



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

October 1-31, 2011

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), 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 October 2011, the collared population consisted of 37 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among eleven packs and four single wolves. Some other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with radio-collared wolves, and others are separate from known packs.

Seasonal note: In October, the IFT continued fall trapping efforts to document pack status and pup recruitment in several packs in the BRWRA. The IFT captured three new pups-of-the-year, two new yearlings and one new adult wolf this month, including fp1250 and fp1251 from the Dark Canyon Pack, m1252 and mp1249 from the San Mateo Pack, m1248 from the Hawks Nest Pack, and M1253 on the FAIR. IFT personnel also recaptured fp1247 from the Hawks Nest Pack and AF1056 from the Paradise Pack in October. The IFT will continue efforts to trap and collar wolves from the Willow Springs Pack in November.

### **IN ARIZONA:**

#### **Bluestem Pack (collared AM806, AF1042, mp1240 and mp1242)**

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

#### **Hawks Nest Pack (collared M1038, m1248, f1208, mp1244 and fp1247)**

In October, these wolves continued to use their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF. IFT personnel trapped and collared a yearling wolf, m1248, which was associated with this pack this month. Toward the end of the month, this wolf began to disperse from other pack members, and was located alone outside of the traditional Hawks Nest Pack territory in the northern portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented five wolves with this pack at the end of October, consisting of four collared wolves and one uncollared pup.

#### **Rim Pack (collared AM1107, AF858 and F1213)**

Throughout October, the IFT located the Rim Pack utilizing its summer range in the central portion of the ASNF.

#### **Paradise Pack (collared AM795, AF1056, mp1243 and mp1245)**

In October, these wolves utilized the traditional summer range of their territory in the northern portion of the ASNF. IFT personnel were able to trap and recollar AF1056 this month.

### **ON THE FAIR:**

#### **M1183 (collared)**

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

**M1253 (collared)**

In October, IFT personnel were able to trap and collar this wolf on the FAIR as part of routine fall trapping efforts.

**IN NEW MEXICO:**

**Dark Canyon (collared AM992, AF923, fp1250 and fp1251)**

Throughout October, the IFT located the Dark Canyon Pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF. The IFT trapped and collared two new pups-of-the-year with this pack this month.

**Fox Mountain Pack (collared M1158 and F1188)**

Throughout October, the IFT documented these wolves together in the northwest portion of the GNF. The IFT has been unable to document the presence of any pups with this pack this month.

**Luna Pack (collared AF1115, F1246 and mp1241)**

In October, 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 October, the IFT located AM871 and AF861 within their traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF.

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

Throughout October, the IFT documented this wolf traveling in the central portion of the GNF.

**San Mateo Pack (collared AM1157, AF903, m1252, f1212 and mp1249)**

During October, the IFT located these wolves in the traditional San Mateo Pack territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. IFT personnel captured and collared two new wolves, mp1249 and m1252, from this pack this month.

**Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185)**

Throughout October, the IFT located this wolf in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT confirmed the presence of another single wolf traveling with M1185 in October, and these two wolves are now named the Willow Springs Pack.

**F1105 (collared)**

At the end of October, the IFT located this wolf in the central portion of the GNF. The IFT continued efforts to document the presence of the one remaining hybrid pup which this wolf produced this past spring; however, no evidence of the pup has been found.

**f1211 (collared)**

During October, the IFT documented this wolf traveling through the north-central portion of the GNF.

## **MORTALITIES**

No wolf mortalities were documented this month.

## **INCIDENTS**

During October, IFT personnel investigated three livestock depredation incidents in the BRWRA. None of the incidents involved Mexican wolves.

On October 9, WS personnel investigated at least eleven dead yearlings in the vicinity of Canyon del Buey on the GNF. The cause of death was determined to be complications associated with transportation of the cattle to the grazing allotment. The carcasses were covered with lime to reduce their palatability to scavengers in the area.

On October 18, WS personnel investigated a dead cow near Sand Flat on the GNF. The cause of death was determined to be organ failure.

On October 24, WS personnel investigated a dead cow on the FAIR. The cause of death was undetermined, but not attributable to predation.

## **CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

No significant activity occurred this month.

## **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

On October 8, Jeff Dolphin presented a Project overview to 40 wildlife management students and associated class instructors from the University of Arizona and Arizona State University at the Sipe Wildlife Area.

On October 8, Melissa Kreutzian presented a Project overview to 40 individuals at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge.

On October 22, Melissa Kreutzian and staff from the USFWS Regional Office presented a Project overview and Mexican wolf information at the Rio Grande Zoo during Wolf Awareness Week.

## **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

Janess Vartanian, rejoined the Project as a temporary FWS technician this month. Janess worked for several years previously on the Project as a biologist for the AGFD, and we are fortunate to have her back.

After almost 30 years of involvement in efforts to reintroduce Mexican wolves back into the southwestern United States, Terry Johnson, endangered species coordinator for the Arizona

Game and Fish Department, is calling it a career. Terry has been instrumental in almost all aspects of reintroduction activities, and his dedication to the involvement of all stakeholders in the process of Mexican wolf reintroduction and management has been a hallmark of his time with the Project. Terry will remain involved in policy issues for AGFD on a part-time basis. Thank you, Terry, for all of your efforts and dedication to the return of Mexican wolves to the Southwestern landscape. Your guidance and insight will be sorely missed!

### **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.