



## **Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Monthly Update**

June 1- 30, 2019

The following is a summary of Mexican Wolf Recovery Program 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 Program 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 [azgfd.gov/wolf](http://azgfd.gov/wolf) or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at [fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf](http://fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf). For information on the FAIR, call (928) 338-4385 ext. 226 or visit [wmatoutdoor.org](http://wmatoutdoor.org). Past updates may be viewed at these websites. Interested parties may [sign up](#) to receive this update electronically by visiting [azgfd.com](http://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 Mexican Wolf Recovery Program 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 AZGFD 24-hour dispatch (Operation Game Thief) at (800) 352-0700.

### **Overall Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Monthly Updates**

On June 3, Margaret Everson, Principle Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Barbara Wainman, Assistant Director of External Affairs, visited the Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility and assisted with the vaccination and health checks of 6-week old Mexican wolf pups.

On June 12, USFWS staff met with staff from AZGFD and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish to discuss the upcoming process for revising the 2015 10j rule for the Mexican wolf (80 FR 2512-2567, January 16, 2015). The rule was remanded by the Arizona District Court in 2018, with a deadline to complete a revised rule by May 1, 2021. The 2015 10j rule can be

found on the Service's Mexican wolf website: [https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/pdf/Mx\\_wolf\\_10j\\_final\\_rule\\_to\\_OFR.pdf](https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/pdf/Mx_wolf_10j_final_rule_to_OFR.pdf). Additional information about the revision process will be forthcoming to the public this summer.

**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. 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 end of year census for 2018 was a minimum of 131 Mexican wolves in the wild (64 in AZ and 67 in NM). This was about a 12% increase in the population from a minimum of 117 wolves counted at the end of 2017.** 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 pup mortality generally occurs in this period). 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 when the Mexican wolf population is most stable.

At the end of June, there were 30 identified wolf packs (14 in AZ and 16 in NM) and six single collared wolves. There were 79 wolves with functioning radio collars that the IFT was actively monitoring. Not all of the wolves are collared. Studbook numbers following individual pack names below denote wolves with functioning radio collars.

### **IN ARIZONA:**

#### **Eagle Creek Pack (collared M1477)**

In June, the IFT continued to document M1477 traveling with an uncollared wolf in the pack’s territory in the east central portion of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (ASNF).

#### **Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294, F1668, m1695, f1696, and f1697)**

In June, the Elk Horn Pack was located within their traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF in Arizona and New Mexico. M1671 was found dead in New Mexico; the

incident is under investigation.

**Hoodoo Pack (collared AM1290, AF1333, M1681, F1830, and m1789)**

In June, the Hoodoo Pack was located within their traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. The IFT maintained a food cache near the den as part of the cross-foster effort and to reduce the potential for livestock-related conflict. The Hoodoo Pack continued to exhibit behavior and movements consistent with denning in June.

**Panther Creek Pack (AM1382 and AF1683)**

In June, the IFT documented the Panther Creek Pack in their territory in the east central portion of the ASNF. The IFT continued to maintain a supplemental food cache near the den as part of the cross-foster efforts. The Panther Creek Pack continued to show behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Pine Spring Pack (collared AM1394, f1794, and f1825)**

In June, 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.

**Prime Canyon Pack (collared AM1471, AF1488, m1790, f1791, and f1823)**

In June, the IFT documented the Prime Canyon Pack within their territory in the east central 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 conflict. The Prime Canyon Pack continued to show behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Rocky Prairie Pack (collared F1489)**

In June, the IFT documented F1489 in the east central portion of the ASNF. The Rocky Prairie Pack continued to show behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Saffel Pack (collared AM1441, AF1567, f1792 and f1833)**

In June, the Saffel Pack was located within their 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 potential for wolf-livestock conflict. The Saffel Pack continued to show behavior consistent with denning during the month of June.

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

In June, the Sierra Blanca Pack was located in their territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. The Sierra Blanca Pack exhibited behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Single collared M1574**

In June, M1574 was lethally removed by Wildlife Services on the SCAR due to repetitive confirmed depredations on livestock.

