

Idaho Wolf Management Progress Report December 2009

Wolves are being managed as a big game animal in Idaho. They are protected by state laws approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho legislature, and the Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Fish and Game Commission set a statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves for the 2009-2010 hunting season. Nez Perce Tribe members may take up to 35 additional wolves within the Nez Perce Tribal Treaty Area.

Wolf Hunting Seasons

Wolf harvest seasons have closed in five wolf management zones when harvest limits were met: Upper Snake zone (November 2), McCall-Weiser zone (November 9), Dworshak-Elk City zone (November 17), Palouse-Hells Canyon zone (December 18), and the Southern Mountains zone (December 31). All seven remaining zones are open until March 31, 2010, or until harvest limits for individual zones are met, whichever comes first.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game sold 26,428 wolf tags (25,744 resident, 684 nonresident) in 2009. Hunters must purchase a 2010 hunting license and new 2010 wolf tag to hunt wolves during the remaining open seasons.

Hunters are required to call 1-877-872-3190 within 24 hours of killing a wolf. They must have the skull and hide checked in by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game within five days of kill.

Idaho wolf hunting seasons and rules are available on our website:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/wolfrules.pdf>

Hunters are required to confirm the season remains open in the zone they are hunting by calling 1-877-872-3190 or by checking status on-line: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/quota.cfm>

Harvest – From September 1 through December 31, 135 wolves were legally harvested (Table 1). During this period three wolves were documented to have been either shot illegally or wounded and not retrieved, another was killed in a closed area, and a fifth wolf was accidentally killed in a snare legally set by a trapper. These wolves were all counted against the harvest limit for the zone in which they were killed. The heaviest harvest occurred October 10-12 when 16 wolves were taken by hunters over the three-day weekend when deer season opened in most of the state. Hunters harvested 21 wolves in December.

Monitoring

Our 2008 annual report on Wolf Conservation and Management in Idaho is available on our website at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum year-end population estimate for 2008 was 846 wolves, 88 packs, with 39 documented breeding pairs. The 2009 annual report is being prepared and will be available in March.

The following year-end numbers for 2009 are considered preliminary. Idaho Fish and Game and Nez Perce Tribe biologists have documented 94 packs present in Idaho at the end of December. Reproduction was confirmed in 62 packs, and 50 packs are believed to meet Breeding Pair criteria (at least two pups produced and currently surviving). Biologists documented 15 new packs during 2009. Three packs were eliminated by control actions to address livestock depredations, and five previously documented packs were dropped from the count because of a lack of confirmed activity during the year.

Idaho Fish and Game and Nez Perce Tribe biologists are conducting intensive telemetry flights to monitor radio-collared wolves throughout the state to complete year-end counts. Pack status, reproduction and breeding pair status will continue to be assessed through January when final numbers will be tallied for the year. Wolf harvest is being watched closely to help track pack status.

In December, Fish and Game received authorization from the USDA Forest Service to land a helicopter in the Frank Church River-of-No-Return Wilderness as an aid to capture and radio-collar wolves encountered incidental to routine elk population surveys scheduled for March.

Management and Control Actions

USDA Wildlife Services personnel confirmed wolves killed eight sheep, injured two sheep, and probably killed two calves during December. In response to wolf depredations on livestock, Wildlife Services killed two wolves. Also during December, Wildlife Services confirmed that a mountain lion killed an alpaca. Wildlife Services subsequently assisted a licensed lion hunter with harvesting the responsible lion. Wildlife Services did not document any depredations by bears in Idaho during December.

Confirmed wolf depredations 2003 – 2009 are reported in Table 2 (preliminary data).

Research

Idaho Fish and Game research biologists will be capturing and radio-marking elk, moose and wolves in January as part of Fish and Game's on-going elk/wolf interaction study in the North Fork Clearwater and Lowman study areas. The team will radio-mark 20 six-month old elk calves and enough bulls and cows to maintain 20 bulls and 20 cows in each of the two study areas. Four or more wolves will be radio-marked in two to four packs in each study area. Moose will also be radio-marked in the North Fork study area.

Biologists from the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at The University of Montana are conducting research to develop wolf population monitoring techniques. Analyses of DNA from wolf scats and hairs collected at rendezvous sites in three Idaho study areas are underway in Lisette Waits' lab at The University of Idaho. In addition, DNA analyses of hair samples obtained at rub stations deployed last summer were recently completed. Full results and a summary report describing this technique are forthcoming. A 2009 research progress report and more information is available at:

<http://www.umt.edu/mcwru/PERSONNELPROFILES08/PPDaveAusbund2008.htm>

Information and Education

In early November, the Idaho Fish and Game and Nez Perce Tribe wolf technical committee met and began development of our 2009 annual report. Data tabulation and report preparation is underway. The report will be available in March.

Further information and updates can be viewed at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game wolf observation form:

http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Litigation Status

In June 2009, a coalition of 13 special interest groups filed a legal challenge to the wolf delisting in Federal District Court in Missoula, Montana. The Greater Yellowstone Coalition brought a separate lawsuit, and the cases were consolidated. They allege the Northern Rocky Mountain wolf population is not recovered and that the delisting violates the Endangered Species Act for several reasons, including challenges to Montana and Idaho's regulatory frameworks and the assertion that it is not legal to delist only a portion of this distinct population. Judge Donald Molloy denied the plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction to stop wolf hunts in Idaho and Montana on grounds that the plaintiffs failed to show a likelihood of irreparable harm to the wolf population. The final round of briefings in the case will be filed by the end of January 2010. A hearing date for oral arguments has not been set, but is expected within a few months. The state of Wyoming and other parties filed another lawsuit in federal district court in Cheyenne, Wyoming, challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's rejection of Wyoming's regulatory framework and wolf management plan. The U.S. District Court for Montana is in the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. District Court in Wyoming is in the Tenth Circuit, so there could be conflicting rulings at both the district and appellate levels.

Regional Wildlife Biologist Position

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is in the process of hiring a regional wildlife biologist to replace Michael Lucid who accepted a position as a nongame biologist in the Panhandle Region in October. The new biologist will assist with wolf monitoring and other wildlife management activities in our Southwest and Magic Valley regions. Top applicants will be interviewed in January. Lucid will continue to assist the wolf program in his new position.

Table 1. Total known wolf mortality by cause, Jan. 1, 2009 – Dec. 31, 2009 (preliminary).

Wolf Mgt Zone	Control	Harvest	Illegal ¹	Legal (protection of livestock)	Other	Unk	Total
Dworshak-Elk City	4	18			1	2	25
Lolo		6	1 ²			5	11
McCall-Weiser	25	14	1	3		1	44
Middle Fork		14	1			2	17
Palouse-Hells Canyon		5					5
Panhandle		13	3		1		17
Salmon		10					10
Sawtooth	28	33	5		3	8	77
Selway		6					6
South Idaho	2	1					3
Southern Mountains	22	10	1	3	2	6	44
Upper Snake	6	5	2		1		14
Total	87	135	13	6	8	24	273

¹ Five wolves were documented to have been either killed illegally or shot and not recovered after September 1, one in each of the following zones: Panhandle, Lolo, Middle Fork, McCall-Weiser and Sawtooth. These five wolves were counted against the harvest limits for these zones.

² The wolf killed in the Lolo wolf management zone was counted against the harvest limit, but the mortality will be counted toward annual statewide wolf mortality totals in Montana rather than in Idaho because this radio-marked wolf was known to be a member of a pack that denned in Montana in 2009.

Table 2. Confirmed wolf depredations and mortalities in Idaho from 2003 to December 31, 2009 (2009 numbers are preliminary).

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality				
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j / 36-1107 ³	Other ⁴	Hunter Harvest	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8		15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21		38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16		43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19		61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27		77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	14	45		153
2009	76	295	14	385	87	6	45	135	273

¹ Includes confirmed wolf depredations resulting in death or injury.

² Wolves taken by USDA Wildlife Services in response to depredation on livestock.

³ Authorized take under 10j, or legal take after delisting under state law for protection of stock and dogs (Idaho Code 36-1107).

⁴ Other includes of mortalities of unknown cause, documented natural mortality, collisions with automobiles, and illegal take.

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Wolf Hunting Seasons

Hunting seasons opened in the Lolo and Sawtooth wolf management zones on September 1, and in the Selway and Middle Fork wolf management zones on September 15. The remaining eight wolf management zones opened October 1. Wolf hunting seasons will close immediately in individual wolf management zones if the harvest limit for that zone is reached. Seasons close immediately statewide if the statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves is met. In November, the Idaho Fish and Game Commission extended the seasons in seven of 12 wolf management zones to close on March 31.

