

Wildlife Program

Week of June 6 – June 12, 2016

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements for Livestock (DPCA_L): Supervisor McCanna requested a conference call with Wolf Policy Lead Martorello and Wildlife Conflict Section Manager Simek and discussed the prioritization of DPCA_L contracts for the Blue Mountains.

Ranch Visit: Biologist Shepherd spent several hours with a large cooperative ranch family with several federal and private allotments. Data sharing, the lethal removal protocol, cooperative agreements, contracts, and compensation payment issues were discussed.

Allotment Surveillance: Natural Resource Worker Weatherman spent time on federal allotments looking for wolf and livestock activity.

Southwest Stevens County Depredation: Biologist Shepherd discussed wolf issues and preventative measures with the owner of a Holstein killed by wolves in southwest Stevens County. Biologist Shepherd, Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, and contract range riders provided surveillance while the owner was on a planned work absence for several days and the owner was appreciative upon his return. Compensation was discussed.

Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements for Livestock: Biologist Shepherd and Natural Resource Worker Weatherman worked with area ranchers and ranch managers in person and by email to submit invoices and sign agreements. Biologist Shepherd entered contracts in the contract system.

Colville Area Wolf Sightings: Biologist Shepherd received several calls concerning multiple wolves in yards and near houses with domestic dogs southwest of Colville. Residents were generally not in favor of this development.

Data Sharing: Biologist Shepherd attempted to distribute usernames and passwords to area ranchers with data sharing agreements.

Cattle Producers of Washington Monthly Meeting: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett was invited to attend a monthly Cattle Producers of Washington meeting. Brand Department and Beef Commission changes were primarily discussed. Bennett made contact with producers in the Huckleberry/Stranger area to introduce the newly created Lethal Removal Protocol for gray wolves in eastern Washington.

Trail Cameras: Biologist Earl gathered the remainder of the cameras in Asotin County with no images captured of wolves.

Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements for Livestock (DPCA_L): Biologist Earl continued to work on A-19s and checklists this week. Earl, Conflict Specialist Rasley, and Supervisor McCanna met in St. John to discuss the interest and prioritization of DPCA_Ls in the Blue Mountains.

Livestock Insurance Company: Biologist Earl was contacted by an insurance agent in Asotin County who wanted to discuss the protocol for reimbursements on confirmed wolf depredations for producers who have coverage on their herd.

Sensitive Information Agreement: Biologist Earl was contacted this week by someone looking to gain access to the wolf collar data sharing. Earl referred the person to Carnivore Section Manager Aoude, who is now handling the execution of these agreements.

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Ferruginous Hawk Productivity Surveys: Biologist Lowe conducted a second productivity survey at a ferruginous hawk nest west of Lacrosse to determine the number of fledging age young. The early post-hatch survey found three nestlings. This survey found one bird in the nest, nearing fledging age. Science Technician Walker conducted a second productivity survey at a nest near Irby and found the nestlings fledged and spending time on the ground nearby.

Near fledging age ferruginous hawk in the Wise Road territory west of Lacrosse



Ferruginous Hawk State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE): Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley worked with Assistant District Biologist Vekasy and Farm Bill Coordinator Kuttel on the proposed expansion of ferruginous hawk SAFE into Walla Walla County. Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley introduced Vekasy to Natural Resources Conservation Service District Conservationist Teal to talk to him about the program and get letters of support from landowners within the targeted area.

Farm Bill: Biologist Baarstad continued to work on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts in cooperation with landowners and the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. Due to the low rate of application acceptance during the last general CRP signup, SAFE program acres have all been allocated to contracts and Conservation Practice-33 (Upland Bird Buffer Strip) applications have increased.

Chief Joseph, WA – Irrigation: Biologist Woodall and Technician Steveson, along with other staff, spent some time setting out irrigation pipe and attempting to get a pump started to water alfalfa. There have been some difficulties, including leaking seals,



plugged pump with puncture vine seeds, suction issues, and a possible electrical reverse wiring issue. We hope to get that resolved by the end of the week.

WDFW employees and interns laying out irrigation pipe

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

Disabled Hunter Access: Natural Resource Technician Bendixen worked with Colville National Forest staff members on road clearing activities for the Aladdin Mountain disabled hunter access route. The route should be ready for fall use in the next few weeks.

