



## Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

July 1 - 31, 2008

The following is a summary of Mexican wolf reintroduction project activities in Arizona on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests (ASNF) and in New Mexico on the Apache National Forest (ANF) and Gila National Forest (GNF), collectively known as the Blue Range Wolf Reintroduction Area (BRWRA). Additional 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 Web site at <http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf> or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf>. Past updates may be viewed on either Web site, 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), New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), 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) located on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR). Other entities cooperate through the Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) that meets quarterly in Arizona and/or New Mexico, including private individuals, organizations and tribes.

To view the 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 alpha wolves.

**Definitions:** For the purposes of the Monthly Update, a “wolf pack” is defined as two or more wolves that maintain an established home range. 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 July, the collared population consisted of 22 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 12 packs and one single wolf. Other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with wolves having radio collars, as well as being separate from known packs.

Seasonal note: Wolf pups are generally born between mid-April and mid-May. The IFT has been actively monitoring wolf packs during the past several months in order to document wild-born pups and estimate their survival. Based on monitoring information from the last 15 weeks, the IFT has determined that the following packs produced pups this spring: Hawks Nest, Paradise, Rim, Bacho, Dark Canyon and Fox Mountain. In addition to these packs, the Middle Fork pack likely has pups. The status of pup production is unknown for San Mateo, Bluestem, Lofer and Luna packs.

### **IN ARIZONA:**

#### **Bluestem Pack (collared AF521, AM806 and F1042)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the Bluestem pack in its traditional territory on the ASNF and the FAIR.

#### **Hawks Nest Pack (collared M1044 and AF1110)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the Hawks Nest pack in its traditional territory on the ASNF. The IFT documented at least two pups in July.

#### **Paradise Pack (collared AM795)**

Throughout July, AM795 continued to be located within the pack's traditional territory on the ASNF. The IFT has not documented any additional wolves or pups with AM795 since last month.

#### **Rim Pack (collared AF858 and AM1107)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the Rim pack within its traditional home range in the central portion of the ASNF.

#### **M619 (collared)**

The IFT located M619 in the central and northern portions of the ASNF and ANF in Arizona and New Mexico during July.

### **ON THE FAIR:**

#### **Bacho Pack (collared AM990)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the Bacho pack on the FAIR.

#### **Lofer Pack (collared AF1056)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the Lofer pack on the FAIR.

### **IN NEW MEXICO:**

#### **Dark Canyon (collared AM992 and AF923)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the Dark Canyon pack in its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF.

**Laredo Pack (collared AF1028 and AM1008)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the Laredo pack in the east central portion of the Gila Wilderness on the GNF.

**Luna Pack (collared F1118)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the Luna pack in its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF.

**Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871, AF861 and F1115)**

The IFT located the Middle Fork pack on and adjacent to the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness and central portion of the GNF throughout July.

**San Mateo Pack (collared AF903 and AM1114)**

Throughout July, the IFT located the pack in the east-central portion of the ANF.

**Fox Mountain Pack (collared AM1038)**

Throughout July, the IFT continued to locate the Fox Mountain pack in the northwestern portion of the ANF. The IFT documented at least two pups with the Fox Mountain pack in July.

**MORTALITIES**

The IFT documented no wolf mortalities in July.

**INCIDENTS**

In total, members of the IFT investigated two livestock injury incidents and five depredations in July. Of the five depredation investigations, two were confirmed as wolf depredations, one was determined as a probable wolf depredation, one was confirmed as a black bear depredation, and one was determined as a probable black bear depredation. The livestock injury incidents consisted of three calves in one incident and a single calf in the other incident. In the first incident, two of the calves sustained injuries that the IFT confirmed as wolf-caused. The IFT determined that the remaining calf sustained a probable wolf-caused injury. The IFT confirmed that the remaining livestock injury incident was wolf-caused. Summaries of the investigations are as follows:

On July 5, the IFT investigated a dead calf in Corduroy Draw, New Mexico. The investigation confirmed the incident as a wolf depredation. The IFT assigned the depredation incident to one uncollared wolf.

On July 10, the IFT investigated a dead calf near East Sand Flat, New Mexico. The investigation confirmed it to be a black bear depredation.

On July 12, the IFT investigated a report of an injured sheep near Big Lake, Arizona. The sheep later died as a result of the injuries. The investigation determined the incident to be a probable black bear depredation.

On July 13, the IFT investigated a dead calf near East Sand Flat, NM. The investigation determined the incident to be a probable wolf depredation. The IFT located AM1114 in the area.

On July 16, the IFT investigated a report of three injured calves near Deep Creek Divide, New Mexico. The IFT confirmed that two of the calves sustained wolf-caused injuries and the remaining calf sustained probable wolf-caused injuries. None of the three calves has died, and no depredation incident has been assigned.

On July 16, the IFT investigated a dead cow near T Bar Grassland, New Mexico. The IFT confirmed the incident as a wolf depredation and assigned it to one uncollared wolf.

On July 30, the IFT investigated a report of an injured calf near East Sand Flat, NM. The IFT confirmed that the calf had sustained wolf-caused injuries. The calf did not die, and no depredation incident has been assigned.

### **CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

No significant activities this month.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

The IFT participated in the quarterly Adaptive Management Oversight Committee and AMWG meetings in Morenci, Arizona.

The IFT continued to communicate and coordinate with members of the public and livestock operators. The IFT delivered several programs during July at the Big Lake visitor's center on the ASNF.

### **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

Mike Sumner left his position as Acting IFT Leader with the Project and returned to his wildlife manager district with the AGFD. His efforts while serving as Acting IFT Leader for the prior six months have proved invaluable to moving the Project forward and are greatly appreciated by the team.

Chris Bagnoli with the AGFD joined the Project and will be serving as Acting IFT Leader.

Ryan Gordon with the USFWS began a special detail as a Project biologist in July.

Rebecca Mowry with the USFWS left her volunteer position with the Project. Thank you Rebecca for your dedicated efforts!

### **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 \$40,000 for a total reward amount of up to \$52,000, 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, AZ, at (480) 967-7900, in Alpine, AZ, at (928) 339-

4232, or in Albuquerque, NM, at (505) 346-7828; the WMAT at (928) 338-1023 or (928) 338-4385; AGFD Operation Game Thief at 1-800-352-0700; or NMDGF Operation Game Thief at 1-800-432-4263. 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.