

Wildlife Program

Week of August 22 – August 28, 2016

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Conference Calls: Supervisor McCanna participated on multiple conference calls this week regarding current wolf activity in Profanity Peak.

Profanity Peak: Lethal removal activities continued throughout the week, including monitoring of the collared animals.

Depredation Investigation in Stevens County: Wildlife Conflict Specialists Bennett and Shepherd, along with WDFW Enforcement Officer Kirsch, examined a guard dog with injuries found within the Huckleberry wolf territory. Due to the nature of the wounds, it was determined to be an Unknown Cause of Injury (Unknown Canid). It is not suspected that wolves were involved at this time. Follow up will continue.

Possible Wolf Concerns in Stevens County: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett was contacted by a concerned livestock producer near Valley who heard what was thought to be a wolf howling near cattle. Information on wolf packs in the area, landowner rights, and further interactions were discussed.

Lamont Producer Nonlethal Deterrents: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett met with a livestock producer to deploy bio-fencing around a sheep herd. A camera was placed to monitor the guard dog and predator response. This is an ongoing project.

Cattleman Meetings: Biologist Earl met with producers and range riders this week to check up with their successes on human presence within known wolf activity areas.

Herding Dog Missing: Biologist Earl met with a range rider who reported one of his herding dogs was missing. The dog went missing near Mount Misery and has not been located for the past couple of days.

Tour of the Blue Mountains: Biologist Earl, Natural Resource Technician Wade, and Conflict Specialist Rasley took Wildlife Conflict Specialist Waddell on a tour of several grazing allotments within the Tucannon pack territory in Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield and Asotin counties.

Logger Reports: Biologist Earl met with several loggers and truck drivers this week to discuss wolf sightings while they were working in the Blue Mountains near grazing allotments.

OR-38: Biologist Earl and Conflict Specialist Rasley each contacted Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for Livestock (DPCA-L) cooperators to inform them of the movements through grazing areas this week.

Region 2 Wolf Activities

Wolves: Specialist Heilhecker and Officer Trautman investigated a bone pile along a county road in the Loup Loup pack territory. The cow had been professionally butchered and dumped by someone other than the landowner. There was no evidence indicating wolves scavenged on the remains.

Region 3 Wolf Activities

Wolves: Range Riders McBride and Fonken located one dead sheep that had died from a non-predator related cause. Conflict Specialist Wetzel and sheep herder DelaCruz located a sheep that appeared to have been killed by a cougar. No other signs of predators were located in the area.

Ragbox: Range Rider McBride checked the ragbox on the Swauk permit range operation. The battery needed charging and was replaced.



Guard dog on duty, Swauk permit range



Battery replaced on ragbox unit

Wolf Discussions: Conflict Specialist Wetzel discussed wolf activity and locations with a sheep producer, cattle producer, and operator range rider this week.

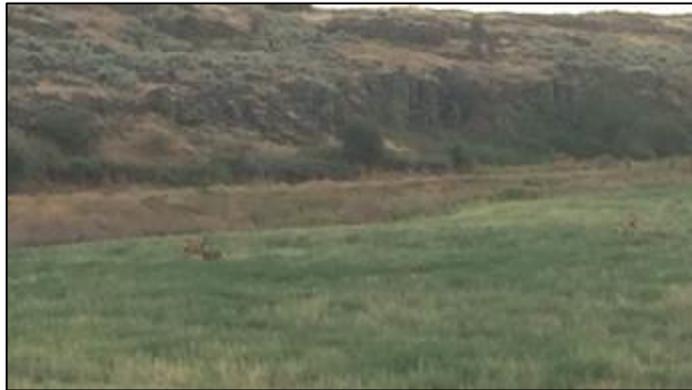
REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Pre-Season Deer Surveys: Biologists Atamian and Lowe conducted road-based deer surveys in GMUs 124, 136, and 142 to classify white-tailed and mule deer does, fawns, and bucks pre-hunt. A student interested in wildlife biology assisted on one evening survey with Lowe.



Mule deer buck in CRP field



Mule deer does and fawns in hay field

Habitat Burn: Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley assessed a Feel Free to Hunt property where the local Pheasants Forever Chapter had a habitat project. The property had a fire go through that started on a neighboring property and ended up burning over 15,000 acres in Walla Walla County.



Burned Feel Free to Hunt property in Walla Walla County

BLM-Packer Creek Food Plot: On Monday, Finch returned a call from a regional Pheasants Forever volunteer, and also spoke with Jason Lowe, a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wildlife biologist in Spokane, about recent trouble at BLM's Packer Creek property, located near WDFW's Revere Wildlife Area. The cattle from an adjacent BLM grazing pasture got into the area where BLM planted shrubs and food plot annuals. Paraphrasing from WFDW Private Lands Biologist Erik Lewis, who inspected the site after notification from the Pheasants Forever volunteer, "the gate was open, the electric fence was on the ground, and 30-40 cows were in the native grass and food plot area eating everything. The riparian area was destroyed and cows were standing in creek." Pheasants Forever and contracted WDFW personnel planted the grass and food plots. The cattle even chewed up some of the fenced-off shrubs and trees planted at Packer Creek over the last few years. The Pheasants Forever volunteer was quite upset to see the

money and volunteer effort that Pheasants Forever had invested ruined by carelessness. Lowe was also unhappy with the turn of events, as were Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area staff members. Tens of thousands of dollars in effort and plants were lost. Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area staff members have received no word yet on what, if anything, BLM plans to do about the damage. If BLM wants to replant, they may contract with Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area staff members again to perform much of the work.



Packer Creek – Photos by Erik Lewis

Asotin Creek – Weed Control: Biologist Woodall and Technician Steveson sprayed weeds down through Cooper Canyon. They started in weedy sites in the upper canyon and made it down to the ruins. They were mainly targeting young emerging scotch thistle rosettes. They scoped out some other areas and picked sites in need of an herbicide dose later this fall. Last year's fall spray efforts have left some clean lands this year and they will continue this method of weed control. While in the area, Biologist Woodall looked at the RMEF sagebrush and bitterbrush seedling plantings from this past spring's work party. He also looked at the boss big-game guzzler water tanks and found them more than half full.



Sagebrush seedling planted this past spring



Bitterbrush seedling planted this past spring

GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Northeast Washington Fair: Wildlife Biologist Annemarie Prince, Officer Kirsh, and bear dog Jax had an informational booth at the fair and talked with fairgoers about bear biology and safety.

Wildlife Control Operator Program: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett attended and participated in a Spokane area certification course. Several participants wanted to sit in to learn about the program. Great discussions were had throughout the course.



REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Northern Leopard Frog: District Wildlife Biologist Finger finished a draft report for northern leopard frog translocation feasibility and submitted the report to internal and external partners for review. The project was funded by Washington State Department of Ecology and involved genetics sampling to establish a population viability assessment, eDNA sampling to assess chytrid and ranavirus presence at the source population and potential reintroduction sites, and a broad scale habitat quality assessment. Biologist Rowan participated in a site visit and meeting with many cooperating agencies and other partners to discuss historic and current knowledge regarding northern leopard frogs and future directions for reintroductions and recovery of this state endangered species.