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

Spokane County Conservation Futures: Biologists Lowe and Kunz visited the nominated properties for the Spokane County Conservation Futures Program with Paul Knowles from Spokane County Parks, Recreation, and Golf. There were 38 properties nominated this year, and WDFW has been asked to score each property for the wildlife



and aquatic habitat criteria in the Program’s evaluation process.

Landowners giving tours of their nominated properties to WDFW

Voluntary Public Access (VPA) Ranking: Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley ranked fifteen VPA contracts for Columbia and Walla Walla

counties and submitted them to Supervisor McCanna for funding review.

Reclamation Tour: On Tuesday, Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Finch took a group of mine-cleanup specialists on a field tour of two sites that Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area has restored from old farm field to native shrub-steppe grassland. The tour participants were from areas as far afield as Nova Scotia and China. The tour was organized by a

local seed company salesman for the group. The group's annual conference was held this year in Spokane. Wildlife Area Manager Anderson and WDFW Vegetation Ecologist Kurt Merg also attended.



GOAL 4: MAINTAIN A HIGHLY SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE BY SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY

Statewide Hunting Access Sign Order: Supervisor McCanna received and reviewed three separate sign quotations from the Monroe Correctional Facility. McCanna requested edits to several signs and approved all three quotations to be processed. The signs will be completed and picked up by the end of June. McCanna will coordinate the pick-up of signs and delivery to Private Lands Biologists statewide.

Region 1 Private Lands and Wildlife Conflict Team Meeting: Supervisor McCanna held a meeting for his team in Region 1. This was one of two in-person meetings McCanna holds every year to review and/or inform employees of policies and procedures. A minimum of two team conference calls are also held each year. The meeting was attended by Regional Wildlife Program Manager Robinette and the eleven staff members working for McCanna. McCanna required employees to enter contracts into Novatus within two weeks of a contract being signed by a landowner.

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Aechmophorus Grebes: Biologist Finger and McPherson deployed 18 grebe platforms to Jones Bay on Banks Lake to assess whether this breeding colony, which started last year, can be influenced by floating platforms to nest in deeper water and earlier in the season. Banks Lake is now operating under a more extensive draw down due to Odessa Subarea Project operations and the lake is expected to draw down eight feet below normal during August. Last year, this colony had 33 nests at the end of July, all of which were likely in less than eight feet of water. Nesting was still occurring after mid-August.

Wildlife Areas

Big Bend Fencing: Noel and Derek completed repairs to stock fence around the 150-acre Bissell Flat restoration site. Once an irrigated alfalfa field, the site is now fully infested with rush skeletonweed. The stock fence intended to keep cattle out of the alfalfa had fallen into disrepair,

allowing the lessee's cattle to wander about in the rush skeletonweed, likely contributing to the spread. The repair work will prevent this from continuing while our multi-year control and restoration efforts for the site progress.

Carlton Complex Fence – Indian Dan Canyon: Dan spent one day with CAMPS project coordinator and fence inspector Scott Allen for the final inspection of this 17-mile fence project. The contractor has approximately one half mile to complete and should be done by June 17.

Supplemental Feed Route Project: Assistant Manager Bechtold spent the majority of two days conducting cut-stump treatments on Russian olive in the Road 10 area of the Gloyd Seeps Unit. These treatments represent the continuation of a project in which the olive trees are selectively removed from mixed forested stands. This strategy was chosen to minimize a secondary invasion of treated areas and have thus far been effective. Treated areas have largely been occupied by desirable species such as wheatgrass, milkweed, rose, and willow.



Piles of Russian olive slash in the treatment area – Photo by N. Bechtold

Methow Forest Rehabilitation Project:

WDFW Forester Jamie Bass performed a site visit with Meg Trebon from USFS and Prescribed Fire Program Manager Matt Eberlein on an isolated WDFW ownership. This piece is included in a landscape cooperative prescribed burn planned for autumn 2017. Approximately 27 acres are commercially viable, but due to the remote location and long haul distance, it's unlikely to interest bidders. If the 27 acres cannot be sold, they will be included in the larger area on the unit that is going to be hand-thinned prior to the prescribed fire planned by USFS. The field trip covered what the prescribed burn will look like, what WDFW can do to help, and what fuel manipulations would work well to carry the fire without undue damage to residual trees. Eberlein and Bass discussed possible work for the Okanogan Prescribed Fire Team once the burn ban is put down by DNR, and also planned to do a tour of Okanogan forest management projects to get acquainted with ongoing fire and forest restoration projects. While on this field trip, Forester Bass documented an *Ips Pini* bark beetle breakout that has killed a multi-cohort patch. Bass followed up with notification to other managers and recommendations for limiting beetle population expansion.

