



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, January 16 - 22, 2010

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

On 1/14, wolf NW034M was harvested by a trapper near Kimberly, British Columbia (~ 66 miles north of Bonners Ferry, ID). NW034M was captured and collared on 8/14/2005 as a member of the Kootenai South pack and has been missing since 6/5/2006.

On 1/20, wolf NW526M, which has been dispersing from the Lydia pack (near Koocanusa Reservoir in NW Montana) was shot in Idaho east of Bonners Ferry. NW526M has traveled from the Lydia pack (west of Fortine) to the southern end of the Cabinet Mountains, to the Idaho Panhandle, to about 51 miles north of the border into Canada, and back into the Idaho Panhandle. The wolf was on private property and reported to be within about 20 yards of the landowner and his dog (the wolf was not showing aggression towards the dog). IDFG responded.

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 on 1/12 and 1/22 in northwest Montana.

Wolf - Livestock Activities

Correction: The last weekly (1/15/10) incorrectly reported that the control efforts to remove the remaining wolves in the Mitchell Mountain pack north of Helena (2-3, one collared) concluded after 45 days had passed and that not all wolves were killed. FWP had authorized full pack removal on 11/30 after multiple confirmed incidents in 2009. However, a subsequent incident on 12/14 occurred in which WS confirmed the death of 3 buck sheep. The 45-day timeline for WS to complete the

removal of the last wolves, *in fact started over with the December incident and has not expired. Efforts will continue until January 28.* The landowner kill permit is still valid.

On 1/4, WS confirmed a cattle calf killed by wolves on private land in the Fortine area (near Eureka, northwest Montana). FWP has authorized lethal control and WS is currently assessing the field conditions.

On 1/19, FWP strung close to 2 miles of fladry around a calving pasture in the Martinsdale area (north end of the Crazy Mountains).

On 1/20, WS killed one wolf from the Bender pack (Big Hole Valley west of Wisdom) on private land. The control action is completed.

Outreach and Education

WS has and will be attending Wool Pool meetings around the state. Wolf updates will be provided.

Echinococcus granulosus was recently documented in Montana and Idaho wolves in a peer reviewed journal article, although it is not known for sure where the *E. granulosus* originated. It is considered baseline information for wolves in Montana and Idaho. FWP has recently completed a fact sheet on *Echinococcus*, a tape worm. Here is a short summary.

Two different species of the tape worm are known to exist in Montana wildlife and the environment. The life cycle requires two different “hosts” – typically a definitive canine host where the worms live in the intestinal tract and from which eggs are shed in feces (wolf, coyote, fox, or domestic dog) and an intermediate host (rodents, domestic or wild ungulates, or occasionally a human) that ingests the eggs previously shed in the definitive host’s feces. In the intermediate host, eggs can turn into cysts in the organs (liver, lung, or brain). If the organ tissue of an infected intermediate host is eaten by a wild or domestic canine, adult tapeworms can develop in the intestinal track of the canine and be shed in feces. Cysts are rarely documented in muscle tissue of the immediate host.

To become infected, a human must ingest (take into the body) the eggs which are passed with the feces of an infected canine. Eggs could also be ingested while consuming vegetation or drinking water that was contaminated with egg-laden feces. Humans could also become infected by not washing their hands before eating if they’ve handled canine scats or contaminated canine fur. In the rare instance in which larval cysts may occur in muscle tissue of domestic or wild ungulates, thoroughly cooking the meat should kill any larvae. No reports were found of eggs developing into adult tapeworms in human intestines.

Basic precautions will minimize the risk of human infection by either eggs from canine scats or cysts in domestic or wild ungulate organs. Dog owners should not allow their dog to consume carcasses of wild or domestic ungulates. If your dog does have access to carcasses, talk to your veterinarian about an appropriate deworming strategy. Always wash your hands after handling a dog that has access to ungulate carcasses. When enjoying outdoor recreation, do not touch or disturb wolf, coyote, or fox scat. Hunters should wear gloves when field dressing a wolf, coyote, or fox carcass, and wash your hands, forearms etc., since they may have come into contact with feces or contaminated fur.

As with handling of any wild or domestic tissues or carcasses, use common sense and wash your hands. These simple precautions should remove nearly all potential for human infection.

Research Activities

Nothing to report.

Law Enforcement and Related Activities

On 1/21, a wolf was killed in a vehicle collision on the Wolf Creek Road (area of checkerboard ownership Plum Creek Timber Company and US Forest Service) east of Koocanusa Reservoir in NW Montana. FWP responded and retrieved the carcass. Pack affiliation is somewhat uncertain because it occurred a “border” area between packs (Satire or Wolf Creek).

Other Updates

2009 Wolf Hunting Season Summary

A complete and detailed summary of the 2009 wolf hunting season is available on the FWP Wolf Program Home page.

Northern Rockies Delisting Litigation in Missoula Federal Court

The schedule for parties to submit written briefs to the court in a staggered fashion has been followed by all (US Department of Justice representing USFWS, plaintiffs, and interveners). The last briefs will be filed by the end of January. A hearing date for oral arguments has not been set, but is expected to be not long after completion of the written briefing schedule.

FWP (on behalf of the State of Montana) is intervening in the lawsuit in support of the USFWS delisting decision. Montana’s position is that Montana’s track record of wolf management is proven and adequate, leaving wolves listed in Wyoming does comply with the federal Endangered Species Act, and that connectivity requirements have been met and will continue to be met into the future.

Background:

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, leaving a delisted, state-based legal framework in place in Montana while the main lawsuit moves forward.

During the course of the litigation, Montana state laws, administrative rules, and the federally-approved management plan remain in effect. 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 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 next full Board meeting will be April 9 in the Montana Capitol and Internet streaming is expected. The full agenda will be publicized as the meeting date approaches, but is expected to include funding and rulemaking. 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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