Ute Ladies' Tresses: Manager Fox received word from Chelan PUD biologists that ute ladies' tresses, a federally listed threatened plant, are now establishing themselves on the shorelines of the ponds and side channels constructed on the Columbia River at Beebe Springs. These shoreline features were constructed in 2010 and 2012 and it was hoped they would provide addition habitat for this small orchid.

Ute ladies' tresses on shoreline of pond at Beebe Springs

Monarch Butterflies: Biologist Heinlen and Science Technician Erlenbach finished surveys for showy milkweed and associated monarch butterflies in the Okanogan District. Although few monarchs were seen, showy milkweed turned out to be more widespread and locally abundant than anticipated.





Showy milkweed with caterpillar foraging evidence – Photo by J. Heinlen



Pygmy Rabbit Breeding Enclosure Weed Infestations (Episode VII): We have not ended our war on weeds in the breeding enclosures, both in terms of removing what was needed and the fact that Coordinator Gallie had used up the last remaining good will from other Region 2 staff members and is staring down an eventual crew mutiny. This week's effort removed 770 pounds of weed material, bringing our minimally confirmed total to 2,170 pounds removed this summer (just think of the composting potential). Gallie discussed options and plans for fall and spring herbicide treatments with Wildlife Area Manager Peterson and Private Lands Biologists Dougherty and Comstock. Huge thanks to all who helped out with this.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER

WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Areas

ADA Road Access Hunting Program: Assistant Manager Troyer talked with the ADA hunting program coordinator, Dolores Noyes. Dolores was wonderful at outlining Troyer's responsibilities for the Bear Mountain hunt that begins September 1. Once Troyer understood and lined up all the administrative technicalities for the hunt, he then visited the designated ADA hunting area and inspected and cleared roads. The area is a prime candidate for the program and is spider webbed with accessible roads. It took an entire day to canvas all roads, knock back brush, and clear downed and overhanging trees, but it also gave Troyer a chance to GPS the area. Hopefully the MWA can make a few maps for the visiting hunters and provide suggestions on where they might find quality game. Troyer was fortunate to see a quality black bear in the area, but the bear was able to avoid the camera.

Indian Dan Canyon Reconnaissance: Dan, Noel, and volunteer Fischer took an eight mile trek through the unit. Heavy rain in July caused serious damage to the interior roads and left the primary service road impassable. Public vehicular access is not affected. The unit is just two years into recovery from the Carlton Complex fire and lacks the robust vegetation that would lessen the impact of such an event. In addition to the road damage, the downpour created gullies on some of the steeper hillsides. Fidel plans to repair the roads later this fall. Dan found a

corner brace built during the recently completed project to build 17 miles of new fence that is not to specification. Three roles of brand wire at the site suggest that the contractor may have intended to return and complete it correctly, but then failed to do so. Dan sent photos and a description to Project Manager Scott Allen. Scott says the fence is under a one year warranty and he notified the contractor to make arrangements with area personnel to complete the brace.



Road damage at Indian Dan Canyon –
Photo by Dan Peterson

GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wildlife Areas

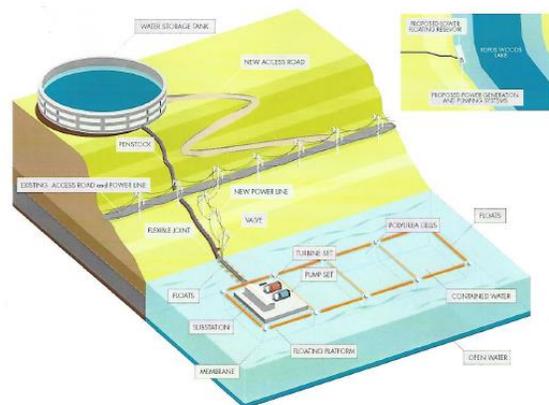
Proposed Hydro Battery: Dan attended an open house at Bridgeport High School hosted by Shell Energy North America (SENA). SENA is proposing to construct a “closed-loop pumped storage facility,” known as a Hydro Battery, seven miles from Bridgeport on Pearl Hill. The project would consist of a large water storage tank on a hill (on land owned by the DNR) 1,300 feet above Rufus Wood Lake, a penstock from the tank to a generator on a barge floating in the lake, a set of collapsible membranes, also in the lake, a water pump on the floating barge, and a substation. The idea is that during periods when there is excess electricity from wind energy, the water pump will use that electricity to pump the water contained in the collapsible membranes up the hill to the storage tank. Then, when there’s not a sufficient amount of wind energy being produced, the water releases from the tank, flows through the penstock and the generator, and produces additional energy for the grid. The water then goes back into the floating membranes suspended out in the lake and anchored somehow to shore. The folks from Shell weren’t received particularly well by the idea.



**SHELL ENERGY
NORTH AMERICA**

HYDRO BATTERY PEARL HILL PROJECT

This project proposes to develop a small 5MW closed-loop pumped storage facility to help maximize the potential of renewable energy resources in the region.



For visualization purposes only. Proportions and layout shown are approximations.

Private Lands/Access

Week: 8/19/2016			
	Total Permits Available	Permits Used by Start of the Week	Likelihood of Using More Permits in the Foreseeable Future
Master Hunter Elk (Hunt Choice 2702)	41	2	Unlikely
Master Hunter Deer (Hunt Choice 1802)	30	1	Unlikely

Mule deer buck with doe in harvested canola field, Douglas County – Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW



Highlights – Multi-carnivore Surveys: Biologists Fitkin and Heinlen completed additional midseason checks on a sample of cameras deployed for a Washington State University study aimed at developing an occupancy model for the Okanogan Lynx Management Zone. A sub-set of these sites are also part of the WDFW multi-carnivore survey pilot project. Cameras are deployed along secondary roads and trails without any attractants, yet these sites are yielding a tremendous number and diversity of wildlife photos, including lynx and other carnivores.



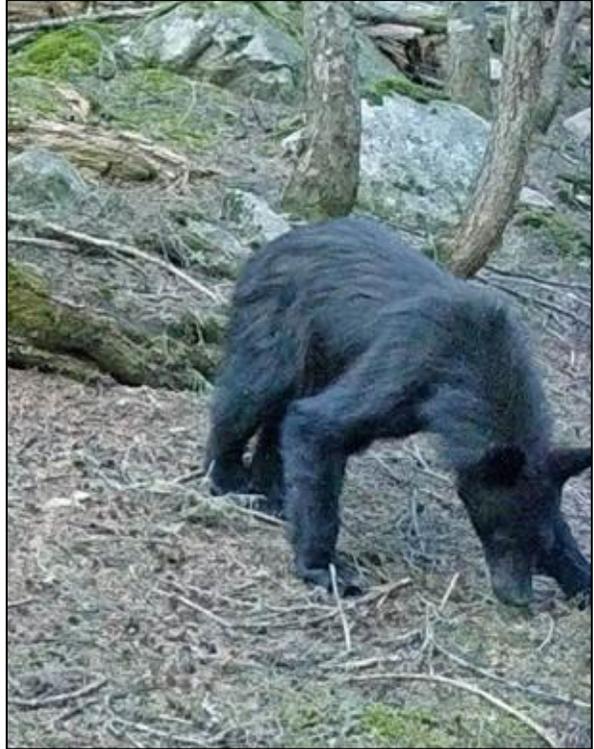
Lynx – Photo from WSU/WDFW remote camera



