



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

November 1 - 30, 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](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.wmatoutdoors.org](http://www.wmatoutdoors.org). Past updates may be viewed 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 (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/OiGSGH> or [www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/RWL.cfm](http://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**

On November 29, 2017, the USFWS posted on its website the finalized Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan, First Revision. The goal of the plan is to provide guidance to recover the subspecies within the subspecies' historical range in the Southwestern United States and Mexico. The recovery plan provides measurable and objective criteria which, when met, will enable the USFWS to remove the Mexican wolf from the list of endangered species and turn its management over to

the appropriate states and tribes. To review the recovery plan and related documents, visit the USFWS Mexican wolf website at: <https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/>

**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 lower case 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**

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 November, there were 66 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 November, the Bear Wallow Pack was located within their traditional territory on the east central portion of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (ASNF). The pack had several infrequent locations on the SCAR during November. Yearling m1673 made a wide dispersal movement into southwestern New Mexico.

#### **Bluestem Pack (collared F1489, f1563, and fp1665)**

In November, f1489 made dispersal movements around the northern and western edges of the

Bluestem Pack's traditional territory in the central ASNF. Yearling f1563 and fp1665 were found dead; the incidents are under investigation.

**Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294, m1471, f1473, m1474, m1477, fp1668, and mp1671)**

In November, the Elk Horn Pack was located within their traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. Two yearling wolves, m1477 and f1473, each made wide dispersal movements, traveling separately, from their natal territory. Two pups were documented traveling with the pack in November.

**Frieborn Pack (collared F1443 and m1447)**

In November, the Frieborn Pack was documented within their territory in the east central portion of the ASNF in Arizona and into New Mexico.

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

In November, the Hoodoo Pack was located within their traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. Hoodoo f1663 was found dead in November; the incident is under investigation. Two pups were documented traveling with the pack in November.

**Maverick Pack (collared AF1291)**

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

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

In November, the Panther Creek Pack was located in the east central portion of the ASNF. The IFT maintained a supplemental food cache for this pack with the goal of increasing survival of genetically valuable pups that the IFT cross-fostered into the Panther Creek Pack in May.

**Prime Canyon Pack (collared F1488)**

In November, F1488 was documented traveling within a territory in the east central portion of the ASNF.

**Saffel Pack (collared AF1567 and mp1661)**

In November, the Saffel Pack was located in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. Four pups were documented traveling with the Saffel Pack in November.

**Single collared AM1038**

In November, AM1038 of the old Hawks Nest Pack was located traveling in the north central portion of the ASNF.

**Single collared m1483**

Male 1483 was found dead in November; the incident is under investigation.

**Single collared f1484**

In November, f1484 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.

**Single collared f1562**

Female 1562 was localized in the north central portion of the ASNF during November and has been documented traveling with an unknown collared wolf. The IFT continued to maintain a diversionary food cache on the ASNF for this pair to reduce potential for wolf-livestock conflict.

**ON THE FAIR:****Baldy Pack (collared mp1672)**

In November, mp1672, previously captured, collared and released in October, was determined via genetic analysis to be offspring of AF1445 and AM1347 of the Baldy Pack. Male pup 1672 was located traveling alone in the eastern portion of the FAIR and northern portion of ASNF during November. AF1445 and AM1347 have not been located by the IFT this year and remain fate unknown.

**Tsay-O-Ah Pack (collared AM1343, AF1283, and fp1674)**

In November, the Tsay-O-Ah Pack was located within their traditional territory on the FAIR. A female pup, fp1674, was captured, collared, and released.

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

In November, f1560 was documented traveling in the eastern portion of the FAIR and north central portion of the ASNF. Male 1571 continued to travel apart from other Diamond Pack members and made wide dispersal movements to the eastern portion of the FAIR and the central portion of the ASNF. Male 1572 dispersed from traditional Diamond territory through the western portion of the ASNF into the Coconino National Forest during the month of November. Male 1559 was not located during the month of November.

**IN NEW MEXICO:****Copper Creek Pack (collared M1386)**

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

**Dark Canyon Pack (collared F1456 and M1354)**

During November, F1456 and M1354 were documented traveling together within the west central portion of the GNF.

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

During November, the Iron Creek Pack continued to utilize their territory in the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness and the southern portion of the GNF.

**Lava Pack (collared F1405 and AM1285)**

During November, the Lava Pack was located within their traditional territory in the southeastern portion of the GNF.

**Leopold Pack (collared AM1293, AF1346, and m1561)**

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

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

During November, the Luna Pack remained in their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF.

**Mangas Pack (collared AM1296, AF1439, and fp1664)**

During November, the Mangas Pack was located within their territory in the northwestern portion of the GNF.

**Prieto Pack (collared AF1251, AM1398, f1565, and mp1669)**

During November, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT re-collared mp1669 during trapping efforts in November.

**San Mateo Pack (collared AF1399 and fp1578)**

During November, the San Mateo Pack continued to utilize their territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT captured, re-collared, and released AF1399 in November. The supplemental food cache maintained by the IFT to increase survival of cross-fostered pups was discontinued due to reduced use and increased movements of the pack throughout its territory.

**Shepherders Baseball Park (SBP) Pack (collared AM1284, AF1553, and mp1667)**

During November, the SBP Pack continued to use their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF.

**Single collared AM1155**

During November, AM1155 of the old Morgart's Pack was documented traveling within the GNF in New Mexico.

**Single collared M1455**

M1455 was not located by the IFT during November and is now considered fate unknown.

**Single collared m1486**

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

**Single collared M1552**

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

**Single collared m1569**

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

## **MORTALITIES**

During November, Bluestem f1563 and fp1665, Hoodoo f1663, and single m1483 were located dead in Arizona. These incidents are under investigation. From January 1 to November 30, 2017 there have been a total of 12 documented wolf mortalities.

## **INCIDENTS**

During the month of November, there were no confirmed wolf depredation incidents on livestock. There was one nuisance incident investigated. From January 1 to November 30, 2017 there have been a total of 16 confirmed depredation incidents in New Mexico and 15 confirmed depredation incidents in Arizona.

On November 1, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a probable wolf kill.

On November 4, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was killed by a coyote.

On November 6, the IFT investigated a report of wolves acting aggressively toward campers at the Hannagan Campground located near Hannagan Meadow. Based on interviews of the campers involved and evidence gathered from an investigation of the scene, the IFT determined domestic dogs were responsible for the incident.

On November 24, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf had been killed by coyotes.

On November 28, WMAT investigated a dead steer on the FAIR. The investigation determined the steer died of illness.

## **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

On November 4, WMAT personnel presented at the White Mountain Apache Wildlife Fair at the Hon dah Conference Center on the FAIR.

On November 14, WMAT personnel presented on a radio show on KNNB radio in Whiteriver, AZ.

## **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

WMAT welcomed a temporary employee this month. We are glad to have her on board!

## **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.