**Single collared F1686**

In June, the IFT documented subadult F1686 in the east central portion of the ASNF.

**Single collared f1792**

In June, yearling f1792 (from the Saffel Pack) was documented traveling in the northeastern portion of the ASNF.

**Single collared M1829**

In June, M1829 was documented making wide dispersal movements in the GNF in New Mexico and in the east central portion of the ASNF.

**Single collared F1959**

In June, F1959 was documented travelling with M1574 in the east central portion of the ASNF and on the SCAR.

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

In June, the Baldy Pack was located in their traditional territory in the eastern portion of the FAIR and north central portion of the ASNF.

**Maverick Pack (collared AF1291 and f1828)**

In June, the Maverick Pack was located within their traditional territory in the eastern portion of the FAIR and east central portion of the ASNF.

**Tsay-O-Ah Pack (collared M1559 and AF1283)**

In June, the Tsay-O-Ah Pack was located within their traditional territory in the eastern portion of the FAIR and occasionally documented north of their territory on the FAIR.

**Tu dil hil Pack (collared F1679 and AM1338)**

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

**Poker Pack (collared F1674)**

In June, the Poker Pack was documented traveling in the eastern portion of the FAIR and the SCAR.

**IN NEW MEXICO:****Colibri Pack (collared AM1555)**

In June, the Colibri Pack was documented traveling together within their traditional territory, in the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness and the southern portion of the GNF. The Colibri Pack continued to show behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM1354, AF1456, and m1717)**

In June, 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 show behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Datil Mountain Pack (collared F1685)**

In June, the Datil Mountain Pack traveled within their traditional territory in the western portion of the Cibola National Forest (CNF) and the western portion of the ASNF.

**Frieborn Pack (collared AF1443, f1701, and f1702)**

In June, 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 supplemental food cache near the den. The Frieborn Pack continued to exhibit behavior and movements consistent with denning in June.

**Iron Creek Pack (collared AM1240, AF1278, M1821, f1721, m1710, and f1712)**

In June, 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 exhibited behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Lava Pack (collared AM1285, AF1405, and m1715)**

In June, the Lava Pack was located within their traditional territory in the southeastern portion of the GNF. The Lava Pack continued to exhibit behavior consistent with denning in June. The IFT did not locate m1715 during June.

**Leon Pack (collared M1824 and F1578)**

In June, the Leon Pack was documented within the northwestern portion of the Gila National Forest in New Mexico.

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

In June, the IFT documented the Leopold Pack within their territory in the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness. The Leopold Pack continued to exhibit behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Luna Pack (collared AM1158, AF1487, and m1831)**

In June, the Luna Pack remained in their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The Luna Pack continued to exhibit behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Mangas Pack (collared AM1296, AF1439 and M1832)**

In June, the Mangas Pack was located within their territory in the northwestern portion of the GNF. The IFT continued to maintain a diversionary food cache for the Mangas Pack to reduce potential conflict with livestock. The Mangas Pack continued to show behavior consistent with denning in June.

**Prieto Pack (collared AF1251)**

In June, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT continued to maintain a diversionary food cache for the Prieto Pack to

reduce potential for conflict with livestock. The Prieto Pack continued to show behavior consistent with denning in June. The collar AM1398 has on is non-functioning; hence AM1398 studbook number is not listed above.

#### **San Mateo Pack (collared AF1399 and f1822)**

In June, the San Mateo Pack continued to utilize their territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT maintained a supplemental food cache near the den as part of a cross-foster effort last month and to reduce potential for wolf-livestock conflict. The San Mateo Pack continued to exhibit behavior consistent with denning in June.

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

In June, AF1553 was confirmed traveling in the traditional territory of the SBP Pack in the north central portion of the GNF. During June, AF1553 exhibited behavior consistent with denning.

#### **Squirrel Springs Pack (collared F1788 and M1349)**

In June, the Squirrel Springs Pack was located in the north central portion of the GNF. The Squirrel Springs Pack continued to exhibit behavior consistent with denning in June.

