



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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WHITEHAWK WOLF PACK HISTORY

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) lethally controlled all remaining members of the Whitehawk wolf pack after a series of depredations on private property in the East Fork of the Salmon River near Clayton, Idaho, on April 6, 2002.

This history of the Whitehawk Pack serves as a record of the pack's members, their locations, and their activities for a period of almost six years in Idaho. It also documents the actions of many individuals, private and public, who have been intimately involved with this wolf pack.

- 1997: Moyer Pack
 - Pack members radio-collared, including two subadult male members, B40m and B47m.
- July 25, 1998: Moyer Pack
 - Moyer Basin livestock depredations investigated by USDA Wildlife Services.
 - B40m and B47m involved in incident.
 - Two livestock producers reported 1 cow, 3 yearlings, and 3 calves attacked by Moyer Pack on private grazing allotment.
 - Wildlife Services confirmed wolf kill (3 yearlings, 1 cow) and determined 3 dead calves were highly probable kills.
 - B51f was captured and relocated.
- February, 1999: Moyer Pack
 - B40m dispersed from Moyer Pack.
 - B40m kills calf on private land along Carmen Creek, north of Salmon, Idaho.
 - B40m helicopter captured and relocated to the South Fork of the Salmon River.
 - B40m returned to Moyer Pack.
- April, 1999: Moyer Pack
 - B40m dispersed again, with his brother B47m (and possibly other pack members) to Bear Valley area.
- Spring, 2000: Formation of Whitehawk Pack
 - B40m and B47m joined other wolves.
 - One pup produced; pack becomes the Whitehawk Pack.
 - B40m and B47m moved throughout Bear Valley/Stanley area with other pack members.

- Spring, 2001: Whitehawk Pack
 - Pack settled into the East Fork of the Salmon.
 - Whitehawk Pack apparently killed a calf and attacked dogs near ranch along the East Fork.
 - Rancher contacts Wildlife Services; no control action initiated.

- February 13, 2001
 - Winter helicopter capture.
 - B101m, a large black male wolf, and B102 m, a subadult male gray wolf (assumed to be the lone pup sighted in the Bear Valley) are radio-collared.

- March 19, 2001
 - Calf kill on private land.
 - B102m was shot in the act of killing and eating the calf.
(Rancher could have legally killed 4 other pack members observed in the act of depredation, but did not.)
 - Calf confirmed killed by wolves. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determines wolf killing legal. No further control action was taken by the Service.

- April 2001
 - Pack moves into Stanley valley and dens in Warm Springs Creek area.

- June 8, 2001
 - Band of domestic sheep moved onto public land near apparent Whitehawk Pack rendezvous site.
 - Wolf managers unaware of wolf presence in the vicinity.

- June 10, 2001
 - Whitehawk Pack attacked and killed a large guard dog and 8 domestic sheep.
 - Telemetry revealed Whitehawk members near depredation.
 - Nez Perce Tribe determined that Whitehawk Pack had 9 pups that same day.
 - Service, Wildlife Services, Nez Perce Tribe, Forest Service and sheep producer meet regarding proactive measures, including installation of electric fencing to protect the sheep on bedground during the night. No alternative grazing allotments were available for the producer to move his sheep.

- June 16, 2001
 - Livestock producer reported calf kill on his private land during the night.
 - Service, Wildlife Services and Nez Perce Tribe field personnel immediately investigate kill (staff on-site building electric fence).
 - Calf confirmed killed and consumed by wolves.
 - Telemetry identified Whitehawk Pack, and wolf tracks lead directly up ridge toward rendezvous site.
 - B40m, B47m and B101m identified by radio collar monitors.

- Service issues control action to remove two adult wolves (trapping or helicopter shooting planned).
- Wolf advocate protesters in area led to further discussions about the planned lethal control.
- Idaho Wolf Recovery Coordinator agreed to the trapping and relocation of two of the wolves with condition that wolf advocates allow Wildlife Services to conduct the capture.
- Traps set and checked daily.
- June 21, 2001
 - Nez Perce field biologist stayed near sheep camps, and was awakened in early morning hours by gunfire. Shepherders had fired gun to frighten wolves; wolves were in act of attempted depredation on lamb. Wolves ran off and lamb returned to band.
 - No report of lamb kill; assumed that lamb survived attempted kill.
- June 24, 2001
 - Film crew attempted to film Wildlife Services checking traps.
 - Wildlife Services reported the incident to the Service. Traps were immediately removed.
- June 29, 2001
 - Depredation on 8 domestic sheep from previously attacked band. Kill confirmed.
 - Nez Perce field biologist staying near sheep during the night of the attack attempted to scare wolves out of the sheep during the actual attack, but his efforts failed.
 - Lethal control action authorized by Service to remove two adult male wolves from Whitehawk Pack.
 - B40m and B101m lethally removed.
 - Agency meetings continued to determine fate of remaining pack members.
 - Concurrently, a cattle producer reported the kill of 2 calves in the area. Wildlife Services could not confirm the calves were killed by wolves, but description indicated wolves were responsible.
 - The Service, Wildlife Services, Nez Perce Tribe, Forest Service, livestock producers and the Defenders of Wildlife discussed a proposed "Wolf Guardian Program," which would employ various non-lethal means of control on the Whitehawk Pack.
 - Methods included: training of volunteers to haze wolves away from livestock using radio-activated guard (RAG) boxes; fladry (ribbons hanging from lengths of rope); and presence around livestock, using telemetry tracking to determine when wolves were near.
- July, 2001
 - Wolf Guardian Program initiated.
- August 5, 2001
 - Pack now comprised of B47m, an un-collared alpha female and nine pups.
 - Pack attempts to attack the sheep during the night on bedground.
 - Nez Perce Tribal biologist and several Guardian volunteers repelled the wolf attack using a RAG box, gunfire, yelling and singing.
 - Wolves moved away and the single radio-collar signal (B47m) faded.

