

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, June 5 – June 11, 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 2009 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

On 6/11, FWP Ross and Hilary Zaranek of YNP Wolf Project trapped and collared an adult black male wolf in Tom Miner Basin north of Gardiner. At this time, it is assumed that the wolf is part of a new pack but further monitoring will be needed for final determination.

Flights: Ross flew in southwest Montana on June 8.

Wolf - Livestock Activities

On 6/2, MT WS removed the collared male from the Selow pack southwest of Ravalli. One wolf remains. Efforts to remove this wolf are ongoing.

On 6/5, WS confirmed a cow was killed by wolves on private property in Deer Park east of Lincoln. FWP authorized WS to kill 2 wolves and collar 1 wolf. The Arrastra Creek pack is known to use this area and no wolves are currently collared in this pack. One wolf was trapped and killed on 6/7. A shoot-on-site permit was issued to the landowner.

On 6/7, a yearling wolf was killed as part of efforts to remove the Trapper Peak pack. A total of 4 wolves were killed by the end of the 45-day control window. There may be 1-2 wolves left in the area and further monitoring effort will be done to determine the status of the pack.

On 6/8, WS investigated a report of 10 goats being killed by wolves near Lima on private land. WS determined that it was unconfirmed wolf damage and that coyotes caused the damage.

On 6/10, WS investigated and confirmed a calf as being injured by wolves on or near the Wall Creek Wildlife Management Area south of Ennis. The situation is being monitored and no lethal control has been authorized at this time.

On 6/10, WS confirmed that a wolf or wolves killed a sheep on private land north of Helena. On 6/11, WS confirmed that wolves killed another ewe roughly in the same area. Tracks of at least 2 and maybe 3 wolves were seen. This is most likely a new pack since the Mitchell Mtn pack no longer exists. WS has been authorized to kill one and collar one wolf. Traps have been placed in the area.

On 6/11, WS confirmed that a wolf or wolves killed a calf on private land south of Wisdom. Efforts to remove the Miner Lakes pack have been ongoing since February, though unsuccessful to date. The 45-day control window will start over.

Outreach and Education

Sime gave a presentation at a training course sponsored by the US Forest Service Northern Region called People, Economics, and Forest Carnivore Management. About 25 people attended.

Research Activities

Nothing to report.

Law Enforcement and Related Activities

Nothing to report.

Other Updates

Northern Rockies Delisting Litigation in Missoula Federal Court

On 4/23, Judge Molloy announced a hearing date for oral arguments in the legal challenge of the USFWS decision to delist the wolf throughout the northern Rockies DPS except Wyoming. This hearing is on the merits of the main case. The hearing will be June 15 at 9:00am in the Russell Smith Courthouse in Missoula.

Background: 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.

FWP Proposes 2010 Wolf Hunting Season

FWP and the FWP Commission are taking public comment on the proposed 2010 hunting season through June 14, 5:00pm. FWP has received about 1000 comments thus far.

To comment: 1. Mail written comments to: FWP – Wildlife Bureau, Attn: Public Comment, POB 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701. 2. Submit electronic comments through the FWP Hunting page by clicking on the link Comment on Proposed 2010 Wolf Hunting Seasons Quotas and Hunting District Boundaries (<http://fwp.mt.gov/Hunting>).

All background information and supporting documents and maps can also be found at the above link. For further clarification, you may also call the Wildlife Bureau office at 406-444-2612.

Montana Livestock Loss Reduction & Mitigation Board:

The Prevention Subcommittee of the Montana Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Board met on June 4 to begin crafting the Prevention side of the Board's Mission and overall program. Work is ongoing with this effort, a Funding Subcommittee, and a Rules Subcommittee.

The Board's website is www.llrmb.mt.gov. Look under Board and Meetings on the left navigation bar. Agendas 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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