
Wolf Management Update - January 2013

Wolf Harvest

2011/12 Wolf Season: Harvest limits applied to 6 of 13 Zones, no statewide harvest limit. Most hunting seasons ran Aug 30 – Mar 31. Season extended through June in Lolo and Selway zones. Trapping allowed in 5 northern Zones (Nov 15 –Mar 31). Both foothold traps and snares allowed.

- a. *Tags sales*
 - *43,246 hunting tags sold. Hunters could purchase 2 hunting tags per calendar year.*
 - *526 trapping tags sold. Trappers could purchase 3 trapping tags per season.*
- b. 379 wolves taken by hunting and trapping combined (Aug 30, 2011 - Jun 30, 2012)
 - *255 wolves taken by hunting.*
 - *124 wolves taken by trapping.*
- c. Trapping proved to be very effective. 254 trappers purchased 526 wolf trapping tags and harvested 124 wolves—trapping comprised 33% of the total harvest. Trapping resulted in >50% of the harvest December – March 2012 (Fig. 1.).

2012/13 Wolf Season: Same season format as 2011/12. Additionally, season opened July 1 on private land in Panhandle zone. Trapping season expanded to Units 19A and 25.

- Hunters may purchase up to 5 wolf hunting tags per calendar year for use in 7 of 13 zones. 2 hunting tags per calendar year in remaining 6 zones.
- Trappers may purchase up to 5 wolf trapping tags for use in 6 of 7 zones per trapping season; 3 per trapping season in remaining zones.
- 202 wolves harvested through Jan. 31, 2013 compared to 270 harvested through the same date in 2012, a 25% reduction in harvest (Fig. 2).

Wolf Trapper Education

Wolf Trapping Classes: Licensed trappers must complete a mandatory wolf trapper training workshop to become certified and eligible to participate in wolf trapping. Emphasis on regulations, ethics, responsibilities, avoidance of nontarget captures.

2011-2012

- a. IDFG conducted 41 day-long classes (Oct – Mar).
- b. 963 individuals completed classes and were certified to trap wolves.

2012-2013

- a. Administration streamlined in 2012-2013. Lower demand for new trappers, returning experienced paid instructors.
 - b. 24 classes scheduled for 2012-13.
 - c. ~440 students certified.
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Wolf Monitoring

- Under the 2009 delisting rule, IDFG is required to document the presence of a minimum of 150 wolves and 15 breeding pairs (pack with ≥ 2 adults and ≥ 2 pups as of Dec. 31) at the end of each year.
 - At the end of 2011, there were 101 documented resident wolf packs in Idaho (not counting packs along state borders that denned in adjacent states) (Fig. 3).
 - As wolf numbers and distribution has increased through time, monitoring wolves via radio telemetry has become increasingly challenging and expensive.
 - Federal financial support for monitoring has declined 50% over the last 2 years and will cease completely in 2 years.
 - Loss of radiocollared wolves during harvest seasons and control actions in response to livestock depredations further complicates monitoring efforts.
 - Although radio telemetry will continue to be an important component of wolf monitoring through the foreseeable future, to address these challenges, IDFG is transitioning into new monitoring strategies to meet minimum monitoring obligations by:
 - Focusing intensive monitoring on a smaller number of packs selected based on pack persistence through time, lower probability of removals due to depredation on livestock, lower susceptibility to harvest, practicality of access for monitoring by ground or air, etc.
 - Using surveys to collect information on hunter observations of wolves to populate Patch Occupancy models to estimate number of packs in the state.
 - Collecting DNA samples from pup scats at rendezvous sites during early summer to document annual reproduction and confirmed minimum survival of pups through the year by DNA evidence collected from adult-sized scats in subsequent years.
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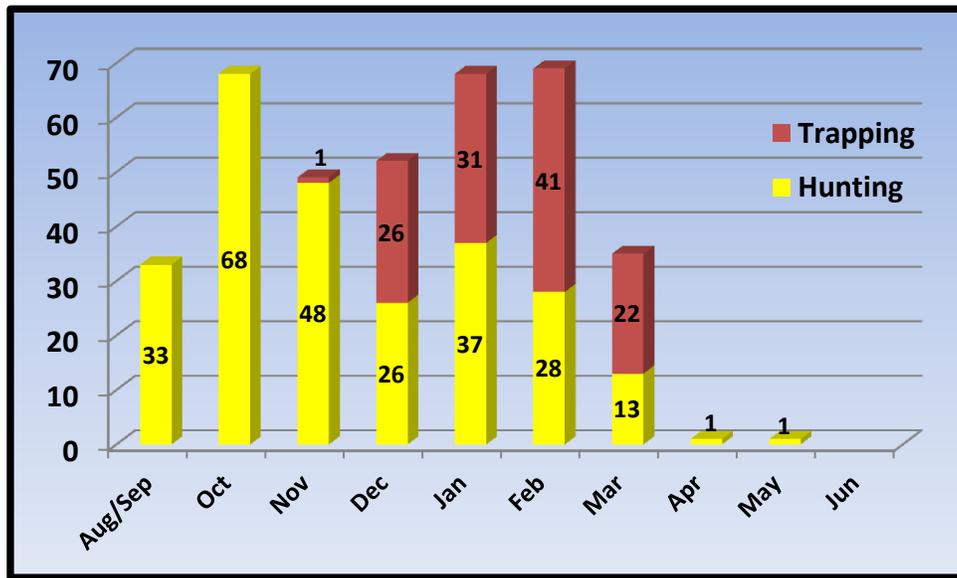


