



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

September 1-30, 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 September 2012, the collared population consisted of 36 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 14 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: In September, the IFT continued fall trapping efforts to document pack status and pup recruitment in several packs in the BRWRA. The IFT captured and collared a female pup from the Bluestem Pack, fp1280. The IFT also trapped and collared an adult female wolf, F1279, from the Willow Springs Pack. The IFT recaptured mp1274 from the Fox Mountain Pack. This wolf was originally trapped and collared in July; however, it slipped its collar shortly after release. The pup weighed a robust 36 pounds at capture. The IFT also recaptured m1276 from the Fox Mountain Pack in September.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042, m1240, mp1275, mp1277 and fp1280)

Throughout September, the IFT located these wolves in their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF. At least five pups were documented traveling with this pack this month, including fp1280, which was captured and collared this month.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AF1208 and m1244)

In September, 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 September; however, this wolf is not included in this report due to its nonfunctioning radio telemetry collar.

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

In September, these wolves were documented using the summer range of their territory on the northern portion of the ASNF and the FAIR.

Rim Pack (collared AM1107 and AF858)

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

ON THE FAIR:

Maverick Pack (collared AM1183)

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

Tsay o Ah Pack (collared AM1253 and m1254)

During September, the IFT located these wolves on the FAIR.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Canyon Creek Pack (collared M1248 and F1246)

In September, the IFT located these wolves traveling together in the central portion of the GNF.

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923, f1251 and fp1278)

Throughout September, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF.

Elk Horn Pack (collared F1212)

During September, the IFT located this wolf traveling in the northwest portion of the GNF.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared AM1158, AF1188, m1276 and mp1274)

Throughout September, the IFT documented these wolves in the northwest portion of the GNF. This month, IFT personnel trapped and recaptured mp1274 and m1276. mp1274 was originally captured and collared in July; however, this wolf slipped its collar shortly after it was released.

Luna Pack (collared AF1115 and AM1155)

In September, 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 September, the IFT located these wolves within their traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF, including the Gila Wilderness.

San Mateo Pack (collared AM1157, AF903 and m1249)

During September, the IFT located these wolves in the traditional San Mateo Pack territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. IFT personnel confirmed the presence of at least four pups with this pack this month.

Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185 and F1279)

Throughout September, the IFT located these wolves in the north-central portion of the GNF. An adult female wolf, F1279, was captured and collared this month.

M1252 (collared)

The IFT located this wolf in September traveling through the central portion of the GNF, including areas just outside of the GNF.

MORTALITIES

No wolf mortalities were documented during the month of September.

INCIDENTS

During September, IFT personnel investigated two livestock depredation incidents in the BRWRA.

On September 8, WS personnel investigated a dead cow on private property in the vicinity of Jones Peak on the GNF. The cause of death from the investigation was unknown.

On September 29, WS personnel investigated a dead calf in the vicinity of Freeman Mountain on the GNF. The incident was determined to be a wolf depredation, and the IFT assigned the incident to a wolf or wolves from the Elk Horn Pack.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

On September 17, Project personnel captured M1130 at the Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility for health evaluations and vaccinations.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On September 15, IFT personnel presented a Project update to 25 individuals at the “Fall into the Wild” Festival at Sipe Wildlife Area. The annual event is a fundraiser for the White Mountain Regional Medical Center in Springerville, Arizona. Another 67 individuals visited a display booth for the Project.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

No significant activity occurred 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 \$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.