



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

March 1-31, 2013

The following is a summary of Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project (Project) activities in Arizona on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests (ASNF) and Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR) and in New Mexico on the Apache National Forest (ANF) and Gila National Forest (GNF). Non-tribal lands involved in this Project are collectively known as the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (BRWRA). Additional Project information can be obtained by calling (928) 339-4329 or toll free at (888) 459-9653, or by visiting the Arizona Game and Fish Department website at <http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf> or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf>. Past updates may be viewed on either website, or interested parties may sign up to receive this update electronically by visiting <http://www.azgfd.gov/signup>. This update is a public document and information in it can be used for any purpose. The Reintroduction Project is a multi-agency cooperative effort among the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), USDA Forest Service (USFS), USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (USDA-APHIS WS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT).

To view weekly wolf telemetry flight location information or the 3-month wolf distribution map, please visit <http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf>. On the home page, go to the “Wolf Location Information” heading on the right side of the page near the top and scroll to the specific location information you seek.

Please report any wolf sightings or suspected livestock depredations to: (928) 339-4329 or toll free at (888) 459-9653. To report incidents of take or harassment of wolves, please call the AGFD 24-hour dispatch (Operation Game Thief) at (800) 352-0700.

Numbering System: Mexican wolves are given an identification number recorded in an official studbook that tracks their history. Capital letters (M = Male, F = Female) preceding the number indicate adult animals 24 months or older. Lower case letters (m = male, f = female) indicate wolves younger than 24 months or pups. The capital letter “A” preceding the letter and number indicate breeding wolves.

Definitions: A “wolf pack” is defined as two or more wolves that maintain an established territory. In the event that one of the two alpha (dominant) wolves dies, the remaining alpha wolf, regardless of pack size, retains the pack status. The packs referenced in this update contain at least one wolf with a radio telemetry collar attached to it. The Interagency Field Team (IFT)

recognizes that wolves without radio telemetry collars may also form packs. If the IFT confirms that wolves are associating with each other and are resident within the same home range, they will be referenced as a pack.

CURRENT POPULATION STATUS

At the end of March 2013, the collared population consisted of 46 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 12 packs and five single wolves. The IFT caught and collared a female pup, fp1295 from the Fox Mountain Pack. The IFT documented one wolf mortality this month. Some other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with radio-collared wolves, and others are separate from known packs.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042, mp1275, mp1277, fp1280 and fp1289)

Throughout March, the IFT located these wolves in their traditional territory in the east-central portion of the ASNF.

Elk Horn Pack (collared AM1287 and f1294)

In March, the IFT located these wolves traveling in the northeast portion of the ASNF in Arizona.

Hawks Nest (collared AM1038)

During March, the IFT was able to confirm that AM1038 was still alive in the traditional Hawks Nest territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF; however, it has a nonfunctioning radio collar, making this wolf impossible to track with telemetry equipment. This wolf is not included in the collared population estimate or overall pack total in the Current Population Status summary above.

Maverick Pack (collared AM1183, mp1290 and fp1291)

During March, the IFT located these wolves on the west-central portion of the ASNF, as well as the FAIR. mp1290 continued to travel separately from other pack members in March, in the central portion of the ASNF.

Paradise Pack (collared AM795 and AF1056)

In March, the IFT located AM795 and AF1056 using their traditional winter territory in the northern portion of the ASNF, as well as north of the BRWRA.

Rim (collared AM1107)

Throughout March, the IFT located AM1107 utilizing the south-central portion of the ASNF and the SCAR. The IFT now considers this wolf to be a single animal, and although it will retain the pack name, it will not be included in the overall pack total in the Current Population Status summary above.

ON THE FAIR:

Tsay o Ah Pack (collared AM1253, m1254 and fp1283)

During March, the IFT located AM1253 and fp1283 on the FAIR. The IFT did not locate m1254 this month.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Canyon Creek Pack (collared M1252 and F1246)

In March, the IFT located these wolves traveling together in the central portion of the GNF.