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

Private Lands/Access

Douglas County Dumping: Private Lands Biologist Braaten came upon a large dumpsite, reported the location, and sent names and pictures to Douglas County Sheriff Deputy Caille. Braaten was able to retrieve the names of the garbage owners, who are residents of Chelan in

Douglas County. The deputy called the landowner and found out a relative has been dumping other people's garbage on the property. The person dumping didn't have permission. We are waiting to find out if charges will be filed and how the dump will be cleaned up. The dump site was attracting ravens. The area is in the middle of sage grouse nesting and brood rearing habitat. The attraction the dump has to ravens could have negative impacts. Private Lands Biologist Braaten observed sage grouse broods a half mile from the site. Braaten expressed these concerns to Deputy Caille. This site was almost 50 miles from Chelan.



Douglas County dump site with sage grouse nesting habitat in background –
Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW



Sage grouse hen watching over brood in Douglas County – Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW



Mule deer doe with fawns – Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW



Babcock Bench looking south along the Columbia River – Photo by Chad Eidson

There is still some snow left in the high peaks – Photo by M. DeHart



REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Bat Surveys: District Biologist Fidorra continued the WDFW bat survey, placed acoustic bat detectors at sites in Districts 4 and 5, and coordinated with Biologist Rowan to relocate detectors near the Ephrata office. Fidorra is placing detectors at eight sites and will repeat recording protocols at each site monthly through August.

Burrowing Owls: District Biologist Fidorra continued occupancy and productivity checks for burrowing owls at artificial burrow sites and coordinated with the Global Owl project on upcoming trapping and banding efforts. Several nestlings near fledging age and a few adult females were banded during checks.



Two burrowing owls chicks near fledging from artificial burrow in Franklin County

Sick Goose: District Biologist Fidorra responded to a call regarding a sick goose in Howard Amon Park. Fidorra collected the animal to avoid further issues in the popular swimming area during the high temperatures.

Ferruginous Hawk: District Biologist Fidorra conducted productivity surveys at occupied ferruginous hawk territories on private lands and accompanied Hanford Site MSA biologists during three productivity checks on Hanford. Eight District 4 nests currently have young confirmed, including one that fledged.

Ferruginous hawk nest with one of two nestlings perched on the nest on a transmission line tower



Canada Goose Banding: District Biologist Fidorra coordinated staff members and volunteers to assist with the annual Canada goose banding in Kennewick and Pasco. The event will take place on June 16.

Ferruginous Hawk Surveys: District Biologist Fidorra reviewed volunteer hours and mileage from the ferruginous hawk survey and began organizing productivity surveys for active FEHA sites in District 4.

Badger Damage: Several calls regarding badger damage have been received by staff members in both Region 3 districts lately. District Biologist Fidorra consulted with Biologist Bernatowicz in District 8 and Game Division staff members in Olympia to confirm the preferred process for addressing badger damage, which currently is to utilize licensed trappers during the trapping seasons when possible, or to direct landowners to Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (NWCOS).

Goose Banding: Biologist Bernatowicz participated in the annual goose roundup. Over 300 geese were captured and 280 new bands deployed. The high numbers are due to an expansion of the study. When banding started, the focus was urban geese only. Non-urban geese are now being banded.

Sandhill Cranes: Biologist Bernatowicz read the status review of sandhill cranes and corresponded with Biologist Stinson regarding cranes in the Teanaway. Sandhill cranes are periodically seen in meadows along the main Teanaway road. One year, a pair was observed in a more remote meadow. Sandhill cranes are sensitive to human disturbance and cattle grazing. While birds are seen feeding in the area and may attempt to nest, current use in the area will probably prohibit the establishment of a Teanaway nesting population.

Lamb Depredation: Biologist Bernatowicz reviewed pictures of a depredation event in the Wenas. The evidence pointed toward a canid depredation and not cougar.

District 8 Goose Banding: Biologist Moore worked with District Biologist Bernatowicz, Waterfowl Specialist Wilson, Natural Resource Technician Median, Yakama Nation Biologist Blodgett, and numerous other volunteers to capture geese throughout Yakima County. The operation was extremely successful and we were able to capture and band 280 geese over two days of effort.

