NORTHERN GRAY WOLF MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR THE FLATHEAD INDIAN RESERVATION

Image Courtesy of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Tribal Wildlife Management Program
P. O. Box 278
Pablo, Montana 59855

2020

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Salish, Kootenai & Pend d'Oreille people have always stressed the importance of a balanced ecosystem, and according to the Salish & Pend d'Oreille Tribal Elders, the wolf is considered to be a vital part of the ecosystem. They believe that the wolf takes sickness away from the game herds, therefore helping the herds to maintain overall herd health. (Salish & Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee, unpubl. data). Other people have expressed admiration for the wolf's skill as a hunter. Other people who reside on the Flathead Indian Reservation are concerned about adverse impacts that wolves may have on game populations, domestic animals and livestock and human safety issues

The recovery of the Gray Wolf *(Canis lupus*) to the Northern Rocky Mountain Region (NRM), which includes Montana, Idaho and Wyoming, was rapid. Needing little help, the natural emigration of wolves from Canada into Idaho and Montana was first documented in the 1970s (Pletscher et al. 1997). Reintroduction efforts of 1995 at Yellowstone National Park (YNP) and northeastern Idaho allowed this top predator to strengthen its foothold in the NRM (Bangs et al. 1998). No other reintroduction efforts anywhere in the Northern Rocky Mountains occurred.

At the end of 2008, there was an estimated minimum of 1,695 wolves with 95 breeding pairs in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming, with 497 wolves, consisting of 39 breeding pairs in Montana alone (Sime et al. 2009). By the end of 2014 in Montana, a minimum of 627 wolves including 28 breeding pairs were documented in Montana. In northwest Montana, a minimum of 412 wolves in 104 packs, with 16 breeding pairs were documented (Bradley et al. 2014). Approximately 30 wolves occurred on the Flathead Indian Reservation at the end of 2013 (Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Wildlife Management Program, unpublished. data, 2014).

The welcome mat has not always been out for wolves in Montana and other Rocky Mountain states. Wolf packs were thought to have been eliminated from Montana by the 1930's, primarily due to the statewide bounty offered for each wolf hide and state-and federal-sanctioned wolf elimination programs. By the 1970's, only a few rare sightings were reported, with an occasional wolf kill reported. This eventually led to the 1974 listing of the northern gray wolf as "endangered" under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and ongoing management and recovery efforts directed by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

In 1980, efforts began with the Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Team to fully recover the species and eventually remove it from the Endangered Species List. Recovery goals were developed with a minimum of 30 breeding pairs established (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1987). These recovery goals were first achieved in 2002 (Sime et al. 2007).

The rate of recovery of gray wolves exceeded many people's expectations, but there was little doubt that at some point wolves would no longer need the continued protections of the ESA. With that realization, wildlife management agencies have been assembling appropriate management plans to guide the future of the species. These efforts originally involved monitoring and conflict resolution, but with the increase in wolf populations and the attendant conflicts between wolves and stockgrowers, serious concerns about the impacts of wolves upon big game populations have also been major issues.

The three states within the NRM, along with tribal governments, completed work on wolf conservation plans to take over the management of wolves from the USFWS, after delisting from the ESA occurred. Montana and Idaho completed wolf management plans which received the approval of the USFWS, as did plans for the Wind River, Blackfeet, Nez Perce and Flathead Indian Reservations. After initial disagreement on Wyoming's wolf management plan, the USFWS eventually approved it; however, litigation in 2014 caused management of Wyoming wolves to revert back to the USFWS.

Delisting (removal of gray wolves from the Endangered Species List) officially first occurred in February, 2008. That decision was subsequently overturned due to questions raised in litigation, and the gray wolf listing was reinstated in July 18, 2008. Subsequent responses to the litigation by the USFWS resulted in a second de-listing effort which was published on April, 2009, with the official de-listing occurring on May 4, 2009.

Several conservation organizations subsequently sued the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the second de-listing. In a Federal District Court decision on August 5, 2010, the Court's ruling directed the USFWS to again list the gray wolf as an Endangered Species in northwestern Montana and to re-instate the experimental, non-essential status for wolves in southwestern Montana and Idaho.

During the winter of 2011, the conservation groups that brought the lawsuit to re-list wolves and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service reached a settlement requested by 10 of the 14 plaintiffs involved in the litigation. The proposed settlement would have revised the earlier court decision and removed wolves from listing in Montana and Idaho. The Court also rejected that settlement proposal.

