



## **Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update**

September 1-30, 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 September 2013, the collared population consisted of 47 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 13 packs and six single wolves.

### **IN ARIZONA:**

#### **Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042, m1275, f1280, mp1330, mp1331, fp1332 and fp1333)**

In September, the IFT set traps to capture and collar pups-of-the-year from the Bluestem Pack. On September 5, they captured a male pup, was attached a radio telemetry collar, designated it mp1330, and released it on site. On September 6, they captured another male pup, collared it, designated it mp1331, and released on site. In the evening of September 6, they captured a female pup, collared it, designated it fp1332, and released it on site. On September 8, they captured another female pup, collared it, designated it fp1333, and released it on site. IFT members observed ten Bluestem Pack wolves in late September, which is consistent with data the IFT has gathered documenting seven collared wolves, two uncollared pups and the uncollared alpha male.

#### **Elk Horn Pack (collared AM1287 and F1294)**

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

#### **Paradise Pack (collared AM795 and AF1056)**

In September, the IFT located AM795 and AF1056 using their traditional territory in the northern portion of the ASNF and the FAIR. In August, the IFT documented and assigned four depredations to this pack in 70 days. The IFT has initiated trapping efforts to capture the two Paradise Pack wolves and permanently remove them to captivity. The IFT has been unsuccessful in capturing either animal to date, but trapping efforts are continuing.

#### **Rim Pack (collared AM1107 and f1305)**

Throughout September, the IFT located AM1107 and f1305 utilizing the south-central portion of the ASNF and the SCAR.

### **ON THE FAIR:**

#### **Maverick Pack (collared m1290 and f1291)**

During September, the IFT located m1290 and f1291 on and off the FAIR in the west-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT has initiated trapping for uncollared wolves in this pack.

#### **Tsay o Ah Pack (collared AM1253 and f1283)**

During September, the IFT located AM1253 and f1283 on the FAIR.

## **IN NEW MEXICO:**

### **Canyon Creek Pack (collared M1252 and F1246)**

In September, these wolves were located traveling together in the central portion of the GNF.

### **Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923, M1293 and f1278)**

Throughout September, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF. The IFT consistently found f1278 with single wolf M1244 during September.

### **Fox Mountain Pack (collared AM1158, AF1212, M1276 and m1274)**

During September, the IFT documented these wolves in the northwest portion of the GNF. The IFT has consistently located f1281 and f1295 separate from the Fox Mountain Pack and now consider them to be single wolves.

### **Luna Pack (collared AM1155, AF1115, m1284, m1285 and m1286)**

In September, the IFT located these wolves in the north-central portion of the GNF. A diversionary food cache has been maintained for the Luna Pack throughout the month.

### **Prieto Pack (collared F1251)**

Throughout September, the IFT located this wolf in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT continues to document an uncollared wolf with F1251 and is maintaining a food cache for the animals to alleviate potential depredation issues.

### **San Mateo Pack (collared AM1157, AF903, M1249, m1282 and f1327)**

In September, most of these wolves continued to use their traditional territory in the northern portion of the GNF. The IFT observed that the telemetry collars on AM1157 and AF903 are failing and has attempted to trap them to replace the collars. Wolf f1327 has been consistently located separate from the rest of the San Mateo Pack throughout September.

### **Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185, F1279 and mp1329)**

Throughout September, the IFT located these wolves in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT initiated trapping in August to capture and collar pups produced this year.

### **M1240 (collared)**

The IFT documented this wolf primarily in the central portion of the GNF throughout September.

### **M1244 (collared)**

Throughout September, the IFT located this wolf traveling with Dark Canyon wolf f1278 in the central portion of the GNF, north of the Gila Wilderness.

### **M1277 (collared)**

The IFT documented this wolf traveling in the northeast portion of the GNF and outside of the BRWRA boundary during September. The IFT now considers this wolf to be single and not a member of the Bluestem Pack anymore.

**f1281 (collared)**

In the months leading up to September, the IFT consistently documented this wolf separate from the Fox Mountain Pack and now consider it to be a single wolf. The IFT did not locate f1281 during September, but continue searching for it.

**f1295 (collared)**

During September, the IFT consistently located this wolf separate from the Fox Mountain Pack and now consider it to be a single wolf.

**M1296 (collared)**

In September, the IFT located this wolf traveling outside the BRWRA boundary and in the northeastern portion of the GNF.

**MORTALITIES**

During September, an uncollared wolf was found dead in New Mexico. The IFT is does not know the history or status of the animal. They assigned it stud book number m1334. The wolf's death is under investigation.

**INCIDENTS**

During September, WS personnel investigated five livestock depredation incidents and no nuisance reports in the BRWRA.

On September 1, WS personnel investigated a dead calf on private land west of Alpine, Arizona, and determined it was killed by a bear.

On September 5, WS personnel investigated a dead cow east of Pool Knoll in Arizona and determined it was killed by lightning.

On September 7, WS personnel investigated a dead cow in New Mexico and determined the cause of death to be unknown.

On September 10, WS personnel investigated two dead calves east of Greens Peak in Arizona and determined their cause of death to be unknown.

On September 30, WS personnel investigated a dead cow in New Mexico and determined the cause of death to be unknown.

**CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

No significant activity to report.

**COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

On September 30, IFT members gave a presentation at the Gila River Festival on Water Resources in Silver City, New Mexico. IFT members presented information on the Mexican wolf reintroduction project and explained different techniques used in monitoring and managing wolves.

### **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

Three new USFWS interns, Kaija Klauder, Mike Mohr and Ed Davis, started working for the Project this month. Welcome to the Project!

### **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.