#### **Whitewater Canyon Pack (F1684 and M1827)**

In June, the Whitewater Canyon Pack continued to travel in the north central portion of the GNF.

#### **New Pair (F1705)**

In June, F1705 was documented traveling with an uncollared male in the northwestern portion of the GNF. This new pair did not show behavior consistent with denning in June.

#### **Single collared m1693**

On June 14, m1693 was translocated from a temporary stay in captivity into to Gila Flat, NM with f1836. Male 1693 was documented making wide dispersal movements separate from f1836 in the GNF in New Mexico for the remainder of June. Male 1683, was captured in April in New Mexico and taken to captivity to receive veterinary care.

#### **Single collared f1836**

On June 14, f1836 was translocated from a temporary stay in captivity to Gila Flat, NM with m1693. Female 1836 was documented making wide dispersal movements separate from m1693 in the GNF in New Mexico for the remainder of June. Female 1836 was removed in March from the Prieto Pack in New Mexico due to livestock conflict.

### **MORTALITIES**

In June, M1671, of the Elk Horn Pack, was found dead in NM; the incident is under investigation. From January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019, there have been a total of eight documented wolf mortalities.

### **INCIDENTS**

During the month of June, there were 16 confirmed wolf depredation incidents and one probable wolf depredation on livestock. There was one nuisance incident reported in June. From January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019 there have been a total of 88 confirmed wolf depredation incidents and

six probable wolf depredations in New Mexico; and 26 confirmed wolf depredation incidents and one probable wolf depredation in Arizona.

On June 4, the IFT took a report of wolves that had been observed chasing cattle on the ASNF near Escudilla Mountain. The reporting party, a stockman riding horseback, stated his dogs ran toward the cattle then returned with two wolves chasing his dogs. The stockman rode on his horse toward the wolves and got to within approximately 20 feet, at which point the wolves became aware of his presence and retreated. The stockman then chased four other wolves away that had been observed chasing the cattle. No cattle were found to be missing or injured. The IFT responded and determined the wolves had left the area. The IFT determined from GPS collar data that the incident had occurred with wolves from the Elk Horn Pack.

On June 4, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf on the SCAR. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 5, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 7, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf on the SCAR. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 9, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf on the FAIR. The investigation determined the calf was a probable wolf kill.

On June 9, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf died of respiratory illness.

On June 11, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 11, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed coyote depredation.

On June 12, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Sierra County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 13, Wildlife Services investigated two dead calves in Apache County, AZ. The investigation confirmed both calves were killed by wolves and were classified as one depredation incident.

On June 15, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 18, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 18, Wildlife Services investigated an injured calf in Greenlee, AZ. The investigation determined the injured calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 18, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed bear depredation.

On June 19, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation concluded the cause of death was unknown.

On June 19, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 21, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 25, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On June 25, Wildlife Services investigated three dead cows in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined all three cows were confirmed wolf depredations.

On June 26, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf depredation.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

On June 6, USFWS staff met with USDA Farm Service Agency's New Mexico State Director in Albuquerque, NM.

On June 6, USFWS staff met with Congressional staff from Representative Haaland, Heinrich, Torres-Small, and Udall's offices.

On June 13, USFWS staff attended Mexican Wolf Livestock Council meeting in Quemado, NM.

On June 18, Mexican Wolf Recovery Coordinator met with USDA Wildlife Services AZ and NM State Directors in Albuquerque, NM.

On June 19, WMAT staff provided a presentation to students at John F. Kennedy Day School in Cedar Creek, AZ.

On June 24, WMAT staff provided a presentation to students at Canyon Day Jr. High School in Canyon Day, AZ.

On June 28, USFWS staff met with USFS staff in the FS's R3 Regional Office, Albuquerque, NM.

## **PROGRAM PERSONNEL**

There were no personnel updates for the program in June.

## **REWARDS OFFERED**

The USFWS is offering a reward of up to \$10,000; the AZGFD 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; AZGFD Operation Game Thief at (800) 352-0700; or NMDGF Operation Game Thief at (800) 432-4263. Killing a Mexican wolf is a violation of state law and 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.