In April of 2011, the United States Senate approved language in the Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Bill, which the President signed, that directed the Secretary of the Interior to re-issue the Final Rule (74 Federal Register 15123 et seq.) published on April 2, 2009. That action resulted in the delisting of the northern gray wolf in Montana and Idaho. The Final Rule determined that wolf populations in these two states had recovered biologically. The Final Rule also contained mandatory post-delisting monitoring and public reporting requirements, and safeguards that could result in wolves again being considered for Endangered Species Act re-listing, if necessary.

The result of the legislation is that the management of northern gray wolves is returned to the states of Montana, Idaho, eastern Oregon, eastern Washington and north-central Utah. State wildlife managers in those states work cooperatively with their counterparts on Indian Reservations to manage wolf populations and human/wolf conflicts. Although the wolf management plan for Wyoming was not included, the state and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service eventually reached agreement, and wolf management was turned over to the state. That agreement was overturned in litigation brought by environmental organizations in 2014, and wolf management was again placed with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Wyoming.

Ecology of the Northern Gray Wolf

The gray wolf is the largest native canid species. Adults range from 60-130 pounds and measure four and a half feet to six feet in length and twenty-six to thirty-eight inches tall. The gray wolf can vary in color from white, gray, to pure black. Characteristics such as; longer legs, large feet, straight tail, and

broad head and snout, help distinguish it from other closely related canid species. Tracks are another way to correctly identify a wolf from other canids, their front tracks generally measure 3 7/8" to 5 ½" long by 2 3/8" to 5" wide, with the rear track measuring 3 1/8" to 4 ¾" long by 2 ¼" to 4 ¼" wide (Rezendes 1999).

Another major feature that sets the gray wolf apart from other canids is their strong social connection to one another. Wolves tend to form packs, which can vary greatly in size. In 2008, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) found that Montana's wolf pack averaged 6.0 individuals per pack (Sime et al. 2009). Pack members generally consist of a breeding dominant pair, their young of the year and the previous year's offspring. However, unrelated wolves are occasionally allowed to join the pack. Cooperation by all members of the pack is critical for survival. The pack travels together, and pack members help to rear young, defend territory against intruders and hunt and eat as a family group.

Breeding primarily occurs between the alpha male and alpha female, and has been found to be at its peak in mid- to late-February in the Rocky Mountain Region (Boyd et al. 1993). However, breeding by more than one female in a pack has been documented in wolf packs in Yellowstone National Park (YNP) (Smith et al. 2000) and on the Flathead Indian Reservation (FIR) in 2008, resulting in more than one litter of pups (Sime et al 2009). In 2008, twenty-seven wolves were documented in the Hog Heaven pack on the Flathead Indian Reservation, including 2 breeding females and 15 pups. This is the largest recorded pack in Montana [a pack of 37 wolves was documented in Yellowstone National Park], and it is only the third time that a double litter has been documented in Montana in 23 years. On average, one litter of 5 pups is born in late April.

When juveniles reach sexual maturity, which generally occurs around 22 months (Mech 1970), some choose to disperse from the pack. These individuals are known as "dispersers", and tend to leave the pack at 1 to 3 years of age (Boyd et al. 1993, Sime 2008). In Northwestern Montana, dispersers were found to leave mainly during courtship (January-February), or breeding season (May-June) (Boyd and Pletscher 1999).

Disease, like distemper and parvovirus, and lack of nutrition are major factors affecting pup survival (Mech and Goyal 1993, Johnson et al. 1994). Adult survival in the Rocky Mountain Region is affected mainly by human-caused deaths, due to conflicts with livestock, as well as being killed by other wolves defending their territory (Mech et al. 2003). Other human-caused deaths can be associated to vehicle and train collisions. An analysis of wolf radio telemetry data in the NRM from 1984-2004 indicated on average 26% of the adult-sized wolves die each year. Overall, morality occurs from agency control (10%/yr.), illegal killing (10%/yr.), human-caused accidents (3%/yr.) and natural causes (3%/yr.).

Wolf habitat is difficult to classify, due to the fact that it's totally dependant on prey availability, therefore variations in territory boundaries from year to year are not uncommon. In 1999, the average territory of a wolf pack within Northwest Montana was 185 square miles (USFWS et al. 2000). Territories in the NRM range can be as large as 500 square miles.