Nature in the raw (cougar and mule deer) – Photo from WSU/WDFW remote camera



Squatch? – Photo by WDFW remote camera



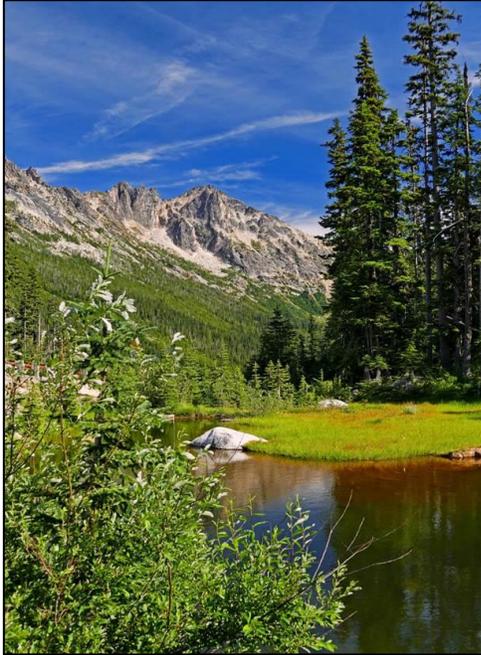
Or not – Photo by WDFW remote camera



Elusive western Okanogan County elk – Photo from WSU/WDFW remote camera



Albino red squirrel gathering cones – Photo by Scott Fitkin



Washington Pass – Photo by Scott Fitkin



Monarch feeding on gray rabbit brush, Washburn Island – Photo by Angel Hastings

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDIFE

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Hagan released more insects for control of diffuse knapweed this week. This bio-agent is *cyphocleonus achates* (knapweed root weevil), and was received from Washington State University Extension’s Integrated Weed Control Project.



A nice view of Chopaka Lake – Photo by M. DeHart



A photo example of the knapweed root weevil



Knapweed root weevil release site in the Stemilt Basin

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Babik and Assistant Manager Hunt toured some of the former Plum Creek ownership in T18N, R15E in order to begin getting Manager Babik acquainted with that part of the wildlife area. They inspected the recently completed RMAP project in 18-15-Section 9 (good work by Mark Nelson of our Yakima Construction Shop Crew), visited the Manastash Cabin, and drove out to the Murray Crossover and Tamarack Ridge Roads (new routes for the new manager).

Spraying Weeds: Natural Resource Technician Hill spent his week searching for and spraying weeds. He hit a patch of musk thistle shown to him by Natural Resource Technician Leuck in the Whiskey Jim drainage. He also sprayed Canada thistle along Hutchins Road and near Tamarack Springs. There are large patches of thistle in some slash left over from logging in that area.



Musk thistle in the Whiskey Jim drainage



Canada thistle around left over slash from a logging project

Rutted Road: Natural Resource Technician Hill looked for a rutted road along North Riggs Canyon. A member of the public said a portion of the road was impassable. Hill found water had eroded a good chunk of soil from the crossing.



Stream cut in road



Soil removed from North Riggs Canyon Road

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Forester Mackey assisted Forester Pfeifle, Forester Ashiglar, and Assistant Manager Palmer marking timber on the Rustler's Gulch Unit of the Sherman Creek Wildlife Area. Timber will be removed by Boise as part of the volume owed for acquisition of their perpetual timber rights on state land.

Moose observed on the Rustler's Gulch Unit, Sherman Creek Wildlife Area, Pend Oreille County while assisting with timber marking



Wildlife Management

Bat Surveys: District Biologist Fidorra continued the WDFW bat survey and placed acoustic bat detectors at sites in District 4 and 5. He coordinated with District 5 Assistant Biologist Rowan to relocate detectors near the Ephrata office. This week, for the first time in the two year study, the detectors malfunctioned and only recorded one night of bats. This might have been a power issue or cable connections failing. Fidorra is placing detector at eight sites and will repeat recording protocols at each site monthly through the end of this month to conclude the two year study.

Duck Banding: District Biologist Fidorra worked with staff members at a private hunting ranch to collect banding materials and data after their successful banding season. Sixty-six ducks were trapped and banded for inclusion in the WDFW efforts to monitor migratory waterfowl.

Duck Traps: District Biologist Fidorra set and baited duck traps and worked with Private Lands Biologist Stutzman, Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Kaelber, and a volunteer to band mallards on the Bailie and Mesa units of the Sunnyside-Snake River Wildlife Area for two days. The team put out 163 ducks this week, including 33 recaps. This brings the 2016 District 4 totals to 267 new mallard bands placed, 11 wood duck, two pintail, and seven green-winged teal.

Fidorra with one of the colorful male wood ducks banded at the Mesa Unit on the Sunnyside-Snake River Wildlife Area this week



Monarch and Milkweed Surveys: District Biologist Fidorra conducted monarch and milkweed surveys in Franklin County and was able to locate several larger patches of showy milkweed and monarch caterpillars and butterflies at patches on the Mesa Unit of the Sunnyside-Snake River Wildlife Area.

One of several monarch caterpillars found during surveys in Franklin County



Waterfowl Banding: Biologist Bernatowicz banded most of the week with Waterfowl Specialist Wilson and Yakama Nation Biologist/Technician Blodgetts. About 250 mallards were banded on the Sunnyside Wildlife Area. Over 400 birds have been banded at Sunnyside this year. The Yakamas have banded over 600 birds in the Yakima Valley.



A catch pen full of ducks ready to be banded

Western Gray Squirrel Survey: Biologist Bernatowicz received word from Research Scientist Vanderhaegen that one of the hair samples collected last week was western gray squirrel. Most of the hair was fairly short, but two hairs measured >15mm. The site is about four miles from where a western gray squirrel was photographed in 2011, but tube surveys failed to detect any. No nests have been seen. If there is a population of western gray

squirrels in the area, it is very low density.

Bighorn Sheep Home Range Analysis: Time was spent during the week to determine if the NDVI values observed on the Tieton and Quilomene ranges for Ecological Site 301 were significantly different. These data were evaluated for a normal distribution by using histograms, Quantile-Quantile plots, and Shapiro-Wilk tests in R. NDVI data from three scenes illustrated a normal distribution for both the Tieton and Quilomene, while the other seven scenes did not. These data were evaluated for significance by using either t-tests or Wilcoxon sign-ranked tests. All of the spring, summer, and fall NDVI values observed in the Tieton were significantly higher than those observed in the Quilomene. The scene from February 10, 2004 (Julian Day: 041) was not significantly different. Also, an initial evaluation of District 8 bighorn sheep GPS datasets was started to determine the quantity of data available for further analysis.

Elk Calves Caught in Fences: Conflict Specialist Wetzel was contacted by a hay grower in the Park Creek area who reported two elk calves caught in fences. Both calves had died before being detected. One was salvaged for wolverine bait.



Elk calf found dead in fence

GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman answered questions for several hunters who were drawn for ADA Hunter Access tags on the wildlife area.

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Sak and Natural Resource Technician Medina used the Marsh Master to dig a channel in the Hay Stack ponds to allow the ponds to drain more effectively.

Boss Lake Channel: Natural Resource Technician Medina and Natural Resource Worker Becker used the Marsh Master to clean the channel that comes out of Boss Lake.