The wolf harvest season in the Upper Snake wolf management zone closed November 2, the McCall-Weiser zone closed on November 9, and the Dworshak-Elk City zone closed on November 17 when the harvest limits for those zones were met. All remaining zones are open until March 31, 2010 or until harvest limits for individual zones are met, whichever comes first.

Hunters are required to call 1-877-872-3190 within 24 hours of killing a wolf. They must have the skull and hide checked in by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game within five days of the kill. Compliance with these requirements has been very high.

Idaho wolf hunting seasons and rules are available on our website:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/wolfrules.pdf>

Hunters are required to confirm the season remains open in the zone they are hunting by calling 1 (877) 872-3190 or by checking status on-line:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/quota.cfm>

Harvest — From September 1 through November 30, 113 wolves were legally harvested (Table 1.). The frequency of wolf harvest increased as predicted beginning October 10 when most deer and elk hunters headed to the field. The heaviest harvest occurred October 10-12 when 16 wolves were taken by hunters over the three-day weekend when deer season opened in most of the state. Hunters harvested 31 wolves in November.

Monitoring

Our 2008 annual report on Wolf Conservation and Management in Idaho is available on our website at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum year-end population estimate for 2008 was 846 wolves, 88 packs, with 39 documented breeding pairs.

As of the end of November 2009, there were 95 documented packs in Idaho. Reproduction has been confirmed in 59 packs, and a minimum of 179 pups have been confirmed produced. To date, 47 packs are believed to meet Breeding Pair criteria (at least two pups produced and currently surviving). Pup counts are incomplete in several packs that were determined to be reproductive, so Breeding Pair status may still be confirmed.

Idaho Fish and Game and Nez Perce Tribe biologists are conducting telemetry flights to monitor radio-collared wolves throughout the state about twice monthly. Wolf harvest is being watched closely to help track pack status. Pack status, reproduction, and breeding pair status will continue to be assessed through January when final numbers will be tallied for the year.

Management and Control Actions

During November, USDA Wildlife Services personnel conducted two wolf depredation investigations and confirmed wolves killed an adult cow on private land. In response to this and at least three previous depredations in the area this year, WS killed seven members of the responsible wolf pack. Wildlife Services confirmed that a mountain lion killed a calf on private land. Wildlife Services did not receive any reports of grizzly or black bear depredations in November.

Confirmed wolf depredations in Idaho from 2003 – November 30, 2009 are reported in Table 2.

Research

Idaho Fish and Game wildlife research crews continue to monitor wolves and elk survival in the Lowman and North Fork Clearwater study areas. Planning for winter elk and wolf capture and radio-collaring operations in both study areas is under way. In addition to capturing elk and wolves, the research crew will also be capturing and collaring moose in the North Fork Clearwater Study area.

Biologists from the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at the University of Montana are conducting research to develop wolf population monitoring techniques. Analyses of DNA from wolf scats and hairs collected at rendezvous sites in three Idaho study areas are underway in Dr. Lisette Waits' lab at the University of Idaho. In addition, DNA analyses are being conducted to determine effectiveness of rub stations deployed last summer in an effort to non-invasively obtain hair samples from wolves. Results are forthcoming and a 2009 progress report was recently completed.

Information and Education

In early November, Idaho Fish and Game and Nez Perce Tribe wolf technical committee met and began the data sharing and planning process to begin development of our 2009 annual report.

Further information and updates can be viewed at:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game wolf observation form: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Litigation Status

A lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in Missoula by a coalition of 13 environmental and animal rights groups in June. Another separate lawsuit challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delisting criteria was filed by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. The two cases were consolidated in the federal district court in Missoula. Their complaint alleges the Northern Rocky Mountain wolf population is not recovered, and that the delisting violates the Endangered Species Act for many legal reasons, including that delisting cannot occur without an adequate Wyoming regulatory framework in place. A request for a preliminary injunction would have stopped proposed wolf hunts and returned wolves in Montana and Idaho to the endangered species list while the court decides the case within the next year. U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy denied the plaintiffs' request on grounds that the plaintiffs failed to show a likelihood that the wolf hunt would result in irreparable harm to the wolf population. But Molloy indicated the plaintiffs demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits of their lawsuit. The judge stated concerns with leaving a portion of the Northern Rockies Distinct Population Segment still listed (i.e., state of Wyoming). Written briefings by all parties will be completed by late January, 2010. A hearing date for oral arguments has not been set, but is expected to be soon after completion of written briefings.

Gray wolves were delisted wolves in Montana, Idaho, the eastern one-third of Washington and Oregon, and a small part of north-central Utah on May 4, 2009. Wolves in Wyoming remain listed under the Endangered Species Act. The US Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage wolves in Wyoming under the provisions of the 1994 nonessential experimental population rules.

Wolves are being managed as a big game animal in Idaho. They are protected by state laws approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho legislature, and the Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Fish and Game Commission set a statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves for the 2009-2010 hunting season. Nez Perce Tribe members may take up to 35 additional wolves within the Nez Perce Tribal Treaty Area.

Recruiting Announcement

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game has vacancy for a regional wildlife biologist to assist with wolf monitoring and management duties in southwest Idaho. Interested individuals must register online and complete the required exam.

http://labor.idaho.gov/dhr/ats/statejobs/jobannouncement.aspx?announcement_no=00835057109

Table 1. Total known wolf mortality by cause, Jan. 1, 2009 – Nov. 30, 2009.

Wolf Mgt Zone	Control	Harvest	Illegal	Legal (protection of livestock)	Other	Unk	Total
Dworshak-Elk City	4	18			1	3	26
Lolo		4	1 [#]			5	10
McCall-Weiser	23	14	1 [#]	3		1	42
Middle Fork		13				2	15
Palouse-Hells Canyon		4					4
Panhandle		12	2		1		15
Salmon		3					3
Sawtooth	28	26	4		3	5	66
Selway		6					6
South Idaho	2	0					2
Southern Mountains	22	8	1	3	1	7	42
Upper Snake	6	5	2		1		14
Total	85	113	11	6	7	23	245

[#] Wolf shot illegally in closed wolf zone or shot and not recovered. These wolves count towards zone harvest limits. (The wolf killed in the Lolo wolf mgt. zone will count against the harvest limit, but the mortality will be counted toward annual statewide wolf mortality totals in Montana because this marked wolf was known to be a member of a pack that denned in Montana.)

Table 2. Confirmed wolf depredations and mortalities in Idaho from 2003 to November 30, 2009.

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality				
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j / 36-1107 ³	Other ⁴	Hunter Harvest	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8		15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21		38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16		43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19		61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27		77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	14	45		153
Jan 1 – Nov 30, 2009	76	285	14	375	85	6	41	113	245

¹ Includes confirmed wolf depredations resulting in death or injury.

² Wolves taken by USDA Wildlife Services in response to depredation on livestock.

³ Authorized take under 10j, or legal take after delisting under state law for protection of stock and dogs (Idaho Code 36-1107).

⁴ Other includes of mortalities of unknown cause, documented natural mortality, collisions with automobiles, and illegal take.

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Wolf Hunting Seasons

Hunting seasons opened in the Lolo and Sawtooth wolf management zones on September 1, and in the Selway and Middle Fork wolf management zones on September 15. The remaining eight wolf management zones opened October 1. Wolf hunting seasons will close immediately in individual wolf management zones if the harvest limit for that zone is reached. Seasons close immediately statewide if the statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves is met.

Hunters are required to call 1-877-872-3190 within 24 hours of killing a wolf. They must have the skull and hide checked in by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game within five days of kill. Compliance with these requirements has been very high.

Idaho wolf hunting seasons and rules are available on the Fish and Game Web site:
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/wolfrules.pdf>

Hunters are required to confirm the season remains open in the zone they are hunting by calling 1-877-872-3190 or by checking status on-line:
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/quota.cfm>

Harvest Update

From September 1 through October 31, 81 wolves were legally harvested (Table 1). The frequency of wolf harvest increased as predicted beginning October 10 when most deer and elk hunters headed to the field. The heaviest harvest occurred October 10-12 when 16 wolves were taken by hunters over the three-day weekend when deer season opened in most of the state.