The gray wolf is considered to be an opportunistic feeder and known to scavenge winter kill or livestock carcasses. Their primary natural prey species consists of white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus),* mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), moose (*Alces alces*) and beaver

(*Castor canadensis*); however, being opportunistic predators, they will and are capable of taking a wide variety of prey species. Their affect on ungulate populations and how well ungulates will adjust are not completely understood but varies on a host of factors. In 1999, white-tailed deer made up 83% of a wolves diet in northwestern Montana, with elk and moose comprising of 14% and 3%, respectively (Kunkel et al 1999). Recent research on wolf-ungulate interactions in southwestern Montana indicated elk as preferred prey for wolves, with varying degrees of predation impacts observed on the elk populations studied (Hamlin et al. 2008).

Studies with YNP have found that, with the reintroduction of this top predator, the natural ecosystem as a whole seems to be recovering. For example, elk populations are being forced to use different habitats; therefore the aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) and willow (Salix spp.) that they have heavily over-utilized are recovering (Jones 1974, DeByle 1985, Boyce 1989). This in turn benefits migratory birds that use these deciduous trees at various times of the year for nesting and foraging. Other wildlife species that are scavengers [coyotes (*Canus latrans*), birds, etc.} are also benefiting from leftover kills made by wolves year-round, rather than depending on winterkill only during the early spring months (Kunkel et al. 1999).

The return of wolves to the landscape of the NRM retains a wide range of visceral feelings for the human residents of the region. The presence of wolves on the landscape is viewed by many Native Americans as the return of a brother and by environmentalists as the return of a missing piece of the ecological puzzle. Other viewpoints contrast sharply. Wolves preying upon livestock have caused considerable and serious concern about its presence by stock growers. In addition, many big game hunters have concerns about both the short and long-term impacts of a recovered and productive wolf population upon big game populations that they hunt and subsist on.

Clearly the return of the wolf and how it will be managed has created the greatest controversy in wildlife management since the extreme reductions of wildlife populations throughout North America during the time of settlement. As a result, wildlife managers find themselves attempting to reconcile the diverse opinions of factions that refuse to compromise their beliefs and principles about gray wolves in an effort to forge a long-term management strategy that provides for the best consideration of all viewpoints.

Current Status of Gray Wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains of Montana

Within the exterior boundaries of the Montana, a minimum of 566 wolves were documented in 2010, indicating that 108 verified packs and 32 breeding pairs were present in the state (Sime et al. 2011). At the end of 2014 in Montana, a minimum of 627 wolves including 28 breeding pairs were documented in Montana. In northwest Montana, a minimum of 412 wolves in 104 packs, with 16 breeding pairs were documented (Bradley et al. 2014). An additional minimum of 123 wolves in 26 packs, with 7 breeding pairs

Current Status of Gray Wolves on the Flathead Indian Reservation

Records of wolf observation on the Flathead Indian Reservation prior to the 1990s seem to be sporadic and usually undocumented. Most reports involved observations of suspected wolves in the northwestern corner of the Reservation. In 1992, the movements and colonization of wolves in the Ninemile Valley,

just south of the Reservation, were a topic of interest to many. In 1993, the first documented activity in the south end of the Reservation was reported, and shortly thereafter, depredation by wolves upon cattle was reported and verified.

Since that time, there have been several reported observations of wolves, some verified and some not verified. Activity has been heavily concentrated primarily in the western half of the Reservation and along the southern boundary areas. The Hog Heaven area has likely seen the most activity and has been the site of at least three different packs. Other activity has been regular along the western and southern boundaries of the Reservation, in addition to activity in the Salish Mountains.

On the Flathead Indian Reservation as of the summer of 2014, Tribal Wildlife Biologists observed wolf activity (observation reports, scat or tracks) in seven locations on the Reservation. These packs include a minimum of approximately 30 wolves, not including pups born during the summer of 2014 (Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Wildlife Management Program, unpublished. data, 2014).

Given the ability of wolves to range over large landscapes with relative ease, the Reservation can play host to wolves that not only den and spend most of their time on the Reservation, but the area may also be utilized by wolves from adjacent areas. As a result, wolves from other packs in these areas, as well as other non-territorial wolves from elsewhere may occasionally move back and forth across the boundaries of the Reservation. As of late 2013, wolf activity was also documented at 8 areas adjacent to the Reservation, such as in the Thompson River Drainage, the Ninemile area and the Swan Valley. Some of those wolves occasionally move on and off of the Reservation.

