



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

May 1-31, 2016

The following is a summary of Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project (Project) activities in the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area (MWEPA) in Arizona, including the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR), San Carlos Apache Reservation (SCAR), and New Mexico. 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 [www.azgfd.gov/wolf](http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf) or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at [www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf](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 [www.azgfd.gov/signup](http://www.azgfd.gov/signup). This update is a public document and information in it can be used for any purpose. The 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 semi-monthly wolf telemetry flight location information please visit [www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/RWL.cfm](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/RWL.cfm)

**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.

### **Overall Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Monthly Update**

The Fish and Wildlife Service participated in the New Mexico Ecological Services Office's annual Tribal Workshop on Endangered Species on May 5, 2016, and gave a presentation on the status of the Mexican wolf and on-going recovery planning workshops. The Tribal Workshop was attended by several New Mexico Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations, who provided their perspectives on Mexican wolf recovery.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Fish and Wildlife Service participated in the annual Trilateral Committee meeting, which was held in Ottawa, Ontario the week of May 16, 2016. The FWS provided a joint presentation with Carlos Lopez from Mexico on the status of the Mexican wolf and on-going recovery planning workshops.

The FWS attended a court hearing in Federal District Court in Albuquerque on May 26, 2016, on the State of New Mexico's Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction against the FWS for further initial releases and cross-fostering of Mexican wolves in the State of New Mexico. The Judge will provide a ruling within 7-10 days of the hearing.

**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 breeding 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 May 2016, the wild Mexican wolf population consisted of 53 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 19 packs and six single wolves.

### **IN ARIZONA:**

#### **Bear Wallow Pack (collared M1338 and F1335)**

In May the Bear Wallow Pack was located within their traditional territory in the east-central portion of the ASNF. At the beginning of May the Bear Wallow Pack started making broad movements within their territory indicating they probably lost their den.

#### **Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042, AM1341, M1331, M1382, M1404, and F1443)**

In May, the Bluestem Pack continued to use their traditional territory in the central portion of the Apache-Sit greaves National Forest (ASNF). The IFT has not been able to locate AM1341 during the month. On May 21, an uncollared wolf was captured, collared and designated f1488. The wolf was then released on site. On May 23, an uncollared wolf was trapped collared and designated f1489. The wolf was then released on site. Wolves f1488 and f1489 have been located with F1443 from the Bluestem Pack after they were collared and released. At the end of May the IFT documented denning behavior in the Bluestem Pack. Wolf M1331 has been located

separate from the Bluestem Pack for three months and is now considered a single wolf.

**Buckalou Pack (collared M1404 and F1405)**

Wolf M1404, from the Bluestem Pack, was documented traveling with F1405 during this month. The IFT has been unable to document M1161 traveling with the Buckalou Pack since M1404 began traveling with F1405. M1161 has not been located for three months and is now considered fate unknown. M1404 has been located travelling with F1405 for three months and is now considered part of the Buckalou Pack. The IFT has not documented denning behavior in the Buckalou Pack for during the month of May.

**Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294 and AM1342)**

In May, the IFT continued to document denning behavior by this pack this month. The Elk Horn Pack has periodically used a food cache set up by the IFT to supplement the pack due to the two pups cross-fostered into the pack's litter in April.

**Hawks Nest Pack (collared AM1038, M1383, and m1453)**

In May, the Hawks Nest Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north central portion of the ASNF. The Hawks Nest Pack did not exhibit denning behavior during May.

**Hoodoo Pack (collared AM1290, AF1333 and m1441)**

In May, the Hoodoo Pack remained in the north-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT continued to document denning behavior by the Hoodoo Pack this month. The IFT has documented the Hoodoo Pack utilizing the food cache set up for them this month to prevent potential depredation issues in the area.

**Marble Pack (collared AM1330 and m1440)**

At the beginning of May, the Marble Pack consisted of three wolves: AM1330, mp1440, and one uncollared yearling. AM1330 has traveled within the northwestern portion of the ASNF during the month of May. Wolf m1440 has been traveling separately from AM1330 in New Mexico. No denning behavior has been documented from this pack.

**Maverick Pack (collared AM1183 and AF1291)**

In May, the Maverick Pack was located within their traditional territory both on the FAIR and ASNF. While the Maverick Pack has localized during the month of May, it is not known whether the pack is denning at this time.

**Panther Creek Pack (F1339 and M1394)**

In May, the Panther Creek Pack has been located in the east-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented denning behavior by this pack during the month of May. On May 9, The IFT cross-fostered two female pups into the Panther Creek Pack. The pack has utilized a food cache set up to supplement the extra pups in the litter and has been documented using the food cache.

**ON THE FAIR:**

**Diamond Pack (collared M1249, f1437, mp1447, and mp1454)**

In May, the Diamond Pack was located in the eastern portion of the FAIR, the north portion of the ASNF, and non-public land in Arizona. f1437 was not heard or located during the month of April. It is not yet known if the pack denned.

**Tsay o Ah Pack (collared M1343, AF1283, fp1445)**

In May, the Tsay-o-Ah Pack was located in the eastern portion of the FAIR. Wolf fp1445 minimally traveled to the northwestern portion of the ASNF. The pack exhibited denning behavior and pups were documented.