The wolf harvest season in the Upper Snake wolf management zone closed November 2 when the harvest limit for that zone was reached. The harvest limit for the McCall-Weiser wolf management zone was met and the season closed on November 8.

Monitoring

Our 2008 annual report on Wolf Conservation and Management in Idaho is available on our website at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum year-end population estimate for 2008 was 846 wolves, 88 packs, with 39 documented breeding pairs.

As of the end of October, there were 95 documented packs in Idaho. Reproduction has been confirmed in 57 packs, and a minimum of 179 pups have been confirmed produced. To date, 48 packs are believed to meet Breeding Pair criteria (at least two pups produced and surviving). Pup counts are incomplete in several packs that were determined to be reproductive, so Breeding Pair status may still be confirmed.

Idaho Fish and Game and Nez Perce Tribe biologists are conducting telemetry flights to monitor radio-collared wolves throughout the state approximately twice monthly. Wolf harvest is being watched closely to help track pack status.

Management and Control Actions

U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services personnel confirmed that wolves killed four calves, injured another calf, and probably killed two sheep during October. In response to these and previous depredations, Wildlife Services killed one wolf. Wildlife Services did not receive any reports of bear or lion depredations in October.

Confirmed wolf depredations in Idaho from 2003 – October 31, 2009 are reported in Table 2.

Research

Idaho Fish and Game wildlife research crews continue to monitor wolves and elk survival in the Lowman and North Fork Clearwater study areas. Planning for winter elk and wolf capture and radio-marking operations is underway.

Biologists from the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at The University of Montana are conducting research to develop wolf population monitoring techniques. Analyses of DNA from wolf scats and hairs collected at rendezvous sites in three Idaho study areas are underway in Dr. Lisette Waits' lab at the University of Idaho. In addition, DNA analyses are being conducted to determine effectiveness of rub stations deployed last summer in a noninvasive effort to obtain hair samples from wolves. Results are forthcoming, and a 2009 progress report will be available soon.

Information and Education

Information and updates can be viewed at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game wolf observation form: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Litigation Status

A lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in Missoula by a coalition of 13 environmental and animals rights groups in June. Another separate lawsuit challenging the USFWS delisting criteria was filed by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. The two cases were consolidated in the federal court in Missoula. Their complaint alleges the Northern Rocky Mountain wolf population is not recovered, and that the delisting violates the Endangered Species Act for many legal reasons, including that delisting cannot occur without an adequate Wyoming regulatory framework in place. A request for a preliminary injunction would have stopped proposed wolf hunts and returned wolves in Montana and Idaho to the endangered species list while the court decides the case within the next year. U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy denied the plaintiffs' request on grounds that the plaintiffs failed to show a likelihood that the wolf hunt would result in irreparable harm to the wolf population. But Molloy indicated the plaintiffs demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits of their lawsuit. The judge stated concerns with leaving a portion of the Northern Rockies Distinct Population Segment still listed (i.e., state of Wyoming). Written briefings by all parties will be completed by late January, 2010. A hearing date for oral arguments has not been set, but is expected to be soon after completion of written briefings.

Table 1. Total known wolf mortality by cause, Jan. 1, 2009 – Oct. 31, 2009.

Wolf Mgt Zone	Control	Harvest	Illegal	Legal (protection of livestock)	Other	Unk	Total
Dworshak-Elk City	4	11			1	2	18
Lolo		4	1 [#]			4	9
McCall-Weiser	23	13	1 [#]	2		1	40
Middle Fork		9				2	11
Palouse-Hells Canyon		2					2
Panhandle		8	2				10
Salmon		2					2
Sawtooth	21	19	4		2	4	50
Selway		4					4
South Idaho	2	0					2
Southern Mountains	22	5	1	3	1	7	39
Upper Snake	6	4	2		1		13
Total	78	81	11	5	5	20	200

[#] Wolf shot illegally in closed wolf zone or shot and not recovered. These wolves count towards zone harvest limits. (The wolf killed in the Lolo wolf mgt. zone will count against the harvest limit, but the mortality will be counted toward annual statewide wolf mortality totals in Montana because this marked wolf was known to be a member of a pack that denned in Montana.)

Table 2. Confirmed wolf depredations in Idaho from 2003 to October 31, 2009.

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality				
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j / 36-1107 ³	Other ⁴	Hunter Harvest	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8		15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21		38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16		43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19		61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27		77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	14	45		153
Jan 1 – Oct 31, 2009	75	285	14	374	78	5	36	81	200

¹ Includes confirmed wolf depredations resulting in death or injury.

² Wolves taken by USDA Wildlife Services in response to depredation on livestock.

³ Authorized take under 10j, or legal take after delisting under state law for protection of stock and dogs (Idaho Code 36-1107).

⁴ Other includes of mortalities of unknown cause, documented natural mortality, collisions with automobiles, and illegal take.

Delisting Litigation Update

Gray wolves were delisted wolves in Montana, Idaho, the eastern one-third of Washington and Oregon, and a small part of north-central Utah on May 4, 2009. Wolves in Wyoming remain listed under the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage wolves in Wyoming under the provisions of the 1994 nonessential experimental population rules.

Wolves are being managed as a big game animal in Idaho. They are protected by state laws approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho Legislature, and the Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Fish and Game Commission set a statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves for the 2009-2010 hunting season. Nez Perce Tribe members may take up to 35 additional wolves within the Nez Perce Tribal Treaty Area.

To review information, past wolf updates and publications on the wolf webpage go to:
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>.

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Wolf Hunting Seasons

Hunting seasons opened in the Lolo and Sawtooth wolf management zones on September 1 and in the Selway and Middle Fork wolf management zones on September 15. Seasons in the remaining eight wolf management zones opened October 1.

Wolf hunting seasons will close immediately in individual wolf management zones if the harvest limit for that zone is reached. Seasons close immediately statewide if the statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves is met.

Hunters are required to call 1-877-872-3190 within 24 hours of killing a wolf. They must have the skull and hide checked in by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game within five days of kill.

Idaho wolf hunting seasons and rules are available on the Fish and Game website:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/wolfrules.pdf>

Hunters are required to confirm the season remains open in the zone they are hunting by calling 1-877-872-3190 or by checking status online:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/quota.cfm>

Harvest update From September 1 through September 30, 16 wolves were harvested by hunters. Two were killed in the Lolo Wolf Management Zone, five in the Middle Fork Zone, seven in the Sawtooth Zone, and two were killed in the Selway zone (Table 1.). An additional wolf was killed illegally in the McCall-Weiser wolf management zone before that season opened October 1. The wolf was seized, and the suspect has been cited. Wolf harvest seasons opened in all remaining zones on October 1. As of October 8, 33 wolves had been killed (Table 1.). Wolf harvest is expected to increase beginning October 10 when most deer and elk hunters head to the field as those seasons open.

Monitoring

The 2008 annual report on Wolf Conservation and Management in Idaho is available at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum year-end population estimates for 2008 for Idaho are 846 wolves, 88 packs, with 39 documented breeding pairs.

During September, Idaho Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, and USDA Wildlife Services personnel captured three wolves. One new wolf was radio-collared, one previously marked wolf was captured, and its radio collar was replaced. One pup was captured, marked with ear tags and released.

By the end of September, there were 95 documented packs in Idaho. Reproduction has been confirmed in 57 packs, and a minimum of 179 pups have been confirmed produced (of which 13 have been documented to have died of various causes). To date, 48 packs meet breeding pair criteria (at least two pups produced and currently surviving). Pup counts are incomplete in several packs that were determined to be reproductive, so their breeding pair status may still be confirmed with additional effort.

The summer field season has come to a close and trapping efforts have been suspended as hunting seasons have opened throughout the state. Nez Perce Tribe seasonal biologists Shannon Katchel and Kari Holder performed exceptionally well throughout the season and are now on furlough until next year. We thank them for their outstanding contributions.

Management and Control Actions

During September, USDA Wildlife Services confirmed wolves killed a bull, two cows, six calves, 44 sheep, and a guard dog. Wildlife Services also confirmed that two guard dogs were attacked and injured by wolves. Another two calves and four sheep were documented as probable wolf kills. In response to these and previous wolf depredations, Wildlife Services killed 19 wolves. Wildlife Services confirmed that a black bear killed three sheep and determined that a lion probably killed a calf. Confirmed wolf depredations in Idaho from 2003 – September 30, 2009 are reported in Table 2.

Research

Idaho Fish and Game wildlife research crews continue to monitor wolves and elk survival in the Lowman and North Fork Clearwater study areas. Trapping efforts ceased with the opening of hunting seasons.