Purple Loosestrife: Natural Resource Worker Becker continued helping the Yakima County Spray Crew spray Purple Loosestrife along the banks of the Yakima River on areas at the I-82 Ponds Unit.

Mowing: Assistant Manager Kaelber was able to get a lot of mowing done this week. Kaelber mowed the Serpent wetland at the Mesa Lake Unit, the perimeter of circles four and six at the Windmill Ranch Unit, the access trail to Windmill Lake, and the circle three equipment staging area at the Windmill Ranch Unit.

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Babik and Assistant Manager Hunt met with Demorest from USBR on the Heart K project to inspect the exclosure and steel beams for the stream crossing. They discussed next steps and future partnerships.

Grazing Monitoring: Natural Resource Technician Leuck completed grazing monitoring on the



final pasture of the year. Range Ecologist Burnham, Manager Babik, and Natural Resource Technician Leuck reviewed required documentation and checked conditions in Parke Creek. They introduced Manager Babik to the neighboring landowner who often exercises her hunting dogs in that area.

Grazed blue bunch wheat grass

Wenas Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Taylor and Natural Resource Worker Freitas scanned GPS coordinates at an old stock fence line on

Cleman Mountain. This was near the Mellotte feed site that gets heavy elk use during winter and spring. Hunter Ed/Volunteer Coordinator Garcia has offered to put together a volunteer work party to remove the fence.

Wildlife Management

Booklet Review: District Biologist Fidorra reviewed the Eastside Pheasant Enhancement Program Booklet and prepared and submitted updated maps for inclusion in this year's booklet.

Landowner Hunt Permits: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand continued to coordinate with landowner hunt permit managers at Blackrock and Silver Dollar on scheduling hunting opportunity. One of the hunt managers for the Robert Ranch claims only five cow elk are residing on their 12,000+ acres at this time. The Range 12 fire has dramatically changed elk activity patterns in this area.

Hunting Seasons: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman spoke with four hunters about the upcoming season, most with questions about access at the PSE wind farm.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: Manager Lopushinsky assisted a Boy Scout troop led by Biologist Mark Teske with reconnecting a branch of Naneum Creek to Naneum Lake. This included shifting stream beds in Naneum Creek after the Table Mountain fire had cut off water to the lake and it nearly dried up. Thanks go to Mark for securing the necessary permits and arranging for the scouts to do the work.

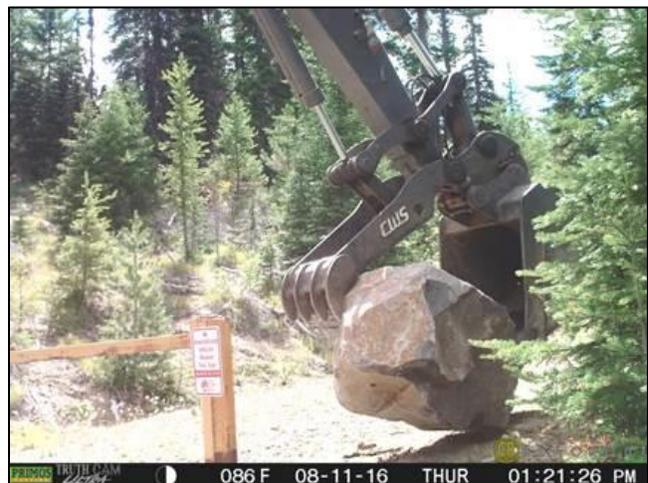


Mark Teske directs Scout Troop 413 from Ellensburg while working at Naneum Lake

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Natural Resource Technician Hill helped some stranded ATV riders along the Watt Canyon road. One of their ATVs had hit a stump and bent the rim. Hill assisted with pounding out the bent rim and transporting them back to the Watt parking lot area.

Equipment: Assistant Manager Hunt helped Natural Resource Technician Leuck load his injured Can Am quad into the pickup after a portion of the frame and undercarriage broke loose on Parke Creek Road (repairs pending). Hunt and Leuck also picked up the Case backhoe from Precision Ag after repairs. The backhoe contained biofuel, which eventually gummed up the system and robbed the machine of power. Hunt and Leuck moved some equipment around at the Watt Hay Barn in anticipation of hay deliveries next month.

Gate Check: Natural Resource Technician Leuck checked on a closed gate in T18N, R15E that had been a trouble spot where vehicles would go around the gate. A few people were on the camera checking out the gate at night and some were hiking or biking around it. The RMAP crew placed a boulder in the gap to hopefully stop the vehicles and motorcycles from bypassing the gate.



Boulder placement on a closed road in T18N, R15E

Wenas Wildlife Area: Manager Confer Morris and Assistant Manager Taylor, along with Regional Director Livingston, met Representative Dent to tour a Moses Lake shooting range that closed due to safety concerns after a manufacturing plant went in just north of the range. The group also toured the Ephrata Gun Club, which has been identified by a number of WDFW personnel and members of the public as a good example of a safe range. Confer Morris also participated in a conference call with Regional and Lands staff members to discuss the status of the Wenas target shooting proposal and the next steps.

Shooting range tour with Representative Dent



Moses Lake closed range



View north from top of berm

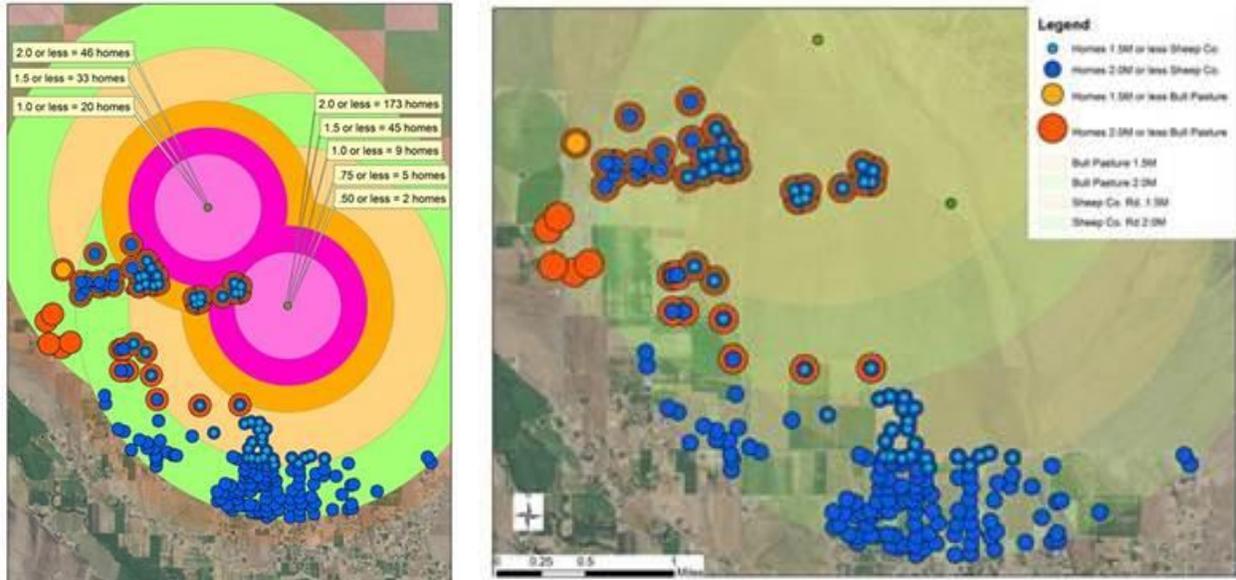


Ephrata Gun Club



Fish Distribution Data: Biologist Longoria produced figures for the EA showing the fish distribution data from the USFWS Streamnet website. Based on correspondence with the WDFW Fish Program, the data is accurate for salmonid species.