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

Wildlife Areas

Wenas Wildlife Area: Manager Confer Morris participated in several meetings with Regional and Wildlife Program staff members to discuss Wenas target shooting issues, including additional public outreach, a bird dog training site, and the acoustic’s study contract. Confer Morris set up a WAAC meeting for June 13 to update the group on status and next steps. She also submitted a pre-application conference request form to Kittitas County Planning for permits at the Durr Road site.

Green Dot System: Biologist 2 Longoria pulled together an informative summary on the green dot road system, highlighting current regulations and concerns regarding conscientious use. This draft synthesis is expected to be posted along with the green dot maps when we get ready to post PDFs of the maps to our website.

Manastash Ridge Trails Planning Project: Biologist Longoria and Manager Confer Morris met to discuss Manastash Ridge Trails Planning Project, for which we received an RCO grant. Longoria will be taking the lead role for WDFW and will coordinate with DNR and other affected landowners. Biologist Longoria met with DNR Recreation Specialist Margheim to begin the planning process, discussing goals for the project and sharing essential documents. Following the meeting, Longoria constructed a tentative timeline for the project and a list of “important persons.”

Teanaway Junction Boat Launch: Access Manager Garcia made repairs to the primitive boat launch at Teanaway Junction and graded the entrance to the Thorp access site.



Teanaway Junction (boat launch)



Thorp access (entrance)

Litter Cleanup: Natural Resource Worker Barbosa led a Juvenile corrections crew at our lower valley access sites, where they picked up litter and brushed roads.



Pond 4 (entrance before)



Pond 4 (entrance after)

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman worked on Discover Pass items related to “iron ranger” pass sales at Oak Creek. Huffman was able to get an electronic copy of the State Parks form and started working on changes. Huffman and Planner Posner also had a conference call with Licensing Division to discuss their role, how the pass should be created and who should create it, and how funds should be tracked.

Wildlife Management

Hunt by Reservation: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman and Natural Resource Technician Kaelber traveled to the Wildhorse Windfarm again to post Hunt by Reservation signs. Good progress was made and only one additional trip is anticipated.



New Hunt by Reservation signs went up at the Wildhorse Wind Farm



Mule deer buck and turkeys on Wildhorse 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 attended the Region 2 awards ceremony in Ephrata. Lopushinsky drove Wenatchee resident Bill Stegeman to the meeting to receive the Region 2 Volunteer of the Year Award.

Rare Plant Survey: Manager Lopushinsky assisted a volunteer from the University of Washington's Rare Care program in preparation for a rare plant survey on the Colockum. This person was assigned to survey Hedgehog Cactus (*Pediocactus nigrispinus*) in the Little Brushy Creek area.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman prepared for and attended a public meeting for the Oak Creek Management Plan process on Monday night. Forester Mackey, along with Regional and Olympia staff members, were also at the meeting. Planners Posner and Vigue gave an overview of the process and the public asked questions and visited stations to provide comments. Multiple user groups attended the meeting, with a strong contingent of rock climbers.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area Advisory Committee Meeting: Manager Huffman prepared for and hosted an Oak Creek Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC) meeting on Tuesday night. Forester Mackey, Planner Vigue, and Regional Program Manager McCorquodale attended. The WAAC meeting was well attended by members and resulted in a lot of good comments on the development of the management plan.

Wildlife Education Corp Cleanup Day: Manager Huffman, Assistant Manager Berry, and Natural Resource Worker Farias organized and set up for the Wildlife Education Corp (WEC) cleanup day and BBQ. Twenty-four volunteers drove 12 routes across the wildlife area and



DNR land, picking up roadside and camp site trash. All trash was hauled back to Oak Creek for disposal. Things were pretty clean overall. Sites with a lot of clean up included Tim's Pond, pull-offs on US Highway 12, and Cowiche Mill Road. Following the cleanup, a BBQ was held with spouses and other WEC members attending.

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Technician Hill delivered antler sheds to the Oak Creek Wildlife Area for the antler auction on June 22.

Antler sheds to go to the antler auction

Wildlife Management

Elk Monitoring: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand monitored elk distribution and movements in Elk Areas 3721 & 3722. Steady numbers of elk continue to cross Hanford's southern boundary to graze in winter wheat fields, although hunting pressure and active hazing has reduced the amount of time spent on private lands. Multiple calf elk are being reported in both Elk Areas.