University of Montana crews had a very successful summer and collected more than 1,200 DNA samples from wolves in three study areas. UofM crews tested howl boxes and rub pads throughout the three study areas in Idaho. Results from the 2008 hunter survey are nearly complete, and it appears that, as in 2006 and 2007, hunter reports of the numbers of wolves in the study areas largely track the known density of wolves in those areas. DNA and data analyses are in progress. To learn more about this project that is developing alternative methods to radio telemetry for monitoring wolf populations, go to:

<http://www.umt.edu/mcwru/PERSONNELPROFILES08/PPDaveAusband2008.htm>

Information and Education

Further information and updates can be viewed at:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are fully protected under state law. For more detailed information on the laws and policies protecting wolves in Idaho, and what people are allowed to do to protect livestock and pets, please visit the Idaho Fish and Game website or call a local Fish and Game office.

Please help Fish and Game manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on the wolf observation form found at: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/.

Table 1. Total known wolf mortality by cause, Jan. 1, 2009 – Sep. 30, 2009.

Wolf Mgt Zone	Control	Harvest	Illegal	Legal	Other	Unk	Total
Dworshak-Elk City	3				1	2	6
Lolo		2				3	5
McCall-Weiser	23		1 [#]	2		1	27
Middle Fork		5				2	7
Panhandle			2				2
Sawtooth	21	7	4		2	3	37
Selway		2					2
South Idaho	2						2
Southern Mountains	22		1	3	1	7	34
Upper Snake	6		2		1		9
Total	77	16	10	5	5	18	131

[#] Wolf shot in closed wolf zone that will count towards zone quota.

Table 2. Confirmed wolf depredations in Idaho from 2003 to September 30, 2009.

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j / 36-1107 ³	Other ⁴	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	14	45	153
Jan 1 – Sep 30, 2009	70	285	14	369	77	5	49	131

¹ Includes confirmed wolf depredations resulting in death or injury.

² Wolves taken by USDA Wildlife Services in response to depredation on livestock.

³ Authorized take under 10j, or legal take after delisting under state law for protection of stock and dogs (Idaho Code 36-1107).

⁴ Other includes of mortalities of unknown cause, documented natural mortality, collisions with automobiles, illegal take, and legal hunter harvest beginning Sep 1, 2009.

Delisting

Gray wolves were delisted wolves in Montana, Idaho, the eastern one-third of Washington and Oregon, and a small part of north-central Utah on May 4. Wolves in Wyoming will remain under the adequate regulatory mechanisms of the Endangered Species Act. The US Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage wolves in all of Wyoming under the provisions of the 1994 nonessential experimental population rules.

In Idaho wolves are being managed as a big game animal. They are protected by state laws already approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho legislature, and Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Fish and Game Commission set a statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves. Nez Perce Tribal members may take up to 35 additional wolves within the Nez Perce Tribal Treaty Area.

Litigation Status

On June 2 a lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in Missoula by a coalition of 13 environmental and animal rights groups. Another separate lawsuit challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's delisting criteria was filed shortly after by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. Those two cases were consolidated in the U.S. District Court in Missoula under Judge Donald Molloy. Their complaint alleges the Northern Rocky Mountain wolf population is not recovered and that the delisting violates the Endangered Species Act for many legal reasons, including that delisting cannot occur without an adequate Wyoming regulatory framework in place.

On August 20, a request for preliminary injunction was filed by the plaintiffs requesting that wolves in Montana and Idaho be placed back on the Endangered Species list while the lawsuit is resolved within the next year. Arguments on the injunction were heard at the federal courthouse in Missoula on August 31. Judge Molloy denied the motion for preliminary injunction on September 8 on grounds that the plaintiffs had failed to show hunting seasons in Montana and Idaho were not likely to cause irreparable harm to the wolf population. But Molloy indicated the plaintiffs have demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits of their lawsuit. Among other things, Molloy stated concerns with leaving a portion of the Northern Rockies Distinct Population Segment still listed – the state of Wyoming.

You may review information, past wolf updates, and publications on our wolf webpage at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Idaho Wolf Management Progress Report

August 2009

Wolf Hunting Seasons

Hunting seasons opened in the Lolo and Sawtooth wolf management zones on September 1 and will remain open through March 31 or until individual zone harvest limits have been reached or the statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves has been reached. Seasons will open in the Selway and Middle Fork wolf management zones on September 15 and run through December 31. Seasons in the remaining eight wolf management zones are scheduled to run October 1 through December 31.

Wolf hunting seasons close immediately in individual wolf management zones if the harvest limit for that zone is reached. Seasons close immediately statewide if the statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves is met.

Hunters are required to call 877-872-3190 within 24 hours of killing a wolf. They must have the skull and hide checked in by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game within five days of kill.

Idaho wolf hunting seasons and rules are available on our website:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/wolfrules.pdf>

Hunters are required to confirm whether the season remains open in the zone they are hunting by calling 877-872-3190 or by checking status on-line:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/hunt/wolf/quota.cfm>

Harvest update

From September 1 through September 9, four wolves were reported harvested by hunters. Three were killed on September 1, two in the Lolo wolf management zone and one in the Sawtooth wolf management zone. A fourth wolf was reported killed September 6 in the Sawtooth Zone, but a report from a witness and subsequent investigation by Fish and Game officers revealed the wolf was actually taken in a unit outside the Sawtooth wolf management zone. The wolf was seized and the individual was issued a citation for illegal take of a wolf during a closed season. Take of this wolf has been subtracted from the harvest limit set for the McCall-Weiser wolf management zone which opens on October 1.

Monitoring

Our 2008 annual report on Wolf Conservation and Management in Idaho is available on our website at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum year-end population estimates for 2008 for Idaho are 846 wolves, 88 packs, with 39 documented breeding pairs.

During August Idaho Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, and USDA Wildlife Services personnel captured seven wolves. Five wolves were radio-collared, one previously-marked wolf was captured and its radio collar was replaced, and one pup was captured, marked with ear tags, and released.

By the end of August, reproduction had been confirmed in 52 packs (minimum of 162 pups confirmed so far); of those, 43 packs met breeding pair criteria of at least two pups. Pup counts are incomplete in several packs that were determined to be reproductive, so their breeding pair status may still be confirmed with additional effort.

Management and Control Actions

During August, Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed three cows, seven calves, 96 sheep, and three guard dogs; and injured three calves, five sheep and one guard dog. Wildlife Services also determined wolves probably killed four calves and 70 sheep.

In response to those and previous depredations, Wildlife Services killed 25 wolves and radio-collared and released one wolf. Wildlife Services also captured and released two wolves that were already wearing radio collars.

Also during August, Wildlife Services confirmed that black bears killed five sheep, and that another 12 sheep were probably killed by black bears. One calf was probably killed by a grizzly bear. Wildlife Services confirmed one goat was killed by a mountain lion.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to August 31, 2009.

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j / 36-1107 ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	14	45	153
Jan 1 – Aug 31, 2009	61	241	11	313	56	5	33	94

¹ Includes confirmed wolf depredations resulting in death or injury.

² Authorized take by USDA Wildlife Services.

³ Authorized take under 10j, or legal take after delisting under Idaho Code 36-1107 for protection of stock and dogs under state law.

Research

Idaho Fish and Game wildlife research staff continues to monitor wolves and elk survival in the Lowman and North Fork Clearwater study areas. Trapping efforts were conducted in both study areas to replace nonfunctioning radio collars and mark new wolves. Trapping will continue into September.

University of Montana crews recently finished the summer field season by wrapping up in the Panhandle region. Crews had a very successful summer and collected more than 1,200 DNA samples from wolves in three study areas. Simultaneously, crews tested both howl boxes and rub

pads throughout the three study areas in Idaho. Results from the 2008 hunter survey are nearly complete, and it appears that, as in 2006 and 2007, hunter reports of the numbers of wolves in the study areas largely track the known density of wolves in those areas. DNA and data analyses are forthcoming.

To learn more about this project that is developing alternative methods to radio telemetry for monitoring wolf populations go to:

<http://www.umt.edu/mcwru/PERSONNELPROFILES08/PPDaveAusband2008.htm>

Information and Education

Further information and updates can be viewed at:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are fully protected under state law. For more detailed information on the laws and policies protecting wolves in Idaho, and what people are allowed to do to protect livestock and pets, please visit the Fish and Game website or call the local Fish and Game office.

