

# Oregon Wolf Program Update

## January 2012

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### Reports of Wolf Activity:

ODFW received 25 public wolf reports during January. Of those, 7 wolf reports were from the western wolf management zone (4 sighting reports, 3 tracks and scat reports), and 18 from the east zone (12 sighting reports, 6 track reports). Western/Eastern wolf management zones are divided by Hwys 97/20/395.

People with wolf sightings or other wolf observations are encouraged to use the online wolf reporting system at: [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/wolf\\_reporting\\_form.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/wolf_reporting_form.asp)

### Field Investigations/Monitoring:

Imnaha Pack: ODFW continued to receive GPS radio-collar locations of OR4, the alpha male of the pack, until January 25<sup>th</sup>. Since that time no data downloads have been received. The VHF telemetry signal continues to function and the wolf has been detected recently. At this time we believe that the collar suffered structural damage which has caused malfunction – not uncommon with wolves as they can be hard on these types of collars. It is possible that the telemetry beacon will continue to function, but it is unknown for how long. OR2's telemetry signal still functions and the pack will be monitored by standard telemetry methods in the near-term. There was depredation by the Imnaha pack in January (see below).

OR7: OR7 remained in California during January. This wolf is federally listed as endangered and ODFW continued to assist the USFWS and California Department of Fish and Game by providing regular location updates during the month. ODFW does not provide location information for wolves outside of Oregon except to state and federal fish and wildlife agencies.

Wenaha Pack: Tracks of Wenaha pack wolves were observed on two days in January. In addition, remote camera data continued to show a minimum of five wolves in the pack. No additional pups (other than the one discovered in December) were documented in January.

Walla Walla Pack: ODFW biologists tracked the Walla Walla pack using telemetry in January and observed that the pack consisted of 8 wolves (this includes 5 known pups from 2011). With the mild winter weather these wolves are continuing to use higher elevation forested areas in the Upper Walla Walla River drainage.

Catherine Creek Unit: On January 31 a single wolf track was documented by ODFW biologists in a forested area near Cove, OR. It is unknown if this represents resident wolf activity or a dispersing wolf. Additional surveys will be conducted.

Heppner Unit: On January 31 a single wolf track was documented by ODFW biologists in the Madison Butte area. It is unknown if this represents resident wolf activity or a dispersing wolf. A remote camera was installed to help monitor the site if the wolf returns.

### Livestock Depredation, Investigations, and Livestock Producer Assistance:

ODFW conducted four wolf depredation investigations during the month in Wallowa County – all associated with the Imnaha pack. These resulted in one “confirmed” depredation (cow), two “probable” determinations (a bull and a mule), and one

“possible/unknown” determination (cow). A summary of each investigation can be viewed at the following link [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/livestock\\_loss\\_investigations.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/livestock_loss_investigations.asp)

### **Non-Lethal/Preventative Actions:**

ODFW continued to send text messages to Wallowa County livestock producers with livestock in the area of the Imnaha pack. During the month, a total of 920 text messages were sent. Texts were sent twice daily until January 30. Many personal phone calls were also made to specific producers in areas without cell phone service. Beginning January 30, texts are not available due to the failure of OR4's collar (see above). ODFW will continue to monitor this pack via telemetry (and Range Rider) and will continue to inform area producers of any location information we receive of this pack.

In response to the January 7<sup>th</sup> confirmed depredation (Imnaha pack) of a cow in the Upper Valley area, ODFW implemented a new Range Rider project, installed 2 Radio-Activated Guard devices, and installed approximately ½ mile of electrified fladry. The Range Rider began on January 7<sup>th</sup> and worked 20 days of the month, primarily in evening and early morning.

### **Litigation:**

On Nov. 15, the Oregon Court of Appeals extended the stay prohibiting ODFW from killing two wolves from the Imnaha pack under the chronic depredation rule. ODFW's planned lethal removal of the alpha male and an uncollared wolf from the pack is on hold pending the Court of Appeal's decision on the case.

### **Annual Report**

On January 6, ODFW staff presented the 2011 annual wolf management report to the ODFW Commission. The report used data and information collected through December 15, 2011. The report and supporting attachments can be accessed at the following web address: [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/12/01\\_jan/Exhibit%20D\\_Attachment%202\\_2011%20Wolf%20Management%20Report%202011.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/12/01_jan/Exhibit%20D_Attachment%202_2011%20Wolf%20Management%20Report%202011.pdf) Staff will now update the report to reflect year-end data and will post before the end of February.