Definition of Need

As in other areas of the Northern Rockies, the Flathead Indian Reservation has been the location of several conflicts with livestock and other domestic animals. In each case, Tribal Wildlife Management Program staff, Tribal Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers and U. S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services staff have jointly investigated the conflict sites and taken action to alleviate the conflicts. These actions have included the use of non-lethal techniques, such as hazing, installation of fladry and the use of noise making devices.

When non-lethal techniques fail to deter wolves from taking livestock, authorization has been sought from the Tribal Council and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to kill one or two wolves at the conflict site to attempt to preclude further depredations. When that has failed, authorizations have been requested to kill the entire pack involved. At the same time, active management has been balanced with public information and information for stockgrowers involved to provide examples of how to potentially avoid future depredation conflicts.

Wolf management efforts undertaken by all management agencies have resulted in the development of effective cooperative relationships, with the roles of each clearly defined. Staffing by each has developed an effective group of professionals that can respond well and quickly to management issues within their jurisdictions. These effective working relationships engender improved and effective responses.

The current status of wolves in the northern Rocky Mountains, along with their ability to disperse into adjacent locales and their prolific productivity will place increased stress upon already limited wildlife management budgets, regardless of the entity involved. Wildlife managers will be challenged to determine ways to cover public demands involved with managing wolves while simultaneously attempting to adequately manage other pressing wildlife issues.

Management Goal

The goal of this wolf management plan is to provide for and manage the long-term presence of wolves on the Flathead Indian Reservation while simultaneously minimizing conflicts between wolves and humans and adverse impacts upon big game populations. In attempting to do so, the cultural significance of wolves must be acknowledged, and animals must be respected and treated in a humane manner, even during control actions.

The management of wolves on the Reservation will be coordinated with wolf management activities of other state and federal agencies in such a way as to support the viability of wolves as a native species in northwestern Montana and prevent the need for re-listing of the species under the federal Endangered Species Act. The following objectives are the foundation for wolf management on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Each represents an important issue that will be considered in conducting wolf management activities.

Objectives

1) Acknowledge the cultural beliefs and concerns of the Salish, Kootenai and Pend d' Oreille people with regard to wolves and incorporate reverence for those to the extent possible in wolf management.
2) Consider the ecology and behavioral aspects of wolves in developing management prescriptions for wolves.
3) Inform residents of the Flathead Indian Reservation about wolf ecology and management to the extent possible.
4) Work cooperatively with state and federal agencies to monitor local, regional and range-wide wolf populations and manage conflicts efficiently to the extent possible.
6) Assess the influence of wolves upon big game and act as appropriate.
7) Work cooperatively with livestock growers to assess depredation complaints and to assist in developing solutions to those conflicts, including providing assistance with damage compensation claims to available sources.
8) Consider human safety as a potential management concern related to the presence of wolves.

Tribal Wolf Management Policy

On April 16, 2009, the Tribal Council approved a policy indicating support for treatment of gray wolves as a native wildlife species which requires active management. In doing so, the Council realized the cultural and ecological significance of wolves to many of its constituents. The Council also

acknowledged the potential for conflicts between wolves and local populations of big game and other wildlife, as well as the potential for conflicts between wolves and domestic livestock. The Council decision favored a balanced approach to wolf management that attempts to take all of these factors in to account. Council action in December of 2014 re-iterated those earlier policy decisions.

This wolf management policy will neither manage toward a maximum nor a minimum number of wolves on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Management direction will attempt to assure the long term presence of a wolf population, minimize the potential of conflict with humans and resolve that conflict when it occurs. Wolf population management will depend heavily upon wolf behavior and amount of conflict with other wildlife, livestock and people. For example, if there are few or no conflicts with a higher population of wolves on the Reservation, no excessive effort to reduce the wolf population will occur. However, if limited numbers of wolves occur on the Reservation and if those wolves repeatedly kill livestock, or if excessive numbers of big game or other wildlife species are documented as killed by wolves, lethal control may be implemented.

Implementation

Regulations and Statutes

The gray wolf is recognized as a native wildlife species by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Under the provisions of this management plan, gray wolves are not subject to taking by hunting or trapping at this time, although the Tribal Council may consider such taking at a later date.