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game wolf observation form found at: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Delisting: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Status (WY, MT, ID):

The Final Rule to Establish a Gray Wolf – Northern Rocky Mountain Distinct Population Segment and Remove it from the Federal List of Threatened and Endangered Species became effective May 4, 2009. The rule delisted wolves in Montana, Idaho, the eastern one-third of Washington and Oregon, and a small part of north central Utah. Wolves in Wyoming remain under the regulatory mechanisms of the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage wolves in all of Wyoming under the provisions of the 1994 nonessential experimental population rules.

In Idaho wolves are being managed as a big game animal. They are protected by state laws already approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho legislature, and Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Fish and Game Commission approved 2009 wolf hunting season dates in March and on August 17 set a statewide harvest limit of 220 wolves. The Nez Perce Tribe may take up to 35 additional wolves within the Tribal Treaty Area.

Delisting Litigation Status

On June 2, a lawsuit was filed in federal District Court in Missoula by a coalition of 13 environmental and animals rights groups. Another separate lawsuit challenging the Fish and Wildlife Service's delisting criteria was filed shortly after by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. Those two cases were consolidated in the U.S. District Court in Missoula under Judge Donald Molloy. Their complaints allege the northern Rocky Mountain wolf population is not recovered and that the delisting violates the Endangered Species Act for many legal reasons, including that delisting cannot occur without an adequate Wyoming regulatory framework in place. On August 20, a request for preliminary injunction was filed by the coalition of 13 environmental and animal rights groups, requesting that wolves in Montana and Idaho be placed back on the

Endangered Species list while the court decides the case within the next year. A preliminary injunction hearing at the federal courthouse in Missoula was heard on August 31. Judge Molloy denied the plaintiffs' motion for preliminary injunction on September 8 on grounds that the plaintiffs failed to show a likelihood of irreparable harm to the wolf population.

You may review information, past wolf updates, and publications on our wolf webpage at:
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Idaho Wolf Management Progress Report

July 2009

Monitoring

Our 2008 annual report on Wolf Conservation and Management in Idaho is available on our website at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum year-end population estimate for 2008 for Idaho is 846 wolves, in 88 packs, with 39 documented breeding pairs.

In July, Idaho Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services personnel captured 14 wolves. Ten previously uncollared wolves were radio-collared; one previously marked wolf that had shed its collar was recollared; and two pups were captured, marked with ear tags, and released; and one pup was released unmarked.

As a result of these captures, radio collars were placed in four packs (Pond Peak, Kootenai, Grandad, Bitch Creek) that were previously documented but without radio-collared wolves. Additionally, a new pack of wolves was detected and radio-collared by Wildlife Services (Little Wood River pack) during a control action north of Carey.

By the end of July, reproduction had been confirmed in 37 packs (minimum of 113 pups confirmed so far); of those, 31 packs met breeding pair criteria (of at least two pups). Pup counts were incomplete in several packs that were determined to be reproductive, so their breeding-pair status may still be confirmed with additional effort.

Oregon – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife received a call about an adult black wolf and three pups southeast of Wallowa Lake and subsequently found a rendezvous site and began trapping. On July 17 B300 (Idaho disperser with a dead radio collar) was captured by Oregon Fish and Wildlife wolf coordinator Russ Morgan. She was in good shape, weighed 77 pounds and was nursing pups.

Washington – Based on multiple reports from loggers, biologists verified the presence of a new pack in Pend Oreille County, adjacent to the Idaho Panhandle. A howling survey on July 9 detected both adults and pups. Sightings by local loggers and remote camera images suggest the pack is comprised of the alpha pair and three to five pups. In cooperation with Washington Department of Wildlife, on July 31 Idaho Fish and Game wolf biologist Carter Niemeyer captured and radio-collared the alpha male and captured and released two pups. This is the first reproductive pack confirmed in northeastern Washington.

Management and Control Actions

During July, Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed 10 calves, 70 sheep and three dogs and injured one calf, six sheep and a dog. Wildlife Services also determined that three sheep were probable wolf kills. During the same time frame, Wildlife Services confirmed that black bears killed 11 sheep, and grizzly bears killed two calves. In response to these and previous depredations, Wild Services killed 16 wolves, and radio-collared and released three wolves and two grizzly bears. For comparison, in July 2008, Wildlife Services confirmed wolves killed two cows, 15 calves, 46 sheep and six dogs; black bears killed 38 sheep; and grizzly bears killed one cow and one calf.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to July 31, 2009.

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j / 36-1107 ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	13	44	151
Jan 1 – Jul 31, 2009	51	145	8	204	34	4	22	60

¹ Includes confirmed wolf depredations resulting in death or injury.

² Authorized take by USDA Wildlife Services.

³ Authorized take under 10j; or legal take after delisting under Idaho Code 36-1107 for protection of stock and dogs under state law.

Research

Idaho Fish and Game wildlife research staff in the Lowman and North Fork Clearwater study areas continue to monitor wolves with GPS/ARGOS collars and have observed that dispersals have occurred at most times of the year - fall, spring, and summer. ARGOS technology has enabled us to track several dispersing wolves whose fate would otherwise have gone undetermined. Unfortunately, however, the ARGOS collars placed in both study areas this winter and spring have been plagued by high failure rates. Trapping efforts will continue as opportunities arise in the research study areas throughout August and September.

The University of Montana research crews continued their work developing monitoring techniques for wolves. Crews conducted scat surveys, deployed howl boxes and rub pads, and obtained pup counts in the Salmon and Lowman areas. Much of August will be spent surveying for wolves in the St Joe drainage (GMU 6). For more info on this research see:

<http://www.umt.edu/mcwru/PERSONNELPROFILES08/PPDaveAusband2008.htm>

Information and Education

Further information and updates are at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are fully protected under state law. For more detailed information on the laws and policies protecting wolves in Idaho, and what people are allowed to do to protect livestock and pets, please visit the Idaho Fish and Game Web site or call the local Fish and Game office.

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game observation form found at: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Delisting: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Status (Wyoming, Montana, Idaho): “The Final Rule to Establish a Gray Wolf – Northern Rocky Mountain Distinct

Population Segment and Remove it from the Federal List of Threatened and Endangered Species” **became effective May 4**. The rule delisted wolves in Montana, Idaho, the eastern one-third of Washington and Oregon, and a small part of north central Utah. Wolves in Wyoming will remain under the adequate regulatory mechanisms of the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage wolves in all of Wyoming under the provisions of the 1994 nonessential experimental population rules.

In Idaho, wolves are being managed as a big game animal. They are protected by state laws already approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho legislature and Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Fish and Game Commission approved 2009 wolf hunting season dates in March and set harvest limits on August 17.

Delisting Litigation Status

On June 2, a lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in Missoula by a coalition of 13 environmental and animals rights groups. A separate lawsuit challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delisting criteria was filed shortly after by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. Those two cases have been consolidated in the U.S. District Court in Missoula under District Judge Donald W. Molloy. Their complaint asserts the Northern Rocky Mountain wolf population is not recovered and that the delisting violates the Endangered Species Act for many legal reasons, including that delisting cannot occur without an adequate Wyoming regulatory framework in place. A request for a preliminary injunction has been filed.

You may review information, past wolf updates, and publications on our wolf webpage at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Idaho Wolf Management Progress Report June 2009

Wolf Delisting Litigation Status

June 2, a lawsuit was filed in federal District Court in Missoula by a coalition of 13 environmental and animals rights groups. Another separate lawsuit challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delisting criteria was filed shortly after by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. Both groups have their own attorneys, but those two cases have now been consolidated in the Missoula District Court in Missoula under Judge Donald Molloy. Their complaint alleges the Northern Rocky Mountain wolf population is not recovered and that the delisting violates the Endangered Species Act for many legal reasons, including that delisting cannot occur without an adequate Wyoming regulatory framework in place. A request for a preliminary injunction has not been filed at this time. In addition, the state of Wyoming filed a lawsuit in Cheyenne, Wyoming, challenging the Fish and Wildlife Service's rejection of Wyoming's regulatory framework and the Wyoming state wolf management plan.

Additional information, past wolf updates, and publications are available at:
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>.

Monitoring

The Idaho Fish and Game 2008 annual report on Wolf Conservation and Management in Idaho is available at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum year-end population estimates for 2008 for Idaho are 846 wolves, in 88 packs, with 39 documented breeding pairs. This is about a 15 percent increase over the 2007 minimum population estimate of 732.

