

## **Selway DAU (GMUs 16A, 17, 19 and 20)**

### Abstract

The Selway DAU is composed of IDFG GMUs 16A, 17, 19, and 20; and was home to 6 documented packs during 2008; 3 border packs tallied for Montana reside adjacent to this DAU (Figure 14; Table 6). The reproductive status was not known for any of the resident ID packs. One mortality of unknown cause was documented. This predominantly Wilderness DAU does not contain any domestic cattle and sheep consequently no livestock losses were reported. Minimal wolf capture efforts were undertaken in this DAU during 2008.

### Background

Habitat varies throughout the DAU from high-precipitation, forested areas along the lower reaches of the Selway River to dry, steep, south-facing ponderosa pine and grassland habitat along the Salmon River. Many areas along the Salmon River have a good mix of successional stages due to frequent fires within the wilderness. Fire suppression within portions of the Selway River drainage has led to decreasing forage production for big game. Road densities are low. Noxious weeds, especially spotted knapweed, have encroached upon many low-elevation areas. Due to the rugged and remote nature of this zone, human impacts have been very limited. In 1964, almost all of GMU 17 and a small portion of GMU 16A were included in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Most of GMU 19 became part of the Gospel Hump Wilderness in 1978, and in 1980, part of GMU 20 was included in the Frank Church River-of-No-Return Wilderness (IDFG 2007).

### Management Direction

According to the Wolf Plan, current levels of wolf-ungulate conflicts are high and wolf-livestock conflicts are low (no livestock grazing). Therefore wolf numbers in the Selway DAU are slated to be reduced and then maintained at stable but lower levels, primarily to reduce impacts on ungulate populations, which are not meeting management objectives.

### Documented Resident Packs

#### *Battle Ridge*

No field effort was conducted on this pack in 2008. This pack was not reported as a breeding pair for 2008.

#### *Gospel Hump*

No radiocollared wolves remained in the pack, making monitoring difficult. No reports were received of wolf activity in this pack's home range and there was no field effort made to locate the pack during 2007 and 2008. A wolf (B407) captured and radiocollared in the Sleepy Hollow pack's territory (south side of the Salmon River) was subsequently aerially located in the eastern portion of the Gospel Hump pack's previously defined home range. The Gospel Hump pack was not reported as a breeding pair in 2008.

### *Indian Creek*

This pack did not count as a breeding pair for 2008 as there was no field effort conducted.

### *Magruder*

This pack, which has not had a radiocollared member since 2005, was dropped from the list of documented packs at the end of 2007 due to lack of verified activity. In July 2008, a biologist heard 3-4 wolves howling from the general vicinity of where a wolf from this pack was trapped in 2004. This group was reinstated as a documented pack, but no information was obtained regarding reproductive status. This pack was not considered a breeding pair.

### *Pettibone Creek*

A biologist detected at least 2 wolves, based on tracks, in mid summer, but without radiocollared wolves, further effort to document pack size and reproductive status was unsuccessful. A trapping effort was unsuccessful. This pack was not counted as a breeding pair for 2008.

### *Selway*

B355's signal was detected on mortality mode during the May monitoring flight; its remains were investigated but cause of death was not ascertained. The remaining radiocollared wolf, B356, was located during much of 2008 in the Selway River corridor. Investigation of a traditional rendezvous site failed to detect evidence of pack occupancy or the presence of pups, and coupled with B356's locations it was believed that if the pack produced a litter it was probably along a remote stretch of the Selway River. The Selway pack was not reported as a breeding pair in 2008 and there was no estimate of pack size.

### *Documented Border Packs*

#### *Lake Como (MT)*

This documented border pack was tallied for Montana in 2008. See the respective State's annual report for information on this pack.

#### *Trapper Peak (MT)*

This documented border pack was tallied for Montana in 2008. See the respective State's annual report for information on this pack.

#### *Watchtower Creek (MT)*

This documented border pack was tallied for Montana in 2008. See the respective State's annual report for information on this pack.

### *Other Documented Wolf Groups*

#### *Roaring Lion*

No field effort was undertaken in 2008. This group likely spends some time in Montana as well.

#### *B266*

This wolf was captured in 2006 as a member of the Timberline pack, but was last located in that pack's home range in April 2007. A mortality signal was obtained during the August monitoring flight in the central portion of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Law Enforcement agents attempted to investigate the site, but were unable to reach it, so the fate of this wolf was officially recorded as a suspected mortality.

