

IDAHO WOLF MANAGEMENT UPDATE

October 2011

Harvest Seasons

Wolf hunting seasons opened August 30 throughout the state. Seasons are scheduled to close on December 31 in the Island Park and Beaverhead wolf management zones (unless harvest limits are met first), and on June 30, 2012 in the Lolo and Selway zones. Seasons in the other nine zones close on March 31, 2012 (unless harvest limits are met first). Harvest limits have been established for five of the 13 wolf management zones (Salmon, Sawtooth, Southern Mountains, Beaverhead in Island Park). In these zones, the season will close when either the harvest limit has been met, or the season closing date is reached, whichever comes first. Hunters may purchase two wolf tags per calendar year. See the wolf seasons brochure for more information. <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/docs/rules/wolfRules.pdf>

Wolf trapping seasons were set for November 15 – March 31 in the Lolo, Selway, and Middle Fork wolf management zones and portions of the Panhandle and Dworshak-Elk City wolf management zones. Individuals interested in trapping wolves must first attend a wolf trapper education class before buying wolf trapping tags. Certified trappers may purchase up to three wolf trapping tags per trapping season. See details on our website: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/hunt/?getPage=266>

To date, Fish and Game staff members have conducted 12 wolf trapper education classes and 289 individuals have been certified to trap wolves. Ten additional classes are scheduled for November and December and more will be scheduled as needed.

One hundred wolves were harvested by hunters through the end of October. Hunters killed three wolves in August during the first two days of the season, 30 wolves during September, and 68 wolves in October. In comparison, hunters had killed 84 wolves by October 31 during our first season in 2009, including 67 during October. Just under 30,000 wolf hunting tags for 2011 had been sold as of close of business on November 7. Additionally, 71 wolf trapping tags have been purchased for the season that opens November 15. Hunters purchased 26,428 wolf tags in 2009.

Monitoring

The 2010 annual report on Wolf Conservation and Management in Idaho was prepared by the Nez Perce Tribe wolf program staff and is available through our website at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/docs/wolves/reportAnnual10.pdf>

Through October 31, Nez Perce Tribe and Idaho Fish and Game had documented successful reproduction of minimum of 163 pups in 55 packs, including 39 packs that tentatively qualify for “breeding pair” status (at least two pups produced and surviving). No new wolves were captured in October.

Management and Control Actions

During October, USDA Wildlife Services personnel confirmed wolves killed two calves and eight sheep. In response to these, and previous depredations, Wildlife Services killed three wolves. For comparison, in October 2010, Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed one calf and 15 sheep, and in response, Wildlife Services killed three wolves.

From January 1 – October 31, 2011, Idaho USDA Wildlife Services personnel confirmed wolves killed or injured 68 cattle, 83 sheep, and 6 dogs. During January 1 – October 31, 2009, Wildlife Services confirmed wolves killed or injured 75 cattle, 285 sheep, and 14 dogs. (January 1 – October 31 totals not available for 2010 after Idaho Fish and Game ceased involvement.) Confirmed wolf depredations and mortalities from 2003–2011 are reported in Table 2.

Information and Education

Additional information and updates can be viewed at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Table 1. Total known wolf mortality by cause, Jan. 1, 2011 – Oct. 31, 2011.

Wolf Mgt Zone	WS Control	IDFG Control Action	Harvest	Illegal	Legal (protection of livestock or pets)	Other	Unk	Total
Dworshak-Elk City	1	7	16				2	26
Lolo		6	4					10
McCall-Weiser	6		11	2	5	2	1	27
Middle Fork			8				1	9
Palouse-Hells Canyon			2			0	1	3
Panhandle			20			1		21
Salmon	3		8	1	2		5	19
Sawtooth	14		10	1	3	3	2	33
Selway								0
Southern Idaho					1			1
Southern Mountains	9		11		2			22
Beaverhead	1		1			1		3
Island Park	2		9					11
Unknown				2		1	1	4
Total	36	13	100	6	13	8	13	189

Table 2. Confirmed wolf depredations and mortalities in Idaho, 2003 to Oct. 31, 2011.

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality					
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	IDFG Control Action ³	10j / 36-1107 ⁴	Other ⁵	Hunter Harvest	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7		0	8		15
2004	19	176	4	199	17		0	21		38
2005	29	166	12	207	24		3	16		43
2006	41	237	4	282	35		7	19		61
2007	57	211	10	278	43		7	27		77
2008	104	215	14	333	94		14	45		153
2009	76	295	14	385	87		6	45	135	273
2010	75	148	0	223	67		13	18	46	144
2011 (1/1 – 10/31)	68	83	6	157	36	13	13	27	100	189

¹ Includes only confirmed wolf depredations of cattle, sheep, and dogs that resulted in death or injury.

² Wolves taken by USDA Wildlife Services in response to depredation on livestock.

³ Wolves taken as authorized by IDFG to address unacceptable predation on ungulates and public safety.

⁴ Authorized take under ESA Sec. 10j, or legal take under state law for protection of stock and dogs (Idaho Code 36-1107) while wolves were delisted, or authorized by kill permit while wolves were delisted.

⁵ Other includes of mortalities of unknown cause, documented natural mortality, collisions with automobiles, and illegal take.