

MONTANA WOLF PROGRAM - WEEKLY REPORT

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Ken McDonald, Wildlife Bureau Chief
SUBJECT: Wolf Program Activities and Related Information
WEEK OF: March 5 – 11, 2011

Contributors to the Montana Wolf Weekly are Montana Fish, Wildlife & 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 each Monday, covering the previous week. It and other wolf program information (including the 2009 annual report) can be found on the FWP website.

WOLF MONITORING ACTIVITIES:

Flights:

3/8: Bradley conducted a monitoring flight in Western Montana.

3/8: Lance conducted a monitoring flight in Southwestern Montana.

WOLF-LIVESTOCK ACTIVITIES:

3/8: Wildlife Services confirmed a yearling calf was killed by wolves on private land in the Bitterroot Valley near Lake Como. From tracking it appeared that 2 wolves were involved and FWP has authorized WS to remove 2 wolves. It is unknown whether these wolves are a new establishing pair or members of a nearby pack. A kill permit has been issued to the landowner for 2 wolves on his private land.

3/8: Lance reports that a lion hound dog was killed by wolves on public land in the Elkhorn Mountains. The hunter had three dogs total but it was thought that the dog was running alone at the time. Tracks of at least two wolves were observed in the area.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION:

3/8: Nelson gave a brief update on wolf activity and monitoring efforts to members of the Upper Yellowstone Watershed Basin group in Emigrant, MT.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:

3/10 – 3/11: Laudon attended a multi agency bear handling workshop.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND RELATED ACTIVITIES:

3/9: Nelson retrieved a wolf mortality north of Yellowstone Park with USFWS special agent Brian Lakes. Circumstances of the mortality are under investigation.

OTHER UPDATES:

FWP's **Montana Gray Wolf Conservation and Management 2010 Annual Report** is now available online at fwp.mt.gov. The report shows Montana's minimum wolf population increased about 8 percent in 2010, compared to a 4 percent increase in 2009 and an 18 percent increase in 2008. The minimum Montana wolf population count includes 566 wolves in 108 verified packs, and 35 breeding pairs.

The **Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery 2010 Interagency Annual Report** is available at <http://westerngraywolf.fws.gov>

The annual report for the Northern Rocky Mountain Distinct Population Segment (NRM DPS) indicates population numbers and its distribution remain roughly the same as in 2009 with at least 1,651 wolves in 244 packs and 111 breeding pairs. Human-caused mortality and the natural territorial behavior of wolves are likely responsible for maintaining the population at 2009 levels.

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 or 1-800-847-6668.

To request an investigation of injured or dead livestock, call USDA Wildlife Services directly in western Montana / Helena area at 406-458-0106 or in eastern Montana at the statewide office at 406-657-6464. 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 406-444-5609.