



Oregon Wolf Program January, 2009 Update



Russ Morgan, ODFW Wolf Coordinator
107 20th Street, LaGrande, OR 9850 (541) 963-2138

Wolf Reports: Thirteen wolf reports were received by ODFW in January as follows: Eastern Oregon (11) and western Oregon (2). Five of the reports (38%) were of more than one wolf. Types of wolf reports are categorized as follows: Sighting reports (8), howling reports (1), and reports of wolf tracks (4).

Field Investigations/Findings: Snow track surveys were conducted in NE Oregon over a period of 20 days in January. These surveys are conducted by using snow machines over designated routes and areas. Surveys will be repeated over the winter months as weather allows. No wolf sign was detected this month on track surveys and summary data is included in the table below.

Wildlife Management Unit *	Days	Transect Miles	Evidence Collected
Pine Creek	1	34.5	No wolf sign observed
Keating	1	37	“
Walla Walla	1	41.6	“
Starkey	3	100.2	“
Wenaha	1	119	“
Heppner	13	658	** See below
Total	20	990.3	

* The Oregon Wildlife Management Unit map can be viewed online at:
http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/big_game/units/index.asp

** The Heppner Unit track surveys were in conjunction with other ongoing ODFW wildlife tracking projects and were not wolf-specific surveys. However, it is expected that wolf tracks and sign would be detected if present while conducting these surveys. Thus, the results of these surveys are included in this report.

One day was expended by ODFW personnel following up on a Starkey Unit wolf sighting report. Same day investigation revealed a single set of wolf tracks, and after several miles of snow tracking, it was determined that this was a single animal. It is likely the same wolf that was reported last month as it was in the same general area, and was reported to be the same color (gray).

On January 27, a black wolf-like canid was sighted and photographed by a citizen driving Highway 20 in the Santiam/Suttle Lake area. While the animal in the photograph showed very wolf-like characteristics, the origin of this animal was unknown. Field follow-up was conducted by joint efforts of the USFWS and ODFW, and the tracks were located and followed. The initial intent of the follow-up effort was to determine if the animal sighted is a wild wolf. It remains unknown at this time the status and the origin of this animal. Efforts will continue to monitor this area in February.

Aerial Monitoring: No aerial telemetry flights were conducted in January.





Livestock Damage Reports/Concerns: None

Media Contacts and Presentations:

- Gave two wolf-related newspaper interviews in January.
- Presented an Oregon wolf update presentation to the Oregon Chapter of the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep.

Enforcement: Worked with Oregon State Police through the Coordinated Enforcement Program to identify wolf-related enforcement priorities for Northeast Oregon in 2009.

Federal Delisting Update: The decision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to delist wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains (which included a portion of eastern Oregon) was put on hold, pending a review by the new administration. The decision was scheduled to be published on January 27 and would have gone into effect 30 days later. Following a legal and policy review, the delisting could be allowed to go forward, be modified, or be held indefinitely. It is unknown how long the review will take.

More information on wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains can be viewed at the following web address:
<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/mammals/wolf/>