

# 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 <sup>1</sup>				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS <sup>2</sup>	10j <sup>3</sup>	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

<sup>1</sup> Includes confirmed depredations resulting in death or injury

<sup>2</sup> Authorized take by Wildlife Services

<sup>3</sup> 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/](http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/)