

****Post-Release Movement by Swift Foxes Translocated to the Fort Belknap Reservation, MT**

Dana Nelson*, Clemson University, Smithsonian Institution
Hila Shamon, Smithsonian Institution
William McShea, Smithsonian Institution
Melissa Songer, Smithsonian Institution
Nucharin Songsasen, Smithsonian Institution
Harold Main, Fort Belknap Fish and Wildlife Dept., Montana
Timothy Vosburgh, Fort Belknap Fish and Wildlife Dept., Montana
David Jachowski, Clemson University

*Indicates Presenter

**Indicates Student Presentation

In species reintroductions, monitoring post-release movement of translocated individuals can provide valuable insight into the factors influencing survival, site fidelity, and ultimately, reintroduction success. Swift fox (*Vulpes velox*) populations in Montana are primarily the result of multiple reintroduction efforts onto tribal lands in northern Montana and Canada, yet despite those actions occurring >20 years ago, an approximately 350 kilometer range gap remains between the restored population in northern Montana and southern populations near the borders of Wyoming and South Dakota. The Fort Belknap Indian Community and partners are translocating swift foxes both to promote connectivity in this range gap and to return an extirpated species to Nakoda and Aaniiih sovereign lands. To date, we have translocated and fitted 75 swift foxes with GPS collars to monitor post-release movement and measure progress towards ecological and cultural goals. In addition to an overview of the translocation process and early progress toward reintroduction benchmarks, we present preliminary results on the effects of origin, individual factors, and release strategy on distance travelled in the first two weeks post-release. We discuss the implications of findings from the first two years of translocations in terms of adaptive management of the ongoing reintroduction and for future conservation actions to promote this sensitive species.