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923, m1293 and fp1278)

Throughout March, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF. The IFT documented fp1278 traveling separate from the pack for most of the month in the west-central portion of the GNF, including the Gila Wilderness.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared AM1158, AF1212, m1276, mp1274, fp1281 and fp1295)

Throughout March, the IFT documented these wolves in the north-west portion of the GNF. The IFT documented AM1158, AF1212 and m1276 traveling together, while mp1274 was located traveling both together and separate from the other three collared wolves. Most of the month, the IFT located fp1281 separate from the rest of the pack. fp1281 traveled throughout the northwest portion of the GNF, as well as moving outside the BRWRA. IFT personnel caught and collared female pup fp1295 this month.

Luna Pack (collared AM1155, AF1115, mp1284, mp1285 and mp1286)

In March, the IFT located the pack within its traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF.

Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871 and AF861)

The IFT did not locate these wolves during the month of March. The radio collars for these two animals are most likely no longer functioning. The IFT continued ground efforts to locate the wolves, and they did document wolf sign in this pack's traditional territory.

San Mateo Pack (collared AM1157, AF903, m1249, mp1282 and fp1292)

In March, these wolves continued to use their traditional territory in the northern portion of the GNF. The IFT documented m1249 traveling separately from other pack members, but still within the pack territory this month.

Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185 and F1279)

Throughout March, the IFT located these wolves in the north-central portion of the GNF.

m1240 (collared)

The IFT documented this wolf traveling widely throughout the BRWRA in March. The IFT documented this animal primarily in the central portion of the GNF and east-central portion of the ASNF.

m1243 (collared)

Throughout March, the IFT located this wolf traveling throughout the central portion of the

GNF.

m1244 (collared)

Throughout March, the IFT located this wolf traveling in the central portion of the GNF, north of the Gila Wilderness.

m1245 (collared)

During March, the IFT found this animal dead. The cause of death is under investigation.

f1251 (collared)

Throughout March, the IFT located this wolf traveling in the north-central portion of the GNF.

MORTALITIES

During March, the IFT documented one wolf mortality. The IFT located single wolf m1245 dead this month, and the cause of death is under investigation.

INCIDENTS

During March, IFT personnel investigated two livestock depredation incidents and two livestock injuries in the BRWRA. One nuisance incident outside of the BRWRA was also investigated this month.

On March 3, IFT personnel investigated a dead cow and newborn calf near Watts Creek on the ASNF. The cause of death for cow was determined to be a gunshot. The cause of the death for the calf was undetermined.

On March 5, IFT personnel trapped and removed a wolf-dog hybrid from the vicinity of Snowflake, Arizona. Genetic testing revealed it was a gray wolf-domestic dog hybrid. No Mexican wolf DNA was present in this animal. Its behavior prior to capture indicated it was habituated to humans. The IFT placed it in the custody of the Navajo County Animal Control Service for final disposition.

On March 18, IFT personnel investigated an injured calf in the area of Canovas Creek outside the BRWRA. The cause of injury was determined to be ravens.

On March 18, IFT personnel investigated the remains of a dead calf in the area of Wagontongue Mountain in New Mexico. The cause of death was undetermined.

On March 31, IFT personnel investigated an injured horse on private property in the northwest portion of the GNF. The cause of injury was undetermined.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

No significant activity occurred this month.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

No significant activity occurred this month.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

FWS intern Crissy Guimaraes left the Project this month. Thanks for the hard work, Crissy!

Julia Smith joined the Project this month as a FWS intern. Welcome to the Project, Julia!

REWARDS OFFERED

The USFWS is offering a reward of up to \$10,000; the AGFD Operation Game Thief is offering a reward of up to \$1,000; and the NMDGF is offering a reward of up to \$1,000 for information leading to the conviction of the individual(s) responsible for the shooting deaths of Mexican wolves. A variety of non-governmental organizations and private individuals have pledged an additional \$46,000 for a total reward amount of up to \$58,000, depending on the information provided.

Individuals with information they believe may be helpful are urged to call one of the following agencies: USFWS special agents in Mesa, Arizona, at (480) 967-7900, in Alpine, Arizona, at (928) 339-4232, or in Albuquerque, New Mexico, at (505) 346-7828; the WMAT at (928) 338-1023 or (928) 338-4385; AGFD Operation Game Thief at (800) 352-0700; or NMDGF Operation Game Thief at (800) 432-4263. Killing a Mexican wolf is a violation of the Federal Endangered Species Act and can result in criminal penalties of up to \$50,000, and/or not more than one year in jail, and/or a civil penalty of up to \$25,000.