



## Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

November 1-30, 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), 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 November 2011, the collared population consisted of 35 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among eleven packs and three single wolves. The IFT documented two wolf mortalities in November. Some other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with radio-collared wolves, and others are separate from known packs.

Seasonal note: In November, the IFT initiated more focused efforts to document uncollared wolves within the BRWRA, including howling surveys, snow track surveys, trail cameras and coordinated follow up regarding reported wolf sightings. These activities are scheduled to continue over the next three months.

### **IN ARIZONA:**

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

Throughout November, the IFT located these wolves in their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF. Toward the end of the month, the IFT investigated a report of an injured wolf from this pack. The IFT was able to view the animal from a distance, and determined it was mp1242 and had an injury to a rear leg. Capture operations were implemented; however, as of the end of November, these efforts were unsuccessful.

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

In November, these wolves continued to use their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented five wolves with this pack, consisting of four collared wolves and one uncollared pup. The IFT confirmed that M1038 was again with the pack this month; however, the telemetry collar on this wolf is still not currently functional. Toward the end of the October, m1248 began to disperse from other pack members, and throughout November, this wolf was located alone outside of the traditional Hawks Nest Pack territory in the northern portion of the ASNF.

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

Throughout November, the IFT located the Rim Pack utilizing its summer range in the central portion of the ASNF. The IFT located F1213 dead within the pack territory this month.

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

In November, these wolves continued to utilize the traditional summer range of their territory in the northern portion of the ASNF and the FAIR.

### **ON THE FAIR:**

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

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

**M1253 (collared)**

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

**IN NEW MEXICO:****Dark Canyon (collared AM992, AF923, fp1250 and fp1251)**

Throughout November, the IFT located the Dark Canyon Pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF.

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

Throughout November, the IFT documented these wolves together in the northwest portion of the GNF.

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

In November, the IFT located the Luna Pack within its traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. Toward the end of November, F1246 was located traveling on the GNF away from the other pack members.

**Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871 and AF861)**

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

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

Throughout November, the IFT documented this wolf traveling just outside of the BRWRA and in the central portion of the GNF.

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

During November, the IFT located these wolves in the traditional San Mateo Pack territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT documented f1212 traveling away from the pack on the edges of the pack territory. The IFT also documented m1252 traveling widely through the BRWRA in Arizona and on the FAIR during November.

**Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185)**

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

**F1105 (collared)**

At the end of November, 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 conclusive evidence of the pup has been found. This wolf was documented associating with domestic dogs at a hunter's camp this month, and IFT personnel implemented efforts to capture this wolf shortly thereafter. As of the end of November, this wolf had not been captured.

**f1211 (collared)**

During November, the IFT located this wolf dead within the northern portion of the GNF in the

BRWRA. Just prior to this wolf's death, the IFT documented another wolf traveling with f1211.

## **MORTALITIES**

The IFT documented two dead wolves in November. Rim Pack F1213 in Arizona and f1211, a single wolf traveling in the BRWRA in New México, were both found dead this month. Both deaths are under investigation.

## **INCIDENTS**

During November, IFT personnel investigated five livestock depredation incidents in the BRWRA. They confirmed that two of the incidents involved Mexican wolves.

On November 1, WS personnel investigated a dead calf in the vicinity of Bishop Peak on the GNF. They determined the cause of death to be a black bear depredation.

On November 8, WS personnel investigated a dead calf outside of the BRWRA north of Highway 60 on a BLM allotment in New Mexico. The cause of death was unknown.

On November 13, WS personnel investigated a dead yearling on private land in Nutrioso, AZ. They determined the cause of death to be a wolf, and assigned the incident to an uncollared wolf.

On November 17, WS personnel investigated a dead cow on private land in Nutrioso, AZ. The cause of death is pending.

On November 21, WS personnel investigated a dead calf near Elk Mountain on the GNF. The cause of death was determined to be a wolf depredation. The incident assignment is pending.

## **CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

No significant activity occurred this month.

## **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

On November 17, IFT personnel conducted a public meeting in Alpine, AZ, regarding a proposal to conduct an initial release of two single female wolves this winter and a wolf pack next spring in the primary recovery zone in Arizona. There were 24 members of the public in attendance.

On November 9, Cathy Taylor provided a Project overview to 25 individuals at a meeting of the Department of the Interior's U.S./Mexico Border Field Coordinating Committee in Silver City, NM.

## **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

Sarah Eno joined the Project as a FWS intern this month. Welcome to the Project, Sarah.

## **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.