*B407*

Male B407 was radiocollared while a capture effort was underway for the Sleepy Hollow pack (Middle Fork DAU). Within 5 days it was aurally located on the north side of the Salmon River and has continued to be located in the Selway DAU. B407 was observed with another gray wolf and was presumed to be part of a potential breeding pair for 2009.

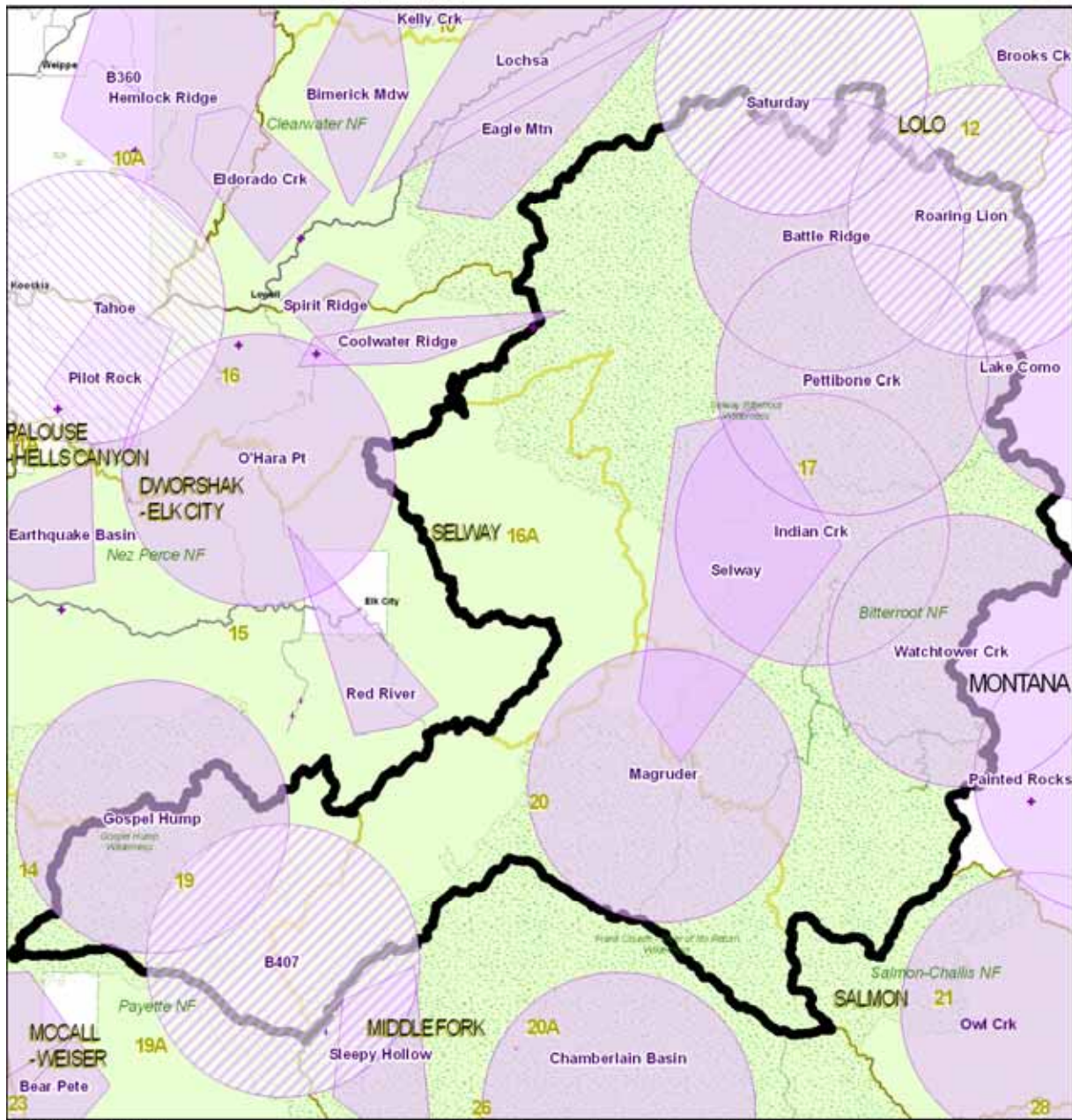
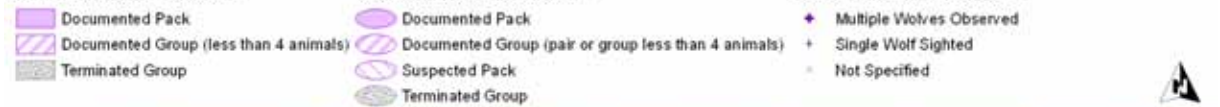
# Selway Wolf Activity

