

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, March 13 - 19, 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 on the FWP website.

NOTE: FWP has recently redesigned and reorganized its Website. The Wolf Program Home Page can be found at <http://fwp.mt.gov/wolf>. If you get an error page, go to the FWP Home page and look for Montana Wolves under Fish & Wildlife.

Wolf Monitoring Activities

FWP announces the availability of the 2009 Annual Report. A media release and the FWP Quick Facts Summary are available at: <http://fwp.mt.gov/wolf>. The full report can be found by scrolling down the Wolf Program Home page to Reports // look for 2009 Annual Report or click on the photo link for 2009 Annual Report.

Flights: Laudon flew in northwest MT on 3/15-16.

Wolf - Livestock Activities

On 3/13, MT WS and CSKT removed 2 gray female wolves from the Camas Pack near Hot Springs. Control is complete at this time.

On 3/18, WS confirmed a calf was killed by wolves in the Ninemile Valley. The Ninemile pack was found nearby and an adult male wolf was killed off the calf carcass the night of the 18th. Traps were set on the 19th and any wolves returning to the depredation site in the next 2 days will be killed.

On 3/19, a calf was confirmed injured by wolves on private land in the Fishtrap pack territory. This is the 4th depredation event since the beginning of January and demonstrates a significantly different behavioral pattern in that pack since they were first documented in 2000. In the past, livestock conflicts have been very infrequent. Three wolves were removed in February in response to the previous 3 incidents. Depredations are not ceasing and the area ranches are beginning to calf. FWP has authorized the removal of the remaining pack.

Outreach and Education

On 3/10, Laudon presented an update on wolves and MFWP’s wolf program for the Mountain West Bank Summit Club in Kalispell. There were about 15 in attendance.

On 3/13, Sime, Dr. Ramsey (FWP vet), and Chief Legal Counsel Lane gave updates at the annual Montana Wild Sheep Foundation meeting in Helena. About 50 people attended.

On 3/16, Lance, FWP area biologists Fager and Boccadori, and WS area specialist McDougal talked with the Big Hole Watershed Group in Jackson about wolves and wolf management, 2009 report highlights, numbers, prey, future hunting season, etc. About 40 people attended.

On 3/18 Laudon presented an update on wolves and MFWP’s wolf program for the community in Condon. There were about 25 in attendance.

Research Activities

Nothing to report.

Law Enforcement and Related Activities

Nothing to report.

Other Updates

Northern Rockies Delisting Litigation in Missoula Federal Court

Montana’s interests in support of delisting have been represented and brought forward through efforts by FWP in consultation with the Montana Attorney General’s Office. FWP filed its last written brief on 1/28.

FWP argued that: 1. for a variety of reasons, it is lawful for USFWS to establish different levels of protection for a species, subspecies or Distinct Population Segment under the Endangered Species Act; 2. the facts show that Montana’s existing regulatory mechanisms will keep wolf populations well above the federal recovery criteria and encourage connectivity; 3. sufficient genetic exchange has taken place and will continue; and 4. Montana’s hunting season is not a basis for relisting the gray wolf.

At this time, a hearing for oral arguments has not been scheduled. One could be scheduled at any time, but there is no requirement for an oral hearing.

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](http://montana.gov/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.

=====

To learn more about Montana's wolf population, the Montana program and to help FWP monitor wolves by reporting wolf sign, visit FWP online. Use the following shortcut link and be sure to update your bookmarks: <http://fwp.mt.gov/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 death 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.

2010-03-19 Montana Wolf Weekly.pdf