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Gray wolf from Oregon spotted in Mono County, furthest south traveled in modern times

[California](#)

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Posted: Feb 26, 2021 / 09:57 AM PST / Updated: Feb 26, 2021 / 10:14 AM PST

In this undated photo released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shows a dispersing wolf from the Oregon Pack OR-54, a descendent of the famous OR-7, the first wild wolf in California in nearly a century. (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service via AP)

FRESNO, Calif. (KSEE/KGPE) — A male gray wolf collared by Oregon wildlife officials last year has been recently spotted in Mono County, the furthest south a wolf has traveled through California in modern times, according to wildlife officials.

OR-93 was spotted this week in Alpine County, between Highway 4 and Highway 108, before moving into Mono County, east of Yosemite, putting him hundreds of miles from the Oregon state line and his original territory, said Jordan Traverso, a spokesman with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. He is a young male that left northern Oregon's White River pack, southeast of Mt. Hood.

"We're thrilled to learn this wolf is exploring deep into the Sierra Nevada, since scientists have said all along this is great wolf habitat," said Amaroq Weiss, senior West Coast wolf advocate with the Center for Biological Diversity. "He's another beacon of hope, showing that wolves can return here and flourish as long as they remain legally protected."

The wolf was fitted with a tracking collar by federal wildlife officials and officials from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs within the pack's territory in June 2020.

OR-93 was spotted in Modoc County in early February 2021 and has continued traveling swiftly, moving into Lassen County and into the central Sierra Nevada.

“Given the time of year, we assume OR-93 has traveled such a long way in search of a mate,” Weiss said. “I hope he can find one.”

OR-93 is the 16th gray wolf documented to have traveled into California, with most of those coming from Oregon. One wolf, OR-54, traveled as far south as the Lake Tahoe Basin before returning north. Others have primarily traveled, and sometimes settled, in California’s northernmost counties.

The first wolf known in California since the 1920s, OR-7 first visited in late 2011, Traverso said. Since then, the state has seen the formation of two packs. The Shasta Pack in Siskiyou County had five pups in 2015 before disappearing late that year. The Lassen Pack, which occupies parts of Lassen and Plumas counties, has produced pups each year from 2017 to 2020.

CDFW officials encourage those who see wolves to detail their sightings on its online reporting site: wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Gray-Wolf/Sighting-Report.