



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

MONTANA WOLF PROGRAM WEEKLY REPORT

To: Interested Parties

From: FWP Wolf Program Coordinator, Carolyn Sime (406-461-0587)

Subject: Wolf Program Activities and Related Information, October 17 – October 23, 2009

Contributors to the Montana Wolf Weekly are Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), Universities, USDA Wildlife Services (WS), the National Park Service (NPS; Glacier NP; Yellowstone National Park will be reported in the Wyoming Wolf Weekly), US Forest Service, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the Blackfeet Nation.

Highlighted activities relate to: monitoring, wolf – livestock interactions, outreach and education, research, law enforcement, and other miscellaneous topics of public interest. The Weekly Report will be available on each Monday, covering the previous week. It and other wolf program information (including the 2008 annual report) can be found at: <http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf/default.html>.

Wolf Monitoring Activities

Trapping efforts are winding down given cooler weather and increased hunting-related recreation particularly on public land. Efforts may still occur in certain situations or on private lands where access is more controlled.

Kris Boyd finished up the field season on 9/30. Kris, as always did a great job this season, and really carried the water collaring wolves in FWP Region 1 this year!

Volunteers Charlie Bahnson and Anna Valan finished the regular field season on 10/9. They will continue to help out intermittently throughout the winter as they can with other jobs. Erika Edgley has resumed classes at the University of Montana this fall Semester, but will continue to help throughout the winter on a part time basis. Thanks to Charlie, Erika, and Anna for a great field season and a job well done!

Laudon finished trapping and surveying in the Thompson Falls area on 9/23.

On 10/19, FWP confirmed a new pack called Cache Creek in the South Fork of Fish Creek west of Missoula. This is a new border pack shared with ID. Male wolf B348M split off from the Big Hole pack last winter and paired up with a female in the South Fork of Fish Creek. Four pups were documented.

Hunters, other recreationists, and landowners can help FWP monitor the population by reporting wolf observations, tracks, or sign through the FWP online reporting button [Contact Us - Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks](#), by contacting the closest wolf specialist or FWP office, or mailing a wolf observation card.

Flights: Laudon flew in northwest Montana on 10/15-10/16.

Wolf - Livestock Activities

On 10/16 and 10/19 Wildlife Services removed 2 wolves from the Lydia pack in response to previously reported confirmed depredations.

On 10/18 WS confirmed 10 lambs as being killed and 13 lambs as being injured by wolves, the injured were not expected to live. This occurred in the Blacktail area south of Dillon on private land in the same area as the previous depredations. WS flew on the 10/20 and found the Centennial pack in the area so it was assumed they were responsible for the killing. FWP authorized a control action for the full pack removal of the Centennial pack was issued. WS flew again on 10/20 in the PM and removed one pup. A group of five were seen 3 adults and 2 pups, that is consistent with what has been seen on recent monitoring flights. WS will try to finish the removal by the opening of big game season.

On 10/21, WS flew and killed the remaining members of the Nevada Creek pack (2 adults, 2 pups) in response to multiple depredations in the Threemile area (near Avon). Four calves were confirmed killed and 1 probable (on 10/15) over the last month. Last week, 2 male pups were killed.

On 10/21, WS also flew the Hall area between Drummond and Phillipsburg and killed the collared adult male of a new trio that recently established in that area. They were believed responsible for a dead calf in July and a heifer in September. The adult female he was paired with was killed last week. A third uncollared adult wolf is believed to remain but cannot be found.

WS also completed investigations during the week and none were confirmed as wolf.

Outreach and Education

On 10/23, Sime, FWP Director Maurier, and FWP's Management Section Chief Quentin Kujala attended the Montana Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Board's meeting. WS West District Supervisor Kraig Glazier also attended. All provided update reports and answered questions from Board members.

Research Activities

Nothing to report at this time.

Law Enforcement and Related Activities

On 9/27 a FWP warden collected a carcass of an adult male wolf from the Lydia pack area. Cause of death is unknown.

