office. There is a need for each agency to come up with more resources, either money or FTEs. There is an identified need for a landowner relations expert, but that position remains unfilled. Our stakeholders, constituents and AMOC tell us we are stretching our resources too far.

TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

Bruce Thompson said that Duane brought up a compelling case. In January 2006, NMDGF put on an additional wolf FTE (Saleen Richter's position) and its IFT component will be full once that position is refilled. NMDGF has two full time wolf positions now, and also has several part time positions working on the wolf program. If there is acceptance of new activities, NMDGF might get additional resources. Renae Held said New Mexico may contribute 15 monitoring flights to supplement flight time. Terry Johnson wants this aerial support commitment in writing. Renae Held said they are working out the details internally. Bruce Thompson will look to Matt Wunder and Renae Held to see if and where NMDGF is falling short. NMDGF may look at how we can do different things with different people to work on wolf issues. Can we identify additional resources instead of what we have done in the past?

Benjamin Tuggle wants to thank everybody for putting resources on the table. USFWS has a current wolf vacancy, and is trying to put more resources on ground. He will sit down with the USFWS folks to patch gaps. He wants to keep USFWS positions fully staffed. Benjamin asked, "Are our funds aligned with priorities?" Benjamin wants to know real needs, and the true objectives. We cannot do more with less. What can we do with the resources we have? We need to identify if it is more or less. Benjamin has not really seen wolf budgets, but he is good at managing budgets. Again, he says we cannot do more with less. We might need to go to public on what cuts need to be made.

Harv Forsgren said it will be hard to increase the USFS budget in FY 08, since the overall USFS budget was hit hard. Harv asked where additional USFS support would provide the greatest benefit? Terry Johnson said an additional IFT FTE, based out of Alpine. He asked AMOC and the IFT to indicate whether they agreed, and all parties did agree. This position would be a communication liaison between USFS and the IFT, and with permittees and the public versus a wolf biologist. Don DeLorenzo replied that he does not see a real need for additional money.

Duane said it might be best to write down funding/resource needs for the program. What are the collective needs of the program? For instance, there is a need for \$120,000 for flights, and how is that need going to be funded by the different agencies? Different budget cycles and budget cuts make the planning process hard. We want to take on more responsibilities, but we have less resources each year. AGFD has done this in the past. We need the money to take on these new activities. How do we work to make all agencies more comfortable with annual work plan, and other documents? The Directors asked AMOC and the IFT to shore up the annual work plan and other documents for future Director review and recommendations and decisions. Bruce Thompson says the NMDGF fiscal year is so out of synch and budget information is not available. Terry Johnson replied that cooperating agency budgets are on different cycles, which complicates this issue.

Terry Johnson again said that perhaps AMOC's single greatest failing is that they have not worked adequately with their Directors to increase project resources with additional IFT staff, re-directing current employees to work partially on the wolf project (i.e. outreach, landowner relations personnel), and possibly bringing in other agencies as cooperators.

Jeff Green said generally WS is paid 50% fed and 50% by cooperators. Money is tight. This is the fifth year that Congress allocated \$150,000 for the wolf program, which is spent between two states and funds 1.25 FTEs. WS is totally dependent upon congressional appropriations. Constituents are lobbying on our behalf, but this is a bad time to get federal money. Federal appropriations are the only way WS can get needed money.

Jon Cooley said that AGFD uses the project's annual work plan to establish priorities and schedule personnel. We need all agencies to use this document when determining their priorities and where to direct resources.

Brian Millsap said there is not any budget consideration for the EIS, which should cost around \$1 million per year for perhaps 3-4 years.

Action Item – AMOC/IFT review Annual Work Plan for calendar 2008 and provide to directors in mid-December.

Action Item - USFWS employees provide Benjamin Tuggle more budget information for his review.

J. Miscellaneous items:

On another note, Terry Johnson brought up the fact that AGFD Landowner Relations Program has paid and is paying some livestock producers to modify their grazing system to reduce exposure to wolves during the more vulnerable calving season. We have three FTLs across the two states, including a WMAT FTL. There has been a lot of progress in cooperation, but more needs to be made on work load issues and sharing resources.

Shannon Barber-Meyer says the IFT needs a USFS contact person. We spend a lot of time disseminating information to all affected District Rangers, etc. We need one USFS employee as a primary contact, who can then disseminate this information. How do we share resources across agencies and boundaries?

John Morgart said that December's Directors Summit is scheduled for December 11 – 13. The location is Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge, New Mexico. We need to confirm local rooms now for the meeting. He has reserved rooms at the Refuge.

K. Adjournment.

The Directors again complimented AMOC and the IFT on this meeting, and the meeting adjourned at 1312 MST.