



Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

September 1-30, 2015

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), 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 or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at 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. 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 semi-monthly wolf telemetry flight location information please visit 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.

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 September 2015 the wild Mexican wolf population consisted of 48 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 21 packs and three single wolves. Members of the IFT continue pup counts this month and have so far counted 43 pups produced by 11 packs in the MWEPA.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042, m1331, f1333, m1382, m1404, and f1405)

In September, the Bluestem Pack continued to use their traditional territory in the central portion of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (ASNF). Bluestem wolves' f1333, m1382, and m1404 have been located in their traditional territory during the month, while m1331 has been located separate from the pack in New Mexico. Wolf f1405 has been located separate from the pack in eastern Arizona.

Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294 and M1342)

In September, the Elk Horn Pack continued to make broad movements within their traditional territory in the northeast portion of the ASNF. Visuals on the pack have not confirmed the presence of pups.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AM1038, AF1280, m1383, and f1439)

In September, the Hawks Nest Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north central portion of the ASNF. The IFT continued to document Hawks Nest utilizing a rendezvous site in September. A diversionary food cache was maintained to reduce potential conflicts with livestock. Wolf fp1438 was found dead this month. The incident is under investigation.

Hoodoo Pack (collared AM1290 and mp1441)

In August, AM1290 remained localized in the north-central portion of the ASNF. In September, the IFT documented AM1290 traveling with another adult wolf and at least two pups. A male pup born in April (mp1441) was captured and collared by the IFT.

Marble Pack (collared AF1340, mp1440, and fp1442)

The IFT continued to document a male wolf with a non-functional radio collar traveling with AF1340 in the northwest-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT continued to document the Marble Pack utilizing a rendezvous site in September. The IFT also documented a minimum of five pups traveling with the Marble Pack. The IFT captured and collared a second pup born this year (fp1442). A diversionary food cache was maintained to reduce potential conflicts with livestock.

Maverick Pack (collared AM1183, AF1291, and f1335)

During September, the Maverick Pack traveled within their traditional territory both on the FAIR and ASNF.

Panther Creek Pack (F1339 and M1394)

The IFT has documented denning behavior from the Panther Creek Pack, and has documented a minimum of one pup. The Panther Creek Pack has been located in the east-central portion of the ASNF. A diversionary food cache has been set up to reduce potential conflicts with livestock.

Rim Pack (AF1305)

In September, AF1305 has remained in the traditional Rim Pack territory in the central portion of the ASNF.

Bear Wallow Pack (m1338 and f1335)

This pack continues to utilize the east-central portion of the ASNF.

Single M1161 (Collared)

M1161 has not been located during the month of September. The IFT believes the collar has failed.

ON THE FAIR:

Diamond Pack (collared 1437)

During September, the Diamond Pack was located on the FAIR.

Tsay o Ah Pack (collared M1343 and AF1283)

During September, the Tsay o Ah Pack was located on the FAIR.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Coronado Pack (collared AM1051)

During September, AM1051 of the Coronado Pack was not located.

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923, M1293, m1354 and m1347)

During September, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the Gila National Forest (GNF). A diversionary food cache has been set up and maintained to reduce potential conflicts with livestock.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared m1396)

In September, the IFT documented the Fox Mountain Pack within their traditional territory in the northwest portion of the GNF.

Iron Creek Pack (collared AM1240 and AF1278)

In September, 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 captured and re-collared the breeding pair (AM1240 and AF1278) in late September. The IFT continues to document denning behavior in this pack during the month.

Lava Pack (collared M1285 and F1295)

In September, the Lava Pack was located in its traditional territory between the Gila Wilderness

and the Elk Mountains. The IFT has documented pups produced by the Lava pack. Two diversionary food caches have been maintained to reduce potential conflicts with livestock.

Luna Pack (collared AM1155, AF1115, and m1398)

In September, AM1155 remained in the Luna Pack territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. Luna wolves AM1155 and m1398 have been documented traveling at different times together during the month of September.

Prieto Pack (collared AM1387, AF1251, m1386 and f1392)

During September, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT continues to document denning behavior in this pack during the month. The IFT attempted to trap other members of the Prieto Pack this month to collar additional wolves, but efforts were unsuccessful. A diversionary food cache has been set up and maintained to reduce potential conflicts with livestock.

San Mateo Pack (collared AF903 and M1345)

During September, the San Mateo pack was located within their traditional territory in north eastern portions of the GNF.

Willow Springs Pack (collared AM1185, f1390 and f1397)

In September, the IFT located the Willow Springs Pack in their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT was unsuccessful at trapping the Willow Springs pack in September.

M1284 (collared)

During September, M1284 was located by the IFT within the GNF in New Mexico.

m1350 (collared)

Wolf m1350 was not located during September.

Mangas Pack (collared M1296)

During September, M1296 made large movements in and outside the north eastern portion of the GNF in New Mexico.

MORTALITIES

In September, fp1438 from the Hawks Nest Pack was found dead in Arizona. The incident is under investigation.

In September, f1390 a, dispersing wolf from the Willow Springs Pack, was located dead in New Mexico. The incident is under investigation.

INCIDENTS

During September, there were 8 livestock depredation reports involving wolves and no nuisance reports.

On September 1, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow near Coyote Creek in Arizona. The investigation determined the calf was a probable wolf kill.

On September 4, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow south of Tenney Mountain in Arizona. The investigation determined the cow had been killed by wolves. The Depredation was assigned to the Bluestem Pack.

On September 7, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf near Greens Peak Arizona. The investigation determined the calf died of pneumonia.

On September 7, Wildlife Services investigated a second dead calf near Greens Peak in Arizona. The investigation determined the calf was killed by lightning.

On September 8, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf south of Reservation Lake in Arizona. The investigation determined the calf was killed by lightning.

On September 8, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow south of Reservation Lake. The investigation determined the cow was killed by wolves. The incident was assigned to the Maverick Pack.

On September 25, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Williams Valley Arizona. The investigation determined the calf was killed by a motor vehicle collision.

On September 27, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Williams Valley in Arizona. The investigation determined that the cow was killed by a motor vehicle collision.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On September 9, an IFT member gave a presentation on wolves to a Boy Scout troop near Carnero Lake in Arizona.

On September 26 and 27, the IFT ran a wolf information booth at the Wildlife Fair in Pinetop Arizona.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

No significant activity to report.

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.