Wolves have denned and produced pups. Numerous monitoring flights have occurred over the past three months, including efforts to look for lost radio-collars or missing wolves. As of the end of June, 25 packs had been confirmed to have produced pups across Idaho.

In June, biologists radio-collared eight new wolves and replaced radio-collars on two additional wolves. Between January 1 and June 30, Idaho Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, and USDA Wildlife Services personnel captured and placed radio-collars on 44 new wolves and replaced radio-collars on 10 previously collared wolves.

Management and Control Actions

During June USDA Wildlife Services verified 22 wolf depredations, two black bear depredations and three mountain lion depredations. Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed six calves, 65 sheep and a guard dog. Wildlife Services also confirmed wolves injured four calves, two sheep and one guard dog; and determined one calf and 32 sheep were probable wolf kills, and one calf and one sheep suffered injuries that were probably caused by wolves.

During the same time frame, Wildlife Services confirmed that black bears killed one calf and injured another, and a mountain lion killed eight sheep. Wildlife Services killed 10 wolves in June, and captured, radio-collared, and released three.

Between January 1 and June 30, 2009 (all preliminary figures), Wildlife Services verified 56 wolf depredations, two black bear depredations and five mountain lion depredations. Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed 33 calves, 67 sheep and three dogs. Wildlife Services also confirmed that wolves injured seven calves, two sheep and one guard dog. Wildlife Services also determined that six calves and 32 sheep were probable wolf kills, and one calf and one sheep were probable wolf injuries. During the same time frame, Wildlife Services confirmed that black bears killed one calf and injured another and mountain lions killed 18 sheep.

Wildlife Services killed 30 wolves and one mountain lion, and captured, radio-collared, and released six wolves to aid in future monitoring.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to June 30, 2009.

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j / 36-1107 ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	13	44	151
Jan 1 – Jun 30, 2009	40	69	4	113	30	4	19	53

¹ Includes confirmed wolf depredations resulting in death or injury.

² Authorized take by USDA Wildlife Services.

³ Authorized take under 10j; or legal take after delisting under Idaho Code 36-1107 for protection of stock and dogs under state law.

Research

On the North Fork Clearwater River study area, Idaho Fish and Game research biologists attempted to capture wolves in a helicopter-darting operation in the Pot Mountain and Fish Creek Packs to deploy additional Argos-GPS radio collars. They were unable to capture any wolves in the Pot Mountain Pack, but they recaptured Wolf 187 and replaced her Argos-GPS radio collar and also captured and collared a yearling male. The research crew will be trapping in July to deploy radios in the Pot Mountain and Deception packs.

In the Lowman study area, a sub-adult male (B448) in the Casner Pack was captured in May and collared with an Argos-GPS collar, as part of a pilot wolf diet study. The research crew back-tracked it during June and examined sites the wolf visited and collected diet information. Fish and Game research staff also provided pack/den site locations from the ARGOS collars to Dave Ausband for further investigation.

University of Montana researchers continue to develop wolf population monitoring techniques. In June, one UM crew obtained pup counts in several wolf packs in the three research study areas (Lowman, Salmon, Coeur d' Alene). This crew also continued testing howl boxes and rub stations near occupied rendezvous sites. An additional UM crew began rendezvous site-DNA surveys in the Salmon area in June. Both UM crews will continue working in the three study areas through July and August. For more info on this research see:

<http://www.umt.edu/mcwru/PERSONNELPROFILES08/PPDaveAusband2008.htm>

Information and Education

Further information and updates can be viewed at the Fish and Game Web site:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are fully protected under state law. For more detailed information on the laws and policies protecting wolves in Idaho, and what people are allowed to do to protect livestock and pets, please visit the Fish and Game Web site or call local Fish and Game offices.

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on the Fish and Game observation form at: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Delisting: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Status (WY, MT, ID): The rule that removed the gray wolf in the Northern Rocky Mountains from the endangered species list became effective May 4.

The “Final Rule to Establish a Gray Wolf – Northern Rocky Mountain Distinct Population Segment and Remove it from the Federal List of Threatened and Endangered Species” was published in the *Federal Register Vol. 74, No. 62 pages 15123-15188* on April 2. The rule, the literature cited, and questions and answers about the delisting rule are posted on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Web site at <http://westerngraywolf.fws.gov>. The rule delists wolves in Montana, Idaho, eastern third of Washington and Oregon, and a small part of north central Utah. Wolves in Wyoming will remain under the protection of Endangered Species Act. The Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage wolves in all of Wyoming under the provisions of the 1994 nonessential experimental population rules. Management under the ESA will continue until Wyoming develops a regulatory framework that the Service determines meets the purposes of the ESA. After that happens Fish and Wildlife may initiate the mandatory federal regulatory process, including public review and comment, to turn management over to Wyoming.

As of May 4, all wolves in Idaho, Montana, eastern Washington and Oregon, and a portion of northern Utah are delisted. In Idaho wolves are being managed as a big game animal. They will be protected by state laws already approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho legislature, and Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Fish and Game Commission approved 2009 wolf hunting season dates in March and will set the statewide and wolf zone harvest quotas in August.

Information, past wolf updates and publications are available on the Idaho Fish and Game wolf webpage at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Idaho Wolf Management Progress Report April and May 2009

Delisting: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Status (WY, MT, ID): The rule that removed the gray wolf in the Northern Rocky Mountains from the endangered species list became effective May 4.

The “Final Rule to Establish a Gray Wolf – Northern Rocky Mountain Distinct Population Segment and Remove it from the Federal List of Threatened and Endangered Species” was published in the *Federal Register Vol. 74, No. 62 pages 15123-15188* on April 2. The rule, the literature cited, and questions and answers about the delisting rule are posted on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Web site at <http://westerngraywolf.fws.gov>. The rule delists wolves in Montana, Idaho, eastern third of Washington and Oregon, and a small part of north central Utah. Wolves in Wyoming will remain under the protection of Endangered Species Act. The Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage wolves in all of Wyoming under the provisions of the 1994 nonessential experimental population rules. Management under the ESA will continue until Wyoming develops a regulatory framework that the Service determines meets the purposes of the ESA. After that happens Fish and Wildlife may initiate the mandatory federal regulatory process, including public review and comment, to turn management over to Wyoming.

In all of Idaho, gray wolves are being managed as a big game animal. They will be protected by state laws already approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho legislature, and Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Fish and Game commissioners approved the 2009 wolf hunting season dates at their March meeting, and will consider statewide and wolf zone harvest quotas in August.

Since delisting, Jon Rachael became the new wolf program coordinator, replacing Steve Nadeau. Rachael replaced Brad Compton as the new state wildlife game manager and will oversee the state's big and small game programs.

Information, past wolf updates and publications are available on the Idaho Fish and Game wolf webpage at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Monitoring

The 2008 annual report has been completed and sent to the Fish and Wildlife Service. It is available at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum year-end population estimates for 2008 for Idaho are 846 wolves, in 88 packs, with 39 documented breeding pairs. This is about a 15 percent increase over the 2007 minimum population estimate of 732.

Wolves have denned and produced pups. Several monitoring flights have occurred over the past two months, including looking for lost collars and missing wolves. Many den sites have been located and pup counts have begun. As of the end of May, seven packs had been confirmed to have produced pups across Idaho.

Radio collars have been placed on eight wolves over the past two months by program personnel.

Management

From April 4 – May 31, agencies documented 18 dead wolves in Idaho. Of those, 10 were depredation control actions by USDA Wildlife Services, two were legal kills, one illegal kill, one natural death, and four other died of unknown causes.

From April 4 through May 3, 10 mortalities were confirmed – four control, three unknown, one illegal, one legal (10j), and one natural. From May 4 – the date of delisting – through May 31, eight mortalities were confirmed – six control, one legal (36-1107), and one other human.

From January 1 – May 29, Wildlife Services (tentatively) confirmed that wolves killed 26 calves, three sheep, three dogs; injured four calves; probable kills of five calves; and probable wolf-caused injuries to two calves.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to May 29, 2009 (tentative).

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	13	44	151
Jan. 1- May 3	16	3	3	22	13	3	11	27
May 4- present	10	0	0	10	6	1	1	8
Total	283	1138	50	1471	239	34	147	420

¹ Includes confirmed depredations resulting in death or injury

² Authorized take by Wildlife Services

³ Authorized take under 10j; or while delisted for protection of stock and dogs under state law.

