

## **Summary of Proactive Management Activities conducted in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area in 2012**

The IFT, working with Non Governmental Organizations (NGO), used proactive management to assist in eliminating or reducing wolf-livestock conflicts in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (BRWRA). The Reintroduction Project and NGOs spent approximately \$100,250 on proactive management activities affecting an estimated 5,480 livestock (2930 in Arizona, 2550 in New Mexico). The large drop in the number of livestock that benefitted from these measures from 2011 to 2012 is due to the conversion of a large sheep operation to cattle in Arizona, and non-use of a large yearling allotment in New Mexico. The IFT, agency contract employees, and NGO contract employees spent approximately 9000 hours implementing proactive management activities during 2012.

The agencies and NGOs purchased hay and supplements during the calving season for four stakeholders in Arizona and New Mexico. One of these measures was in direct response to livestock depredations occurring on one of these ranches. No known depredations occurred on the other three ranches. The project assisted another rancher in the purchase of water, which allowed livestock grazing in an allotment away from an active wolf den in New Mexico. No depredations are known to have occurred on the allotment during 2012.

Project personnel met with Forest District Rangers, biologists and range staffs, to discuss livestock management during the wolf denning season. The IFT coordinated with the Alpine, Clifton, Springerville, Black Range, Quemado, and Reserve Ranger Districts and stakeholders in Arizona and New Mexico to address potential conflicts between livestock and wolves. In several of these cases, livestock were scheduled to graze in or near pastures where wolves were denning. In pursuing efforts to reduce interactions between livestock and denning wolves, the Districts and ranchers changed pasture rotations and moved livestock into alternate pastures during the denning season, where possible. A total of three depredations occurred on two of the seven alternate pastures; however, there would likely have been additional depredations if livestock had been placed in pastures closer to the den-sites.

During 2012, the Reintroduction Project and NGOs contracted 11 range riders (five in Arizona, six in New Mexico) to assist 13 stakeholders (five in Arizona, eight in New Mexico) in monitoring wolves in proximity to cattle. Range riders monitored approximately 5275 livestock within seven wolf pack home ranges, and provided additional oversight of livestock and light hazing of wolves when they were among livestock. Five depredations occurred on allotments (two in Arizona, three in New Mexico) while ranger riders were under contract in 2012.

The IFT issued radio telemetry equipment to stakeholders (five in Arizona, seven in New Mexico) in areas where wolf-livestock conflicts were prevalent. Equipment loans were provided in response to past conflicts between livestock and wolves on specific allotments. The IFT trained stakeholders to use the telemetry equipment to monitor

wolves in the vicinity of cattle or residences, and instructed them on non-injurious hazing techniques. Stakeholders were encouraged to contact the IFT for assistance and were required to report any wolf-livestock conflicts requiring hazing efforts. These measures resulted in stakeholders increasing their vigilance over livestock when wolves were in the vicinity and may have helped reduce the potential for livestock depredations.

Supplemental food caches were utilized to assist a pack or remnant of a pack in feeding young of the year when extenuating circumstances (such as a death of one of the adults) reduce their own ability to do so. Supplemental food caches also served to reduce potential conflicts between wolves and livestock. Supplemental food caches were utilized for the Bluestem pack in 2012. The Bluestem breeding adult male wolf (AM806) was found dead on July 6, leaving AF1042 as the only breeding animal in the pack providing for five pups. The IFT established a supplemental food cache within a reasonable distance of the den and rendezvous sites to help the remaining adult and subadult wolves feed the young of the year and to reduce the likelihood of livestock depredations. No known livestock depredations involving the Bluestem pack occurred in 2012, and all five pups survived to year-end.

Diversionsary food caches are utilized to reduce potential conflicts between wolves and livestock, primarily in areas where depredations have occurred in the past. Diversionsary food caches were established for three packs during the 2012 denning season (April-May): the Luna pack, Elk Horn pack, and Fox Mountain pack. Between May and September, two depredations were assigned to members of the Luna pack, one depredation was assigned to members of the Elk Horn pack, and two depredations were assigned to members of the Fox Mountain pack. Prior to establishment of a diversionsary food cache, members of the Fox Mountain pack were involved in additional depredations. Due to the number of depredations assigned to members of the Fox Mountain pack, some of which occurred outside the BRWRA, a permanent removal order for AF1188 was issued by the USFWS.