Barring changes in Tribal Council management direction, legal taking could occur for administrative reasons, such as taking of aggressive wolves that threaten human safety or wolves that kill domestic animals and livestock. Livestock growers may also take problem wolves that are attempting to kill or are observed feeding on livestock that the wolves have recently killed under specific guidelines.

While wolves have not been documented as a significant human safety concern, the potential does exist that they might threaten humans under certain circumstances. As a result, wolves that are openly aggressive toward humans can be harassed or killed by Tribal and USDA Wildlife Services personnel under specific guidelines. Those guidelines can be found in Table 1.

Regulations regarding wolves will be included in the annual Fish, Wildlife and Recreation Regulations developed by the Tribal Division of Fish, Wildlife Recreation and Conservation. These regulations are reviewed annually by the Tribal Council and the public, and the Council may approve changes as necessary. These regulations will be enforced by the Tribal Fish and Wildlife Conservation Program, and the staff of this program will coordinate with federal, state and local authorities as necessary to enforce the regulations.

Departmental Responsibilities

The Tribal Wildlife Management Program will be responsible for implementation of the Tribal Gray Wolf Management Plan. The Tribal Wildlife Program Manager will have discretion to make

decisions on day-to-day management of individual wolves, including coordination of interagency monitoring and management activities and big game and livestock depredation management.

Tribal Wildlife Management Program staff will work closely with the Tribal Fish and Wildlife Conservation Program in conducting wolf management activities. Tribal Wildlife Management Program staff will also work cooperatively with USDA Wildlife Services personnel under a Memorandum of Understanding to respond to livestock depredation complaints. The Tribal Wildlife Management Program will coordinate with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks as appropriate on wolf population monitoring and management issues that affect wolves which routinely use both state and tribal lands.

Public Information and Outreach

A wide variety of methods will be utilized to keep the public informed of wolf activity and management activities. Print and broadcast media will carry information on wolf management topics. Additional information will be placed on the Tribal Wildlife Management Program page on the Tribal website that could be used as a reference for ongoing management activities, as well as for educational opportunities.

Conflict Management

Investigation of Conflicts

Conflicts between wolves and livestock will likely occur occasionally. When that happens, all calls, complaints and reports of conflicts will be investigated as quickly as possible to determine the nature of the conflict and to ascertain if wolves are involved.

If livestock or domestic animal depredation occurs, animals killed should be covered with a tarp or other cover to preserve the scene for investigation. Foot traffic and other activity in the vicinity which might obscure evidence of depredation should also be limited.

Any investigations of possible wolf depredation of livestock or domestic animals will include examination of dead and injured livestock as necessary to attempt to best determine cause of injury of death. All investigations will use caution not to damage or destroy evidence. Images pertinent to the incident will be included, along with a narrative of the incident. All results will be documented in a case file. The information in the case file will be used to assess the situation and to determine an appropriate course of management action.

In general, non-lethal methods of wolf control will be utilized initially. If repeated depredations occur or the non-lethal methods of control are ineffective, the use of lethal control of depredating wolves will be considered on a case-by case basis. Management responses to wolf/human conflicts are listed in Table 1.

Assistance of USDA Wildlife Services Agents will be requested as deemed necessary by Tribal Wildlife Management Program personnel. The Tribes maintain a Memorandum of Agreement with that agency for cooperative management of livestock depredation issues.

Table 1. Management Responses to Wolf/Human Conflicts

Conflict Type	Responses
Mild habituation to humans or first incidence of food conditioning	1 wolf or multiple wolves: Nonlethal harassment, trapping, collaring, and monitoring. Examine reason for conflict and apply preventative measures.
Major habituation or subsequent evidence of food conditioning	1 wolf: Lethal control Multiple wolves: Trapping, collaring, and monitoring combined with harassment and lethal control of 1 or more of the wolves. Examine reason for conflict and apply preventative measures.
Livestock depredation-first incident.	1 wolf: Lethal control or trapping, collaring, & monitoring Multiple wolves: Trapping, collaring, monitoring. Examine livestock practices and recommend changes or preventative measures, if needed.
Livestock depredation-subsequent incidents.	1 wolf: Lethal control Multiple wolves: Trapping, collaring, monitoring combined with lethal control of 2-3 wolves. Examine livestock practices and use changes or preventative measures if needed. Evaluate effectiveness of actions. More wolves killed after each subsequent depredation until depredations are alleviated, or the entire pack may be killed.

