

and, a century or more of sustained effort may be needed to simply discover whether it's possible to ever rebuild a self-sustaining population

Our early findings raise questions that won't find answers for many decades. For example: is "transience" (occasionally reported in the behavioral repertoire of wild adults) a genetic or life stage phenomenon? Is there a sexual predilection for becoming a transient? Do transients ever reverse course and eventually revisit populations or habitat they passed through years previously? If rebuilding a self-sustaining population ever proves to be possible (not at all clear from our work to-date) could such efforts that use headstarted juveniles succeed in habitats somewhat smaller than what might be required if translocated adults were used?

It's almost certain that high resident densities are needed for population sustainability (not to be confused with the sighting of {relic} individuals in ancestral habitats for many decades after their population actually fell below its capacity for self-sustainability).

Aggressive proactive protection of any remaining high-density populations is critical and should be a high priority for management agencies. Trying to rebuild such a population may prove to be virtually impossible.