Home Count: Biologist Longoria finished an improved count of homes within 1.5 and 2 miles of the shooting ranges proposed at the Sheep Company and Bull Pasture sites.



Fence Repair: Natural Resource Worker Freitas maintained and repaired the “people” fence along Sheep Company Road, starting at the wildlife area entrance and working his way towards the Cottonwood parking area. He replaced rotted posts and repaired sections damaged by elk and people.

Access Program: Staff members posted a “Launch at Your Own Risk” sign at Thrall after neighbors voiced concerns about rafters launching at the site and getting caught up in overhanging branches just downstream.

Launch at Your Own Risk sign posted at Thrall

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman explored different options for the public to make reservations on tour trucks during winter feeding. Currently, volunteers take hundreds of phone calls and schedule the reservations. There are no options to change at this time. Huffman also looked at possible changes to displays in the visitor’s center after receiving a predator poster put together by Regional Program Manager McCorquodale.



Wildlife Area Encroachment: Manager Huffman finalized letters and mailed them to two landowners who have confirmed encroachment onto the wildlife area. The landowners are requested to make arrangements to have all structures removed within three months.

Maintenance: Assistant Manager Berry and Natural Resource Worker Farias replaced stolen boundary signs on Bald Mountain and installed gate reflectors on a gate in the Rock Creek Unit.



Gate reflectors installed on a gate on the Rock Creek Unit to improve visibility of the gate

Kiosk Installation: Assistant Manager Berry and Natural Resource Worker Farias installed the kiosk and “iron ranger” pay station next to the Oak Creek Visitor’s Center. Signs will need to be designed and installed prior to winter feeding for Discover Day Pass sales and phone/online sales of Discover Passes.



Refurbished kiosk and pay station installed at the Oak Creek Headquarters

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Buser received a report of an abandoned vehicle in the east parking lot of the Thornton Unit. Enforcement was contacted and the vehicle was previously reported as stolen. Enforcement worked with the Benton County Sheriff’s Office and the car was hauled off to be returned to the owner.

Wildlife Management

Rattlesnake Mountain Elk Damage: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand conducted elk damage assessments in wheat crops on Rattlesnake Mountain with landowners and crop adjustors. Wheat harvest in this area is now pretty much complete. Elk damage was prevalent in many fields adjacent to the Hanford site.

Aggressive Animal: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received a call from a Pasco City resident who claimed he and his small dog were attacked by a small animal while walking in an upscale housing development. He described the animal as a ferret or groundhog who he thought might have rabies, but was really unsure. A site visit to the area was conducted with the reporting party, but the animal appeared to have left the area. Contacted residents were not aware of any aggressive animals in the area.

SAFE: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman met a few times with a Benton County landowner to make adjustments to his SAFE conservation plan based on seed prices and seeding schedule. Stutzman also met with a different landowner to go over their plan and obtain a signature.

Elk Herding: Conflict Specialist Wetzel spent several days and nights herding elk west of Ellensburg. USDA Wildlife Services assisted in herding and hazing elk one of the nights, along with Assistant District Biologist Moore. No lethal removals occurred this week. Elk numbers increased to 59.

Elk Conflict: Elk were reported damaging a field near the Heart K Ranch. Conflict Specialist Wetzel spent two mornings looking for these elk, which were displaced from west Ellensburg. The elk actively avoided three one-way return gates and went back to west Ellensburg.

GOAL 4: BUILD AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION BY SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY

Wildlife Areas

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Babik reviewed applicants for the Assistant Manager position and handled drop-in visitors with questions about the position. We will soon be scheduling interviews.

Wildlife Management

Personnel: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman worked with HR and Region 6 Private Lands/Conflict Supervisor Harris to identify candidates to fill a seasonal Natural Resource Technician position in Region 3.

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Protected Wildlife Management – White-Nose Syndrome in Bats: District 12 continued acoustic efforts throughout the Snoqualmie Valley (Stillwater WMU). District 12 also coordinated with a regional media entity to come out to Stillwater in order to get pictures and interview (this has been a long-term effort, but it continues to fall through due to schedules, field needs, and traffic hang-ups). The media crew was running late and could not make it in time for the start of the survey.

District 12 provided orientation in the field and a history of efforts to our white-nose syndrome coordinator. While out, a dead bat was collected. Bats deposited at Region 4 HQ were also passed along. Field efforts, given habitat and area, were discussed in this situation.

District 12 continues to communicate with landowners and the media regarding ongoing efforts, bats on their lands (e.g. newly reported maternity colonies and results of analyses to confirm species), and more.

A deceased *Myotis* found in King County and reported by a member of the public –

Photo by Chris Anderson



WDFW and collaborators are asking the public to report dead or dying/sick bats via our hotline found at the link

below. Decontamination, outlined in below links, is essential to assist in management of this pathogen, particularly in the research, management, and recreationist communities like caving, climbing, and canyoneering.

Report dead or dying/sick bats at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/wns/>.

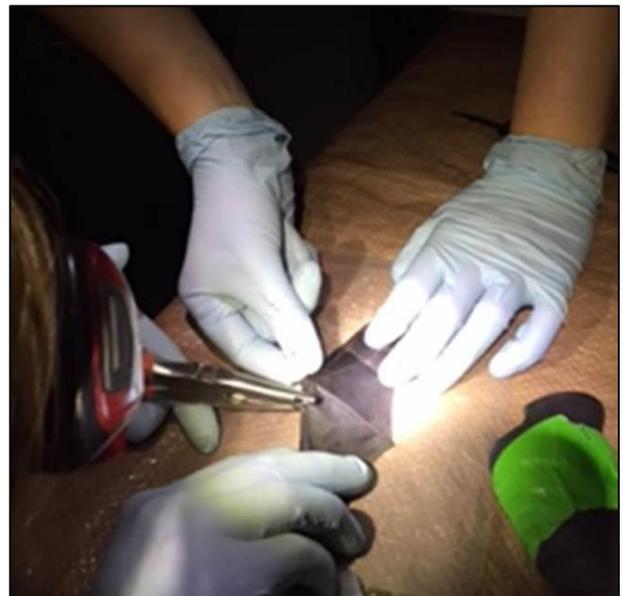
More information can be found at <https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/>.

Mountain Goat Survey Analysis: District 13 completed analysis of the results of July’s mountain goat surveys and provided estimates to Headquarters.

Avian Response to Estuary Restoration Research Proposal: District 13 worked with partners on the final draft of a grant proposal to study birds relative to estuary restorations occurring in the Skagit and Stillaguamish systems.

Bat Captures on Orcas Island: District 13 accompanied a team of graduate researchers for a night of mist netting bats on Orcas Island. Only three bats were netted, but one was a relatively rare species to capture using mist net: a silver-haired bat. This species is one of the “tree bats” thought to roost in the foliage of trees.