Figure 1. Wolf harvest by method and month Aug 30, 2011 - Jun 30, 2012.

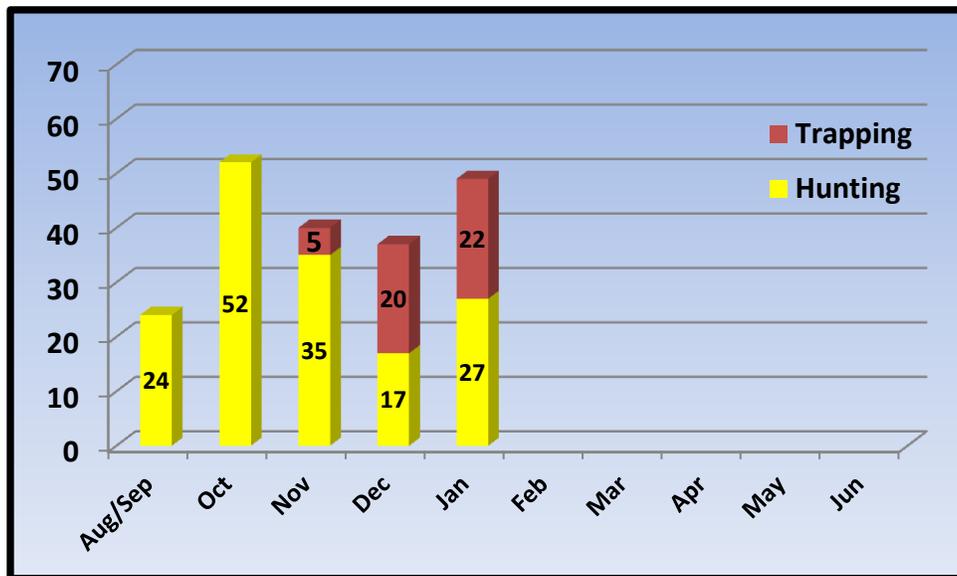
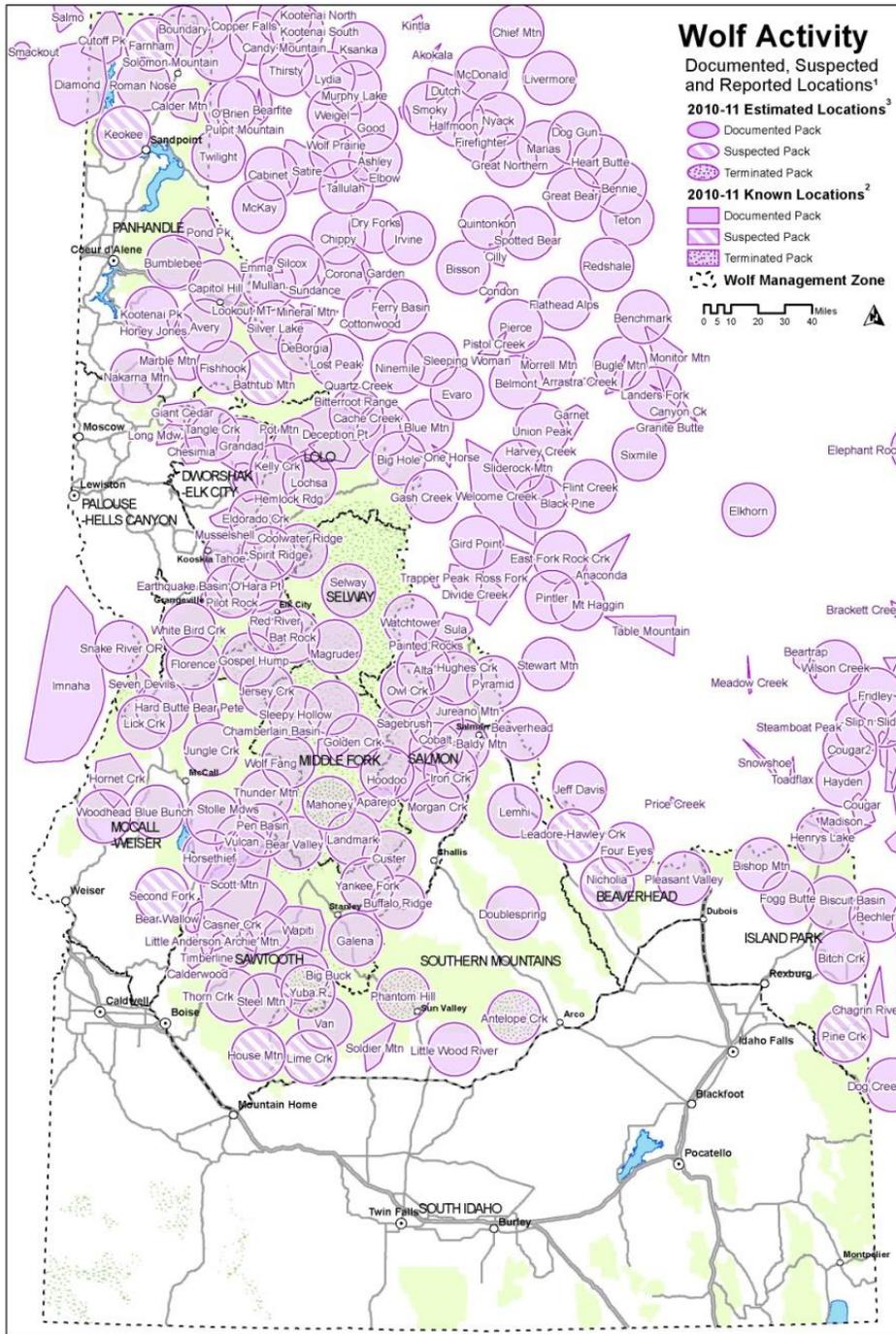


