

MEXICAN WOLF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Summary Notes for Meeting of July 20-21, 2006

Location: Community Center, Reserve, New Mexico
Date/Time: July 20, 2006: 1330 – 1700 (NM Time)
July 21, 2006: 0800 – 1130 (NM Time)
Host: New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Participants: AMOC Lead Agencies: AGFD – Terry B. Johnson (Chair), Bill Van Pelt, Shawn Farry, Janess Vartanian, Shawna Nelson; NMDGF – Chuck Hayes, Saleen Richter; USDA APHIS WS – Dave Bergman, Stewart Breck, Richard Grabbe; USDA FS – Cathy Taylor; USFWS – John Morgart.

AMWG Signatory Cooperators: Greenlee County AZ – Hector Reudas.

Note: some participants were not present for the entire meeting.

Action items are listed in bold type.

July 20: 1330-1700

1. Opening comments and ground rules
Terry Johnson called the meeting to order at 1330 local time.
2. Agenda review/additional discussion points:
Nantac Pack removal order
Stuart Breck's research
John Morgart – other business
3. Discussion of Summary Notes from AMOC/AMWG meetings of April 21-21, 2006
Review of action items; change "Annual Report" to "Work Plan" (regarding template)
4. Miscellaneous
5-Year Review: USFWS response and AMOC's next steps
J. Morgart – not ready to finalize decision on it. Want to fully coordinate with interior and congress and other wolf projects occurring. Proper communication needs to be accomplished.

IFT updates

Occupancy of Alpine Administrative Site

The site (space, budget, etc.) is working for those who are there. Computers OK – new server. Phone bill switched from USFWS to AGFD. USFS put in gravel for parking.

TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

TJ – FYI - research might vie for space in office - particularly in 2008 - so strive for full occupancy, especially of other agencies.

Budget vs. needs in 2006

SF – of \$45k, have 12k left. With pending items – \$1,700 left
G&F has not billed USFS for money, but will be spent by September 30

TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

Why can't IFT purchase processing kit for tribe with their budget?

TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

Depredations

M859 involved July 11 in depredation on Slash Ranch (was closest collared wolf and within couple of miles). Found east of depredation incident and now west of where depredation occurred. Moves quite a bit. GPS collared – gives location once per day. Outside boundary. SF handed out table on depredation information and talked about current status of Saddle, etc.

TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

SF has 43 depredation reports – at least 15 outstanding

Action item: IFT to discuss and tell how SOP needs to be revised (management actions are not being impeded due to lack of reports)

Of reports, 18 confirmed, 4 probable, 3 possible (for 2005)

DB – WS provides a DOW flyer on compensation and two reports to cooperators and 3 reports are provided to cooperators in Catron County

New Mexico not provided all information – communication issue re: WS and IFT

Action Item: to use “Auto Reply” feature as Dave sent schedule to Oakleaf, but Oakleaf gone and therefore we did not know of WS availability

BVP asked if Jess was working OK and Grabbe said he is not a hindrance and that they come to the same conclusions and that he is “helpful with all the maggots”

Management Issues

Meridian OK - no issues - out for 2 weeks

F923 south of Glenwood Monday, OK condition however, may need to be hazed or trapped if she persists near roads or ventures in to populated area.

F924 was by Beaverhead Work Station, NM

M859 might go back into captivity if he persists outside the boundary

Nantac Permanent Removal Order

Conflict of information to WS between Morgart and Hayes

Ranchers upset that WS not using all means necessary and made call to shoot

If not ready for permanent removal, don't put out unless willing to go lethal.

CH asked to emphasize non-lethal means – to give trapping an opportunity to work

Discussed agency perspective

What methods are we trying to employ for a permanent removal order?

DB – use all that is available to us vs. other side not wanting lethal, but removal – how do we address this situation? - Do not give verbal instructions that are not part of the order

Order needs to state – make clear and offer guidance i.e., “trapping 48-hours, then...”
Radio communication issue – couldn’t talk to each other - satellite phones for everyone?
Need one frequency and repeater in Alpine?

Action item: IFT to create a bulleted list of problems that exist and possible solutions to advocate change – provide an assessment of what is wrong

Buy four new truck radios? (for Saleen, etc.)

Stuart’s Research

Cattle carnivore study – update

He will do a report summary of details later

1st broader overview:

1st study area – NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION – November tags come off
2nd site – NM at NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION – has 100 tags and will use
Arizona’s tags next spring when they come off in November. Has two years of funding.
3rd site – TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.

Have a research team put together to focus on Mexican wolf issues. Comprised of Morgart, Breck, Krausman, etc. to focus on research priorities. Meeting on Friday after workshop.
Stewart seeking input on what his role should be here.