- Livestock were gradually removed from both public and private lands as the grazing season ended.
- No known attacks on domestic livestock by Whitehawk Pack reported after August, 2001.
- Winter, 2001/2002
 - Pack frequented the East Fork of the Salmon River area.
- January 13, 2002
 - The Service, Wildlife Services and Nez Perce Tribe initiated winter helicopter capture.
 - Seven pack members radio-collared: alpha female (B119f) and 6 previous year's pups (subadults B120f, B121m, B122f, B123m, B124m, and B125m).
 - Two subadults remained un-collared.
 - Intense radio-collaring effort provided opportunity for Service, Wildlife Services and Nez Perce Tribe to use RAG boxes and associated monitors to scare wolves away from private lands where calving activities would soon begin.
 - Ranchers were issued telemetry, receivers, and non-lethal munitions training.
- January 25, 2002
 - RAG boxes (6) and 4 monitors placed on private land along the East Fork of the Salmon to prevent wolves from frequenting calving pastures.
- Mid-February, 2002
 - Four more RAG boxes placed in additional private calving pastures along the East Fork.
- Late February/Early March, 2002
 - RAG boxes triggered on 3 separate nights by members of Whitehawk Pack, and apparently repelled the wolves.
 - Agency personnel and livestock producers along the East Fork optimistic that RAG boxes were helping.
- March 30/March 31, 2002
 - Livestock producers contacted Wildlife Services and reported harassment of livestock by wolves on private land along the East Fork.
- March 31, 2002
 - Wildlife Services pursued Whitehawk Pack up nearby canyon and fired live ammunition into rock faces and launched cracker shell harassment
 - Livestock producer reported that a single pet, a 4H sheep killed near the house.
 - Sheep confirmed killed by the Whitehawk Pack on private land. Sheep carcass removed and buried.
 - Nearby RAG boxes had fired multiple times and monitors identified the radio-collars of B120f, B122f, B124m, B125m and B119f (alpha female), when they entered the pasture.
 - Service authorized lethal take of two subadult pack members.

- April 1, 2002
 - B125m identified near ranch on a hill above the sheep remains.
 - B125m and an un-collared subadult male wolf lethally controlled. A necropsy of stomach contents of the two wolves revealed sheep wool and bones in the stomach and droppings.
 - After removal of the two wolves, extensive helicopter harassment and other non-lethal control measures implemented. Wolf program specialists optimistic that the wolves would leave the area.
- April 2, 2002
 - RAG boxes and monitors indicated that the wolves had returned during the night.
 - No livestock were killed.
- April 3, 2002
 - Neighbor of a livestock producer along the East Fork reported watching 3 wolves in a calving pasture on private land with several ravens and magpies nearby. Investigation reveals calf kill; one calf missing.
 - Wildlife Services confirmed calf was killed by Whitehawk Pack.
 - Monitors indicated B124m had entered the pasture at 2:10 am, followed by B120f and B122f at 4:00 am. The three wolves left the pasture at 6:15 am. Time corresponded with the time that the neighbor reported seeing three wolves in the pasture.
 - Service authorized lethal take of the three wolves.
 - Lethal control completed that afternoon.
- April 3 and 4, 2002
 - Wildlife Services repositioned RAG boxes and changed sound effects on the tapes.
 - RAG boxes adjusted to trigger when wolves approached more closely to the calves.
- April 5, 2002
 - Calf depredation reported by livestock producer; one other calf missing.
 - Wildlife Services confirmed that the Whitehawk Pack had killed the calf. Calf was outside the protective area of the RAG box.
 - Telemetry indicated that remaining radio-collared wolves were nearby; B47m was extremely close to
 - Decision made by wolf managers for the Service, Wildlife Services and the Nez Perce Tribe to remove remaining Whitehawk Pack members.
 - . Depredations were continuing in spite of agency efforts to discourage the wolves from frequenting private lands.
 - . Non-lethal efforts were exhausted.
 - . No indication that wolves were frightened away by non-lethal efforts — wolves continued to return each night to prey on calves.
- April 6, 2002
 - Lethal control completed on 5 remaining pack members.
 - Wolves removed included: alpha female (B119f), alpha male (B47m), two radio-collared sub-adults (B121m, B123m), and one un-collared subadult.

- SUMMARY

- Members of the Whitehawk Pack have been implicated (confirmed, probable and possible) in the depredation deaths of:

- 1 cow, 13 calves, 3 yearling cattle, 17 domestic sheep and one guard dog.

- Depredations from July 25, 1998 — April 6, 2002 by the Whitehawk Pack involved 12 confirmed livestock incidents.

- Whitehawk Pack members had a long history of depredation. The wolves persisted in killing livestock during and after non-lethal attempts to control them.

- All reasonable steps were taken to prevent the continued pattern of depredation behavior toward domestic livestock, however, the Whitehawk Pack habituated to killing sheep and cattle.