



Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

October 1 - 31, 2017

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 or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf. For information on the FAIR call (928) 338-4385 ext. 226. Past updates may be viewed on either website. Interested parties may [sign up](#) to receive this update electronically by visiting www.azgfd.com and clicking on the E-news Signup tab on the top left corner of the webpage. 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://arcg.is/0iGSGH> or www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/RWL.cfm.

Please report any wolf sightings or suspected livestock depredations to: the Alpine wolf office (928) 339-4329, Pinetop wolf office (928) 532-2391 or toll free at (888) 459-9653. For sightings or suspected depredations on the FAIR, please call the FAIR wolf office in Whiteriver at (928) 338-4385 ext. 226. 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 Updates

The USFWS met with Phil Miller, of Conservation Planning Specialist Group, in the week of October 2 to discuss public and peer review comments on the draft Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan, Biological Report and appendices.

The Department of Justice submitted the 6-month status report to the court on October 18, in compliance with the Stipulated Settlement Agreement to complete the Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan by the end of November 2017.

Southwest Regional Director Amy Lueders met with the WMAT Tribal Council on October 18 to discuss several USFWS issues, including the Mexican Wolf Recovery Program.

The USFWS convened a conference call with Mexico's National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP by its Spanish acronym) to discuss actions and costs necessary to achieve recovery of Mexican wolves in Mexico.

The USFWS met with the AGFD and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish on October 25 to discuss issues regarding the final Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan.

On October 27, 2017, Peter Siminski retired from the Living Desert Zoo and Gardens in Palm Desert, California, and as the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan Coordinator and Studbook Keeper. The USFWS expresses its gratitude for the more than 30 years that Peter Siminski has devoted to the recovery of the Mexican wolf.

Regional Director Lueders convened a conference call on October 30 with the Mexican Wolf Tribal Working Group to discuss Tribal perspectives on Mexican wolf recovery.

On October 31, Regional Director Lueders contacted the leaders of several Tribes and Pueblos directly affected by Mexican wolf recovery in Arizona and New Mexico to discuss concerns, process and communication.

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. Studbook numbers listed in the monthly update denote wolves with functioning radio collars. 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

Annual surveys are conducted in the winter as this is when the population experiences the least amount of natural fluctuation (i.e. in the spring the population increases dramatically with the birth of new pups and declines throughout the summer and fall as mortality is particularly high on young pups). Thus, the IFT summarizes the total number of wolves in the winter at a fairly

static or consistent time of year. This allows for comparable year-to-year trends at a time of year that accounts for most mortality and survival of young pups.

During annual year-end population counts, the IFT documented a minimum of 113 Mexican wolves in the wild in Arizona and New Mexico at the end of 2016. At the end of October, there were 69 wolves with functioning radio collars that the IFT was actively monitoring.

Wolves with functioning radio collars are listed by studbook number in the pack updates below.

IN ARIZONA:

Bear Wallow Pack (collared AM1338, AF1335, and m1673)

In October, the Bear Wallow Pack was located within their traditional territory on the SCAR and on the east central portion of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (ASNF). A yearling male, m1673, travelling with the Bear Wallow Pack was captured, collared, and released. A minimum of three pups were documented; however, minimum pup numbers may change as the IFT continues to document observations of wolf packs.

Bluestem Pack (collared F1489, f1563, and fp1665)

In October, the Bluestem Pack continued to use their traditional territory in the east central portion of the ASNF. Two pups were documented with the pack in October.

Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294, m1471, f1473, m1477, fp1668, and mp1671)

In October, the Elk Horn Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north eastern portion of the ASNF. A male pup, mp1671, and a yearling male, m1477, were captured, collared and released in October. Two pups were documented traveling with the pack in October.

Frieborn Pack (collared F1443 and m1447)

In October, the Frieborn Pack was documented within their territory in the east central portion of the ASNF in Arizona and into New Mexico. No pups have been documented traveling with F1443 and m1447.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AM1038)

In October, the Hawks Nest Pack consisted of one collared wolf, AM1038. AM1038 was located traveling alone in the traditional territory of the Diamond Pack in the northern and central portions of the ASNF.

Hoodoo Pack (collared AM1290, AF1333, f1550, f1663, and mp1666)

In October, the Hoodoo Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north eastern portion of the ASNF. Hoodoo f1663 dispersed from her natal territory and has localized in the eastern portion of the FAIR and north central portion of the ASNF with Diamond m1571.

Maverick Pack (collared AF1291)

In October, the Maverick Pack was located within their traditional territory both on the FAIR and east central portion of the ASNF. AF1291 was observed traveling with another wolf. No pups have been documented with this pack.

Panther Creek Pack (collared AF1339, AM1382, and m1574)

In October, the Panther Creek Pack was located in the east central portion of the ASNF. Single yearling female, f1484, was documented occasionally traveling with the pack. The IFT continued to maintain a food cache for this pack to reduce potential for livestock depredations and with the goal of increasing survival of pups that the IFT cross-fostered into the Panther Creek Pack in May.

Prime Canyon Pack (collared F1488)

In October, F1488 was documented traveling within a territory in the east central portion of the ASNF with an uncollared male. The unknown collared wolf that F1488 had been traveling with was not documented in October.

