



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

May 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 May 2010, the collared population consisted of 27 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among ten packs and one single wolf. Some other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with radio-collared wolves, and others are separate from known packs.

Seasonal note: Wolf pups are generally born between mid-April and mid-May. During the upcoming months, the IFT will be actively monitoring wolf packs to determine if females are denning in order to document wild-born pups and estimate their survival. As of the end of May, the IFT estimates that at least seven packs are exhibiting denning behavior.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AM806, AF1042 and m1183)

Throughout May, the IFT located AM806, AF1042 and m1183 in their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF and the FAIR.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AM1044, AF1110, M1189 and f1188)

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

Rim Pack (collared AF858, AM1107 and f1187)

Throughout May, the IFT located the Rim Pack within its traditional summer range in the central portion of the ASNF.

M619 (collared)

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

ON THE FAIR:

Paradise Pack (collared AM795 and AF1056)

During May, the IFT located AF1056 within its traditional summer territory on the FAIR. AM795 has not been located by aerial or ground telemetry efforts since mid-April.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Dark Canyon (collared AM992 and AF923)

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

Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871, AF861 and m1185)

In May, the IFT located the Middle Fork Pack within its traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF. The IFT documented m1185 travelling away from the traditional Middle Fork territory in New Mexico. By the end of the month, the IFT located m1185 in Arizona on the northern portion of the ASNF.

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 May.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared AF521, M1157 and M1158)

During May, the IFT located the Fox Mountain Pack back within its traditional territory in the northwestern portion of the GNF. This wolf pack had been traveling further to the east of the traditional pack territory for the past several months.

Morgart's Pack (collared F1106 and M1155)

During the month of May, the IFT located Morgart's Pack in the northeastern portion of the GNF, outside of the Gila and Aldo Leopold Wilderness areas.

MORTALITIES

At the end of April, the IFT located F1154 dead in New Mexico. The wolf's death is currently under investigation.

INCIDENTS

The IFT investigated one potential livestock depredation incident in May.

On May 14, WS personnel investigated an injured calf north of Reserve, New Mexico, and confirmed at least one wolf caused the injuries.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

In May, Project personnel at Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility (Sevilleta) documented the birth of a litter of pups to AF1064. These pups, along with AF1064, AM968 and yearling m1187, are candidates for future release into the primary recovery area of the BRWRA.

On May 4, Project personnel captured and moved M1019 and F886 from the Ladder Ranch Wolf Management Facility to Sevilleta. Project personnel also captured and moved M919 and M921 at the Ladder Ranch in order to facilitate routine pen maintenance needs.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On May 17, Chris Bagnoli was present at an open house event at the Nutrioso Community Center in Nutrioso, Arizona, to answer questions regarding Mexican wolf management in the BRWRA. He spoke with approximately 20 individuals during the event.

The IFT has been actively meeting with several Ranger District personnel on both the Apache and Gila National Forests to review current grazing management plans as they relate to known or suspected wolf den sites. The goal of these meetings is to explore grazing management options around these specific areas to potentially reduce the likelihood of wolf/livestock interactions and ultimately wolf depredations on permitted livestock. Specific livestock producers who may potentially be impacted by the presence of wolves on their individual allotments have also attended these meetings.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

Elina Suvilampi, a Forest Service intern from Finland, left the Project in May. Thank you for your hard work, Elina!

Two new FWS volunteers, Jason D'Agostino and Kim Romano, joined the Project in May.

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.