

MEXICAN WOLF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP
Summary Notes for Meeting of January 26, 2006

Location: Thatcher AZ (just west of Safford on US Hwy 70), in the Eastern Arizona Activity Center Open Dining Room, 1014 North College Avenue
Time: AZ time: 4 pm – 8 pm on January 26
Host: Arizona Game and Fish Department
Participants: AMOC Lead Agencies: AGFD – Terry B. Johnson (Chair), Bill Van Pelt, Dan Groebner, Sharon Hansen, Shawn Farry; NMDGF – Chuck Hayes, Saleen Richter; USDA APHIS WS – Alan May; USDA FS – Wally Murphy; USFWS – John Morgart, and John Oakleaf.

AMWG Signatory Cooperators: Greenlee County AZ – Hector Ruedas.

January 26 – 1600-2000

A. Welcome, Introductions, Ground Rules, and Agenda Review

Terry Johnson called the meeting to order at 1600 local time. After a brief welcome and introductions, the agenda was followed.

B. 2005 End-of-Year Count

Shawn Farry discussed the total number of wolves in the wild. John Oakleaf reviewed the field survey process and the breeding pair definition in the Final Rule under which the Project operates. 2006 end-of-year counts: total wolves 35 – 49; breeding pairs 5.

C. AMOC Proposed Moratorium

AMOC SOP 0.D, the Moratorium was discussed. As proposed, a 2006 moratorium on initial releases could be initiated if the Project reached a goal of six breeding pairs in the end-of-year count for 2005. The end-of-year count was five breeding pairs, therefore, a moratorium is not required. AMOC will consider the wild population, animals available for translocation and/or initial release, and determine over the next several weeks how to proceed. Thus, there have been no decisions on translocations or initial releases in 2006 at this time.

Information on further discussion of potential initial releases and translocations will continue to be provided at AMWG meetings, and through the *Endangered Species Updates* self-subscription electronic newsletter referenced on today's agenda. Please review SOPs 6.0 and 7.0 for further background on proposals for initial releases and translocations.

D. Possible Translocations in AZ/NM and Initial Releases in AZ: scoping discussion for specific sites that might be used in 2006 (e.g. Apache and Gila National Forests)

Wally Murphy requested comments on use and occupancy for six potential translocation sites in New Mexico. Participants were asked to document cultural, wildlife and social

issues. They were reminded that the issue at hand is use of these specific sites for wolf releases, not whether (in general) wolves should be released anywhere, anytime. The latter question was answered in the 1998 Record of Decision for Mexican wolf reintroduction. Request for Comment forms were available to the public during the meeting. Attendees were advised that they need to submit comment at this meeting, or mail them to the USFS within the next two weeks.

Chuck Hayes reviewed the six New Mexico sites. All are on the Gila National Forest and have decent prey densities. All comments received will be used in a NEPA scoping document that will determine whether an EIS, EA, or CE needs to be completed.

E. 5-Year Review Outcomes and Implementation Actions

Terry announced availability of the 5-Year Review from AGFD, NMDGF, or USFWS in single hardcopy and CD format, as well as in downloadable electronic format from <http://azgfd.gov/wolf>. He also encouraged interested parties to sign up for automated Mexican wolf announcements via e-mail and review the wolf program website. He also noted the following references:

Information on the 5-Year Review, Standard Operating Procedures, and Proposed Moratorium is available at <http://azgfd.gov/wolf> and <http://mexicanwolf.fws.gov>.

Information on Adaptive Management Work Group meetings and other issues pertaining to the Blue Range Reintroduction Project is disseminated electronically through a self-subscription newsletter. Please access the subscription form at: <http://azgfd.gov/signup>.

E-mail correspondence pertaining to Blue Range Reintroduction Project issues should be sent to mexwolf@azgfd.gov. This is a passive email account; information submitted to it will be read and used within the Reintroduction Project, but individual responses will not be sent.

Terry reviewed AMOC's 5-Year Review recommendations, indicating action has started on Nos. 15 through 37. AMWG meetings have been scheduled for 2006 (see below).

USFWS has not responded to AMOC regarding the 5-Year Review recommendations. AMOC is hopeful a response will be forthcoming shortly. USFWS can accept, reject, or modify AMOC's recommendations.

F. Schedule and Locations of 2006 AMWG Meetings

April 21, 2006, Pinetop, AZ

July 21, 2006, Reserve, NM

August Workshop 29 – 31, 2006 with Hon-Dah, hotel rooms held for 28, 29 and 30th.

October 20, 2006, Morenci, AZ

G. General Discussion and Other Business

No other issues were brought up for discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 1745.