Saffel Pack (collared AF1567 and mp1661)

In October, the Saffel Pack was located in the north eastern portion of the ASNF, north of the traditional territory of the Hoodoo Pack. Four pups were documented traveling with the Saffel Pack in October.

Single collared m1483

Male 1483 continued to travel alone in the north eastern portion of the ASNF in Arizona during October.

Single collared f1484

Female 1484 was documented traveling alone and occasionally with the Panther Creek Pack in the Panther Creek's traditional territory in the east central portion of the ASNF during October.

Single collared f1562

Female 1562 was localized in the north central portion of the ASNF during October and has been documented traveling with an unknown collared wolf.

Single collared mp1672

A male pup, mp1672, with unknown parentage and affiliation was caught, collared, and released in the north central portion of the ASNF during the month of October.

ON THE FAIR:

Diamond Pack (collared m1559, f1560, m1571, and m1572)

In October, the Diamond Pack was located in their traditional territory on the FAIR and in the north central portion of the ASNF. Yearling males m1559 and m1572 were documented occasionally dispersing into new areas in the eastern portion of the FAIR. The IFT continued to maintain a diversionary food cache on the ASNF for the Diamond Pack to reduce potential for further wolf-livestock conflict. Yearling male, m1571, made a large dispersal movement north of the ASFS onto the Navajo Nation. The IFT captured m1571, translocated and released the

wolf back within the MWEPA. Following the translocation, m1571 has localized in the eastern portion of the FAIR and north central portion of the ASNF and has paired with Hoodoo f1663.

Tsay-O-Ah Pack (collared AM1343 and AF1283)

In October, the Tsay-O-Ah Pack was located within their traditional territory on the FAIR.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Copper Creek (collared F1444 and M1386)

During October, M1386 was documented traveling within the west central portion of the GNF. F1444 was not located during October due to a collar malfunction, but is believed to still be traveling with M1386.

Dark Canyon (collared F1456 and M1354)

During October, F1456 and M1354 were documented traveling together within the west central portion of the Gila National Forest (GNF).

Iron Creek Pack (collared AM1240, AF1278, m1555, m1556, and f1670)

During October, 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 continued to observe localized behavior consistent with pup rearing during October. The IFT captured, collared, and released sub-adult wolves m1555, m1556 and f1670. Sub-adult m1555 had its radio collar slip off after it was collared as a pup in 2016.

Lava Pack (collared F1405 and AM1285)

During October, the Lava Pack was located within their traditional territory in the south eastern portion of the GNF. In October, the IFT discontinued the diversionary food cache that had been maintained for the Lava Pack as a result of the pack making larger movements within their territory during the fall.

Leopold Pack (collared AM1293, AF1346, and m1561)

During October, the IFT documented the Leopold Pack within their territory in the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness.

Luna Pack (collared AM1158 and AF1487)

During October, the Luna Pack remained in their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT discontinued the diversionary food cache in October which had been maintained for the Luna Pack to reduce potential for wolf livestock conflict.

Mangas Pack (collared AM1296, AF1439, and fp1664)

During October, the Mangas Pack was located within their territory in the north western portion of the GNF.

Prieto Pack (collared AF1251, M1398, and f1565)

During October, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT continued to observe localized behavior consistent with pup

rearing in October. Male pup 1669, which was collared in early September, had its radio collar slip off in October.

San Mateo Pack (collared AF1399 and fp1578)

During October, the San Mateo Pack continued to utilize their territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT captured, collared and released fp1578, which is one of two pups from the Brookfield Zoo that were placed into the pack's den during a cross-foster operation this past May in effort to increase genetic diversity of wolves in the wild. The IFT continued to maintain a supplemental food cache with the goal of increasing survival of the genetically diverse litter of pups. Male pup 1582, which was collared by the IFT in September, had its radio collar slip off in October.

Shepherders Baseball Park (SBP) Pack (collared AM1284, F1553, and mp1667)

During October, the SBP Pack continued to use their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT continued to observe localized behavior consistent with pup rearing during the month of October.

Single collared AM1155

During October, AM1155 was documented traveling within the GNF in New Mexico.

Single collared M1455

M1455 was not located by the IFT during October.

Single collared m1486

During October, m1486 traveled throughout northern and central portions of the Cibola National Forest (CNF).

Single collared M1552

During October, M1552 traveled throughout central portion of the CNF and eastern portion of the GNF.

Single collared m1569

During October, m1569 traveled throughout central portion of the CNF and eastern portion of the GNF.

MORTALITIES

There were no documented wolf mortalities during the month of October. From January 1 to October 31, there have been a total of eight documented wolf mortalities in 2017.

INCIDENTS

During the month of October, there were no confirmed wolf depredation incidents on livestock and there were no nuisance incidents. From January 1 to October 31, 2017 there have been a total of 16 confirmed depredation incidents in New Mexico and 15 confirmed depredation incidents in Arizona.

On October 16, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf died of unknown causes.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

There were no communication and coordination updates for the month of October.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

There were no personnel updates for the project in October.

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.