



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

July 1 - 31, 2018

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). For information on the FAIR, call (928) 338-4385 ext. 226 or visit [www.wmatoutdoor.org](http://www.wmatoutdoor.org). Past updates may be viewed at these websites. Interested parties may [sign up](#) to receive this update electronically by visiting [www.azgfd.com](http://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 (AZGFD), 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 location information please visit <http://arcg.is/0iGSGH>.

**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**

On July 12 and 13, the annual meeting of the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan (SSP) was hosted by the Brookfield Zoo in Illinois. The SSP oversees management of the Mexican wolf captive breeding program for the USFWS and meets annually with the primary purpose to discuss population demographics, management and research needs, as well as to make breeding and transfer recommendations for the upcoming year. The meeting was attended by USFWS, AZGFD and representatives from captive breeding facilities from the United States and Mexico. The next SSP meeting will be held in Mexico during summer of 2019.

On July 18, the USFWS advertised the job announcement for the Mexican Wolf Recovery Coordinator position. The application period closed on August 2, 2018.

**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) are used to indicate wolves younger than 24 months. A lowercase letter “p” preceding the number is used to indicate a wolf pup born in the most recent spring. The capital letter “A” preceding the letter and number indicates 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**

The year-end minimum population count for 2017 was 114 wolves in the wild in Arizona and New Mexico. 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. Counting the population at the end of each year allows for comparable year-to-year trends at a time of year that accounts for most mortality and survival of young pups. At the end of July, there were 71 wolves with functioning radio collars that the IFT was actively monitoring.

### **IN ARIZONA:**

#### **Bear Wallow Pack (collared AM1338, M1676, and f1683)**

In July, the IFT documented the Bear Wallow Pack in their territory on the east central portion of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (ASNF) and occasionally on the SCAR. Yearling f1683, M1676, and AM1338 were documented traveling separately. Male1676 made dispersal movements across the central and western portion of the ASNF and on the Coconino National Forest.

#### **Bluestem Pack (collared f1686)**

In July, the IFT documented the Bluestem Pack in the pack’s traditional territory in the east central portion of the ASNF. Yearling f1686 made dispersal movements from the pack’s

territory this month within the eastern portion of the ASNF.

**Eagle Creek Pack (collared M1477)**

In July, M1477 continued to be documented with an uncollared wolf. The pair has been holding a territory in the east central portion of the ASNF.

**Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294, f1668, and m1671)**

In July, the Elk Horn Pack was located within their traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. The IFT maintained a supplemental food cache near the den as part of the cross-foster effort and to reduce the potential for wolf-livestock conflict. The pack displayed localized behavior consistent with pup rearing during the month of July.

**Hoodoo Pack (collared AM1290, AF1333, m1666, m1677, and m1681)**

In July, the Hoodoo Pack was located within their traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. The IFT maintained a diversionary food cache for the pack to reduce potential for conflict. The pack displayed localized behavior consistent with pup rearing during the month of July.

**Panther Creek Pack (collared AM1382)**

In July, the IFT documented AM1382 traveling alone in the pack's traditional territory in the east central portion of the ASNF.

**Pine Spring Pack (collared F1562 and AM1394)**

In July, the Pine Spring Pack was located within their territory in the north central portion of the ASNF. The IFT continued to maintain a diversionary food cache for this pack to reduce potential for wolf-livestock conflict. The pack displayed localized behavior consistent with pup rearing during the month of July.

**Prime Canyon Pack (collared F1488 and M1471)**

In July, the IFT documented the Prime Canyon Pack within their territory in the east central portion of the ASNF. F1488 and M1471 exhibited behavior and movements consistent with pup rearing. The IFT maintained a diversionary food cache for this pack in a proactive attempt to reduce the potential for human-wildlife interactions near residences.

**Saffel Pack (collared AM1441, AF1567, m1661, and m1680)**

In July, the Saffel Pack was located in their territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. The pack displayed localized behavior consistent with pup rearing during the month of July.

**Sierra Blanca Pack (collared M1571 and F1550)**

In July, the Sierra Blanca Pack was located in their territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF.

**Single collared F1489**

In July, the IFT documented F1489 traveling in the north and east central portion of the ASNF and in the eastern portion of the FAIR.

**Single collared M1574**

In July, the IFT documented M1574 traveling in the east central portion of the ASNF, the SCAR, and the eastern portion of the FAIR.

**ON THE FAIR:****Baldy Pack (collared AM1347, F1560, and m1672)**

In July, the Baldy Pack was documented traveling in the eastern portion of the FAIR and the north central portion of the ASNF.

**Maverick Pack (collared AF1291)**

In July, the Maverick Pack was located within their traditional territory both on the FAIR and east central portion of the ASNF.

**Tsay-O-Ah Pack (collared AM1343, AF1283, and f1674)**

In July, the Tsay-O-Ah Pack was located within their traditional territory in the eastern portion the FAIR.

**Tu dil hil Pack (collared M1559 and F1679)**

In July, the Tu dil hil Pack was documented traveling in the eastern portion of the FAIR.

**IN NEW MEXICO:****Copper Creek Pack**

During July, the Copper Creek Pack was not located. Currently there are no functioning collars in this pack.

**Dark Canyon Pack (collared AF1456 and AM1354)**

During July, the Dark Canyon Pack was documented traveling together within their traditional territory, in the west central portion of the Gila National Forest (GNF). The Dark Canyon Pack continued to exhibit behavior and movements consistent with rearing pups during July.

