



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

February 1-28, 2011

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), New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), 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). Other entities, including private individuals and nongovernmental organizations, cooperate through the Project's Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) that meets periodically in Arizona and New Mexico.

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 alpha 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 February 2011, the collared population consisted of 25 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among nine packs and three single wolves. On January 28, the IFT translocated M1049 into the Hawks Nest Pack territory to potentially provide a breeding male for this pack. Unfortunately, this wolf did not join with the pack and instead became localized next to private residences in Nutrioso, Arizona. After multiple hazing attempts failed to move it from the residences, the IFT captured this wolf on February 2 and moved it to captivity. This wolf remains eligible for translocation back into the BRWRA. The IFT located wolf pup mp1209 of the Hawks Nest Pack dead this month just outside of the BRWRA. Some other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with radio-collared wolves, and others are separate from known packs.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AM806, AF1042 and m1183)

Throughout February, the IFT located AM806 and AF1042 in their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF. These wolves were located adjacent to the Town of Alpine for short time periods during the month. The IFT located m1183 traveling outside of the traditional Bluestem Pack territory on the FAIR and SCAR.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AF1110, f1188, fp1208 and mp1210)

During February, the IFT located all the Hawks Nest Pack wolves, except f1188, in their traditional summer and winter territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT located f1188 traveling with M1158 of the Fox Mountain Pack in the northeast portion of ASNF. The IFT now considers f1188 to be part of the Fox Mountain Pack. In late February, the IFT located mp1209 dead on Highway 191 just north of Springerville. The case is being investigated.

Rim Pack (collared AF858, AM1107 and f1187)

Throughout February, the IFT located the Rim Pack utilizing both its summer and winter range areas on the central portion of the ASNF.

ON THE FAIR:

Paradise Pack (collared AF1056)

During February, the IFT located AF1056 within its traditional winter territory on the northwest portion of the ASNF.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Dark Canyon (collared AM992 and AF923)

Throughout February, the IFT located the Dark Canyon Pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared M1158 and f1188)

Throughout the month, the IFT documented M1158 traveling with f1188 from the Hawks Nest Pack in the northeast portion of the ASNF in Arizona and the northwestern portion of the GNF in New Mexico. The IFT now considers f1118 to be part of the Fox Mountain Pack.

Luna Pack (collared M1156 and F1115)

Throughout February, the IFT located the Luna Pack within its traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF.

Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871, AF861 and fp1211)

In February, the IFT located AM871, AF861 and fp1211 within their traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF.

Morgart's Pack (collared M1155)

In January, this wolf was translocated into the northwestern portion of the GNF to facilitate a potential breeding pair with F1105 from captivity, which did not occur. After the translocation, the IFT documented this wolf traveling alone through the north-central portions of the GNF. By the end of the month, this wolf was back in its traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the GNF.

San Mateo Pack (collared AF903, fp1212 and M1157)

During February, the IFT located Fox Mountain M1157 traveling with San Mateo AF903 in the traditional San Mateo Pack territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT now considers M1157 to be part of the San Mateo Pack.

m1185 (collared)

Throughout February, the IFT located this wolf traveling widely through the north-central portions of the GNF.

F1105 (collared)

The IFT translocated this wolf into New Mexico near Hulse Lake late in January to facilitate a potential breeding pair with M1155, which did not occur. In February, the IFT documented this wolf traveling alone through the northern portions of the GNF.

MORTALITIES

In February, the IFT located mp1209 from the Hawks Nest Pack dead on Highway 191 just north of Springerville, Arizona. The case is under investigation.

INCIDENTS

The IFT investigated two reports of potential livestock depredations during February. Both

incidents were determined to be wolf depredations.

On February 7, WS personnel investigated a dead calf and severely injured cow just outside of the BRWRA near Canovas Creek in New Mexico, close to the Arizona border. The owner euthanized the cow shortly after both animals were discovered. The incident was confirmed as a wolf depredation, and the wolf responsible for the incident was F1105.

On February 8, WS personnel investigated five steers that had been attacked on private land outside of the BRWRA, north of Quemado, New Mexico. One of the steers died as a result of the attack, while the other four sustained severe injuries. WS personnel confirmed this incident as a wolf depredation, and the wolf or wolves responsible were determined to be uncollared animals. The IFT initiated trapping efforts in the area; however, no wolves were captured.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

On February 3, M1049 was brought to the Ladder Ranch Wolf Management Facility after being captured in the BRWRA in Arizona.

On February 26, at the Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility, personnel observed a breeding tie between M968 and F1064. This pair produced five pups last year, and another litter can be anticipated at the end of April.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

No significant activity occurred this month.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

Jacob Humm joined the Project as a FWS volunteer this month. Welcome to the Project, Jacob!

Bonnie McDonald, formerly with the California Wolf Center, joined the Project as a FWS volunteer this month. Welcome, Bonnie!

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.