

CALIFORNIA'S KNOWN WOLVES – PAST AND PRESENT

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

July 2020

Wolf Packs

Lassen Pack

The Lassen Pack is California's second contemporary pack, and the only currently known wolf pack in the state. The wolves generally utilize a broad area of western Lassen and northernmost Plumas counties, and the pack's home range is approximately 500+ mi². The pack has produced litters in 2017 (four pups), 2018 (five pups), 2019 (four pups), and 2020 (eight pups). One of the 2019 pups (LAS02F) was fitted with a satellite tracking collar in September 2019, but that collar failed in January 2020. A male from the 2019 litter (LAS03M) was fitted with a satellite collar in May 2020 and is currently one of two functioning collars in the pack.

Genetic analysis indicated the original male was a 2014 offspring of southwestern Oregon's Rogue Pack. While he sired the 2017-2019 litters, he has not been detected with the pack since spring 2019. A black-colored adult male began traveling with the pack as early as June 2019, and genetic analysis of 2020 pup scats show the black wolf is the new breeding male. He is not related to other known California wolves, and his origin is currently unknown. The pack's breeding female (LAS01F) is not related to known Oregon wolves and genetic analysis indicates she likely dispersed from some other part of the northern Rocky Mountain wolf population. LAS01F was originally tracked with a GPS collar from June 2017 until it failed in November 2019. She was recollared in June 2020.

In summer 2020, the pack consisted of a minimum of six adult/yearling wolves and eight pups.

In September 2018, a yearling female from the pack was found dead, and the matter remains under investigation. CDFW reminds the public that killing a wolf is a potential crime and subject to serious penalties including imprisonment. CDFW takes very seriously any threats to this recovering wolf population and fully investigates any possible criminal activity.

Shasta Pack

The Shasta Pack was California's first known contemporary pack and occupied a portion of eastern Siskiyou County. DNA indicated that both breeding wolves were from Oregon's Imnaha pack (the pack that produced OR-7). The pair was first detected in early 2015 and 5 pups were identified that summer. The pack was regularly detected from August through November 2015 and consisted of a minimum of six wolves in late November 2015. The pack was observed feeding on a cattle calf carcass in mid-November 2015, and subsequent investigation determined the wolves had likely killed the calf.

The pack was not detected after November 2015, except for one yearling identified within the pack's range in May 2016. The same animal, verified by DNA, was detected in northwestern Nevada in November 2016.

Other Wolves Detected (Collared)

OR-54

OR-54 was an offspring of southwestern Oregon's Rogue Pack and was most likely born in 2016. She was the fourth Rogue Pack wolf known to have spent time in California. She was fitted with a GPS collar by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) in October 2017, and she initially dispersed to California in January 2018. She subsequently spent most of her time in California but made two trips back to Oregon. In California she traveled widely in northeastern California, through portions of Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou Tehama, and Yuba counties. In September 2019, OR-54 crossed to the south side of Interstate 80 and briefly entered Nevada before returning to California and again crossing the Interstate. Those points are the southernmost known wolf locations since wolves returned to California. She covered more than 8,710 miles after leaving the Rogue Pack.

OR-54 was found dead in Shasta County in February 2020 and the circumstances of her death remain under investigation. Gray wolves are protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act. CDFW takes very seriously any threats to this recovering wolf population. Killing a wolf is a potential crime and subject to serious penalties, including imprisonment.

OR-59

OR-59 was a male wolf from northeastern Oregon. He was fitted with a GPS collar by ODFW in February 2018 and crossed the state line into Modoc County in December 2018. CDFW Wildlife Officers found OR-59 shot in December 2019. The poaching incident is currently under investigation. CDFW takes very seriously any threats to this recovering wolf population and will investigate fully any possible criminal activity in these deaths. CDFW reminds the public that killing a wolf is a potential crime and subject to serious penalties including imprisonment.

OR-44

OR-44 was a male offspring from northeastern Oregon's Chesnimnus Pack. He was fitted with a GPS collar by ODFW in December 2016 and dispersed from his pack in fall 2017. OR-44 crossed the state line into eastern Siskiyou County in March 2018. His collar failed in May 2018, and his last known location was in Siskiyou County.

OR-25

OR-25 was a male offspring of northeastern Oregon's Imnaha Pack. He was fitted with a GPS collared by ODFW in 2014. OR-25 made four trips to California during late 2015 and early 2016, traveling through portions of Modoc, Lassen, Shasta and Siskiyou counties. OR-25 was found dead near Fort Klamath, Oregon in October 2017.

OR-7

OR-7 was born in 2009 in northeastern Oregon's Imnaha pack. He was fitted with a GPS collar by ODFW in February 2011. He dispersed from his pack in September 2011 and crossed the state line into eastern Siskiyou County in December 2011. He spent much of 2012 and early 2013 in California traveling through Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Tehama counties. OR-7 returned to Oregon in April 2013, found a mate, and formed the Rogue Pack.

The Rogue pack had litters from 2014-2018, and three of OR-7's offspring have been detected in California: the original breeding male of the Lassen Pack, a female detected in

eastern Siskiyou County in 2017, and OR-54. In late 2019 ODFW reported that OR-7 was no longer with the Rogue pack. His fate is unknown.

Other Wolves Detected (Uncollared)

Since 2017, uncollared dispersing wolves have periodically been detected in northern California via trail cameras, DNA, handheld cameras, and visual observation by CDFW. Most of these detections have occurred in Modoc, Lassen, Plumas, and Siskiyou counties.

Genetic material has been collected from some uncollared dispersers including a female from the Rogue Pack in Siskiyou County in January 2017, a male from northeastern Oregon's Meacham Pack in Lassen County in October 2017, and a male of currently unknown origin detected in Modoc County in May 2020.

