



Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Monthly Update

September 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 or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf. For information on the FAIR, call (928) 338-4385 ext. 226 or visit wmatoutdoor.org. Past updates may be viewed at these websites. Interested parties may [sign up](http://azgfd.com) to receive this update electronically by visiting 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://arcgis/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

There are no overall program updates for the month of September.

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 September, there were 30 identified wolf packs (14 in AZ and 16 in NM) and seven 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 September, the IFT continued to document M1477 in the pack’s territory in the east central portion of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (ASNF).

Elk Horn Pack (collared AF1294, f1696, and f1697)

In September, the Elk Horn Pack was located within their traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF in Arizona and New Mexico. Yearling, m1695, was removed to captivity due to repetitive confirmed depredations on livestock.

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

In September, the Hoodoo Pack was located within their traditional territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. The IFT maintained a food cache as part of a cross-foster effort this past spring and to reduce potential for livestock related conflict. The pack continued to show behavior consistent with pup rearing.

Panther Creek Pack (AM1382, AF1683 and fp1939)

In September, the IFT documented the Panther Creek Pack in their territory in the east central portion of the ASNF. The IFT discontinued the food cache that was established this past spring as part of a cross-foster effort. The Panther Creek Pack continued to show behavior consistent with pup rearing. During routine collaring efforts, the IFT captured, collared and released

fp1939, a wild born pup born this spring.

Pine Spring Pack (collared f1794, and f1825)

In September, the Pine Spring Pack was located within their territory in the north central portion of the ASNF. AM1394 was removed to captivity due to repetitive confirmed depredations on livestock. The IFT maintained a diversionary food cache for this pack to reduce potential for wolf-livestock conflict.

Prime Canyon Pack (collared AM1471, AF1488, m1790, f1791, f1823, fp1919, and fp1920)

In September, the IFT documented the Prime Canyon Pack within their territory in the east central portion of the ASNF. The IFT maintained a food cache as part of a cross-foster effort this past spring and to reduce potential for conflict. The Prime Canyon Pack continued to show behavior consistent with pup rearing. During routine collaring efforts, the IFT captured, collared and released fp1919 and fp1920, two wild born pups born this spring.

Rocky Prairie Pack (collared F1489)

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

Saffel Pack (collared AM1441, AF1567, and f1833)

In September, the Saffel Pack was located within their territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. The IFT maintained a food cache as part of a cross-foster effort this past spring and to reduce potential for wolf-livestock conflict.

Sierra Blanca Pack (collared AM1571 and AF1550)

In September, the Sierra Blanca Pack was located in their territory in the northeastern portion of the ASNF. Sierra Blanca continued to show behavior consistent with pup rearing.

Single collared F1686

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

Single collared f1792

In September, yearling f1792 was documented traveling in the northeastern portion of the ASNF.

Single collared F1668

In September, F1668, formerly of the Elk Horn Pack, was documented making wide dispersal movements in the Gila National Forest (GNF) in New Mexico and in the east central portion of the ASNF in Arizona.

Single collared F1959

In September, F1959 was documented in the east central portion of the ASNF.

ON THE FAIR:

Baldy Pack (collared AM1347 and F1560)

In September, the Baldy Pack was located in their traditional territory in the eastern portion of

the FAIR and north central portion of the ASNF. AM1347 was captured, recollared, and released during routine collaring efforts in September.

Maverick Pack (collared AF1291 and f1828)

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

Poker Pack (collared F1674)

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

IN NEW MEXICO:

Cimmaron Mesa Pack (F1705)

In September, the Cimmaron Mesa Pack was documented traveling in the northwestern portion of the Gila National Forest (GNF).

Colibri Pack (collared AM1555)

In September, the Colibri Pack was documented traveling together within a territory in the northern portion of the Gila Wilderness and the southern portion of the GNF.

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

In September, the Dark Canyon Pack was documented traveling together within their traditional territory, in the west central portion of the GNF. The Dark Canyon Pack continued to show behavior consistent with pup rearing.

