



## **Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update**

September 1-30, 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 September 2010, the collared population consisted of 24 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among ten packs. Some other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with radio-collared wolves, and others are separate from known packs.

Seasonal note: In September, the IFT continued fall trapping efforts to document pack status and pup recruitment in several packs in the BRWRA. No pups were trapped during the month; however, the IFT will continue efforts to trap and collar pups from the Hawks Nest, Rim and Paradise Packs in October.

The IFT has been actively following up on reports of uncollared wolves below the Mogollon Rim in Arizona. Evidence of wolves in this portion of the BRWRA has been collected, and the IFT will continue to search for additional uncollared wolf sign, as well as gauge the opportunity to capture and identify the unknown wolves.

#### **IN ARIZONA:**

##### **Bluestem Pack (collared AM806, AF1042 and m1183)**

Throughout September, the IFT located the Bluestem Pack in its traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF and the FAIR.

##### **Hawks Nest Pack (collared AF1110, f1188, fp1208 and mp1209)**

During September, the IFT located the Hawks Nest Pack in its traditional summer territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented the presence of at least seven pups.

##### **Rim Pack (collared AF858, AM1107 and f1187)**

Throughout September, the IFT located the Rim Pack within its traditional summer range in the central portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented the presence of one uncollared adult-sized wolf with this pack.

#### **ON THE FAIR:**

##### **Paradise Pack (collared AF1056)**

During September, the IFT located AF1056 within its traditional summer territory on the FAIR and northwest ASNF.

#### **IN NEW MEXICO:**

##### **Dark Canyon (collared AM992 and AF923)**

Throughout September, 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 September, 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 m1185)**

In September, the IFT located the Middle Fork Pack within its traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF. A yearling wolf, m1185, continued to travel with the pack this month. The IFT documented a minimum of two pups with this pack.

**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 September. The IFT documented a minimum of five pups with this pack.

**Fox Mountain Pack (collared AF521, M1157 and M1158)**

During September, the IFT located the Fox Mountain Pack within its traditional territory in the northwestern portion of the GNF. These wolves have been traveling separately at times during the month, and did not localize in any specific area.

**Morgart's Pack (collared F1106 and M1155)**

Throughout September, the IFT located Morgart's Pack in the northeastern portion of the GNF. These two wolves were documented traveling separately toward the end of August. During September, they were traveling together more consistently.

**MORTALITIES**

The IFT did not document any mortalities during September.

**INCIDENTS**

The IFT investigated two potential livestock depredation incidents and two potential nuisance incidents in September. Follow-up investigation by the IFT determined that none of these incidents were wolf-related.

On September 8, IFT personnel responded to a report of a single cow carcass southeast of Alpine, Arizona. The sex of the animal was not determined due to the advanced state of decay. WS personnel investigated the carcass, and determined that the animal died of unknown causes not related to a predator.

On September 8, the IFT received a report of a potential wolf nuisance incident on private land just north of the GNF. The report stated wolves had chased horses through a fence. WS personnel attempted to conduct an investigation of the incident; however, the landowner declined an investigation.

On September 16, IFT personnel followed up on a report of wolves near the Pueblo Park campground on the GNF. The report stated wolves had been howling in the area since May; however, this was the first time information had been given to the IFT. The reporting party stated a wolf was in the campground, but when Mexican wolf photographs were shown to the individual, the pictures did not match the animal seen in camp.

On September 23, IFT personnel located an adult cow carcass south of Greens Peak on the ASNF. WS personnel investigated the carcass, and determined that the cow died of unknown causes, not related to predation. The carcass was at least three weeks old.

### **CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

No significant activity was reported this month.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

On September 8, Chris Bagnoli and Jeff Dolphin presented a Project overview and field trip to eight students and two instructors from Prescott College.

On September 22, Cathy Taylor participated in a panel discussion at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado, regarding Mexican wolf management. Approximately 50 people attended. The panel was made up of an Arizona rancher, Bud Fazio from the FWS and a representative from the Center for Biological Diversity.

On September 25, Chris Bagnoli presented a Project overview and a field trip regarding wolf management to three individuals from the Round Valley area as part of the "Fall into the Wild" nature festival and fundraising event for the White Mountain Regional Medical Center at the Sipe Wildlife Area near Eagar.

### **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

Ryan Wilbur and Quinn Harrison joined the Project in August as FWS volunteers. Welcome to the Project, Ryan and Quinn!

Julie Dewild, FWS volunteer, left the Project in September. Thanks for all of your dedicated efforts, Julie!

### **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.