



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

July 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 July 2010, the collared population consisted of 22 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 past three months, the IFT has been 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 July, the IFT estimates that at least seven packs are exhibiting denning behavior, including Middle Fork, Dark Canyon, Luna, San Mateo, Rim, Hawks Nest and Paradise.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AM806, AF1042 and m1183)

Throughout July, 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 AF1110 and f1188)

During July, the IFT located the Hawks Nest Pack in its traditional summer territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF. During July, the IFT located M1189 dead on the ASNF. The wolf's death is under investigation.

Rim Pack (collared AF858, AM1107 and f1187)

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

M619 (collared)

In July, the IFT failed to locate M619 in the traditional areas of the BRWRA that this wolf normally occupies. This wolf is 11 years old, and its radio telemetry collar is aged to the point that it could have stopped functioning. The IFT will continue to look for this wolf for another month before it is classified as "fate unknown."

ON THE FAIR:

Paradise Pack (collared AF1056)

During July, the IFT located AF1056 within its traditional summer territory on the FAIR.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Dark Canyon (collared AM992 and AF923)

Throughout July, 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 July, 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)

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

San Mateo Pack (collared AF903)

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

Fox Mountain Pack (collared AF521, M1157 and M1158)

During July, the IFT located the Fox Mountain Pack within its traditional territory in the northwestern portion of the GNF. In early July, the IFT documented F521 displaying localized behavior near the border of Arizona and New Mexico. This wolf is 13 years old and is considered to be at an advanced age for a wild wolf. An initial visual assessment of the wolf's condition by the IFT indicated it may be injured or sick. The IFT attempted to capture the wolf from the ground to allow for a more detailed evaluation of its condition; however, this wolf proved to be more elusive than originally calculated, and it was never captured. A Project veterinarian viewed F521 from a close distance, and his visual assessment indicated the animal was still able to evaluate its environment for threats and other stimuli and avoid humans. Since that time, F521 has traveled more widely back into New Mexico with M1157 and M1158. The IFT will continue to monitor the status of this wolf.

Morgart's Pack (collared F1106 and M1155)

Throughout July, the IFT located Morgart's Pack in the northeastern portion of the GNF.

m1185 (collared)

During July, the IFT located this wolf traveling widely north of the BRWRA in New Mexico, as well as in the northern portion of the GNF.

MORTALITIES

In mid-July, the IFT located Hawks Nest Pack M1189 dead on the ASNF in Arizona. The wolf's death is currently under investigation.

INCIDENTS

The IFT investigated four potential livestock depredation and two injury incidents in July. Follow-up investigation by the IFT determined two of these incidents were wolf-related.

On July 1, IFT personnel investigated a dead cow south of Big Lake on the ASNF. WS personnel determined multiple wolves caused the cow's death, and assigned the incident to the three members of the Bluestem Pack.

On July 3, WS personnel investigated an injured calf in an area south of Big Lake on the ASNF. They determined the wounds were the result of a wolf attack. The pack most likely involved was the Bluestem Pack. The calf is expected to survive the injuries.

On July 13, IFT personnel investigated a dead cow and calf south of Reserve, New Mexico, in the vicinity of Negrito Creek. They determined the cause of death to most likely be the result of a fall from a ledge. Wolves were not implicated in the incident.

On July 15, IFT personnel investigated a dead cow east of Big Lake on the ASNF, and determined that it died of a gunshot wound. They found the cow in proximity to the carcass of M1189 on the same day they located the wolf. The investigation revealed that the cow carcass was never fed upon by wolves.

On July 21, WS personnel investigated a report of an injured calf in the vicinity of Jenkins Creek on the GNF. They determined the injuries were due to causes other than wolves or predators in general.

On July 27, the IFT received a report of a dead, decomposed cow on Raspberry Creek on the ASNF. The allotment the cow was located on is not currently stocked with livestock, and the area has had unbranded cattle documented on it in the recent past. No collared wolves have been located in this area, and WS personnel did not investigate the carcass.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

On July 14, FWS personnel participated in the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan annual meeting and Reunion Binacional Sobre el Lobo Mexicano at the Wolf Conservation Center in South Salem, New York.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On July 17, Chris Bagnoli presented a Project overview to 77 individuals at Fool Hollow State Park in Show Low, Arizona.

On July 31, Cathy Taylor assisted in the presentation of a program about predators in the Southwest at the city library in Silver City, New Mexico. Approximately 27 individuals attended the program.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

No significant activity occurred during the reporting period.

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.