

MEXICAN WOLF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP  
 INTERAGENCY FIELD TEAM UPDATE FOR OCTOBER 28, 2008 - MAY 27, 2009  
 REVISED FINAL: MAY 27, 2009

**Vacancies and Hirings:**

Paula Capece - NMDGF Field Team Leader (joined Project in October), James Waddell - NMDGF Technician (left Project in October), Cheyenne Burnett – USFWS Volunteer (left Project in November), Beth Wojcik-NMDGF Technician (left Project in April), Allison Greenleaf – USFWS Volunteer (left Project in February), Ben Cook and Carrie Cook - USFWS Volunteers (left Project in May), Holly Lance and Rebecca Carter – USFWS Volunteers (joined Project in May), Rachael Williams – AGFD Summer Intern

**Depredations and Nuisance Responses Fourth Quarter 2008 and First Quarter 2009:**

<u>Report Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Type of Incident</u>	<u>Determination</u>
10-30-08	Snow Lake, NM	Dead Cow	Cause of death ingestion of noxious plants
11-29-08	Mule Creek, NM	Two dead and one injured Alpacas	Cause of death and injuries domestic dogs
01-21-09	Luna, NM	Dead Cow	Cause of death unknown
01-29-09	Johnson Basin, NM	Dead Calf	Cause of death coyote attack
02-10-09	Cerro Montosa, AZ	Dead Calf	Confirmed wolf depredation. Depredation incident assigned to one uncollared wolf
03-23-09	Eagle Peak, NM	Dead Calf	Cause of death unknown. Carcass was 1 year old
04-15-09	Cow Springs, NM	Dead Calf	Confirmed coyote
04-25-09	Coyote Peak, NM	Dead Cow	Owner declined to have an investigation occur
05-11-09	Coyote Peak, NM	Dead Cow	Owner declined to have an investigation occur
05-12-09	Luna, NM	Reported Injured Cow	Injured cow was not found to investigate
05-12-09	Sand Flat, NM	Dead Calf	Confirmed wolf depredation. Depredation incident assigned to F1106. It was the first depredation incident in 365 days assigned to F1106
5-19-09	Mangas Mountains, NM	Dead Calf	Probable wolf depredation. Depredation incident not assigned because of probable designation
5-19-09	Cooney Prairie, NM	Dead Yearling	Owner determined that the cow died of natural causes and did not request an investigation.

Mortalities in the Fourth Quarter 2008:

M922, a newly released single male wolf, was discovered dead in mid November in New Mexico. This case is under investigation.

MP1160 (pup of the year from the Dark Canyon Pack) was found dead in mid December in New Mexico. This case is under investigation.

Mortalities in the First Quarter 2009:

In mid January 2009, F836 of the Moonshine Pack was discovered dead along State Highway 260 in Arizona. This case is under investigation.

F1053, a newly released single female wolf, was found dead in New Mexico. This case is under investigation.

Initial Release and Translocation Activities Fourth Quarter 2008:

On November 6, 2008, project personnel translocated a single male wolf, M922, into the Gila Wilderness near Burnt Corral Canyon, NM. This translocation was implemented to provide a mate for f1040, a wolf whose radio telemetry collar signal disappeared in the same area in 2007.

On November 17, project personnel initially released two wolves, M1039 and F836, near Middle Mountain on the ASNF in Arizona. The male was born in the wild in 2006 and the female was born in captivity in 2003 at the Minnesota Zoo.

On December 19, project personnel translocated a single wolf (F1106) within the BRWRA in New Mexico near Ghost Lake. This translocation was implemented to provide a mate for M1045, a wolf whose radio-collar signal disappeared in the same area in early 2008.

On January 19, project personnel translocated M1039 next to F1028 in New Mexico near Deep Creek after M1039 was captured on January 18.

On January 20, project personnel translocated F1054 into the Fox Mountain Pack territory in western New Mexico in an effort to provide a potential mate for AM1038.

On January 24, project personnel translocated F1106 to Gila Flat, New Mexico after being captured outside the boundary on January 24.

On January 25, project personnel translocated F1054 back into the Fox Mountain Pack territory after being captured outside of the boundary on January 24.

On February 19, project personnel translocated F1106 to Gila Flat, New Mexico after being accidentally captured by a legally set trap on February 18.

Capture Activities First Quarter 2009:

On January 17, project personnel helicopter captured mp1161 from the Fox Mountain Pack in New Mexico. This pup of the year was fitted with a new radio telemetry collar and weighed a

robust 72 pounds during post capture processing efforts. Project personnel also helicopter captured the alpha male from the Fox Mountain Pack, AM1038, and replaced the old radio telemetry collar with a new unit. Both wolves were reunited with the other Fox Mountain Pack members and they are again roaming their territory in Arizona and New Mexico.

Project personnel helicopter captured M1039 near Lookout Mountain in New Mexico on January 18. Project personnel translocated M1039 to the Deep Creek area of New Mexico, immediately adjacent to F1028. The translocation was an attempt to form a pair between these two single wolves.

