



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

March 1-31, 2010

The following is a summary of Mexican Wolf Reintroduction 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 Web site at <http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf> or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf>. Past updates may be viewed on either Web site, 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 March 2010, the collared population consisted of 28 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among ten packs and two single wolves. Two former single wolves, F1106 and m1155, have been travelling together since early February in the northwest portion of the GNF in New Mexico. The IFT has designated these wolves as Morgart's Pack in memory of John Morgart, the former FWS Mexican wolf recovery project coordinator who passed away last year. 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 mp1183)

Throughout March, the IFT located AM806, AF1042 and mp1183 in their traditional winter territory on the FAIR.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AM1044, AF1110, m1189 and fp1188)

During March, the IFT located the Hawks Nest Pack in its traditional winter territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF.

Rim Pack (collared AF858, AM1107 and fp1187)

Throughout March, the IFT located the Rim Pack within its traditional winter range in the west-central portion of the ASNF.

M619 (collared)

In March, the IFT located M619 in the central portion of the ASNF, as well as the northwest portion of the GNF.

ON THE FAIR:

Paradise Pack (collared AM795 and AF1056)

During March, the IFT located the Paradise Pack within its traditional winter territory on the northwestern portion of the ASNF and the FAIR.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Dark Canyon (collared AM992 and AF923)

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

Luna Pack (collared M1156 and F1115)

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

Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871, AF861 and mp1185)

In March, the IFT located the Middle Fork Pack within its traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF.

San Mateo Pack (collared AF903 and AM1114)

The IFT located the San Mateo Pack in its traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF during March.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared AF521, m1157, and m1158)

During March, the IFT continued to locate the Fox Mountain Pack outside of its traditional territory in the northwestern portion of the GNF. The IFT located AF521, m1157 and m1158 in the north and north-central portion of the GNF this month. The IFT has not located AM1038 and m1161 since mid-December of 2009, and these two wolves are now considered fate unknown.

Morgart's Pack (collared F1106 and m1155)

From early February through March, the IFT located F1106 and m1155 travelling together in the northwestern portion of the GNF. Since they have been traveling together through the breeding season, the IFT now considers these wolves to be a pack. F1106 was translocated into New Mexico in late 2008 and m1155 was born in the wild to the Hawks Nest Pack in 2008 in Arizona.

F1154 (collared)

During March, the IFT located this wolf in the vicinity of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness on the GNF.

MORTALITIES

No known wolf mortalities were documented in March.

INCIDENTS

The IFT investigated two potential livestock depredation incidents in March. Neither incident was investigated by Wildlife Services (WS) personnel at the request of the owners of the livestock. The cause of death in both cases was not related to wolves.

On March 13, Project personnel located a cow carcass northeast of Luna, NM. The IFT contacted the owner, who indicated he was aware of the carcass and had reason to believe that the cow had died of natural causes.

On March 27, Project personnel found two dead cows north of Highway 60 in Arizona. The livestock owner knew about both cows and declined to have them investigated by WS personnel. One cow died due to birthing complications, and the other died due to advanced age issues.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

On March 4, Project personnel captured F1105, F1108, M919 and M921 for annual veterinary examinations and vaccinations at the Ladder Ranch Wolf Management Facility. All of these wolves were found to be in excellent health.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On March 9, Project personnel presented a discussion to the Ranching Heritage Alliance regarding proactive methods to reduce wolf and livestock interactions on the ASNF and private lands in Arizona at a meeting at South Fork. This group is comprised of livestock producers, agency personnel and other members of the public in Arizona's White Mountains. About 30 ranchers and other interested individuals were present. The Mountain Livestock Cooperative, a group based in the northwest U.S., presented their concepts. They are interested in developing grazing management methods that reduce large carnivore depredations by integrating information regarding carnivore and livestock behavior profiles with management techniques. Members of the Catron County Commission in New Mexico were also present at the meeting.

On March 17, Jeff Dolphin and Beth Wojcik presented a Project overview, including information from the Project's educational wolf box to approximately 20 students and instructors from the Paolo Friere Charter School in Tucson, Arizona, during their spring break field trip to the White Mountains area of Arizona.

On March 16, Maggie Dwire presented a Project overview to 20 attendees from the Sierra Club at the Valles Caldera Science and Education facility in Jemez Springs, New Mexico.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

No significant activities occurred with Project personnel this month.

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 \$40,000 for a total reward amount of up to \$52,000, 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.