2007-08 Known Locations \*

2008 Estimated Locations \*\*

Documented, Suspected and Reported Locations

2008 Public Observations \*\*\*



\* Tracking collar data and research locations collected and analyzed by Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Wildlife Services, the University of Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit and the National Park Service. Pack locations are minimum convex polygons (MCP) of telemetry and research observations for collared wolves from 1/1/2007 - 12/31/2008 with outliers removed. For packs with only VHF collars 100% MCPs are used. Packs which included GPS locations are floating median 95% MCPs. If the pack did not have any observations in 2008 it is not included on this map. This map is provided for management purposes and should not be used for data analysis. Do not release these data to third parties without first contacting the Idaho Department of Fish and Game or the Nez Perce Tribe.

\*\* Estimated Pack Activity determined by biologists from research locations, public observations and incidental observations from 1/1/2007 - 12/31/2008. These are displayed as 9.8 mile radius circles consistent with pack territories in Idaho.

\*\*\* Public Observations from 1/1/2008 - 12/31/2008 collected on the Idaho Fish and Game website and reviewed by staff biologists. Confirmed and possible observations are displayed.

Figure 14. Distribution of documented and suspected wolf packs, other documented groups, and public wolf reports in the Selway DAU, 2008.

Table 6. End of year summary of estimated pack size, natality, mortality, dispersal, monitoring status, wolf captures, and livestock depredations for documented and suspected wolf groups within Idaho Department of Fish and Game Selway Data Analysis Unit, 2008.

Wolf group <sup>a</sup>	Min. no. wolves detected <sup>b</sup>	Reproductive status			Documented mortalities				Known dispersal	Monitoring status			Confirmed & (probable) wolf-caused livestock losses		
		Min. no. pups prod. (died) <sup>c</sup>	Reported as		Natural	Control <sup>e</sup>	Other human <sup>f</sup>	Unknwn <sup>g</sup>		Active radio collars	No. wolf captures <sup>h</sup>	No. wolves missing <sup>i</sup>	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs
			reprod. pack	breeding pair <sup>d</sup>											
<b>DOCUMENTED PACKS</b>															
Battle Ridge	?	?	NO	NO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gospel Hump	?	?	NO	NO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indian Creek	?	?	NO	NO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lake Como (MT) <sup>j</sup>															
Magruder	3	?	NO	NO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pettibone Creek	2	?	NO	NO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Selway	?	?	NO	NO	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Trapper Peak (MT) <sup>j</sup>															
Watchtower Creek (MT) <sup>j</sup>															
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>SUSPECTED PACKS</b>															
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>OTHER DOCUMENTED GROUPS</b>															
Roaring Lion (ID) <sup>j</sup>	?				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B266	?				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B407	2				0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>UNKNOWN</b>															
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>DAU TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>a</sup> Documented packs = territorial groups of wolves usually consisting of an adult male and female and their offspring from one or more generations, and has the potential to reproduce (2 adults of opposite sex). Suspected packs = geographic areas where wolf pack presence was suspected but not verified, or where wolf

presence was verified but did not meet documented pack status. Other documented groups = verified groups not meeting either documented or suspected pack status (e.g., lone wolves, potential mated pairs, etc.). Unknown = geographic areas where wolf presence was previously unverified and/or no data on group status was known.

<sup>b</sup> Summing this column does not equate to number of wolves estimated to be present in the population.

<sup>c</sup> Number in parentheses indicates known pup mortality; pup mortalities tallied in the appropriate column in “documented mortalities.”

<sup>d</sup> Breeding pairs are the measure of Federal and State wolf recovery and management goals. A breeding pair is defined as “an adult male and a female wolf that have produced at least 2 pups that survive until December 31 of the year of their birth...”.

<sup>e</sup> Includes agency lethal control and legal take.

<sup>f</sup> Includes all other human-related deaths.

<sup>g</sup> Does not include pups that disappeared before winter.

<sup>h</sup> Includes wolves captured for monitoring purposes during 2008. Most, but not all, were radiocollared.

<sup>i</sup> Radiocollared wolves that became missing in 2008.

<sup>j</sup> Border pack officially tallied to (STATE); territory known/likely shared with Idaho. Data on these packs can be found in Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery 2008 Annual Report; data for mortalities and/or depredations by non-Idaho border packs that occurred within Idaho are presented here.