Datil Mountain Pack (collared F1685)

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

Frieborn Pack (collared AF1443, f1701, f1702 and fp1921)

In September, the Frieborn Pack was documented within their territory in the east central portion of the ASNF in New Mexico and Arizona. The IFT captured, collared, and released fp1921 of the Frieborn Pack during routine collaring efforts in September. The IFT maintained a supplemental food cache near the den and a diversionary food cache in September to reduce the potential for wolf-livestock conflicts. The Frieborn Pack continued to exhibit behavior consistent with pup rearing.

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

In September, the Iron Creek Pack continued to use 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 pup rearing in September.

Lava Pack (collared AM1285 and AF1405)

In September, 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 pup rearing.

Leon Pack (collared M1824 and F1578)

In September, the Leon Pack was documented within the northwestern portion of the GNF in New Mexico.

Leopold Pack (collared AM1293 and AF1346)

In September, 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 pup rearing.

Luna Pack (collared AM1158, AF1487, and m1831)

In September, the Luna Pack remained in their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT maintained a diversionary food cache to reduce potential wolf-livestock conflicts. The Luna Pack continued to exhibit behavior consistent with pup rearing.

Mangas Pack (collared AM1296, AF1439 and M1832)

In September, 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 exhibit behavior consistent with pup rearing.

Prieto Pack (collared AF1251)

In September, the Prieto Pack was located within their traditional territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The Prieto Pack continued to exhibit behavior consistent with pup rearing.

San Mateo Pack (collared AF1399, f1822, and mp1953)

In September, the San Mateo Pack continued to utilize their territory in the north central portion of the GNF. The IFT maintained a food cache as part of cross-foster efforts and to reduce potential for wolf-livestock conflict. During routine collaring efforts, the IFT captured, collared and released mp1953, a cross fostered pup from this April. The San Mateo Pack continued to show behavior consistent with pup rearing.

Sheepherders Baseball Park (SBP) Pack (collared AF1553)

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

Squirrel Springs Pack (collared F1788 and M1349)

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

Whitewater Canyon Pack (F1684)

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

Single collared M1829

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

Single collared m1693

In September, m1693 was documented making wide dispersal movements in the GNF in New Mexico.

Single collared f1836

In September, f1836 was located traveling alone in the south central portion of the GNF.

MORTALITIES

In September, an uncollared juvenile wolf, possibly of the Hoodoo Pack, was found dead in Arizona; the incident is under investigation. There have been a total of nine documented wolf mortalities from January 1, 2019 to September 30, 2019.

INCIDENTS

During the month of September, there were 21 confirmed wolf depredation incidents on livestock. There was one nuisance incident reported in September. From January 1, 2019 to September 30, 2019 there have been a total of 116 confirmed wolf depredation incidents and 10 probable wolf depredations in New Mexico; and a total of 49 confirmed wolf depredation incidents and one probable wolf depredation in Arizona.

On September 1, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 2, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 3, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 5, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 6, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 7, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 8, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 8, an elk hunter reported a wolf following and circling the hunting party after successfully harvesting an elk. This nuisance incident occurred in Catron County, NM.

On September 9, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 10, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 12, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 13, Wildlife Services investigated a dead bull in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the bull was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 17, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 19, Wildlife Services investigated two dead calves in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined both of the calves were confirmed wolf depredations.

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

On September 19, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the cow's death was due to a pregnancy complication.

On September 22, Wildlife Services investigated a dead cow in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the cow was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 22, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf died from an unknown cause.

On September 23, Wildlife Services investigated three calves and a yearling cow in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined two of the calves were confirmed wolf depredations, one calf died of a respiratory illness and the cow died from an unknown cause.

On September 24, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed coyote depredation.

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

On September 27, Wildlife Services investigated an injured cow in Apache County, AZ. The investigation determined the injured cow was a confirmed wolf depredation.

On September 29, Wildlife Services investigated a dead calf in Catron County, NM. The investigation determined the calf was a confirmed wolf depredation.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Throughout the month of September the USFS Wolf Liaison to the IFT coordinated with the Alpine, Springerville, Quemado and Reserve Ranger Districts to mitigate wolf-livestock conflicts. More than 55 livestock permittees were contacted via phone, email or text to communicate general wolf locations or other wolf related issues to try and reduce wolf-livestock conflicts.

PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Program volunteers concluded their six month volunteer assignment with the Program at the end of September. Thanks for all your hard work and dedication on the Mexican Wolf Program!

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.