F1054 moved out of the BRWRA and was subsequently recaptured from a helicopter on January 24 near St John's in Arizona. Project personnel translocated F1054 into New Mexico a second time on January 25. On February 11, project personnel darted and captured F1054 from the ground, north of St. Johns, Arizona. This location was approximately 30 miles outside of the BRWRA. After a general health inspection at the White Mountain Veterinary Clinic in Pinetop, Arizona, project personnel placed this wolf into a chain-link fence pen within the Fox Mountain Pack territory in an attempt to allow the pack to locate this female wolf. After several days, the IFT determined that, due to the uncertain breeding status of F1054, a different female wolf from captivity should replace it in the holding pen to maximize the potential of providing a mate for the alpha male wolf (AM1038) of the Fox Mountain Pack. Project personnel removed F1054 from the pen and transported it to the Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility (Sevilleta) in New Mexico. The IFT determined that another female wolf eligible for translocation into the BRWRA, F1053, would provide a viable option as a mate for AM1038. Project personnel placed F1053 into the pen on February 17. On February 25, project personnel released F1053 from the holding pen.

On January 23, project personnel captured AM871 from the Middle Fork Pack in New Mexico during helicopter count flight activities. This wolf had suffered an apparent trap related injury to its front left leg. The project veterinarian amputated the leg and project personnel successfully translocated AM871 back into the Middle Fork Pack territory, where AM871 reunited with the other pack members.

On January 23, project personnel helicopter captured F1106 outside of the BRWRA on the west side of the Luera Mountains in New Mexico. This wolf was translocated back into the BRWRA near Gila Flats on the GNF in New Mexico on January 24.

On February 18, the IFT received a report from a licensed trapper in New Mexico regarding a wolf that had been captured in a legally-set trap. Project personnel responded to the site on February 19; determined that the wolf caught in the trap was F1106 and it didn't suffer any injury as a result of being trapped; then subsequently transported and translocated it to the Gila Flat release site in New Mexico.

#### Outreach Activities Second Quarter 2008:

October 29 AMWG meeting in Glenwood NM; approximately 29 non-agency attendees.

On November 15, Paula Capece presented wolf information, a project overview and a radio-telemetry workshop to approximately 35 educators at the Rio Grande Zoo, New Mexico.

In December and January, Chris Bagnoli and Paula Capece contacted 66 private landowners in Arizona and New Mexico regarding permission to land on private lands during the January helicopter wolf count and capture operations in the BRWRA. Landowners were also questioned regarding potential uncollared wolf sightings as well.

On February 5, Jeff Dolphin presented training to 35 individuals at a radio telemetry workshop at The Wildlife Society Meetings in Gallup, New Mexico.

On February 7, Beth Orning-Tschampl presented a project overview to 90 individuals at The Wildlife Society Meetings in Gallup, New Mexico.

On February 12, Paula Capece, Ellen Heilhecker, and Matt Wunder attended a public meeting regarding the potential impact of wolf recovery on elk populations in Reserve, New Mexico.

On February 19, Maggie Dwire presented a recovery program overview to a group of 20 work volunteers from the Sierra club at the Sevilleta Facility in New Mexico.

On March 12, Matt Wunder presented a project overview in a public meeting with 30 individuals in Deming, New Mexico.

On March 16, Chris Bagnoli participated in a meeting with five grazing permittees from the Eagle Creek Watershed Group to develop a Coordinated Resource Management Plan for several grazing allotments on the Clifton Ranger District on the ASNF in Arizona. The meeting involved discussions of proactive management options to reduce the potential for wolf depredations on cattle in the planning area.

On April 11, Chris Bagnoli and Jeff Dolphin presented a project overview and radio telemetry workshop to 15 students and instructors from Arizona State University at Sipe Wildlife Area in Arizona.

On April 28, Paula Capece and Cathy Taylor presented a project update and answered questions regarding the wolf program at a meeting with approximately 20 grazing permittees in Quemado, New Mexico.

On April 29, Ivan Kasey, Deon Hinton, Bobby Tobin, and Cathy Taylor gave a presentation on the wolf program and the day to day duties of wolf technicians to a visiting 8<sup>th</sup> grade class.

On April 30, Paula Capece and Cathy Taylor attended scheduled meetings with 2 permittees in the Reserve Ranger District, New Mexico to discuss the wolf program and possible proactive approaches to wolf management.

On May 8, Cathy Taylor presented a program to 60 primary school students from the San Lorenzo school in Mimbres, New Mexico.

On May 12, Cathy Taylor showed a video about wolf identification and discussed the project with the Black Mesa Ranger District personnel.

On May 15, Cathy Taylor presented a project overview and wolf identification workshop to 5 outfitter/guides at the Gila Wilderness Outfitter-guide school, New Mexico.

On May 15, Leon Redman represented the Wolf project in attending a film regarding predators in Silver City, New Mexico.

On May 18 and 19, Chris Bagnoli and Cathy Taylor gave presentations to approximately 256, 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade school students and their teachers at the St. John's Middle School.

On May 26, Paula Capece and Cathy Taylor presented a project overview and wolf identification overview to approximately 70 permanent and seasonal Forest Service employees in the Gila Wilderness, New Mexico.

On three separate outreach events, White Mountain Apache Tribe presented to a total of approximately 200 individuals on the wolf project and wolf biology.

### **2008 End of Year Count:**

- 38 wolves observed during survey
- Six wolves captured (one new collar; two collars replaced, three for translocations)
- Population estimate  $\geq 52$  wolves of which 45 were wild born wolves.
- 10 packs (eight of which consist of at least one wild-born member)
- Two breeding pairs\*\*
- $\geq 18$  pups born,  $\geq 11$  survived through December 31<sup>st</sup>
- 1 pair formed on their own in the wild in 2008
- Two packs produced second generation wild-born pups. As many as ten could do so in 2008.

\*\*Defined as an adult male and an adult female with at least two pups produced during the previous breeding season that survived until December 31 of the year of their birth