Attaching a band to a silver-haired bat





A silver-haired bat removed from the net and ready for processing

Marine Waterfowl Molt Survey: District 13 completed the remaining segments of the molting marine waterfowl survey within the district. Areas with molting concentrations located during last summer's survey of all marine waters or from earlier telemetry studies are being revisited to photo-survey flocks for species, sex, and age determinations. Review and analysis of data and images is ongoing. Biologists Yarborough and DeBruyn surveyed for molting scoters in Whatcom County as part of an ongoing effort led by Waterfowl Specialist Evenson.

One highlight of the surveys was a relatively large grouping of tufted puffins located offshore of the Smith Island portion of the San Juan Islands National Wildlife Refuge. In April, the WDFW Commission added tufted puffins to the state's endangered species list to provide them with additional protection. Tufted puffins are native seabirds once considered common in parts of Washington. In recent decades, however, the population has significantly declined, and Smith Island is one of only two occupied breeding sites in the inner marine waters of Washington. The most recent status report for tufted puffins can be found at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01642/>

A few of the group of tufted puffins located off Smith Island, San Juan Islands National Wildlife Refuge



Westside Cougar Project: Biologist Smith assisted Wildlife Research Scientist Kertson with locating a den and three cougar kittens as part of the Westside Cougar Project.

Bats: Biologist Yarborough responded to a call from the North Cascades Gateway Center about a large colony of bats occupying their buildings. They want to seal up the building this winter to stop the bats from coming in.





Bat guano below doorway

Wolverine: Biologist Yarborough attended the wolverine trapping training in Cle Elum. The training was well attended and provided guidance related to camera traps, bait, coordination, and more.

Wildlife Areas

Leque Island Grant Application: Projects Coordinator Brokaw updated and resubmitted a grant application to the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to reflect a change

in the preliminary design and budget. A linear section of dike was removed from the preliminary design, which reduced the overall project budget. RCO deemed that the application is complete, and reviewers will begin scoring it in September.

ESRP Grant Review: Projects Coordinator Brokaw attended presentations in Olympia for projects that applied for grants from the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program. Sponsors presented Puget Sound projects that ranged from acquisitions to protect valuable intact habitat to restoration projects that reestablish habitat-forming processes on degraded sites. Following the presentations and reading through the proposals, Brokaw and the rest of the review team scored the proposals to develop a ranked list to determine which projects get funded.

North Leque Island Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw met with the engineer, surveyor, and permit biologist working on the North Leque project to discuss the preliminary design and timeline for the project. The surveyor will visit the site within the next two weeks to collect the remaining data that the engineer needs to develop a permit-ready design.

Projects Coordinator Brokaw met with Environmental Planner Jewett to discuss updates on a future restoration project at Spencer Island

Reed Canary Grass Control: Manager Kessler started the second cutting of Reed Canary Grass on the Phase 2 area of the Port of Bellingham's wetland enhancement project. This enhancement project is located in the southern end of the Tennant Lake Unit. Kessler mowed approximately eight acres of the grass in the 17-acre project site.



Stillwater Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that mowing continued at the Stillwater Unit in preparation for hunting season.

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reported a large tire dump at the Ebey Slough parking area to WDFW Enforcement. Manager Boehm also requested assistance to remove a transient who set up a camp on the west portion of the unit.

Private Lands/Access Management

Waterfowl Trapping: Natural Resource Technician Deyo and Private Lands Biologist Wingard assisted District 14 wildlife program personnel with recent waterfowl trapping in Whatcom and Skagit counties.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Management

Waterfowl Trapping: Biologist DeBruyn continued trapping waterfowl for avian influenza sampling and banding.

Wildlife Areas

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with volunteers to continue internal access road and trail improvements at this unit. Truckloads of wood chips are being donated and delivered by a local land clearing business. The chips will form a base on the roads to allow vehicle traffic during the fall and winter season.

Cherry Valley Net Pen: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm received approximately 320 pheasants from the Centralia Game Farm. Birds were distributed to the west side units to reduce crowding and mortality at the pheasant facility.



Manager Boehm worked with Habitat, Fish and Enforcement on the accidental drainage of the pond near Highway 203 and the south parking area at the Stillwater Unit. King County Parks Department was conducting culvert maintenance in the area just before the pond was drained.

Leque Island Vicinity Recreation Features: Projects Coordinator Brokaw, Wildlife Area Manager Rotton, Lands Agent Iris, and Access Specialist Hacker met with Snohomish County Parks and City of Stanwood to develop a strategy to implement recreation features suggested by the Leque Island Recreation and Access Committee. The group discussed sites for a potential future boat launch and developed a plan to partner on a grant application to the Boating Facilities Program. The group also discussed partnership ideas for maintaining other recreation features on Leque Island.

Island Unit: Meis mowed designated areas throughout the Island Unit for vegetation control, hunter accessibility, and opening up low areas that could not be planted this season. Meis mowed five to seven acres just east of the Broadlin Field point blind where most of the area was covered with a dense stand of reed canary grass. This area of the Island Unit is part of the Duck Stamp project, and wildlife area staff members will evaluate the site further by being able to see how water accumulates and spreads out over the area to determine the next steps for the project.

Maintenance: Natural Resources Technician Cosgrove mowed areas of cattail, reed canary grass, and spike rush in the Seattle Pond and Ole Thompson fields on the Island Unit. These low areas are often the first to hold sheet water and provide hunting opportunity and open-water habitat throughout the fall and winter. Cosgrove also mowed field edges and trails to improve hunter access on the Island Unit.

Volunteer Efforts: Natural Resource Technician Cosgrove contacted a local Washington Waterfowl Association representative to help solicit volunteers for hunting blind maintenance projects on the Island Unit.

Lake Terrell Pheasants: Manager Kessler monitored the pheasants in the pheasant pens at the Lake Terrell headquarters. Due to the high temperatures, the birds were stressed. Kessler made sure all the waterers were working, and the feeders remained full. There were no mortalities.

Lake Terrell Unit Weed Control: Manager Kessler sprayed herbicides around the Lake Terrell headquarters area for landscape maintenance. He also sprayed blackberries and thistles around the pheasant pens.

Updating Reader Board Hunting Information: Manager Kessler started updating the posted hunting season information for the reader boards on the wildlife area units. Current upland game bird, waterfowl season, and non-toxic shot information will be posted on all the unit reader boards.

Private Lands/Access Management

Migratory Bird Forage Enhancement Projects: Natural Resource Technician Otto checked the growth of migratory bird forage plots in Whatcom and Skagit counties. The plantings looked positive. Each field has plenty of barley growth, with excellent coverage in a variety of fields surrounding current quality hunt fields.

Landowner Meeting: Natural Resource Technician Otto and Deyo met with a new landowner to discuss the property being enrolled in the waterfowl hunting program and were able to coordinate two new properties into the hunt program for this fall. One will be a snow goose quality hunt site and another will be a Hunt by Reservation waterfowl quality hunt site. Both sites are in northern Snohomish County.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program: Natural Resource Technician Otto and Deyo started brushing permanent blinds in Whatcom County using cut and bundled canary grass. Otto and Deyo constructed a new permanent blind in Whatcom County.



