

Oregon Wolf Program Update

December 2010

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Reports of Wolf Activity: Twenty one wolf reports were received by ODFW during the reporting period as follows; east wolf management zone (17) and west wolf management zone (4). [*Note: State's east and west wolf zones divided by Hwy 97/20/395.*] Wolf reports received were categorized as sighting reports (13), track/scat reports (3), and howling reports (5).

Field Investigations/Monitoring: All or part of 13 personnel days in December were spent investigating reports of wolf activity or monitoring known wolf activity.

Imnaha Pack: Location data was collected from the Imnaha Pack during six days in December. On four of the days, the pack was found using the lower elevation areas west of Little Sheep Creek. The area (Zumwalt area) has a large wintering elk herd and a maximum count of 16 wolves was made of this pack by aircraft on 12/6/10. The pack has nine gray, six black, and one unknown color. In addition, this count suggests that six pups may have been produced by the Imnaha Pack in 2010, which ODFW will try to confirm this winter and spring.

Wolves of this pack are not always together and on one day during December, OR-3 (3-year-old sub-dominant male) was located approximately 23 miles away from OR-2 (alpha female). It is notable that the radio-signal from OR-5 (yearling female) has not been detected since 11/29. ODFW has widened the search area for this collar as she may have dispersed from the pack.

On 12/30, Brown captured a short video clip of three members of the Imnaha pack—the alpha female and two pups born spring 2010. The pups are nearly adult-sized this time of year.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2dQjnz8734>

Wenaha Pack: Wolf surveys in the Wenaha Unit were conducted over three days during December – all by snow machine. A minimum of two wolves was documented on Dec. 31, when tracks were found at the site of a cougar-killed deer.

Other field surveys:

Surveys are done by unit in keeping with other big game management. The Oregon Wildlife Management Unit map can be viewed online at: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/big_game/units/index.asp

Ukiah Unit: In response to a public wolf report in the Ukiah Unit, ODFW and USFS personnel conducted 49 miles of transect in the north half (Pearson Creek area) of the Unit. No wolf sign was found (new snow), but this area will continue to be monitored.

Starkey Unit: Surveys for wolf activity were conducted in the Starkey (Shaw Mtn and Glass Hill) Unit over two days in December. A total of 60 miles was surveyed (snow track surveys) with no wolf sign found.

Aerial Monitoring: Three aerial flights wolf were conducted by ODFW in December, all to locate the Imnaha Pack.

Livestock Depredation: None

Media and Presentations:

- On 12/3/10, Morgan attended the OCA annual meeting in Bend and gave a brief update on NE Oregon Wolves.
- On 12/11/10, Morgan attended the Umatilla County Livestock Growers annual meeting in Pendleton and gave a presentation on Oregon wolf management.
- Gave one media interview regarding wolves for Wallowa County Chieftan newspaper article regarding the Imnaha Pack.

Agency Coordination/Miscellaneous:

- Continued to work with USFWS in the update of the 2007 Coordination Strategy.
- Initiated the 2011 Oregon wolf helicopter capture project – initial contracting procedures completed.
- Brown attended a 4-day professional snow tracking workshop in Wisconsin.