

Evidence of wolf in California

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has collected evidence that suggests at least one wolf has traveled into Siskiyou County.

Based on compelling information received earlier this year from Californians reporting they saw a large, dark-colored canid, CDFW deployed a number of remote trail cameras within southeastern Siskiyou County.

At one location, in early May, images were captured of a large, dark-colored, lone canid, which is possibly a dispersing gray wolf. Although scat was collected in the area for genetic analysis, they yielded poor-quality DNA and results were inconclusive. Since then, no other images of a large canid have been captured at this location.

In early June, CDFW biologists came across large canid tracks on a dirt road in a separate, remote location of Siskiyou County, while searching for fawns as part of an ongoing deer study. The tracks were fresh and were from a single animal. Some were within the tire tread marks made from a CDFW vehicle the day before. Assumptions based on the track's size, linear nature and distance, compelled CDFW staff to place a trail camera to remotely capture images of subsequent animal activity along the roadway.

On July 24, CDFW downloaded a series of images from that camera taken the previous week, revealing a large, dark-colored canid. Although other wildlife species and a few passing vehicles were also photographed, there were no images of domestic dogs or other human activity.

Based on the photographic images and tracks, CDFW biologists believe that this lone animal is a gray wolf. The animal's

tracks are significantly larger than those of a coyote, and a comparison of the images with photos of an adult coyote captured at the same site indicate the animal is significantly larger than a coyote.

Additional remote cameras have been deployed and CDFW wildlife biologists will return to the location in an attempt to find scat for subsequent DNA analysis to conclusively confirm whether or not this animal is a gray wolf.

Prior to the arrival of the famous wolf OR7 in December 2011, the last confirmed wolf in California was in 1924. This animal is not OR7. OR7 has not been in California for more than a year and is currently the breeding male of the Rogue Pack in southern Oregon.

Gray wolves are listed as endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). In June 2014, the California Fish and Game Commission voted to list gray wolves as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.