Records of Investigations

Detailed records of any investigations of wolf conflicts or mortalities will be completed and maintained by the Tribal Wildlife Management Program . Copies of these reports will be made available to individuals involved in wolf-human conflicts or to cooperating agencies that are involved with investigations or compensation claims. Data will be shared with other cooperating agencies, such as Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, for use in the Annual Montana Interagency Wolf Report and for other appropriate scientific and management purposes as determined by the Tribal Wildlife Management Program.

Compensation for Losses Caused by Wolves

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes do not assume responsibility for compensation for any losses or damages resulting from wolves, including livestock depredation, livestock harassment, livestock injury, injury to or mortality of pets or other domestic animals or human injuries or mortality caused by wolves.

The Tribal Wildlife Management Program will work directly with stock growers who experience losses due to wolf depredation to assist in facilitating reimbursement with confirmed losses through applicable agreements with government agencies or private organizations that offer such reimbursements. The Program will provide assistance in the form of contacts, copies of verification reports and other evidence that will assist the complainants in accessing reimbursement funding agencies or organizations.

Currently, the only compensation available is the Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Board, which is administered by the Montana Department of Livestock. The Tribal Wildlife Management Program has completed negotiations for a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Livestock to allow Reservation residents to file claims for compensation of verified livestock losses attributable to wolf depredation. Tribal Wildlife Management Program staff will work cooperatively with USDA Wildlife Services Agents to verify wolf depredation and assist affected stockgrowers in filing their claims.

Any reimbursement program must be equally available to all affected individuals located within the exterior boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation, and any claims for reimbursement must be agreed to by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes or their representative.

Wolf Capture and Relocation

Wolves involved in conflicts will not be captured and relocated within the boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation due to the high probability of further conflicts. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks also do not currently condone such relocations elsewhere in Montana.

The Tribal Wildlife Management Program has investigated the possibility of entering into agreements with other wildlife management agencies or captive animal facilities (wildlife sanctuaries, zoos, etc.) that might be willing to accept live wolves. Appropriate permitting of the facility would be necessary before any such transfer. The agency or facility receiving the animal would also be responsible for any transportation and other applicable costs. While such transfers may be possible, initial investigation did not prove successful in developing placement opportunities for live wolves due to the capacity of the facilities or to the difficulty in successfully introducing new wolves into established captive groups.

Animal Handling Procedures

Tribal Wildlife Management Program staff will attempt to capture at least one animal within each pack to be fitted with a radio telemetry transmitter. This equipment will allow the staff to monitor the locations of the animals and their packs and to utilize the locations to determine biological information as well as for assistance in locating depredating wolves.

Depending upon the situation and whether or not capture of a wolf for management or research is warranted, the animal may be captured by padded leg-hold traps, snares, darting, or by net-gun. Each such capture is dependant upon the individual situation and existing conditions. Any capture of wolves will be completed in a respectful manner that is humane, and all possible efforts will be made to quickly remove the animal from the capture equipment, followed by prompt, complete and appropriate handling procedures. Animals that are to be released will be released as quickly as possible. If animals are to be held or transported, these actions will be conducted to facilitate humane treatment and rapid transfer.

Legal Taking of Wolves

Pending the outcome of investigations of livestock depredation complaints, wolves may be legally taken by Tribal Wildlife Management Program personnel, Tribal Fish and Wildlife Conservation personnel or Wildlife Services personnel under Tribal Wildlife Management Program direction.

Livestock growers may kill or harass problem wolves involved in actively pursuing, injuring or killing livestock or domestic animals. When possible, stock growers who observe wolves in the area of their livestock or who observe a wolf depredating livestock or domestic animals are required to contact the Tribal Wildlife Management Program within 12 hours of the incident. Tribal Wildlife Management Program and USDA Wildlife Service staff will then investigate the incident to determine the status and discuss management options with the owner of the livestock

Members of the general public who are threatened by aggressive wolves may legally harass and/or kill the wolves involved. In such cases, the Tribal Fish and Game Conservation Program must be notified within 12 hours following the incident. The Tribal Fish and Game Conservation Program and Tribal Wildlife Management Program will investigate the incident to determine the status as legal taking. As part of this investigation, any wolf carcasses or any parts thereof remain the property of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

Hunting and Trapping of Wolves

The Tribal Council approved wolf hunting and trapping regulations in 2013, but did not do so in 2014. At the Tribal Council's discretion, the Tribal Wildlife Management Program will develop wolf hunting and/or trapping proposals for Tribal Council review. If the Council approves wolf hunting or trapping proposals, regulations for wolf hunting and/or trapping will be developed on an annual basis.

