



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

November 1-30, 2010

The following is a summary of Mexican Wolf Reintroduction 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 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). Other entities, including private individuals and nongovernmental organizations, cooperate through the Project's Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) that meets periodically in Arizona and New Mexico.

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 alpha 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 November 2010, the collared population consisted of 24 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among ten packs. Some other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with radio-collared wolves, and others are separate from known packs.

The IFT conducted trapping efforts in November for uncollared wolves, as well as the Paradise Pack. No wolves were captured during any of these efforts.

The IFT has been actively following up on reports of uncollared wolves within the BRWRA this month. No additional evidence of uncollared wolves in the Raspberry Creek area below the Mogollon Rim was documented during November. The IFT will continue to search for wolf sign, as well as gauge the opportunity to capture and identify the suspected animal(s) in this area.

The IFT did confirm the presence of at least one uncollared wolf in Arizona. On November 9, IFT personnel observed two potentially uncollared wolves near the Campbell Blue River south of Alpine. Telemetry information collected at the time of the sighting did not indicate the presence of any known radio-collared wolves in the area. Later in the month, trail camera photos were obtained of M1158 from the Fox Mountain Pack with a smaller-sized, uncollared wolf in the same area that the uncollared wolves were originally observed.

IFT personnel conducted searches for uncollared wolves in the vicinity of Snow Lake in New Mexico this month. Tracks of one potentially uncollared wolf were found in the Iron Creek/Clayton Mesa area.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AM806, AF1042 and m1183)

Throughout November, the IFT located the Bluestem Pack in its traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AF1110, f1188, fp1208, mp1209 and mp1210)

During November, the IFT located the Hawks Nest Pack in its traditional summer territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF.

Rim Pack (collared AF858, AM1107 and f1187)

Throughout November, the IFT located the Rim Pack utilizing both its summer and winter range areas on the central portion of the ASNF.

ON THE FAIR:

Paradise Pack (collared AF1056)

During November, the IFT located AF1056 within its traditional summer territory on the FAIR and northwest portion of ASNF.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Dark Canyon (collared AM992 and AF923)

Throughout November, the IFT located the Dark Canyon Pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF.

Luna Pack (collared M1156 and F1115)

Throughout November, the IFT located the Luna Pack within its traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF.

Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871, AF861 and m1185)

In November, the IFT located the Middle Fork Pack within its traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF.

San Mateo Pack (collared AF903)

The IFT located the San Mateo Pack in its traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF during November.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared F521, M1157 and M1158)

During November, the IFT located F521 and M1157 within the traditional territory of the Fox Mountain Pack, which is in the northwestern portion of the GNF. Throughout November, the IFT documented M1158 as traveling in the east-central portion of the ASNF in Arizona. A single uncollared wolf was documented travelling with this wolf.

Morgart's Pack (collared M1155)

Throughout November, the IFT located this wolf in the northeastern portion of the GNF.

MORTALITIES

There were no known wolf mortalities this month.

INCIDENTS

The IFT did not receive or investigate any livestock depredation reports during November.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

On November 17, at the Ladder Ranch Wolf Management Facility, Project personnel captured M1035, M1036 and M1037 for routine vaccinations and veterinary exams. These animals were transferred to Wildlife West Nature Park in Edgewood, New Mexico. They remain eligible for initial release. Personnel also captured M1043 for veterinary exam and vaccinations. M919 and

M921 were moved to a different pen to facilitate maintenance work. All animals appeared healthy.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On November 3, Jeff Dolphin presented a Project overview to approximately 150 volunteer docents at the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum in Tucson, Arizona.

On November 5, Cathy Taylor met with Quemado Ranger District personnel and a permittee to discuss the permittee's plans for changes in management that are expected to reduce potential conflicts between livestock and wolves.

On November 17, Project personnel conducted a public meeting in Alpine, Arizona, regarding a proposed translocation of a single wolf into the Hawks Nest Pack territory in Arizona. Seven individuals from the surrounding area attended the meeting.

On November 22, Chris Bagnoli and Mischa Larisch met with four ranch managers and one grazing permittee near Luna, New Mexico, regarding proactive grazing management options to potentially reduce wolf livestock interactions on grazing allotments on the GNF and ASNF.

On Nov. 23, 2010, Cathy Taylor met with Glenwood Ranger District personnel and a grazing permittee to review the annual operating instructions and future plans regarding potential proactive management projects.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

Jeff Dolphin was promoted to the wolf biologist position on the Arizona Game and Fish Department's contingent on the IFT. Jeff has been associated with the Project for about four years and brings an excellent field perspective to this important position.

Mischa Larisch joined the IFT this month as a Project wolf biologist for the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Mischa has spent several years as a district officer with the NMDGF in the BRWRA. Mischa's familiarity and knowledge of the Project area and associated stakeholders will be a great addition to the IFT.

Two FWS volunteers, Jason D'Agostino and Kim Romano, left the Project this month. Thanks to both of you for your dedicated work!

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.