TJ – to convey to research group how fit into scheme and filter – get a sense and bring it back to IFT. Stuart to play advisory role.

TJ – regarding recommendation #16 – direct a response to liaison to AMOC for Stuart.

TJ – funding issue: NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION – 50k to pay from G&F (owe). Final report available spring (summary of all studies)

Action item – June 16, need report in hand (by G&F) or Department will not be able to fund for fiscal needs. (Terry would like to see a clear delineation of data vs. interpretation.)

Have an estimated \$400,000 invested so far.

New releases and translocations in 2006 and plans for 2007

Shawn gave an overview of releases.

Possibly of M859 translocated to Arizona – if hook up with a female and release together – but no females available – therefore, if caught, wouldn’t put back out at this point.

F923 not a match for 1008 or 863 (due to genetics)

JM – single males don’t work as return to original area – pair with female better (like F923) – but criticism that we are letting the depredation fall off (by holding in captivity)

TJ – definition of success – tied to breeding – therefore, yank Hawks Nest and replace with another pair as have not been “successful” for the past 3-4 years. IFT has been too conservative putting out wolves – need a shot in the arm.

May be a possible release per Duane’s approval in August, September, or October pending site and public discussion

Owe the public another meeting if select Bear Valley or another site

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SF – Seven packs demonstrating denning behavior.

Lee Valley sighting – no indication of who wolves were. Think might have been a Bluestem animal – first thought maybe M795, but had an adult collar.

M1007 has been with Saddle Pack for the past two months.

Action item: Duane wants a proposal/decision packet (to pursue Redstem release)

Discussion by Morgart to move October AMOC meeting two days earlier (?)

Meeting adjourned at 1710.

July 21: 0800-1130

Continue new releases discussion from previous day

SF - Redstem and seven pups are available for a fall release – pups will be large enough for adult collars

Re-evaluate site selection: Bear Valley, Engineer Springs, Rousensock - with Middle Mountain occupied leaves Bear Valley

Other sites – nothing else (same selection pressures) – things have not changed below Rim.

Suggestion by TJ – will look at a new release in the fall. Have a public meeting Tuesday night during the workshop at Hon-Dah for site selection

SF – **TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION**.

TJ - AMOC vision for greatest possible release for next year. Constrained by not putting any recommendation; breeding pair, pen space limitations - sense on maximizing releases.

No moratorium for 2007. 2006 moratorium dead.

TJ – IFT to look at removal of Hawks Nest, including areas that might be dry and sufficient game pool - as many possibilities as possible, so that in October we can maximize wolves getting out there and address how many can we handle due to work load etc.

JM – request for moratorium by **NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION** is nothing.

SSP meeting: JM discussion of proposed needs for the SSP for releases

TJ – crafting this internally – not publicly

No predetermination that there will be a release in 2007

AMOC needs to be consistent

Comments? (Have 20 or more wolves in wild)

JM- comment on pair with seven pups (Redstem) – something needs to be done with them – some out or get put back into the captive population – with adult pair for potential releases (due to valuable genetics). What are our actual needs and we need to be realizing them?

TJ – make a decision in October

J – SF – in same boat – need final approval first but end up with none

SF – willing to bite the bullet – logistical capability – if put two out, they will be geographically closer together so easier to deal with

TJ – look at 4, 5, or 6 - 3 max (two on and one off the reservation) if have solid reasons

SF – needs to be a shift with monitoring kills etc.

Set up for failure to have all wolves collared, monitored, etc. – get 100 wolves out there and availability to get all collared is unlikely

Cathy Taylor – will get opposition from permittees - not sure where Elaine is – supports it on some level - go ahead with proposal and see where things check out.

TJ - Important that come across as “planning” only – informed decisions

Action item: TJ – SF to meet with range cons to say this is what we are doing but decisions will be made in October

Translocations for 2007

TJ -Any possibility of translocations from now through December?

M1008 / M863 - Arizona might take them as singles but probably not in NM - valuable animals with wild experience

BVP – what about pairing up the Bluestem female? – **TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.**

859 – is too related? 1008 or 863

TJ – why not release in NM?

Re: 1008 – SR concerns with 863 and 859 moving to areas outside or near boundary and picked up or shot and doesn't think this is doing anything good for perception or program

SF – re: 1008 — not much history that know about – caught off a cow

TJ – no other areas in NM? (to Saleen)

CH - animals were functioning as wide ranging males and there is nothing to show that they will change - ought to try something different. If put back out and get back in trouble and accused of doing the same thing in AZ - just farther away – have more chance of hooking up with some one. These males don't readily associate with others.

