



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

November 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 November 2013, the collared population consisted of 46 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 13 packs and six single wolves.

The USFWS extended the removal order for the Paradise Pack AF1056 until February 4, 2014. The IFT will continue attempts to capture AF1056 for removal during the next few months.

The USFWS also issued a removal order for m1274, M1276 or any uncollared male wolf in the Fox Mountain Pack for multiple livestock depredations. On November 21, the IFT captured m1274 with the aid of a helicopter and removed the wolf to a captive facility in New Mexico.

IN ARIZONA:

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

In November, the Bluestem Pack, except f1280 and fp1332, continued to use their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF. Wolf fp1332 traveled separately from the Bluestem Pack, but stayed within the pack's traditional territory. On November 20, a member of the IFT observed f1280 traveling with another wolf separate from the pack. On November 26, the IFT found tracks from f1280 and M1038 of the Hawks Nest Pack traveling together near Rudd Creek. On November 15, WS investigated a dead cow near Forest Road 581 south of Rogers Reservoir. They confirmed wolves killed the cow, and assigned the depredation to AF1042 and m1275 of the Bluestem Pack.

Elk Horn Pack (collared AM1287 and F1294)

In November, the IFT located this pack traveling in the northeast portion of the ASNF in Arizona. The IFT has documented two collared wolves traveling together in the Elk Horn Pack this month.

Paradise Pack (collared AF1056)

During November, AF1056 and M1249, a dispersing wolf from the San Mateo Pack, continued to travel together in the Paradise Pack territory in the northern portion of the ASNF. A USFWS removal order for AF1056 issued in September has been extended to February 4, 2014. The IFT will continue attempts to capture AF1056 for removal during the next few months.

Rim Pack (collared AM1107 and f1305)

Throughout November, the IFT located AM1107 and f1305 using the south-central portion of the ASNF and the SCAR. The IFT has only documented the two collared wolves traveling together in November.

Maverick Pack (collared m1290, f1291, f1335 and mp1336)

In November, the Maverick Pack traveled in the west-central portion of the ASNF and the FAIR.

ON THE FAIR:

Tsay o Ah Pack (collared AM1253 and f1283)

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

IN NEW MEXICO:

Canyon Creek Pack (collared M1252 and F1246)

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

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923 and M1293)

Throughout November, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF. On November 20, the IFT captured AF923 with the aid of a helicopter. The wolf was recollared and released onsite. The IFT observed no uncollared wolves in the Dark Canyon Pack when they captured AF923. The IFT located f1278 separate from other members of the Dark Canyon Pack. Wolf f1278 has been traveling with M1244, but the pair was located separate from each other early in the month.

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

During November, the IFT documented these wolves traveling in the northwest portion of the GNF and moving into San Mateo territory in the northeast portion of the GNF. On November 21, the IFT captured m1274 with the aid of a helicopter and removed the wolf to fulfill the intent of the permanent removal order issued by the USFWS. The IFT moved the wolf to a captive facility in New Mexico. The IFT has documented eight individuals traveling with the Fox Mountain Pack this month.

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

In November, the IFT located these wolves in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT located m1285 and 1286 separate from the rest of the Luna Pack this month. The IFT documented at least five individuals with the Luna Pack in November.

Prieto Pack (collared F1251)

Throughout November, the IFT located this wolf in the north-central portion of the GNF. They did not observe any uncollared wolves with F1251 during the helicopter operation on November 20, but did document an uncollared wolf with F1251 on November 27.

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

In November, the IFT located the San Mateo Pack in its traditional territory in the northern portion of the GNF. On November 21, the IFT captured AM1157 and AF903 with the aid of a helicopter. The wolves were recollared and released on-site. The IFT has documented the Fox Mountain Pack traveling in the San Mateo Pack territory and interacting with the pack. The IFT has documented members of the San Mateo Pack together and separate in November due to these interactions. M1249 has left the San Mateo Pack and continues to travel with Paradise female AF1056.

Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185, F1279 and mp1329)

The IFT located these wolves in the north-central portion of the GNF. Throughout November, the IFT located mp1329 separate from the Willow Springs Pack. The IFT documented four sets of tracks from the Willow Springs Pack indicating the presence of three pups.

M1240 (collared)

The IFT documented this wolf primarily in the central portion of the GNF throughout November. On November 20, with the aid of a helicopter, the IFT captured and recollared M1240, releasing it on-site.

M1244 (collared)

For most of November, 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 November.

f1278 (collared)

The IFT has documented this wolf separate from the rest of the Dark Canyon Pack and traveling with M1244 in November. The IFT located these wolves separate from each other on the November 14 telemetry flight.

f1281 (collared)

The IFT did not locate f1281 during November. This wolf is now fate unknown and not counted in the monthly collared population summary above.

f1295 (collared)

During November, the IFT located this wolf in the northern portion of the GNF and outside the BRWRA boundary.

M1296 (collared)

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

MORTALITIES

No wolf mortalities were reported in November.

INCIDENTS

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

On November 12, WS personnel investigated a dead cow near the Virginia Chaffin-Pioneer Trail road in Arizona, and determined the cause of death to be unknown.

On November 15, WS personnel investigated a dead cow south of Rogers Reservoir in Arizona. They confirmed that wolves killed the cow and assigned the depredation to AF1042 and m1275 of the Bluestem Pack.

On November 23, WS personnel investigated a dead yearling cow near Luna, New Mexico. The cause of death was determined to be unknown.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

On November 21, M1130 was transferred to the Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On November 15, members of the IFT gave a tour of the BRWRA to an independent film crew.

On November 22, the IFT conducted a public meeting in Alpine, Arizona, regarding proposals for initial releases and translocations for 2014. The meeting was attended by forty-two members of the public.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

No significant activity to report.

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.