



Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

April 1-30, 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 <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 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 <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

Fish and Wildlife Service staff participated in the Arizona Ecological Services Office's Tribal meeting on April 6, to discuss issues regarding the revised regulations for the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area and recovery planning.

The Service, the states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah; the Mexican agencies SEMARNAT and CONANP; the U.S. Embassy; and independent scientists from the U.S. and Mexico met in Mexico City April 11 to 14 to continue discussions on Mexican wolf demographics and genetics and develop information for habitat modelling in the U.S. and Mexico for the development of a revised recovery plan for the Mexican wolf.

On April 26, 2016, the Service signed a settlement agreement with the State of Arizona and Defenders of Wildlife and other environmental groups to complete a new recovery plan for the Mexican wolf. The new recovery plan is scheduled to be published by the end of November 30, 2017. The Service also agreed to complete an independent peer review of the draft recovery plan, in accordance with the Service's Peer Review Policy and to solicit and consider all available scientific and commercial information from appropriate State agencies and other entities as specified in the Peer Review Policy. The Service will submit reports on the status of the recovery planning process to the Court and to the parties to the litigation at six month intervals.

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 April 2016, the wild Mexican wolf population consisted of 53 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 19 packs and two single wolves.

IN ARIZONA:

Bear Wallow Pack (collared M1338 and F1335)

In April the Bear Wallow Pack was located within their traditional territory in the east-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT has documented denning behavior by the Bear Wallow Pack.

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

In April, the Bluestem Pack continued to use their traditional territory in the central portion of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (ASNF). Wolves AM1341 and F1443 have been located in the traditional Bluestem territory during the month. Wolf M1331 has been located in the north-east portion of the GNF in New Mexico in April.

Buckalou Pack (collared M1404, F1405 and M1161)

Wolf M1404, from the Bluestem Pack, was documented traveling with F1405 during this month. M1161 has a non-functional radio collar. The IFT has been unable to document M1161 traveling with the Buckalou Pack since M1404 began traveling with F1405.

Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294 and AM1342)

In April, the Elk Horn Pack continued to travel within their traditional territory in the northeast portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented denning behavior by this pack this month. On April 30, two pups were flown to Arizona from the Brookfield Zoo and cross-fostered into the Elk Horn litter.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AM1038, M1383, and mp1453)

In April, 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 April.

Hoodoo Pack (collared AM1290, AF1333 and m1441)

In April, the Hoodoo Pack remained in the north-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented denning behavior by the Hoodoo Pack this month. On April 25, the IFT documented that the Hoodoo pack had killed a calf elk near Nutrioso Reservoir. After removing the elk carcass away from development and into the national forest, the Hoodoo Pack was reported near a residence and approaching some chickens. The home owner hazed the wolves away and no further incidents have occurred.

Marble Pack (collared AM1330 and m1440)

At the beginning of April, the Marble Pack consisted of three wolves: AM1330, mp1440, and one uncollared yearling. During April, these wolves split up and have been making broad dispersal movements. AM1330 dispersed onto the FAIR and the southern portion of the ASNF, and has remained in traditional Bluestem Pack territory. Beginning April 18, m1440 has been in New Mexico and traveling east. No denning behavior has been documented from this pack.

Maverick Pack (collared AM1183 and AF1291)

In April, the Maverick Pack was located within their traditional territory both on the FAIR and ASNF. No denning behavior has been documented by this pack this month.

Panther Creek Pack (F1339 and M1394)

In April, the Panther Creek Pack has been located in the east-central portion of the ASNF. No denning behavior has been documented by this pack.

ON THE FAIR:

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

During March, the Diamond Pack was located in the eastern portion of the FAIR, the north portion of the ASNF, and non-public land in Arizona. Wolf f1437 was not heard or located during the month of April.

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

During March, the Tsay O Ah Pack was located in the eastern portion of the FAIR.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Coronado Pack (collared AM1051)

AM1051 of the Coronado Pack was not located in April.

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923, M1293, M1354, M1347, and m1444)

During April, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the Gila National Forest (GNF). Wolf M1354 was not located in April, M1293 was located separate from other pack members but near the southern extent of the packs territory, and m1444 continued to display dispersal behavior. Wolf m1347 was located outside the Dark Canyon Pack territory for most of March.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared F1397 and M1396)

In April, the IFT documented the Fox Mountain Pack within their new territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT continues to believe that AM1158 is traveling with F1397. Wolf M1396 continued to be documented traveling with AF1115 of the Luna pack.

Iron Creek Pack (collared AM1240 and AF1278)

During April, 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 April.

Lava Pack (collared m1446)

No evidence of the Lava Pack was documented by the IFT during the month of April.

Luna Pack (collared AM1155, AF1115, and M1398)

During April, the Luna Pack remained in their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT continues to document dispersal behavior of M1398 traveling mainly in portions of the GNF in New Mexico. Wolf AF1115 was located traveling with M1396 of the Fox Mountain Pack again throughout April. The IFT has documented denning behavior by the Luna Pack in April.

Prieto Pack (collared M1386, m1445 and F1392)

During April, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT has documented denning behavior by this pack in April.

San Mateo Pack (collared M1345 and F1399)

During April, the IFT documented M1345 and F1399 traveling together within their territory in the north-central portion of the GNF.

Sheepherder's Baseball Park Pack (AM1284 and AF1392)

On April 23 the IFT fostered two captive-born pups from the Endangered Wolf Center outside St. Louis, MO, into this pack in New Mexico.

Mangas Pack (collared M1296, F1439)

During April, in the Mangas Pack was located within their territory in north-western portions of the GNF in New Mexico.

MORTALITIES

No mortalities were documented during the month of April.

INCIDENTS

During April, there were three livestock depredation reports involving wolves and one nuisance report.

On April 2, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron county New Mexico. The cause of death was due to unknown causes.

On April 22, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County New Mexico. The investigation determined the cow died of unknown causes.

On April 25, AM1290 and m1441 from the Hoodoo Pack were seen close to private property in Nutrioso. The wolves were seen going toward some chickens. The home owner scared the wolves away and no further incidences have occurred. The IFT investigated the report and confirmed it was the Hoodoo Pack.

On April 26, WMAT investigated an injured calf on the FAIR. The cause of injury was determined to be coyotes.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On April 14, WMAT conducted a wildlife presentation at Williams Creek Fish Hatchery on the FAIR.

On April 20, WMAT conducted a wildlife presentation at Whiteriver Elementary School on the FAIR.

On April 22, WMAT conducted a wildlife presentation at Fort Apache on the FAIR.

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.