TJ – eliminate NM – **TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.**

SF – at low level

TJ – **request – TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION.**

SF – Home Creek, but do not support idea - want to come up with something better - have not looked at where could have releases

Action item: give formal assessment of pros/cons so that AMOC can make decision (TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION)

JM –TJ – need to explore translocations for 2007

BVP – would Hawks Nest be easy to capture/trap?

SF – yes, has known territory and no confirmed depredations

JM – 2007 translocations?

SF – F923, F924 - could be anybody - Meridian?

TJ – wants discussion about process – is objective to maximize? Maximum in numbers and minimum stay in captivity?

SF – initial releases are used as a preconditioning area – if doing well, trap and move into NM

TJ – Hawks Nest to NM - more palatable and would open area for pair with 7 pups (Redstem)

SF – increase density in areas with good habitat and wolves can sort it out rather than far apart with issues (livestock etc)

TJ - put this in proposal to compact density in better part of the range than marginal to sub-marginal

JV – TRIBAL INFORMATION REDACTION

TJ - Need to balance all three jurisdictions

SR – NM still has room for wolves – still opportunity for releases in 2007

JM – if get a pair of translocation animals – release with pups – breed in captivity to lock them in – pups key

Action item: In October, to review before meeting, have a full slate of aggressive translocations for 2007. Need no less than 2 weeks to review before AMOC meeting

TJ – Management meeting issue - can't attend. Might consider change to Tues/Wed – tour is important to Hector and Kay

TJ - consider moving Meridian and Hawks Nest to NM

JM – include in document ramifications of no releases

CH – alternatives considered but not carried forward ...do need to go into great detail (include)

Outreach

Priorities and what is going on:

Issues about slide show, integration of?

Attending County Commission meetings, district meetings - where are we with outreach

Outreach occurring with 95% of the people impacted with in Blue range

All ranger district meetings done

County Commission meetings not complete – misunderstanding that thought that AMOC was to do these – IFT to do unless AMOC on the agenda – then AMOC

Permittees, most time spent / drain – contacting after flights

Monthly updates going out and maps

DB – suggestion for outreach, re: International Wolf Conference presentations – are not afraid to hit lethal control and human conflicts – send OR people to see training and bring back here for more balance - send Shawna to IWC

Possibility of NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION doing training at Hon-Dah with Shawna and all PIO's from other agencies - mini workshop?

Action item: DB to talk with NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION about the above possibility.

Action item: Invite Kim Wren, FWS, to workshop (done - Shawna)

IFT Annual Operating Plan for 2007

Due date is October

Something about SU permit (?)

IFT Annual Report for 2006

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February deadline
SF - 2005 Annual Report not posted on web
TJ – needs to be posted on both websites (Sitko should do)

AMOC budget updates for 2006 and 2007
Action Item: within 2 weeks – in 30 days, need to have any adjustments to Estimated Funds Expended. Email changes in sheet so can photo copy for Workshop (due August 4)
And also need a projection estimate for 2007

Other business
SOP key contact – updated information

Myth Busters
Action item: two weeks from today – need comments – some things were adjusted due to the 5-Yr Review- let TJ know if anything missing – are there things hearing at the IFT level that are not addressed? Send concerns and draft response to TJ

Brought copies of 37 recommendations for public

SOP 9 Problematic – changing knowledge of CWD
Action item: work with Bill and Chuck so can come to an agreement and then work with WMAT to OK with them. Get it done before workshop! Due in two weeks to Bill and Chuck.
Have comments from Lisa Shender.

Compilation of AMOC 2006 meetings
Need to resolve for October dates
AMOC / IFT meeting in December

JM – informal meeting - mini directors summit meeting - apart from meeting / workshop - is there a need? Reasons to make and not happen?
DB - Have a breakfast / lunch meeting if want – can come to public meeting - all days and nights are filled – let happen if happen

Two issues are October meeting and Cynthia meeting for 2007. Nice to have meeting on reservation, but she did not identify a date.

Discussion of changing meeting locations (to better fit the weather)
San Carlos in January; Silver in April; Whiteriver or Hon-Dah for AMWG and Sunrise for AMOC in July, Reserve in October

SOP on Electronic Media handed out.

SF - SOP for transport done as a guideline - melded transport and capture and some from SOP 13
Action item: Have transport one be an SOP – need to redo and discuss with IFT. Due in 30 days

JM – other business – SSP meeting next week. Maggie, Melissa, John: cite list for 5–Yr Review – wanted to get copy of all literature cited and available for AMOC. List sent out and John will recreate and send out again and pick out those that you submitted. Need Xerox of cover page and ISBN page if book, but if a chapter, copy those

Colleen asked for Game and Fish historical documents

For administrative record for the 5–Yr review, to make sure records are in place
Public comments that got on the last two federal register notices, JM will copy and provide to AMOC for FYI

TJ wants substantive – to categorize the substance from that without.