Accidental Capture of Wolves

Trappers who accidently capture a wolf must release it unharmed immediately. If the wolf shows signs of injury or the trapper feels uncomfortable releasing the animal, the Tribal Wildlife

Management Program or the Tribal Fish and Wildlife Conservation Program must be contacted as soon as possible to determine disposition of the animal.

Illegal Taking of Wolves

Any cases of illegal killing of wolves will be investigated by Tribal Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers, Conservation Officers from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent in Charge, as appropriate. Any legal action will involved in such cases will occur in the appropriate court.

Harassment of Wolves

Aggressive wolves or wolves that exhibit signs of habituation may be harassed by Tribal and USDA Wildlife Services personnel or affected members of the public. Under certain circumstances, stockgrowers or members of the public by the use of noise-making devices or by shooting firearms in the vicinity of the animals after consultation with the Tribal Wildlife Management Program and USDA Wildlife Services. Other methods of harassment (such as cracker shells, Critter Getters, etc.) may also be available, and information or advice on their use may be obtained from the Tribal Wildlife Management Program.

Disposal of Wolves Taken During Management Actions

Wolves killed during management actions or other wolves that are turned in to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' Wildlife Management Program or the Tribal Fish and Wildlife Conservation Program will remain the property of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Appropriate sampling for biological studies and/or law enforcement investigation requirements will be collected for biological studies or legal proceedings. Some hides and skulls may be retained for educational purposes, as needed.

The Tribal Wildlife Management Program will work in cooperation with the Kootenai and Salish and Pend d' Oreille Culture Committees to transfer wolf carcasses or the parts thereof to them for distribution, if they wish. If not, the Program will develop a list of Tribal members who would like to receive the items. Requests will be filled on a first-come, first serve basis, with one available item provided to individual requestors. Individuals may request only one wolf carcass or the parts thereof.

Research and Monitoring of Wolves

To the extent possible under applicable funding and balanced with other wildlife management priorities, the Tribal Wildlife Management Program will attempt to monitor wolves and their activities in those areas of the Reservation where wolves occur. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks biologists conduct periodic monitoring flights to determine location of packs, numbers of animals and activities. Any observations recorded on the Reservation are transmitted to the Tribal Wildlife Management Program. Verification of wolf activity on the ground is then conducted by the Tribal Wildlife Management Program, as is any attempts to capture and radio-tag animals. Those on-the-ground activities are also coordinated with the local Wildlife Services Agent.

Research and Monitoring of Big Game

To the extent possible under applicable funding and balanced with other wildlife management priorities, the Tribal Wildlife Management Program will attempt to monitor the impact of wolves upon big game and other wildlife. Monitoring will be undertaken in specific areas of the Reservation in which wolves occur on an as needed basis and prioritized along with other wildlife monitoring. Because funding is limited, the scope of this monitoring effort may be limited to specific prioritized areas of wolf activity.

Periodic Plan Review and Revision

This wolf management plan will initially be reviewed at the end of the fifth year of implementation by the Tribal Wildlife Management Program staff and the Tribal Council. Any required changes or adjustments necessary will then be developed for adoption by the Council. The plan may also be reviewed as necessary by the Tribal Wildlife Management Program, and revisions may be recommended for consideration by the Tribal Council.

The plan can also be reviewed and revised as needed by the Tribal Council as a result of a demonstrated need to do so. If revisions to the existing plan are proposed, any cooperating agencies that have agreements with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes will be notified and consulted. Likewise, any changes in policy or procedure related to wolf management by other agencies will require notification of the Tribes and consultation prior to enactment.

Literature Cited

Bangs, E. E., S. H. Fritts, J. A. Fontaine, D. W. Smith, K. M. Murphy, C. M. Mack and C. C. Niemeyer. 1998. Status of gray wolf restoration in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Wildlife Society Bulletin 26:785-798.

Boyce 1989 Boyce, M. S. 1989. The Jackson elk herd: intensive wildlife management in North America. Cambridge University Press, New York, New York, USA.

