

## Oregon Wolf Program March, 2009 Update

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**Reports of Wolf Activity:** Fourteen wolf reports were received by ODFW in March as follows; Eastern Oregon (10) and Western Oregon (4). Eleven of the reports were of single animals and three were of more than one animal. Types of wolf reports are categorized as follows; sighting reports (11), and track reports (3). Also, four of the fourteen wolf reports this month were of sightings that took place in years' past. These types of reports are often a result of recent media coverage that generates renewed interest in past sightings. The information received with these belated reports is still important, but less useful for actual follow-up.

**Field Investigations/Monitoring:** Snow track surveys were conducted in NE Oregon over a period of four days in March. Tracking summary data is included in the table below:

Wildlife Management Unit *	Days	Transect Miles	Evidence Collected
Keating	3	45.7	Pair of wolf tracks
Wenaha	1	8	No wolf sign found
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>53.7</b>	

\* The Oregon Wildlife Management Unit map can be viewed online at:  
[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/big\\_game/units/index.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/big_game/units/index.asp)

### Discussion of monitoring efforts:

New wolf tracks were discovered on two of three snow track surveys in the forested (northern) portion of the Keating Unit in March. On the first visit, a very large set of tracks was followed for several miles and appeared to be a single animal. However, a subsequent survey in the same area produced evidence (tracks) of a pair of wolves traveling together. The sexes of the two animals have not been determined. Further work in this area is planned to determine if the pair is a male and female, and to assess areas of use.

The Wenaha snow track survey was conducted in the southern-most portion of the Wenaha Unit, in an area not known to have wolves, but a few wolf reports. No wolf evidence was observed. No other wolf surveys were conducted in the Wenaha Unit in March.

Two field investigations were conducted in March in the Grande Ronde valley in response to two separate phone reports of wolves sighted. One report of three wolves sighted at first light was investigated within two hours and even though snow was on the ground, no sign was found. The second report occurred during the night and no sign was found on a next-day investigation. The snow had melted significantly, however, and sign would have been undetectable. The valley is highly developed and populated and it is unlikely that wolves are using the valley regularly, especially without regular detection. However, it is possible that wolves may travel through the valley periodically, and the Department will continue to respond to all Grande Ronde valley reports

**Aerial Monitoring:** Two aerial flights were conducted in March. The first was a 2 hour flight to monitor

the radio-collared female wolf B300 in the Imnaha Unit and again her signal was not detected. Because of repeated unsuccessful attempts to locate this signal, monitoring for this wolf will be conducted in the future as part of periodic “missing Idaho radio” searches. The remainder of the flight was used scanning for other Idaho radios in the Snake River area with no Oregon detections made. The second flight was a 2 ½ hour flight in central & south-central Oregon. This is an area that has yet to be flown for missing wolf radio signals and the area searched was the east slope of the Cascades from Mount Jefferson south to the Lakeview area. No wolf detections were made.

**Livestock Damage Reports/Concerns:** None

**Information, Education, and Media:**

- Two wolf update presentations were given in March. One was to the Bend Chapter, Oregon Hunters Association, and the other was to the Roseburg Audubon Society.
- Three newspaper and two radio interviews were given, primarily to provide information on Oregon wolves and to address questions regarding the pending federal wolf delisting decision.

**Legislation:** The Department is reviewing two wolf-related bills which have been introduced in the 2009 Oregon Legislative Assembly. They are briefly summarized below. Interested people can view bills and track the status of new bills at the following website: [http://www.leg.state.or.us/bills\\_laws](http://www.leg.state.or.us/bills_laws)

- **SB391** (as related to wolves): Removes “gray wolf” from the exotic animal definition under Oregon Department of Agriculture statutes.
- **HB3383:** A bill which amends ORS 498.012 and changes the circumstances in which a gray wolf may be taken. Specifically, the bill allows the taking of wolves by any person who owns or lawfully occupies land if the wolf is caught in the act of attacking livestock.

**Federal Delisting Update:** In late March the Department received word that the new wolf delisting rule by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was scheduled to be published on April 2, and would then go into effect on May 4, 2009. This delisting will remove the Northern Rocky Mountain Distinct Population Segment of gray wolves from the federal list of threatened and endangered species and will affect the eastern-most portion of Oregon. **It is important to note that wolves in Oregon remain protected under the Oregon Endangered Species Act.**

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/>