New waterfowl quality hunt program blind on a pond in Whatcom County

Game Management Plan Accomplishments: Private Lands Supervisory Biologists Caldwell submitted the Region 4, Private Land Access Program accomplishments and activities to Olympia for review. Notably, the Region 4 Private Land Access program was able to achieve each outlined strategy within the current Game Management Plan. These accomplishments will be compiled and formalized in several reports by Olympia.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wildlife Management

Ungulate Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman was contacted by WDFW Enforcement to assist with immobilization of a deer in Anacortes reported with a hammock entangled in its antlers. Witman responded and successfully immobilized the deer so the hammock could be cut loose of the antlers. The deer was quickly recovered and back to normal city life.



Black-tailed deer with entangled hammock in antlers before immobilization



Black-tailed deer after immobilization

Conflict: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman assisted Natural Resource Technician Cogdal with completing an elk exclusionary fencing project in the Birdview area of Skagit County. Witman responded to the Rockport area of Skagit County for a report of elk damage to agricultural crops and a garden area. The landowner was consulted on what preventative measures he can take to address the problem. Witman met with a landowner in Whatcom County who has been experiencing ongoing elk-related damage. The landowner is open to leaving property for the elk to move and graze freely around the perimeter of the property, but would also like to learn more about assistance with elk exclusionary fencing. Witman provided elk-related damage updates to Washington State and Tribal Technical Committee members and also provided suggestions for future fencing projects. Witman responded to Whatcom County to remove a deceased deer from a private residence. The deer had been struck by a vehicle and wandered onto the property where it died. Natural Resource Technician Cogdal and Witman performed maintenance on several fladry fences in the Day Creek area of Skagit County. While conducting maintenance, high elk activity was observed in the area. Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell coordinated with Regional and Olympia management on several North Cascades Elk Herd conflict management documents. These documents will proactively support current and future management objectives.

Elk Fence: Biologist Smith coordinated with volunteers involved in ongoing elk exclusion fence maintenance and improvement work. Smith also responded to multiple calls from the public relating to ungulates in agricultural fields and gardens. Hazing strategies, fencing options and rules relating to damage tags were discussed.

Wildlife Areas

Wildlife Area Planning Process: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm participated in Core Team conference calls to discuss and plan next steps for the planning process.

Volunteer Opportunities: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with volunteers on a number of projects. At Ebey Island, one Master Hunter volunteer reset the

pedestrian and equipment entrance gates. Volunteers also prepared the net pen for pheasant season.

Cherry Valley Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm joined Drainage District 7 representatives along with personnel from Wild Fish Conservancy, King Conservation District, and King County Natural Resources Department to discuss potential improvements to the drainage district dike structure. The structure has failed during the two past flood seasons and the group hopes to resolve these issues. Manager Boehm also coordinated with district representatives to begin repairs to the existing structure. The dike breached last November, resulting in a 150' breach in the structure.

Fir Island Farm: Manager Rotton attended the Fir Island Farm construction meeting to discuss final construction and demobilization from the site. Substantial completion of the project is projected for next week.

Skagit Headquarters: Meis created maps and Manager Rotton updated posters of the wildlife area units for the 2016 fall hunting seasons. Manager Rotton coordinated with Dike District 22 on drainage maintenance work to be completed in Wiley Slough as a part of the March storm repairs.

Leque Island: Manager Rotton attended a meeting with WDFW Regional staff members, Snohomish County Parks, and representatives from the City of Stanwood to discuss potential locations for a water access site and the development of a motorized boat launch for this portion of the county.

Private Lands/Access Management

418 Elk Hunt: Private Lands Biologists Wingard spoke with several special permit elk hunters about the upcoming hunt with information about places to go and what can be expected.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program Contracts: Private Lands Biologist Wingard continued preparing contracts for waterfowl quality hunt units in the region. Nearly all the contracts for the 2016 waterfowl season are complete.

Straw Bale Delivery: Natural Resource Technicians Otto and Deyo, along with Biologist Wingard, delivered 40 straw bales and staged them at the La Conner field office and Lake Terrell Wildlife Area storage area. These bales are used to help stabilize soils underneath temporary blinds and help prevent wet and muddy conditions for hunters.

Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator

Hunter Education Instructor Support: Hunter Education Coordinator Steven Dazey activated two new hunter education classes in Region 4. Coordinator Dazey sent out 13 new applicant packets to instructor applicants from Orcas Island. Dazey is looking forward to starting back up the classes on Orcas Island and adding one more venue to the available classes in the San Juan's.

Chinese Language Class: Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey evaluated a hunter education class taught entirely in Chinese at the Region 4 office by instructors William Zheng and Rui Li. Seven students successfully passed the class.



William Zheng conducted the review and then outside for the field course where Rui Li discussed safety when removing a firearm from a vehicle



Rui Li discussing shoot don't shoot scenarios



Know your species and what is legal to hunt in Washington

Pre-Service Training: Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Dazey conducted the second of the two required sessions for certifying new hunter education instructors. This PST session was held in Skagit County at the Skagit Shooting Range and had six applicants attend. Session two had the applicants actually teach students alongside an existing team. The class was very successful, with all six student teachers

passing. All students who attended the class passed. All in all, it was a very successful day.



Classroom review and then outside to discuss zones of fire



Safely remove firearm from vehicle and check for correct ammunition

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Wolverine Survey Training: Biologists Bergh and Stephens attended a training session for this winter's wolverine surveys. This survey is part of a four state (Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming) effort to examine the occupancy and genetics of wolverines. Suitable wolverine habitat was identified and divided into 15 km by 15 km grid cells. Four of the randomly selected grid cells ended up in Region 5, and trail cameras and hair snare stations will be placed within each grid cell. The cameras and bait will be checked once per month December through March. Region 5 stations will be run by Jocelyn Atkins of the Cascade Carnivore Project, with WDFW assistance. Wolverines were historically present throughout the Cascades in Washington and are associated with areas of deep persistent spring snow cover. Remote camera



photos from other studies have shown wolverines to be present in the South Cascades, but this will be the first survey to specifically target photos and hair samples of wolverines.

Wolverine bait and hair station

Klickitat Wildlife Area

New Simcoe Unit: Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven, Assistant District Biologist Bergh, and Technician Petrie posted signs along the property boundary between the newly acquired WDFW parcels and lands still owned by Western Pacific Timber, LLC. Region 5 is working with Western Pacific Timber to facilitate easy identification of WDFW property boundaries by posting signs, creating a map for use with smart phones and to hand out in paper form, and writing driving directions to the parking area. Most of the WDFW/Western Pacific Timber property line has been posted, but there is about 0.8 miles left to go. The goal is to have basic navigation aids in place for visitors by September 2.



Posting boundary line

Grazing Monitoring: Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven checked on a grazing permit on the Fisher Hill Unit this week. A permit holder is grazing livestock during the dormant season there. There was a secondhand report of a dead calf on the shore at a popular camping area near the mouth of the Klickitat River recently, and speculation regarding where it may have originated. While inspecting the permitted grazing area, Van Leuven found a spot where cattle had been grazing on a very steep slope at the top of a cliff above the river. It is at least 100 feet down to the river, and it seems plausible that a calf slipped and fell, and washed up a half mile downstream at the camping area.

Overlooking the Klickitat River

Forest Health Project: Intern Hall, with Habitat Program, is sampling vegetation plots in Unit 1 of the Forest Health Project area. He expects to sample approximately 44 plots within the 81 acre project



area. These plots will be re-sampled after the project is complete, so that changes in the structure and composition of the forest can be quantified and documented. This project is significant, as it is designed to retain or enhance western gray squirrel habitat and improve forest health and resistance to wildfire.

