



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

May 1-31, 2012

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), 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).

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 2012, the collared population consisted of 29 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 13 packs and three single wolves. The IFT located some of the collared single wolves traveling with other packs and dispersing wolves this month. 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. The IFT has documented denning behavior for the following packs: Bluestem, Hawks Nest, Maverick, Tsay o Ah, Fox Mountain, F1212, San Mateo, Willow Springs, Luna, Dark Canyon and Middle Fork. During the upcoming months, the IFT will be actively monitoring packs to document wild-born pups and estimate their survival.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042 and m1240)

Throughout May, the IFT located these wolves in their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared F1208 and m1244)

In May, these wolves continued to use their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented the presence of AM1038 with this pack during May; however, this wolf is not included in this report due to its nonfunctioning radio telemetry collar.

Rim Pack (collared AM1107 and AF858)

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

Paradise Pack (collared AM795, AF1056, m1243 and m1245)

In early May, these wolves were documented using their traditional winter range in the northern portion of the ASNF, just outside of the BRWRA. Later in the month, these wolves were documented on the summer range of their territory on the FAIR.

ON THE FAIR:

Maverick Pack (collared AM1183)

During May, the IFT located this wolf on the FAIR.

Tsay o Ah Pack (collared AM1253)

During May, the IFT located this wolf on the FAIR.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923 and f1251)

Throughout May, the IFT located the Dark Canyon Pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF. Project personnel located f1250 dead within the pack territory during May.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared M1158 and F1188)

Throughout May, the IFT documented these wolves in the northwest portion of the GNF in New Mexico.

Luna Pack (collared AF1115 and M1155)

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

Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871 and AF861)

Throughout May, the IFT located AM871 and AF861 within their traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF, including the Gila Wilderness.

San Mateo Pack (collared AM1157, AF903 and m1249)

During May, the IFT located these wolves in the traditional San Mateo Pack territory in the north-central portion of the GNF.

Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185)

Throughout May, the IFT located this wolf in the north-central portion of the GNF.

M1248 and F1246 (collared)

In May, the IFT located these wolves traveling together in the central portion of the GNF. The IFT now considers these wolves to be new pack and will assign a pack name in June.

F1212 (collared)

During May, the IFT located this wolf traveling in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT was able to obtain a visual observation of another uncollared wolf traveling with f1212 this month. The IFT now considers these wolves to be a pack and will assign a pack name in June.

M1252 (collared)

In May, the IFT located this wolf traveling through the northeast portion of the GNF.

m1241 (collared)

The IFT has not located m1241 on telemetry flights or via ground telemetry since late February. The IFT now considers this wolf to be fate unknown.

MORTALITIES

During May, the IFT located f1250 from the Dark Canyon Pack dead on the GNF. The death is under investigation.

INCIDENTS

During May, IFT personnel investigated five livestock depredation incidents and one dog injury incident in the BRWRA.

On May 1, WS personnel investigated a dead cow near Cow Springs just outside of the BRWRA in New Mexico. They determined the incident to be a wolf depredation and assigned it to the Fox Mountain Pack.

On May 3, WS personnel investigated a dead cow north of Luna, New Mexico. They determined the cause of death to be related to birthing complications.

On May 20, WS personnel investigated a dead calf near Horse Springs, New Mexico. The cause of death was determined to be unknown.

On May 21, WS personnel investigated a dead calf north of Collins Park, New Mexico. They determined the incident to be a wolf depredation and assigned it to M1155 from the Luna Pack.

On May 28, WS personnel investigated a dead calf near Wahl Knoll on the ASNF. The cause of death was determined to be unknown.

On May 30, WS personnel investigated injuries to two dogs from the Alpine, Arizona, area. Both dogs sustained bite injuries; however, the cause of this incident was not determined.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

No significant activity occurred this month.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

In May, Project personnel continued with landowner contacts regarding specific wolf locations in relation to livestock calving operations in Arizona and New Mexico.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

In May, two new FWS interns joined the Project, Graham Goodman and Kaija Klauer.

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.