On 9/30 a male pup, possibly of the Fishtrap pack, was discovered killed by a vehicle along HWY 2.

On 10/9 two wolf pups (1 male, 1 female) from the Kintla pack, were found illegally shot. The subsequent investigation led to the detection, confession and guilty plea. The individual who shot the wolves pled guilty to the charge in Flathead County Justice Court and paid fines and restitution in the amount of \$1,135.

FWP Wardens are also seeking information on a dead wolf found Sunday October 25 in the Red Meadow drainage of the North Fork Flathead. The wolf had been shot. Anyone with any information

about this incident should contact 1-800-TIPMONT. You may remain anonymous and be eligible for a reward of up to \$1,000.

Around 10/10, two wolves (1 male pup, 1 male adult) from the Lydia pack were found dead (electrocuted) along with 4 bears, 2 deer, a coyote, and a turkey vulture around a low hanging power line.

On 10/18, a collared wolf from the Big Hole pack (a MT/ID border pack on Lolo Pass that counted in the ID population in 2008) was found dead in ID. The situation is being investigated and the mortality will count towards the ID quota for that unit.

On 10/19, a male pup, possibly of the Satire pack between Libby and Kalispell, was killed by a vehicle in the Wolf Creek area.

Other Updates

Northern Rockies Delisting Litigation

On 6/2, a coalition of 13 groups challenged the USFWS delisting decision in Federal District Court in Missoula (9th Circuit). On 8/20, a preliminary injunction request was filed, requesting that wolves be placed back on the Endangered Species list while the court decides the main case within the next year – thus preventing a fall hunting season in Montana and Idaho. On 9/8, the injunction request was denied, but the main lawsuit is moving forward. Written briefings by all parties will be completed by late January 2010. A hearing date for oral arguments has not been set, but is expected to be not long after completion of written briefings.

Montana state laws, administrative rules, and the federally-approved management plan remain in effect and wolves are classified and protected under Montana law as a species in need of management. The FWP Commission has the authority to issue rules and regulations regarding the protection and periodic taking of the animal (as through hunting seasons for example). FWP is the lead agency for wolves, assisted by USDA Wildlife Services if wolves are confirmed to have injured or killed livestock.

Montana 2009 Wolf Hunting Season:

In WMU 1, the backcountry wolf hunting season in the Bob Marshall Complex west of the continental divide is ongoing. As of 10/23, a total of 3 wolves had been harvested. A total of 38 wolves remain in the quota for WMU 1 and the season is still open.

In WMU 3, FWP closed the backcountry season in the Absaroka-Beartooth wilderness area on October 9. Nine wolves were harvested from September 15 to October 9. The total remaining quota for WMU 3 is 3 wolves and hunting can resume everywhere in WMU 3 except the Absaroka – Beartooth wilderness area (Deer/Elk Hunting District 316) on October 25.

Wolves harvested during the early backcountry wilderness seasons count toward the total quota for the entire WMU. These backcountry wilderness areas are smaller geographical areas within the larger Wolf Management Units. For the most current harvest status information, call 1-800-385-7826.

Montana Livestock Loss Reduction & Mitigation Board:

The Board met on October 23. The agenda and minutes from previous meetings are available at [Montana Department of Livestock](#). The program coordinator can be reached at 444-5609.

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To learn more about Montana's wolf population, the Montana program and to help FWP monitor wolves by reporting wolf sign, visit FWP at: www.fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf.
To anonymously report a dead or injured wolf or suspected illegal activity, call: 1-800-TIP-MONT.

To request an investigation of injured or dead livestock, call USDA Wildlife Services directly in western Montana / Helena area at 458-0106 or in eastern Montana at the statewide office: 657-6464. Or, call your nearest FWP representative to have your call referred to Wildlife Services.

If you have a confirmed or probable livestock loss due to wolves, USDA Wildlife Services will supply you with a copy of the Loss Reimbursement Application form. For more information, see <http://liv.mt.gov/liv/LM/index.asp>. Or, contact the Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Program Coordinator George Edwards at the Montana Department of Livestock at 444-5609.

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