Boyd, D. K., R. R. Ream, D. H. Pletscher and M. W. Fairchild. 1993. Variation in denning and parturition dates of a wild gray wolf (*Canus lupus*) population in the Rocky Mountains. Canadian Field-Naturalist 107:359-360.

Boyd, D. K. and D. H. Pletscher. 1999. Characteristics and dispersal in a colonizing wolf population in the central Rocky Mountains. Journal of Wildlife Management 63: 1094-1108.

Bradley, L., J. Gude, N. Lance, K. Laudon, A. Messer, A. Nelson, G. Pauley, K. Podruzny, M. Ross, T. Smucker, and J. Steuber. 2014. Montana Gray Wolf Conservation and Management. 2013 Annual Report. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Helena, Montana. Pp 54.

DeByle 1985. Animal impacts. Pages 115-123 in N.V. DeByle and R.P. Winokur, eds. Aspen: ecology and management in the western United States. USDA Forest Service General Technical Report RM-119.

Hamlin, K. L., R. A. Garrott, P. J. White and J. A. Cunningham. 2008. Contrasting wolf-ungulate interactions in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Chapter 25 in R. A. Garrott, P. J. White and F. G. Watson, Eds. The ecology of large mammals in Central Yellowstone. Elsevier, Inc.

Johnson, M. R., D. K. Boyd and D. H. Pletscher. 1994. Serological investigations of canine parvovirus and canine distemper in relation to wolf (Canus lupus) pup mortalities. Journal of Wildlife Diseases 30:270-273.

Jones, J. R. 1974. Silviculture of southwestern mixed conifers and aspen; the status of our knowledge. USDA Forest Service Research Paper RM-122.

Kunkel, K. E., T. K. Ruth, D. H. Pletscher and M. G. Hornocker. 1999. Winter prey selection by wolves and cougars in and near Glacier National Park, Montana. Journal of Wildlife Management 63: 901-910.

Mech, L. D. 1970. The wolf: The ecology and behavior of an endangered species. Natural History Press. Garden City, NY.

Mech, D. L. and L. Boitani, Eds. 2003. Wolves: Behavior, Ecology and Conservation. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, IL. 448 pp.

Mech, L. D. and S. M.Goyal. 1993. Canine parvovirus on effect on wolf population change and pup survival. Journal of Wildlife Diseases 29: 330-333.

Mech, L. D., L. G. Adams, T. J. Meier, J. W. Burch and B. W. Dale. 1998. The wolves of Denali. University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis, MN.

Pletscher, D. H., R. R. Ream, D. K. Boyd, M. W. Fairchild and K. E. Kunkel. 1997. Population dynamics of a re-colonizing wolf population in the Rocky Mountains. Journal of Wildlife Management 61:459-465.

Rezendes, P. 1999. Tracking & the art of seeing: how to read animal tracks & sign. 2nd. ed. Harper Collins Publishers, Inc. New York City, New York.

Sime, C. A., E. Bangs, E. Bradley, J. E. Steuber, K. Glazier, P. J. Hoover, V. Asher, K. Laudon, M. Ross and J. Trapp. 2007. Gray wolves and livestock in Montana: A Recent History of Damage Management. In D. L. Nolte, W. M. Arjo and D. H. Stalman, Eds. 2007. Proceedings of the 12th Wildlife Damage Conference.

Sime, Carolyn A., V. Asher, L. Bradley, K. Laudon, M. Ross, J. Trapp, M. Atkinson, and J. Steuber. 2008. Montana gray wolf conservation and management 2007 annual report. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Helena, Montana, 137pp

Sime, C. A., V. Asher, L. Bradley, K. Laudon, N. Lance, and M. Ross, and J. Steuber. 2009. Montana gray wolf conservation and management 2008 annual report. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Helena, MT. 154 pp

Sime, Carolyn A., V. Asher, L. Bradley, K. Laudon, N. Lance, and M. Ross, and J.Steuber. 2010. Montana gray wolf conservation and management 2009 annual report. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Helena, Montana. 173 pp

United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 1987. Northern Rocky Mountain wolf recovery plan. U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver, CO. 67pp.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Nez Perce Tribe, National Park Service, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Blackfeet Nation, Confederated and Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Idaho Fish and Game, and USDA Wildlife Services. 2010. Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery 2009 Interagency Report. C. A. Sime and E. E. Bangs, eds. USFWS, Ecological Services. Helena, MT.