

Wolf Management Update

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

October – December 2018



Field Work and Monitoring

Lassen pack

The Lassen pack began utilizing its winter range, although it continued to visit summer range areas throughout the reporting period. Detections on November 12 yielded a minimum count of two adults and four pups. Counts are opportunistic and ongoing, and any one data point may not reveal the true pack size.

Other wolves

OR-54

After spending much of the summer near Sierra Valley, OR-54 left the area on September 25 and began traveling through Butte, Tehama, Plumas, Lassen, and Modoc Counties. After travelling north along the California/Nevada border she returned to Oregon on November 5. She visited the territory of her natal Rogue Pack in southern Oregon, then continued north roughly 100 miles before turning south again. She reentered California on December 18 and remained in the state through the end of the year. By the end of December, she had traveled a minimum of 4,325 miles since first leaving her natal pack on January 23.

OR-59

OR-59 began dispersing from northeastern Oregon at the end of September and entered California on November 29. On December 5, a Lassen County livestock producer observed OR-59 feeding on a dead calf. CDFW and Wildlife Services investigated the calf carcass and determined that the calf had died of natural causes. Several days later and miles away, OR-59 was found dead and the matter is under investigation.

Uncollared black wolves

Uncollared black wolves have been occasionally detected in Lassen (since late 2017) and southern Modoc counties (early and mid-2018). Those wolves have been mentioned in previous quarterly updates.

During the reporting period, a black canid that may be a wolf was photographed by a trail camera in northern Plumas County. However, there is also a black wolf-dog hybrid that is known to reside on private property in the same valley. Additionally, genetic analyses of two scats collected near and within the Lassen Pack territory in late 2017 indicated they were from an unrelated male wolf. It is likely, though not certain, that the scats were from one of the uncollared black wolves.

No uncollared wolves were detected in northern Lassen or Modoc counties during the quarter (aside from uncollared members of the Lassen Pack).

More information about these and other wolves can be found on CDFW's gray wolf web page in a document called "*California's Known Wolves – Past and Present*".

CDFW continues to receive and investigate reports of wolf presence from many parts of California. Public reports are an important tool for us. Please report wolves or wolf sign on the CDFW Gray Wolf web page: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Gray-Wolf/Sighting-Report>.

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Livestock Interactions

Depredation investigations

CDFW and USDA Wildlife Services (WS) staff investigated two reports of suspected wolf depredations during the October – December reporting period. The results are as follows:

Date	Determination ¹	County	Investigators	
11/27/18	Confirmed Wolf	Lassen	CDFW	WS
12/5/18	Non-Depredation	Lassen	CDFW	WS

The individual Determination reports are available at www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/mammals/gray-wolf

In early December, CDFW began using new wolf-specific categories and criteria to classify potential wolf depredation incidents. The new considerations were developed with the assistance of WS, and CDFW believes they offer greater clarity than those used previously. They are available on the CDFW gray wolf webpage: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=162369&inline>

Use of non-lethal deterrents

On December 15, about 3.5 miles of turbo fladry was removed from a leased grazing area. The fladry appeared to have helped deter conflicts, as wolf use of the pasture was less frequent after the fladry was installed in August. Wolves did enter the fladry perimeter on at least two instances, but in both cases the fladry perimeter was compromised. Regular monitoring and maintenance is necessary to keep fladry perimeters intact and the electrical system functional. A confirmed wolf depredation occurred outside the fladry on November 27, after cattle were moved from the fladry the day before to prepare for shipping.

Communication

CDFW biologists have been in regular and frequent communication and coordination with CDFW wildlife officers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Wildlife Services, U.S. Forest Service, livestock producers, range riders, conservation organizations, and private timberland owners and managers.

Presentations:

- October 30 – Presentation to an Introduction to Wildlife class at Feather River College.
- November 2 – Presentation to Apex Predator classes at Humboldt State University.
- November 8 – Presentation to The Wildlife Society's Wildlife and Forest Management Summit in Redding