

# GRAY WOLF MANAGEMENT ON FORT MCCOY



# WHY DOES FORT MCCOY MANAGE GRAY WOLVES

- Congress has mandated that all federal agencies shall utilize their authorities to help conserve endangered species.
- Fort McCoy must abide by all applicable laws and regulations, such as the Endangered Species Act of 1973.
- The Army is entrusted to be good stewards of the federal lands it occupies.
- Management Objectives: **MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO MILITARY TRAINING** while at the same time complying with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

# HISTORY OF WOLF MANAGEMENT ON FORT MCCOY

- Winter track surveys to document the presence of wolves were initiated during the winter of 1995/1996.
- Wolf tracks were first documented during December 1999, when the tracks of a lone male were observed.
- This wolf established a territory on Fort McCoy, north of Highway 21 (i.e. North Post).
- During the summer of 2001, a female wolf arrived within the North Post territory.
- In December 2002, a coyote trapper inadvertently captured a female wolf in a trap on North Post. With assistance from the WDNR, a telemetry collar was attached.

# HISTORY OF WOLF MANAGEMENT ON FORT MCCOY

- The first documentation of wolf pups being borne on Fort McCoy occurred in 2003.
- The Fort McCoy Wolf Management Plan was approved in 2003. This plan was last updated in 2011.
- A pair of wolves established a territory on South Post (south of Highway 21) during the winter of 2009/2010.
- Wolf numbers on the Installation have fluctuated from year to year (see table on next page).

# Winter wolf population estimates based on track surveys and wolf observations.

YEAR	NORTH POST	SOUTH POST
1997/1998	0	---
1998/1999	0	---
1999/2000	1	0
2000/2001	1	0
2001/2002	2	0
2002/2003	5	0
2003/2004	2	0
2004/2005	4	0
2005/2006	2	0
2006/2007	5	1
2007/2008	5	0
2008/2009	7	0
2009/2010	4	2
2010/2011	12	8
2011/2012	10	7
2012/2013	9	2
2013/2014	5	2
2014/2015	3	0
2015/2016	3	0

# GRAY WOLF MONITORING

- Track Surveys: To estimate wolf numbers, track surveys are conducted numerous times each winter 12-24 hours after a fresh snowfall.
- Howling Surveys: During the summer and early fall, surveys are conducted by stopping at locations throughout a pack territory and imitating the howl of a wolf. If within hearing distance, wolves will often howl back. This survey technique is useful in determining if pups are present within the pack.

# GRAY WOLF MONITORING

- Radio Telemetry: Locating collared wolves allows their home range to be estimated. The North Post Pack territory is estimated to be a minimum of 95 square miles in size while the South Post Pack territory (when occupied by wolves) is estimated to be a minimum of 37 square miles in size.
- Surveillance Camera: A remote operated camera is used to assist in determining pack size and the identification of individual animals. Road-killed deer were often used to attract deer to the camera location.

# WOLF MORTALITY

- There are many causes of wolf mortality including: disease, other wolves, vehicle collisions, legal harvest (in years when season is conducted), depredation permits, and illegal shooting.



# HISTORY OF WOLF W788

- On December 21, 2011, a female wolf estimated to be 8 months old was captured in a coyote trap on South Post.
- United States Department of Agriculture – Wildlife Services employees placed a telemetry collar on her.
- This wolf was given the identification code W788.
- W788 remained on Fort McCoy until mid-February 2012 when she could no longer be located.

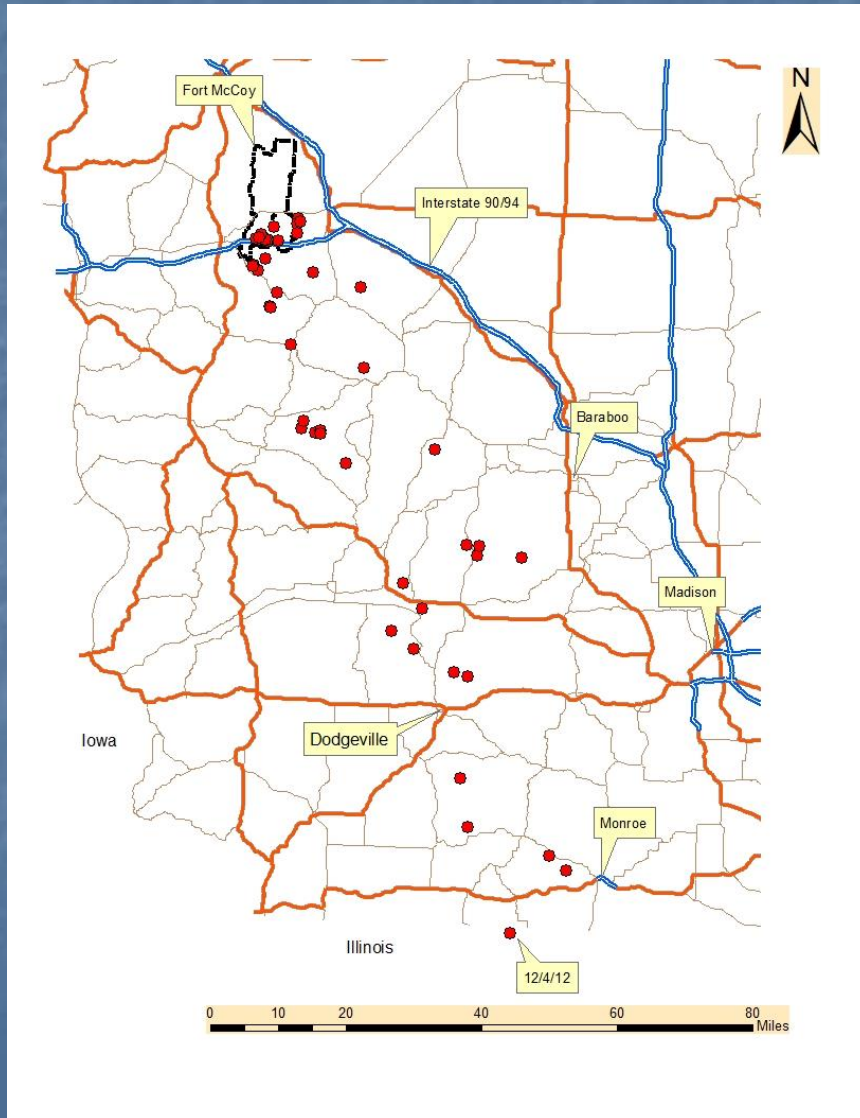
# HISTORY OF WOLF W788

- In early April 2012, WDNR pilots located W788 near Richland Center, WI, approximately 35 miles south of her capture location.
- W788 moved back and forth between Richland Center and Fort McCoy until mid-summer when she crossed the Wisconsin River near Lone Rock.
- In early November she was found only a few miles north of the Illinois border.
- When located by WDNR pilots on December 4, 2012, she had crossed the border into Illinois.

# HISTORY OF WOLF W788

- W788 stayed in and around the Wisconsin/Illinois border for several months.
- On March 15, 2013, her collar was detected in mortality mode.
- A necropsy was performed on the carcass and it was determined that she had likely died from injuries after being struck by a vehicle.
- Her carcass was found 108.5 miles south of where she was originally captured on Fort McCoy.

# Telemetry locations for W788 from December 21, 2011 – December 4, 2012.



**W788 was found dead  
On March 15, 2013, only  
A few miles from her  
December 4, 2012  
location.**

# Surveillance Camera Photos



# Surveillance Camera Photos Wolf Pups At Den