Control

Since the last report on April 4, Wildlife Service has confirmed that wolves killed 15 calves, injured two calves, killed two sheep and one dog. Two more calves were killed that were determined to be probable wolf depredations. In response to these, and previous depredations, 11 wolves were killed, and three were radio collared and released.

Since delisting on May 4 through May 28, Wildlife Service has confirmed that wolves killed 10 calves and injured two calves and probably killed another calf. Wildlife Services has taken a total of seven wolves since delisting and radio collared three. During the same period in 2008, Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed 15 calves and 30 sheep and, in response to depredations, killed 11 wolves and radio collared two.

Research

Nothing new to report.

Information and Education

Additional information is available at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are fully protected under state law. For more detailed information on the laws and policies protecting wolves in Idaho, and what people are allowed to do to protect livestock and pets, please visit the Idaho Fish and Game Web site or call your local Fish and Game office. <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>.

Help Fish and Game manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on the observation form found at: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/.

Idaho Wolf Management Progress Report March 16 – April 3, 2009

News on Delisting

The final rule to establish a gray wolf – Northern Rocky Mountain distinct population segment and remove it from the federal list of threatened and endangered species becomes effective May 4, 2009. It was published in the *Federal Register* Vol. 74, No. 62 pages 15123-15188 on April 2, 2009. The rule, the literature cited, and questions and answers about it are posted on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Website at <http://westerngraywolf.fws.gov>. The rule delists wolves in Montana, Idaho, eastern one-third of Washington and Oregon, and a small part of north central Utah. Wolves in Wyoming will remain under the adequate regulatory mechanisms of the Endangered Species Act.

The Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage wolves in all of Wyoming under the provisions of the 1994 “nonessential, experimental population” rules. Management under the ESA will continue until Wyoming develops a regulatory framework that the Fish and Wildlife Service determines meets the purposes of the ESA. After that, Fish and Wildlife may initiate the mandatory federal regulatory process [including public review and comment] to turn management over to Wyoming.

Until May 4, all wolves to the north of Interstate- 90 in Idaho remain listed as endangered. All wolves in the southern half of Montana, all portions of Idaho south of Interstate-90, and all of Wyoming are being managed under the 2005 and 2008 Endangered Species Act nonessential experimental population 10j regulations. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is the designated agent for the Fish and Wildlife Service in day-to-day management of wolves under an 2006 agreement between the federal government and Idaho.

Once wolves are delisted they will be managed as a big game animal in all of Idaho. They will be protected by state laws already approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho legislature and Idaho Fish and Game Commission. The Commission approved 2009 wolf hunting season dates during their March meeting, and they will set the statewide and wolf zone harvest quotas in August before the fall hunting seasons.

Past wolf updates are available on the Fish and Game wolf Web page along with pertinent wolf information at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Monitoring

Idaho’s annual report on wolf management has been completed and sent to the Fish and Wildlife Service. It is at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/> . The minimum population estimates for 2008 are 846 wolves for Idaho, in 88 packs and 39 breeding pairs. This is about a 15 percent increase over the 2007 minimum population estimate of 732.

Wolves are just beginning to select and dig den sites. Aerial surveys over the next few weeks will attempt to locate den sites to allow biologists to verify reproduction and conduct pup counts. Wolf pups are typically born in mid April.

Management

From January 1 – April 3, 2009, agencies have documented 17 dead wolves in Idaho. Of those, nine were depredation control actions by USDA Wildlife Services; two were legal kills; two illegal kills; one natural kill; and three other or unknown.

From January 1 – April 3, Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed 11 calves, one sheep, two dogs; probably killed two calves; and probably injured two calves.

A wolf pack has been drawing a crowd near Ketchum-Sun Valley recently as they prey on herds of elk that have been fed by local residents through the winter. This pack of wolves continues to be seen at times close to human development and high-use trails and roads. Ground hazing by Idaho Fish and Game continues in an attempt to dissuade the group from remaining in an area where problems may develop. Hazing and aversive conditioning occurs across the state when wolves are in close proximity to humans and pose a threat to livestock, dogs or human safety. Nonlethal harassment is allowed by the public as well. Also, under current federal law, individuals are allowed to kill a wolves harassing or attacking their livestock or dog on public or private land. Once delisted, a similar state law will provide similar protections and allowances.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to March 15, 2009 (tentative).

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	13	44	151
2009	11	1	2	14	9	2	6	17
Total	268	1136	48	1448	229	32	141	402

¹ Includes confirmed depredations resulting in death or injury

² Authorized take by Wildlife Services

³ Authorized take under 10j or while delisted for protection of stock and dogs

Control

From March 16 – April 3, Wildlife Services conducted five wolf depredation investigations. Wildlife Service confirmed that wolves killed four calves, and Fish and Game confirmed that wolves killed one dog - all on private land. In response to these and previous depredations, Wildlife Services shot and killed three wolves. During the same time in 2008, Wildlife Services conducted 10 wolf depredation investigations and confirmed that wolves killed seven calves and a cow, and determined that another calf and cow were probable wolf kills. In response to depredations, Wildlife Services shot and killed five wolves.

Research

Nothing new to report.

Information and Education

Michael Lucid, of Idaho Fish and Game gave a presentation to 20 members of the Fish and Game Master Naturalist program on March 24 at the MK Nature Center.

Curt Mack, of the Nez Perce Tribe gave a presentation to Dr. Matt Carroll's Natural Resource Policy Law course at Washington State University on March 26. Forty students were in attendance.

Further information and updates can be viewed at:

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are protected under the endangered species act and killing one illegally is a federal offense. When they are delisted, they will be fully protected under state and federal laws.

Please help Fish and Game manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on the Fish and Game observation form found at:

http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Idaho Wolf Management Progress Report March 1 – March 15, 2009

News on Delisting

On March 6, 2009, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar affirmed the decision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to **remove gray wolves from the list of threatened and endangered species** in the Western Great Lakes and the Northern Rocky Mountain states of Idaho and Montana and parts of eastern Washington and Oregon and a small part of north central Utah. Wolves will remain a protected species under the Act in all of Wyoming. The Northern Rocky Mountain and Western Great Lakes delisting rules will be published in the next week or so and will become effective 30 days later in mid to late April.

Delisting: FWS – Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Status (WY, MT, ID):

For the time being, all wolves to the north of Interstate- 90 in Idaho remain listed as endangered. All wolves in the southern half of Montana, south of Interstate-90 in Idaho, and all of Wyoming are being managed under the 2005 and 2008 Endangered Species Act nonessential experimental population 10j regulations. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is the designated agent for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in day-to-day management of wolves under a 2006 MOU between the federal government and Idaho.

Delisting wolves and assuring their proper long-term management is and has been of highest priority for the state of Idaho and the Fish and Game Department. We continue to work along with the Interior Department, Department of Justice, and other states and interveners toward the eventual delisting of wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains, and move toward state management under the State Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and the Wolf Population Management Plan.

Past wolf weekly publications are available for review on the Fish and Game wolf webpage and links along with all pertinent and updated wolf information and publications at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Monitoring

The 2008 Wolf Conservation and Management Progress Report for Idaho has been completed and sent to the Fish and Wildlife Service. It is available at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/manage/>. The minimum population estimates for 2008 are 846 wolves for Idaho, in 88 packs and 39 breeding pairs. This is about a 15 percent increase over the 2007 minimum population estimate of 732.

Management

From January 1 – March 15, 2009, agencies have documented 14 dead wolves in Idaho. Of those, 6 were depredation control actions by USDA Wildlife Services, 2 were legal kills, 2 illegal kills, 1 natural kill and 3 were other or unknown.

From February 28 – March 15, Wildlife Services tentatively confirmed that wolves killed seven calves, one sheep and one dog; probably killed two calves; and probably injured two calves.

A wolf pack has been drawing a crowd near Ketchum-Sun Valley recently as it preys on a herd of elk that has been fed by locals through the winter. The feeding season has stopped, and the herd is beginning to move away from the resort community. Fish and Game may replace radio collars on these wolves this week with a helicopter and haze elk farther from the community. Fish and Game is concerned about the wolves becoming habituated to humans in the area and threats they may pose to safety, particularly to pets and livestock.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to March 15, 2009 (tentative).