**Datil Mountain Pack (collared M1453 and F1685)**

During July, the Datil Mountain Pack continued to travel in the western portion of the Cibola National Forest (CNF).

**Frieborn Pack (collared AF1443 and AM1447)**

In July, the Frieborn Pack was documented within their territory in the east central portion of the ASNF in New Mexico and Arizona. The IFT maintained a food cache near the den as part of the cross-foster effort and to reduce the potential for wolf-livestock conflict. The Frieborn Pack continued to exhibit behavior and movements consistent with rearing pups during July.

**Hawks Nest Pack (collared AM1038 and F1473)**

During July, the Hawks Nest Pack began traveling separately. Alpha male 1038 continued to travel in the north central portion of the GNF, while F1437 has consistently been located with its natal pack (Elk Horn) in Arizona.

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

During July, 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 Iron Creek Pack continued to exhibit behavior and movements consistent with rearing pups during July.

**Lava Pack (collared AF1405 and AM1285)**

During July, the Lava Pack was located within their traditional territory in the southeastern portion of the GNF. The IFT discontinued the supplemental food cache. The Lava Pack continued to exhibit behavior and movements consistent with rearing pups during July.

**Leopold Pack (collared AM1293 and AF1346)**

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

**Luna Pack (collared AM1158, AF1487, and fp1684)**

During July, the Luna Pack remained in their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The Luna Pack continued to display behavior consistent with rearing pups during July.

**Mangas Pack (collared AM1296, AF1439, f1664 and f1705)**

During July, the Mangas Pack was located within their territory in the northwestern portion of the GNF. The IFT maintained a diversionary food cache for the Mangas Pack to reduce potential for livestock conflict. The Mangas Pack continued to display behavior consistent with denning within their traditional territory during July.

**Prieto Pack (collared AF1251, AM1398, F1565, m1669, and m1678)**

During July, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT maintained a diversionary food cache for the Prieto Pack and implemented continuous hazing efforts to reduce potential for livestock conflict. The Prieto Pack continued to display behavior consistent with denning within their traditional territory during July.

**San Mateo Pack (collared AF1399 and f1578)**

During July, the San Mateo Pack continued to utilize their territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT maintained a diversionary food cache for the San Mateo Pack to reduce potential for livestock conflict. The San Mateo Pack continued to display behavior consistent with rearing pups during July.

**Shepherders Baseball Park (SBP) Pack (collared AF1553)**

During July AF1553, of the SBP Pack and single M1561 continued to use the traditional territory of the SBP pack in the north central portion of the GNF. The wolves continued to exhibit behavior consistent with rearing pups.

**Squirrel Springs Pack (collared F1788)**

In July the IFT documented an uncollared male wolf traveling with F1788. The IFT has continued efforts to determine reproductive status of this pack and to reduce potential for further

conflict with cattle by maintaining a diversionary food cache and conducting intensive hazing efforts.

**Single collared M1486**

During July, M1486 traveled throughout the northern and central portions of the CNF.

**Single collared M1561**

During July, M1561 has been traveling and rearing pups with AF1553 of the Shepherd's Baseball Park Pack.

**Single collared M1673**

During July, M1673 traveled throughout the southern portion of the GNF, largely within the Dark Canyon Pack territory.

**MORTALITIES**

There were no mortalities documented in July. From January 1, 2018 to July 31, 2018 there have been a total of 6 documented wolf mortalities.

**INCIDENTS**

During the month of July, there were 7 confirmed wolf depredation incidents on livestock. There was one nuisance incident during July. From January 1, 2018 to July 31, 2018 there have been a total of 55 confirmed wolf depredation incidents in New Mexico and 23 confirmed wolf depredation incidents in Arizona.

On July 1, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow and calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow and calf were killed by a bear.

On July 2, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf kill.

On July 4, a horseback range rider working cattle on the ASNF south of Greer had between 4 to 5 wolves approach to within 30 to 40 yards of the range rider and his dogs. The rider stated the wolves' attention was focused on his dogs that were barking at cattle. The rider made aggressive movements toward the wolves and yelled which caused the wolves to immediately retreat out of sight. The wolves were not seen again by the rider. After the incident occurred the rider called and reported the event to the IFT.

On July 7, Wildlife Services investigated an injured calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a probable wolf injury.

On July 7, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf kill.

On July 9, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf kill.

On July 11, Wildlife Services investigated two dead cows in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined both cows were killed by a bear.

On July 15, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf kill.

On July 16, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf kill.

On July 16, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, NM. The investigation concluded the calf had died from unknown causes.

On July 17, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a probable wolf kill.

On July 17, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf kill.

On July 18, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf kill.

On July 19, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf had been killed by a bear.

On July 20, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Greenlee County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf had been killed by coyotes.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

On July 10 through July 12, the IFT completed bi-annual helicopter training.

On July 11 the USFWS participated in an SSP Management Group meeting in Brookfield, Illinois.

On July 17, WMAT presented to Turkey Creek Livestock Association in East Fork, AZ.

On July 18, WMAT presented to BIA Forestry in Whiteriver, AZ.

On July 27, WMAT presented to the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project at Big Lake Recreation Area, AZ.

On July 28, AZGFD personnel presented to the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project at Big Lake Recreation Area, AZ.

### **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

In July, Craig Zurek left the IFT to continue his professional career. Thank you Craig for your dedication and contribution to Mexican wolf recovery.

### **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.