

**Blue Range Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project
Adaptive Management Oversight Committee
Standard Operating Procedure**

Title: Location Dissemination Guidelines

Number: 26.0

File Name: MW SOP 26.Location Dissemination Guidelines.Final.20070223.doc

Note: People using the BRWRA are urged to consider that Mexican wolves might be present anywhere in the area at any time. Information that can reduce the possibility of undesirable interactions between wolves and humans, livestock, and/or pets is available from the Reintroduction Project at <http://azgfd.gov/wolf> and at 1-888-459-9653.

Purpose: This SOP is intended to ensure Reintroduction Project consistency in disseminating Mexican wolf location information. It supersedes relevant sections of the 1998 Mexican Wolf Interagency Management Plan (USFWS 1998), and therefore represents, in part, the “Service Approved Management Plan” referenced in the Mexican Wolf Final Rule (50 CFR 17.84(k)).

Exceptions: None. Per SOP 2.0, AMOC must approve any exceptions to this SOP.

Background: Mexican wolf location information is desired by the public for various reasons. Grazing permittees want it so they can minimize contact between wolves and livestock. Recreationists want it so they can seek out (or avoid) wolf-occupied areas. Location information has other legitimate uses, too, but it could also be used to locate and harm wolves. The Reintroduction Project’s challenge is to ensure that legitimate needs and desires for information are met, without placing wolves at risk.

Mexican wolf location information comes from a variety of sources. Weekly monitoring flights gather data from radio-collared wolves. IFT ground-monitoring yields information on collared and uncollared wolves. Reports from cooperators and the public also provide location information. All the available information is analyzed constantly, to provide the best possible location information for Project use and (within limits) for the public.

The Reintroduction Project provides the public with information on wolf locations as outlined below, with the following caveats: (1) inclement weather can limit the availability and quality of location information; (2) location information is largely limited to radio-collared wolves and uncollared wolves that are associated with them; and (3) wolves are mobile, so wolf location information tends to be outdated from the moment it is collected. Again, the prudent assumption for any person is that Mexican wolves might be present in any part of the BRWRA at any time.

Procedures:

1. Weekly Monitoring Information

Wolf packs tend to remain in certain areas (i.e. home ranges or territories), but wolves can move long distances very quickly. To provide the best available location information

to the public, the Reintroduction Project posts approximate wolf locations from weekly monitoring flights at <http://azgfd.gov/wolf> within 48 hours of each flight. Note: As requested by the White Mountain Apache and San Carlos Apache tribes, the Project does not post or otherwise provide to the public any wolf location information for the Fort Apache Indian Reservation and San Carlos Apache Reservation.

Wolf location information posted at <http://azgfd.gov/wolf> includes two bearings (N, S, E, W, NE, SW, etc.) and distance (to the nearest ½ mile) from a landmark. Example: the Luna pack was 1.5 miles SE of Fence Tank, and 3 miles NE of Snow Lake. However, distances are not posted for wolves known to be denning. Example: the Ring pack was SE of Eagle Peak.

2. Incident Related Information

The IFT provides more specific wolf location information to people who might be directly affected by wolf behavior, including livestock depredation. When one of these situations develops, the IFT makes immediate contact (i.e. within 24 hours at the most) to ensure that the person is aware of the situation and what the IFT will do to remedy it, per SOP 13.0: Wolf Control. Telephone, email, and/or personal visit are all used as necessary to make this contact. Examples of such situations include:

- Wolf or wolves known to be near livestock
- Depredation incident with wolves and livestock nearby
- Nuisance incident pursuant to SOP 13.0
- IFT engaged in wolf control action pursuant to SOP 13.0

During denning and rendezvous season (April 15 - July 30), the IFT also discusses wolf locations with specific permittees and landowners, as necessary, in addition to providing more general locations through weekly postings at <http://azgfd.gov/wolf>.

3. Guidelines for Terminating Distribution of Location Information

If law enforcement issues dictate, the Reintroduction Project will suspend these guidelines and cease providing wolf location information to the general public while it formulates new guidelines. If that happens, location information will still be given to specific individuals in as much detail and as quickly as the situation warrants.