Figure 2. Wolf harvest by method and month Aug 30, 2012 – Jan. 31, 2013.

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Notes:

1. This map provided for management purposes and should not be used for data analysis. Do not release these data to third parties without first consulting the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Wildlife Services, the University of Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit and the National Park Service. Pack locations are 95% based on mean minimum convex polygons of GPS telemetry research observations and wolf mortalities for collared and uncollared animals from 1/1/2010 - 12/31/2011. Pack locations are based on using minimum convex polygons to analyze animal movements. If the pack did not have any observations in 2011 it is not depicted on this map.
2. Known Locations collected and analyzed by Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Wildlife Services, the University of Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit and the National Park Service. Pack locations are 95% based on mean minimum convex polygons of GPS telemetry research observations and wolf mortalities for collared and uncollared animals from 1/1/2010 - 12/31/2011. Pack locations are based on using minimum convex polygons to analyze animal movements. If the pack did not have any observations in 2011 it is not depicted on this map.
3. Estimated Pack Activity determined by biologists from research locations, public observations and incidental observations from 1/1/2010 - 12/31/2011. These are displayed as 9.5 mile radius circles consistent with pack territories in Idaho.

Generated by FRAG (Forest Resource Analysis and GIS) Information System
 Wolf Terminus: 9/25/12
 WolfMap0112L0801.rvt 9

Figure 3. Documented wolf pack activity in 2011 (in revision for 2012).

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Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and mortalities in Idaho, 2003 to January 31, 2013 (preliminary).

YEAR	Confirmed Depredation incidents	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality					
		Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total ²	WS ³	IDFG Control Action ⁴	10j / 36-1107 ⁵	Other ⁶	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	84	57	211	10	278	43		7	27		77
2008	144	104	215	14	333	94		14	45		153
2009	146	76	295	14	385	87		6	45	135	273
2010	109	75	148	0	223	67		13	18	46	144
2011	109	71	121	6	198	37	13	13	33	200	296
2012	122	90	251	4	345	55	14	2	21	330	422
2013 --1/31	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	49	51

¹ Includes only confirmed wolf depredations of cattle, sheep, and dogs that resulted in death or injury. Confirmed depredations on goats, horses, bison, and other domestic animals are not reported here but are listed in the annual reports.

² For comparison purposes in this table, total depredations listed here do not include confirmed depredations of goats, horses, and other miscellaneous animals. Details on these other depredations are provided in the annual reports.

³ Wolves taken by USDA Wildlife Services in response to depredation on livestock.

⁴ Wolves taken as authorized by IDFG to address unacceptable predation on ungulates and/or public safety concerns.

⁵ 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 listed, or authorized by kill permit while wolves were listed.

⁶ Other includes mortalities of unknown cause, documented natural mortality, collisions with automobiles, and illegal take.