Cowlitz Wildlife Area

Davis Lake Unit Culvert Installation: Assistant Manager Vanderlip and Natural Resource Technician Morris installed two 36-inch by 30-foot culverts between two hay fields to help increase reed canary grass hay removal off the Davis Lake flats. Removing the canary grass improves the elk forage on the unit and also increases wintering waterfowl habitat in the fall when the fields flood.



Davis Lake culvert

***GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING,
HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED
RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES***

Private Lands

Recreational Access: Biologist Meyer renewed two access contracts that were expiring in Klickitat County this month. Meyer also spoke with members of Western Pacific Timber about renewing their Feel Free to Hunt contract in Klickitat County.

Access

High Use: Access sites across the region continue to be heavily used. Access staff members Spangler and Rhodes hauled over 200 pounds of trash this week from throughout the access sites. In addition, the Shillapoo restroom was tagged by gang style graffiti both inside and outside the restrooms and was therefore repainted in its entirety.

Oneida Boat Ramp: Use is high at this site as the Buoy 10 fishery takes off. Around three dozen vehicles and trailers were using the upper lots and lower overflow parking lots at midweek.



Oneida boat ramp

GOAL 3: USE SOUND BUSINESS PRACTICES, DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE.

Cowlitz Wildlife Area

Hunter Education Class: Cowlitz Wildlife Area staff members Vanderlip and Morris, along with one local volunteer, conducted a 4.5-hour hunter education online evaluation class at the Wildlife Area office. This class was offered to 18 students who have completed the online class, but have not yet passed the skills evaluation process conducted by a hunter education instructor. This step is required before they can purchase a hunting license in the state of Washington. The material from the student manual was reviewed, and each student completed a 20 question test and had to demonstrate they could safely handle and operate a firearm in a variety of situations. All but one student passed the course.

Trout Hatchery Unit Kiosk Repair: Natural Resource Technician Morris repaired the informational kiosk at the entrance to the Trout Hatchery Unit. Visitors decided to shoot the Plexiglas covering in three places with what looks to be a shotgun. Morris replaced the Plexiglas and also updated the visitor information and rules signage.



Kiosk repair

Wildlife Conflict

Cougar: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin issued a kill permit to a landowner in Carson who had multiple depredations on her livestock. Conklin also set up a trail camera and predator fox light in an area in Morton experiencing concerns with a cougar. Conklin followed up on cougar sightings in Camas, Yacolt, and Skamania County.

Elk: Conflict Specialist Conklin issued damage permits for elk for farms in Wahkiakum, Lewis, and Clark counties.

Deer: Biologist Meyer and Conflict Specialist Conklin met with a landowner in Skamania County to examine recent deer damage on her vineyard and offer new solutions. The landowner was already using turbofladry around the plants, critter gitters, taste-based repellents, and more. Conklin is going to follow up, as there is potential to use a Master Hunter.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Satsop/Mason Deer Project: In 2009, WDFW initiated a study of the effects of forest management practices on black-tailed deer reproduction. Two of eight study sites are represented in District 15: Mason and Satsop. The Mason cluster includes five GPS-collared does, while the Satsop cluster has two. Three fawns collared this spring remain active. Biologist Murphie investigated one fawn mortality this week, which he classified as unknown predation due to the lack of conclusive evidence at the scene.

Snowy Plover: Biologist Sundstrom worked at Leadbetter, Midway, and Graveyard Spit this week. Two known broods at each of the three locations remain. It took a team effort by Sundstrom and Michaelis to find a suspected brood at Midway. This young brood was finally observed and determined to have come from an undiscovered nest. This brood will not reach fledge age until the end of the second week of September.

Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network: Biologists Novack and Sundstrom attended the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network stakeholder meeting held in Long Beach. The Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network is a voluntary network of more than 300 partners that was created in 1985 as a framework for site-specific shorebird conservation. Long Beach has been nominated. Biologist Sundstrom combined this meeting along with a day in the field at Leadbetter following up on broods for the refuge.

Fisher in District 16

Hex 514: On August 24, the team conducted the first visit check of the three stations located within the hex. This hex had been monitored during the 2014 season by ONP and had no fisher detections. All cameras and other items were found to be secure at each station during the check. There were no detections of fishers at any of the stations. Unfortunately, the camera at Station 2 did not work properly during the two weeks. Some long white hairs (possibly from a skunk) were collected from gun brushes in the cubby. This camera was later replaced in the evening by Biologist Ament.

Hex 515: The team also conducted the first check of all stations at Hex 515 on August 24. This hex was also monitored by an ONP crew during the 2014 season, but had no fisher detections. There were no detections of fishers at any of the stations. However, the stations were investigated by various forest dwellers. A cougar, bobcat, and spotted skunk all visited Station

1. A bear and black tailed doe were photographed at Station 2. The bear ate all bait at the station, but fortunately did not damage the cubby or camera. Something triggered some photos at Station 3, but there was no obvious target in the photos. The next check of the stations for Hexes 514 and 515 will be September 7.



Cougar, bobcat, and spotted skunk all dropped by Station 1 for Hex 515



Black bear indulges in chicken drumsticks on bait tree and in the cubby at Station 2

Dead Rhinoceros Auklets: Biologist McMillan has been observing and reporting dead rhinoceros auklets on the Morse Creek beach. WDFW & COASST continue monitoring the mortality event and Biologist McMillan has been asked to continue providing reports around her

local beach at Morse Creek. In the beach wrack is a dead rhinoceros auklet, observed at the Morse Creek beach east of Port Angeles. There is a monthly COASST survey done on much of the coastline, but the spike in dead auklets has resulted in the program accepting reports outside of their protocol survey.



GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Management

Elk Management – Raymond: Biologist Novack met with Weyerhaeuser Forester Tracy to discuss elk management around Raymond and visit areas where elk are damaging young plantations.

Private Lands /Conflict

Wynoochee Valley Elk: Biologist Harris reported last week that things had been pretty quiet. That changed. Fortunately for the producer, the young hunter pictured was available to remind the elk that they are not welcome. She may look familiar to some. Last year she put the sneak on the group and patiently waited until she was sure she would harvest a non-lactating cow elk. She got it done again. Biologist Harris suggested she consider the Master Hunter program. WDFW can always use hunters of her caliber in the program. As expected, the elk moved to a safer area.



Grayland Cranberries: Once again the elk knew when no one was paying attention to their smart phones. They spent the better part of the night filling up on berries, which is not good since harvest is so close.



Elk entering a bog

Satsop Elk: A Master Hunter keeping track of the middle group reports they are spending a lot of time in hay fields. Time limitations are preventing actions at this time. One bull is reported to be carrying part of a badminton net in his antlers. This explains what happened to a net reportedly damaged when the elk discovered some newly planted unfenced apple trees.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY

CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wildlife Management

Customer Service: Biologist Novack answered multiple questions from the public regarding the upcoming elk, goose, and upland bird seasons. He also explained what to do with a dead beaver.

Hunting Opportunity: Biologist Harris spent an estimated 40% of the week speaking with hunters with questions on access and where to hunt.