JM's trip to DC – questions on base line of number of wolves released and mortalities. Dynamic numbers so initializing a series of tables of vital statistics such as causes of documented wolf mortality etc.

TJ - Put header with “updated as of...”

TJ – Before workshop is it possible to have these done and loaded on the website?

JM – some could be

SOP 13 – heads up - despised by everyone both sides – no one likes certainty if don't go their way

No one understands it – JM asked to create a synopsis version more reader friendly.

Morgart will make this dumbed down version – will then get AMOC participation for change

TJ - problem: every effort has been made to provide context and background intended to clarify.

There are two groups: those who have not read it and therefore don't understand it and those who have read it, but approach is contrary to what want to do. It will be surrogate SOP and will be stuck so don't see it as a solution. SOP 13 could be improved, but synopsis version would be creating a bad precedent

DB – concurs (with “bad idea”)

Several weeks ago, rumor from field in New Mexico that AMOC had wolf intern watching wolves, ranchers and workers - hybrid observed in Saddle Pack - *not for AMOC notes.*

Permit implications? – probably would claim to USFS “just in forest...”

Make LE aware of.

Action item: Ask NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION what they are doing with their interns and have interns identify that they are not affiliated with the Project.

JM would document and make suggestions/recommendations of authorship – but hasn't yet done. Need to publish in a peer-reviewed journal - need objective science. Should we write up info in 5-yr Review or update?

TJ – came to clear consensus to stay with info that was covered in 5yr review

JM- need to make the thing current – document was behind the time when completed. Owe to selves and public to get out more current version.

SF - if did that, then recommendations might not be applicable to data – big concerns.

TJ – Dualing documents

JM – think important to be current in information - would rather have science speak for itself and then follow up on documents and do some work on it in terms of authorship and assignments etc.

TJ – issue timeframe come to play- March/Apr deadline, then make sense. 2005 and 2006 information, then would agree with updated approach. But now and next part of calendar year, don't want confusing factor (i.e., different data set)

JM – would take over a year for peer review

DB – struggling w/ 37 recommendations... potentially conflicting scientific data to evaluate with new data - table it until get recommendations done.

JM- we are going to use all of the data out there to move forward with. Would be one year before would come out anyway. Will use all the data at our disposal.

CH – when is our 10 yr review?

TJ – difficulties of 5yr review...reality is this interferes with recovery planning and is another factor. Focus on recovery planning and recovery instead.

TJ – lay out game plan on paper that AMOC can agree to then look at for timeline and game plan.

JM – opposed to trying to tie those in future rule - so goes the project based on the Project Recommendation will deal process- tj stay with rotation

CH – 5-yr and turn into a review project or IFT report and turn it into a peer review converted to technical publication format

TJ – like approach

TJ – 3 suggestions:

1 – 2006 annual report developed in usual shape and form

2- line out time frame, final technical portion converted to scientific format

3- recommendation of next review of the project

Sharon going to review process

By October make decision on any one of the three suggestions

August 2006 Mexican Wolf Management Workshop

Walked through agenda and made decisions - juggling talks and of talks omitted as well as more topics to include – Dave Bergman to revamp schedule

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TJ -Primary purpose of workshop – to create the opportunity to get a large audience with myth busters about what project is

Action item: Shawna to create a CD of all IFT presentations and provide to Terry Johnson (by July 31) Shawn to help.

Talk about getting Jim Heffelfinger, AGFD or Brian Wakeling if Krausman not available

CH has problem with giving all info to one person to present.

Contact Daryl Waybright, NMDGF, Brian Wakeling, AGFD and Art Tejas, USFS for prey information

Livestock overview - distribution in recovery area – from USFS - Cathy looking into who could do (Wally?) Cathy to let DB know.

DB will also talk to John Caid about prey and livestock info on the FAIR

DB will handle audio/visual needs for the workshop.

Suggestion to put logos up on screen behind directors so folks know what agency are from

Day three (invitee day)

NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION to monitor

Who inviting? Having a conference call with **NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION** on how to approach this – Who's affected or thinks so and explore issues.

Use as a focus group to explore boundary issue, SOP 13, outreach, adaptive management

DB - Preference of no more than 30 individuals max (15 from ea state)

Silent observers not an issue - but not public – but might limit participants to be verbal

TJ compiled names of possible participants for AZ and NM

Need some from SCAR and WMAT – want a dynamic group

Preference not to have extra presentations so that could have open discussion or end earlier

How many people need to have travel costs covered?

NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION REDACTION

TJ - Or offer a \$100-150 honorarium for every participant? (which should cover a full day of expenses) for participation but must complete a written evaluation form before payment will be received

Handout provided on the schedule and locations of 2006 AMWG Meetings

The meeting was adjourned at 1330

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