**IN NEW MEXICO:**

**Coronado Pack (collared AM1051)**

AM1051 of the Coronado Pack was not located in May. M1051 has not been documented in 3 months and is considered fate unknown.

**Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923, M1293, M1354, M1347, and f1444)**

During May, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the Gila National Forest (GNF). During May, M1293 continued to display dispersal behavior and is now considered a single wolf f1444 continued to display dispersal behavior, M1354 and M1347 have also not been located with the pack for three months and are now considered single wolves: however, neither M1354 nor M1347 were located during May. In May, AF923 was located dead in New Mexico. The incident is under investigation.

**Willow Springs Pack (collared F1397)**

In May, the IFT documented the Willow Springs Pack within their new territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT documented that AM1158 of the Fox Mountain pack was actually traveling with the Luna Pack and therefore has re-designated F1397 the Willow Springs Pack.

**Iron Creek Pack (collared AM1240 and AF1278)**

During May, the Iron Creek Pack continued to utilize their territory in the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness and the southern portion of the GNF. The IFT documented denning behavior by the Iron Creek Pack in late May. The IFT was able to count a minimum of 5 pups produced by the Iron Creek Pack during the month.

**Lava Pack (collared m1446)**

No evidence of the Lava Pack was documented by the IFT during the month of May. The Lava Pack has not been documented for three months and is now considered defunct.

**Luna Pack (collared AF1115, and AF1487)**

During May, the Luna Pack remained in their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. AM1158 of the Fox Mountain Pack was documented with the Luna Pack, and appeared to be pair-bonded with AF1115; indicating that it has been traveling with the Luna Pack for some time and is considered a member of the Luna Pack. On May 10, an uncollared

wolf was captured, collared and designated f1487. On May 21, f1487 was re-captured and it was determined it was a lactating female wolf. This is the first time the IFT has documented two wolves in the same pack having bred. The IFT believes AM1158 and AF1115 bred, and that M1396 and AF1487 may have bred based on behavioral observations. Genetic analysis of any pups captured later in the year will hopefully elucidate this. On May 24, M1396 was captured and removed from the wild in accordance with a USFWS removal order for repeated livestock depredation. The IFT is maintaining a diversionary and supplemental food cache in efforts to reduce potential for further livestock depredations and assist other pack members feed pups following the removal of M1396.

#### **Prieto Pack (collared M1386, m1455, and f1456)**

During May, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT has continued to document denning behavior by this pack. During May the IFT documented that AF1251 was lactating via remote camera.

#### **San Mateo Pack (collared M1345 and F1399)**

During May, the IFT documented M1345 and F1399 traveling together within their territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT believes that F1399 is denning due to evidence captured on trail camera.

#### **SBP Pack (AM1284 and AF1392)**

In May the SBP Pack continued to use their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. In May, the IFT continued to document denning behavior and documented that AF1392 was still lactating via remote camera. A supplemental food cache has been maintained for the pack throughout May. As May progressed the SBP Pack began making broad movements suggesting that they are no longer denning.

#### **Mangas Pack (collared M1296, F1439)**

During May, the Mangas Pack was located within their territory in north-western portions of the GNF in New Mexico. No denning behavior has been documented by this pack during the month of May.

#### **Single M1398**

During May, M1398 continued to make movements in Arizona and New Mexico.

#### **Single AM1155**

AM1155, formerly of the Luna pack was displaced by members of the Fox Mountain Pack in February and is now considered a Single wolf. During May, AM1155 was documented traveling in NM on the outskirts of its former territory.

### **MORTALITIES**

In May, AF923 of the Dark Canyon Pack was located dead in New Mexico. The incident is under investigation.

### **INCIDENTS**

During May, there were nine livestock depredation reports involving wolves and no nuisance reports.

On May 1, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron county New Mexico. The investigation determined the cow was killed by a wolf.

On May 10, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County in Arizona. The investigation determined the calf died of unknown causes.

On May 13, Wildlife Services investigated three dead cows and 1 dead calf in Catron County New Mexico. The investigation determined all four animals were killed by wolves.

On May 21, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County New Mexico. The investigation determined the cow was killed by a wolf or wolves.

On May 22, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County in Arizona. The investigation determined the calf was killed by a wolf.

On May 28, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County New Mexico. The investigation determined the cow was killed by a wolf or wolves.

On May 29, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County in New Mexico. The investigation determined the calf was killed by a wolf or wolves.

On May 30, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County in Arizona. The investigation determined the calf was killed by a wolf.

On May 31, Wildlife Services investigated three dead calves in Apache County in Arizona. The investigation determined the calves died due to unknown causes.

## **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

On May 18, a member of the IFT gave a presentation to the Winslow elementary school at Bear Canyon Lake.

On May 30, a member of the IFT gave a presentation to a High School class from Corona Del Sol at the Alpine Divide Campground.

## **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

During May, Elizabeth Karlake started a volunteer position with the USFWS. Welcome Elizabeth!

## **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.