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, April 3 – April 9, 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.

FWP is taking applications to fill several volunteer positions to help FWP with wolf monitoring during the upcoming field season. Volunteers investigate public and agency wolf reports and help with trapping efforts. Volunteers are expected to get underway sometime in April and wrap up by June 30. An extension past June 30 is possible but depends on funding availability. Volunteers need not stay the whole time. Learn more at: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks: Gray Wolf Volunteer Opportunity. (http://fwp.mt.gov/doingBusiness/employment/wolfVolunteers.html)

Flights: None this week.

Wolf - Livestock Activities
On 4/5, WS lethally removed one wolf of two seen from the Horse Prairie pack. WS effort to remove the last wolf from this pack are ongoing.

On 4/6, CSKT and MT WS investigated a dead calf north of Niarada and concluded it was a probable wolf kill. The area is within the Dry Forks pack territory which does not have a radio collar. Efforts to collar and remove wolves will be ongoing.

On 4/7, WS called in 4 members of the Dry Forks Pack near where a probable depredation was confirmed yesterday. One gray wolf and possibly 2 were shot but not recovered. The situation will be monitored.

On 4/9, WS confirmed that wolves killed 2 calves on private land near Wisdom. WS efforts to remove the entire pack have been ongoing and will continue. The 45 day timeline will be renewed with this most recent loss. FWP has offered a kill permit, but the livestock owner did not want one.

Outreach and Education
On 4/8, Lance and Sime attended the Elkhorn Working Group meeting in Helena. They gave an update on wolves and wolf management in Montana. About 35 people attended.

On 4/9, Sime attended the Montana Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Board meeting in Helena. She gave a brief update on FWP wolf management. See below for additional information.

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 Livestock Loss Reduction & Mitigation Board met on April 9th. The meeting was also broadcast on local access TV and streamed over the Internet.

Funding Update and two opportunities individual livestock owners can pursue:

1. The MLLRM program Board will be submitting paperwork to receive a $140,000 grant from the USFWS. The USFWS is administering the grant opportunity under a new demonstration program designed to help livestock producers undertake proactive, non-lethal activities to reduce the risk of livestock loss from predation by wolves, or to compensate livestock producers for livestock losses caused by wolves. The Wolf Compensation and Prevention Program legislation was initially sponsored by Montana Senator Tester. The program provides funding to states and tribes, with federal cost-share not to exceed 50 percent. Montana will be able to achieve the necessary match requirement. The MLLRMB will determine how those funds are spent.
2. Leonard McArthur from the state FSA office spoke about a USDA program for livestock compensation due to wolf caused losses. The program is LDAP-20 and it has a very short sign

up period. If you had wolf caused losses related to your livestock operation during either 2008 or 2009, please contact your local FSA office immediately. Certain restrictions apply to the LDAP-20 program. The sign up window is very short and likely only through the end of April. Contact your county FSA office as soon as possible to learn more.

3. Separately, USFWS announced the 2008 Farm Bill Endangered Species Tax Deduction opportunity. A provision in the 2008 Farm Bill allows taxpayers, who are engaged in the business of farming, to receive a tax deduction for expenditures paid or incurred for implementing actions benefitting the recovery of federally threatened or endangered (listed) species. To be eligible for the deduction, the expenditures must be for site-specific management actions recommended in approved recovery plans for listed species. The deduction for endangered species recovery expenses cannot be more than 25 percent of a farmer's gross income from farming. The Internal Revenue Service publishes a Tax Guide for Farmers (http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p225.pdf) that includes information about the requirements for the endangered species deduction in Chapter 5 under Conservation Expenses. The Fish and Wildlife Service can provide information on the recovery plans for listed species including recommended recovery management actions contained in those plans.

The full agenda for this meeting is available at the Board's website www.llrmb.mt.gov. Look under Board and Meetings on the left navigation bar. 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 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.

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