



Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

March 1-31, 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 <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 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 March 2015 the wild Mexican Wolf population consisted of 58 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 18 packs and three single wolves.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042, AM1341, m1330, m1331, f1333, f1339, f1340 and mp1382)

In March, the Bluestem Pack continued to use their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF. Wolf f1339 continues to travel separate from the pack with single m1394 and has been located on the SCAR for all of March. Wolf f1340 remained separated from the Bluestem Pack for the month of March and traveled within the ASNF from Big Lake to Greens Peak. The pair was observed south of Greens Peak in Arizona. In March, the satellite collar on AM1341 dropped off, the design of this collar allows the collar to drop off the wolf, and be retrieved for re-programming as the collar nears the end of its battery life. The IFT has concluded the predation study for winter 2015. The Bluestem Pack was monitored as part of that study.

Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294 and M1342)

In March, AF1294 and M1342 were located within their traditional territory in the northeast portion of the ASNF in Arizona. At the end of March the collar on M1342 began to fail and is currently no longer functioning. The IFT has obtained photos of M1342 with the use of a trail camera indicating the wolf is still alive and traveling with AF1294.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AM1038, AF1280 and mp1383)

In March, the Hawks Nest Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north central portion of the ASNF. The IFT concluded the winter 2015 predation study. The Hawks Nest Pack was monitored as part of that study.

Hoodoo Pack (collared M1290)

In March, M1290 was located throughout the month in the area northwest of Noble Mountain and west of Nutrioso in Arizona. The collar on wolf f1395 has not been functioning since February 11. The IFT has not obtained evidence that a second wolf is traveling with M1290 during the month.

Maverick Pack (collared AM1183, AF1291, and f1335)

During March, the Maverick Pack traveled within their traditional territory both on the FAIR and ASNF. Wolf f1335 began traveling separately from the Maverick Pack at the end of the month.

Single M1161 (Collared)

In March, M1161 was located in the east-central portion of the ASNF in Arizona and the western part of the GNF in New Mexico. At the beginning of March M1161 was confirmed in the killing of two livestock calves in New Mexico. This wolf then returned to Arizona where it remained

throughout the month.

Single m1394 (collared)

In March, m1394 was located traveling with f1339 from the Bluestem Pack. Both wolves were located on the SCAR throughout March.

ON THE FAIR:

Tsay o Ah Pack (collared M1343 and AF1283)

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

Tse ighan lige Pack (collared AM1249, fp1389 and f1388)

M1249 has not been located for two months. This is probably due to a malfunctioning radio collar. On March 17, f1388 was located dead. The incident is still under investigation. On March 24 fp1389 was located dead in Arizona. This incident is also under investigation.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Canyon Creek Pack (collared AM1252 and AF1246)

During March, AM1252 and AF1246 have not been located for three consecutive months and are now considered fate unknown.

Coronado Pack (collared AM1051)

In March, the IFT located AM1051 in south-central portions of the Gila Wilderness.

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923, M1293, mp1354 and mp1347)

Throughout March, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared AM1158, and mp1396)

On March 13, mp1384 was removed to captivity for multiple depredations per a USFWS removal order. In March the IFT documented the Fox Mountain Pack within their traditional territory in the northwest portion of the GNF. During March the collar on AM1158 failed but the IFT has obtained photos from a trail camera indicating AM1158 is still alive and traveling with mp1396.

Iron Creek Pack (collared AM1240 and AF1278)

In March, the Iron Creek Pack continued to utilize their territory in the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness and the southern portion of the Gila National Forest.

Lava Pack (collared M1285 and F1295)

Throughout March, M1285 and F1295 were located together traveling in the northwest portion of the Gila Wilderness.

Luna Pack (collared AM1155, AF1115, and mp1398)

In March, AM1155 and AF1115 of the Luna Pack remained in their traditional territory in the

north-central portion of the GNF. In March, the IFT ended the investigation of GPS clusters associated with the Luna Pack for the winter 2015 predation study. Wolf m1337 has not been located for three months and is now considered fate unknown.

Mangas Pack (collared M1296)

In March, M1296 traveled within the northern portion of the GNF in New Mexico and east of the Gila National Forest boundary.

Prieto Pack (collared AM1387, AF1251, mp1386 and fp1392)

Throughout March, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. The collar on AF1251 failed during the month of March.

San Mateo Pack (collared AF903, M1345 and fp1399)

During March, the IFT located AF903 traveling with M1345 within the traditional territory of the San Mateo Pack. The collar on fp1399 failed during the month of March.

Willow Springs Pack (collared AM1185, AF1279, mp1385, and fp1390)

Throughout March, the IFT located the Willow Springs Pack in their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF.

M1284 (collared)

Throughout March, M1284 was located traveling the northern-central portion of the GNF.

M1338 (collared)

Throughout March, M1338 was located traveling in the central portion of the ASNF.

mp1350 (collared)

Throughout March, mp1350 has been located in the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness and the southern portion of the GNF in New Mexico.

MORTALITIES

In March, f1388 was located dead in Arizona. The incident is under investigation.

In March, fp1389 was located dead in Arizona. The incident is under investigation.

INCIDENTS

During March there were 10 livestock depredation reports involving wolves and one nuisance report involving a dog and a wolf resulting in injury to the dog.

On March 3, Wildlife Services investigated one dead cow near Spur Lake Basin in New Mexico. The investigation determined the cow was killed by wolves. A second calf was investigated the same day in the same area and was confirmed to have been killed by wolves. The depredation was assigned as one incident to M1161.

On March 6, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow near Spur Lake Basin in New Mexico. The investigation determined the cow was killed by a wolf.

On March 8, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow near Hardcastle in New Mexico. The investigation determined the cow had been killed a wolf.

On March 13, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow near Aragon New Mexico. The investigation confirmed the cow had been killed by a wolf.

On March 19, Wildlife Services investigated a nuisance incident in which a dog was reported to have been attacked by a wolf near Collins Park in New Mexico. The injuries to the dog were confirmed as being caused by a wolf.

On March 24, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow near Springerville Arizona. The investigation confirmed the cow had been killed by a wolf.

On March 27, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow near Sand Flats New Mexico. The investigation confirmed the cow had been killed by a wolf.

On March 30, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow near Centerfire Creek in New Mexico. The investigation confirmed the cow had been killed by a wolf.

On March 30, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow near Strayhorse in Arizona. The investigation confirmed the cow had been killed by a wolf.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On March 6, a member of the IFT gave an interview with KVSL radio in Lakeside Arizona.

On March 13, the IFT conducted a meeting at the Alpine community center to collect public comment on proposed initial release and translocations of Mexican Gray Wolves for 2015.

On March 26, a member of the IFT gave a project update in Cottonwood Arizona.

On March 31, a member of the IFT gave a project update at the Arizona Game and Fish and Apache Sitgreaves Forest Service Coordination meeting.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

On March 31, Lauren Ross, and Kenneth Loonam started their internship with the USFWS. Thanks for your help!

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.