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	13	44	151
2009	7	1	1	9	6	2	6	14
Total	264	1136	48	1448	226	32	141	399

¹ Includes confirmed depredations resulting in death or injury

² Authorized take by Wildlife Services

³ Authorized take under 10j or while delisted for protection of stock and dogs

Control

In summary, from February 28 – March 15, Wildlife Service confirmed that wolves killed five calves and probably killed another two. All of these depredations took place on private land. In response to these and previous depredations, Wildlife Service shot and killed two wolves. During the same time in 2008, Wildlife Services did not confirm any wolf depredations.

Research

Nothing new to report.

Information and Education

Idaho Fish and Game director's office has been giving several wolf updates to the state Legislature and to the Fish and Game Commission, and on television.

Jason Husseman gave a talk to 15 retired school teachers on March 10 regarding wolf management.

Michael Lucid gave a wolf biology presentation to 17 students from the Treasure Valley Community College on March 4. The students were in an introduction to biology course.

On February 17, Jim Holyan spoke about wolf biology and ecology and delisting issues with about 20 students in the Environmental Studies class at McCall-Donnelly High School.

Further information and updates, including the directives provided by the commission can be viewed at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are protected under the endangered species act and killing one illegally is a federal offense. When they are delisted, they will be fully protected under state and federal laws.

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game observation form found at: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Idaho Wolf Management Progress Report February 1 – February 28, 2009

Monitoring

Aerial telemetry flights and end-of-year counts are completed, and the annual report is being wrapped up. The minimum population estimates for 2008 are 846 wolves for Idaho, in 88 packs, 39 breeding pairs. This is about a 15 percent increase over the 2007 minimum population estimate of 732.

February was the peak for wolf dispersal during the breeding season. Often these wolves may be close to development and may cause some conflicts if not just increased sightings. As an example, a GPS collared wolf from Paradise Valley north of Yellowstone that was part of the Mill Creek pack moved to the Wyoming, Utah, Idaho border area in September and in January moved to southeast Idaho, then through Utah and recently was located near Vail, Colorado.

On February 27, two U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services employees darted and collared a wolf near Kilgore, Idaho.

Management

From January 1 – February 28, agencies have documented five dead wolves in Idaho. Of those, four were depredation control actions by Wildlife Services, and one was an illegal kill.

From January 1 – February 28, Wildlife Services (tentatively) confirmed that wolves killed 2 calves, 1 sheep and 1 dog; and probably injured 2 calves.

A pack of nine wolves attacked a pet dog at a residence near Ashton. The owner of the dog somehow was able to jump into the fight and retrieve his dog. A reminder that under the 10(j) rule amended in 2008, a person is allowed to kill a wolf attacking a dog, livestock, or stock on public or private land.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to Feb 28, 2009 (tentative).

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	13	44	151
2009	2	1	1	4	4		1	5
Total	259	1136	48	1443	224	30	136	390

¹ Includes confirmed depredations resulting in death or injury

² Authorized take by Wildlife Services

³ Authorized take under 10j or while delisted for protection of stock and dogs

Control

In summary, from February 1 – 28, Wildlife Services conducted five wolf depredation investigations, confirmed two and determined two were probable. Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed one pregnant ewe and one calf and determined that wolves probably killed two more calves. In response to these and previous depredations, Wildlife Services shot and killed four wolves.

By comparison in February 2008, Wildlife Services conducted five wolf depredation investigations and confirmed that wolves killed four calves and a pet dog and determined that wolves probably killed another calf. Wildlife Services shot and killed five wolves in response to depredations in February 2008.

Research

Nothing new to report.

Information and Education

Idaho Fish and Game director's office has been giving several wolf updates to the state Legislature, to the Fish and Game Commission, and on television.

Researcher Craig White gave two presentations to the Legislature on ungulate-wolf research being conducted in Idaho.

Michael Lucid gave a presentation on wintering wildlife, wolf biology, predation, and management to 10 students and several teachers and chaperones of the Timberline High school science class on February 27 and 28 near Lowman.

The annual report on wolf activity in Idaho is being completed and will be out on the Web site in the next week or so.

Further information and updates, including the directives provided by the commission can be viewed at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are protected under the endangered species act and killing one illegally is a federal offense.

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game observation form found at:

http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Delisting: FWS – Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Status (WY, MT, ID):

For the time being, all wolves to the north of Interstate 90 in Idaho remain listed as endangered. All wolves in the southern half of Montana, all portions of Idaho south of Interstate 90, and all of Wyoming are being managed under the 2005 and 2008 Endangered Species Act nonessential experimental population 10(j) regulations. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is acting as the designated agent for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in implementing day-to-day management of wolves under a 2006 MOU between the Department of Interior and Idaho.

Delisting wolves and assuring their proper long-term management is and has been of highest priority for the state of Idaho and the Fish and Game Department. We continue to work along with the Department of Interior, Department of Justice, and other states and interveners toward the eventual delisting of wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains, and move toward state management under the State Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and the Wolf Population Management Plan.

The Fish and Wildlife Service rewrote the delisting rule based on comments and new administrative record and data, and submitted a final delisting rule in January 2009 but did not post it in the Federal Register. The incoming Obama administration placed a hold on all pending rules and regulations to have time to review them. We have not yet heard results of the review. Fish and Wildlife is still filling vacant positions in decision levels. They indicated to Idaho Fish and Game that the review of the rule is ongoing and moving forward.

The state of Idaho's comments to the Fish and Wildlife Service on the delisting rule are available at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Past wolf update publications and links along with pertinent and updated wolf information and publications are available on the Fish and Game wolf webpage at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

IDAHO WOLF MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT January 1 – January 31, 2008

Monitoring

Aerial telemetry flights and end of year counts are completed. Tentative minimum wolf population estimates are between 800-850 for Idaho, 88 packs and 39 breeding pairs. Final end-of-year population estimates will be completed by end of February and included in the annual U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Idaho reports.

Now is the time when wolves begin dispersing great distances prior to the breeding season. Often these wolves may be close to development and may cause some conflicts if not just increased sightings. A couple wolves of note include a young male Idaho wolf that left Idaho (from a pack near Boise) in 2006 and ended up in northern Yellowstone, seen with females then disappeared. Recently that wolf was found in the Beartooth Pack near Crandall, Wyoming. Also, a wolf from Paradise Valley north of Yellowstone that was part of the Mill Creek pack moved to the Wyoming-Utah-Idaho border area in September and in January moved to southeast Idaho.

Management

From January 1 – January 31, 2009, agencies have documented one dead wolf in Idaho, killed illegally. U.S.D.A. Wildlife Services (tentatively) confirmed that wolves killed one calf and one dog. Four wolves were found with radio-collars on mortality signal over the past few weeks, but because of the conditions we have been unable to retrieve them and determine cause of death.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to Jan 31, 2009 (tentative).

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	13	44	151
2009	1		1	2			1	1
Total	247	1133	47	1427	220	30	135	385

¹ Includes confirmed depredations resulting in death or injury

² Authorized take by Wildlife Services

³ Authorized take under 10j or while delisted for protection of stock and dogs

Control

From January 1 – February 1, Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed one calf and one guard dog. During the same time frame in 2008, wolves probably killed two sheep.

Research

Idaho Fish and Game researchers captured and collared 30 wolves in 6 packs during aerial capture work during January in two study areas; one north of Boise and one in the Lolo elk zone. Wolves were collared with ARGOS satellite collars. Researchers also collared 31 elk calves, 16 cows, 19 bulls and 12 moose to add to the animals being studied for predator-prey interactions in the same study areas where wolves were collared.

Barbara Fannin and Dave Ausband of the University of Montana recently finished analyzing DNA from hairs obtained at rub pads in fall 2008. Early results indicate wolves did roll on some of the rub pads and deposited sufficient hair for DNA analyses. A report of the rub pad pilot testing is forthcoming.

Information and Education

The Fish and Game director's office has been giving several wolf updates to the state Legislature and to the Fish and Game Commission.

Michael Lucid gave a presentation on wolf biology and management to the Caldwell Rotary Club on January 28.

Further information and updates, including the directives provided by the commission can be viewed at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

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Delisting wolves and assuring their proper long-term management is and has been of highest priority for the state of Idaho and the Fish and Game Department. We continue to work along with the Department of Interior, Department of Justice, and other states and interveners toward the eventual delisting of wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains, and move toward state management under the State Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and the Wolf Population Management Plan.

New on delisting - The USFWS rewrote the delisting rule based on comments and new administrative record and data, and submitted a final delisting rule in January 2009 but did not post it in the Federal Register. The incoming Obama administration placed a hold

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You may review past wolf weekly publications on our wolf webpage and links along with all pertinent and updated wolf information and publications at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>