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News Release



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Wolf pack with pups confirmed in northeastern Oregon

LA GRANDE, Ore.—A wolf pack that includes both adults and pups was confirmed in a forested area of northern Union County on Friday, the first evidence of multiple wolves and wolf reproduction in Oregon since wolves were extirpated from the state back in the mid-1940s.

Wildlife biologists conducting a howling survey heard the howls of both adults and pups simultaneously. The exact number of wolves was not determined, but at least two adults and two pups were heard.

Wolf sign has been observed infrequently in this area since November and biologists have been conducting regular surveys of the area since.

State and federal biologists will continue to monitor the area to determine the level of wolf activity. They may also try to capture and radio-collar the wolves for monitoring.

Experts have long predicted that wolves from the expanding Idaho population would continue to cross the Snake River and enter Oregon. Biologists have been investigating evidence of wolves in northeast Oregon for some time.

ODFW and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials remind the public it is illegal to shoot a wolf, even one mistaken for another animal such as a coyote. Any gray wolf in Oregon is listed as an endangered species under both state and federal law. (While wolves in the eastern third of Oregon were de-listed from the federal ESA in late March 2008, last week U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy granted a preliminary injunction that restored federal wolf protections.)

Killing an animal protected under the federal Endangered Species Act is punishable by a fine of up to \$100,000, one year in jail, or both. Killing a wolf is also a violation of Oregon state game law, with fines and penalties that are assessed by the court.

Individuals who see a wolf, or suspect or discover wolf activity are asked to immediately contact one of the following:

- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Wolf Coordinator Russ Morgan in La Grande: 541-963-2138
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wolf Coordinator John Stephenson: cell, 541-786-3282.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service La Grande Field Office: 541-962-8584.

Wolf sightings can also be reported online through ODFW's wolf Web site.

Oregon has a Wolf Conservation and Management Plan, created with extensive, state-wide public input and collaboration, which was adopted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission in 2005. More information on wolves and wolf management in Oregon is available on the website: www.dfw.state.or.us/wolves/

Note: No photos of the wolf pack are available, but photos of a wolf observed back in January in northeast Oregon are available.