Camera Check: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand checked and replaced the camera card in the deployed trail camera along Hanford's southern boundary. Cooler temperatures with some precipitation this past week had little effect on changes in elk behavior. Over 1,000 images were recovered, mostly of nocturnal movements of elk.

Two Hanford bull elk leaving Hanford

Deer Browsing: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand followed up with a landowner in northern Franklin County who was having issues with deer browsing on a new planting of cherry trees. The loaned LP gas cannon worked well initially, but stopped functioning. The landowner purchased one of his own and the deer have stayed away for now.



Badgers: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received a call concerning badger control in the Sunnyside area. Referral to the WDFW Living with Wildlife resource guide and contact information for special trapping and use of a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator was provided.

Elk Conflict: Conflict Specialist Wetzel found elk in several problem areas this week. As is typical for this time of year, as range conditions dry out elk move to irrigated agriculture areas.

Elk Hazing: Conflict Specialist Wetzel hazed elk from several locations, and made a new contact with a landowner in an area that elk have used as a refuge in the past. In an alarming discovery, several landowners were found to be feeding large numbers of elk in this area. Hopefully the new landowner will be helpful in dislodging elk from part of the refuge.

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

Wildlife Areas

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Buser, Assistant Manager Sak, and Natural Resource Technician Medina met with Construction Project Coordinator Casey Davidson to go over

bridges / bridge inspections for the Sunnyside / Snake River Wildlife Area. Medina took Casey to the Giffen Lake Foot Bridge on the Sunnyside Headquarters Unit and a bridge at the Byron Unit to have them inspected.

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Acting Manager Hunt attended a meeting regarding future plans for the Ellensburg District office. Office staff members were presented information on three options in the works by Regional Director Livingston, Regional Habitat Program Manager Harvester, and Olympia Facilities Manager Julie Howard. In all three scenarios, the L.T. Murray will lose the current shop facility and be required to “shrink” to fit a new situation.

Tractor: Acting Manager Hunt and Natural Resource Tech Leuck picked up the long awaited new John Deere tractor and associated implements on Tuesday. Hunt hauled implements and Leuck drove the tractor to the Joe Watt Hay Storage Compound. Leuck and Natural Resource Technician Hill fitted and tested everything at the Watt barn. Everything is in order, and Technician Leuck spent time grading and fixing the outside hay storage pad and surrounding area with the new hydraulic blade.



New Murray tractor

Wenas Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Taylor and Natural Resource Technician Kass took the backhoe up to Durr Road to pick up a drum of used oil that had been dumped at the north entrance parking area. Staff members cleaned up two dump sites full of construction debris in Black canyon.

Cleaning up construction waste along Black Canyon Road



REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

State Sensitive Common Loon: Biologist Smith surveyed District 12 for loon activity. Adult loons were documented (singly and in pairs) on area lakes. Nesting loons were documented at two local lakes, while a single adult was located at a third. Both pairs of nesting birds have two eggs at this time, one on a log (successfully used last year), and the other on one of the nesting platforms deployed earlier in the year. At least one of these is a second nest

attempt for the season, as the pair was located earlier attending a different nest location. Continued monitoring will be required to document nesting success/failure this season.

An adult loon seen on an area lake this past week



Estuary Bird Monitoring Project:

District 13 staff members mapped the GPS points for two aerial shorebird surveys conducted in May.

Prohibited Wildlife Management – Invasive Species: District 12 and 13 continued efforts for invasive species monitoring while pulling in help from Region 4 Fish Program and other biologists. African clawed frogs have tentatively been confirmed breeding now – further investigations, as well as samples taken, will finalize those field observations. WDFW is gaining landowner permission, with trapping to start this month. Wildlife Program is working with Fish Program to establish work window needs for trap areas that require such consideration.

State prohibited species – African clawed frog – unfortunately located at a site. Please do not purchase exotic pets without researching legalities and do report exotics to WDFW via our exotic invasive species web reporting site.



Protected Wildlife Management – White-

Nose Syndrome: District 12 and Dr. Katie Haman attended, presented, and provided representation at the International White-Nose Syndrome Symposium in Denver, CO. District 12 is engaging in outreach to formal entities and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). District 12 participated in ongoing internal conferencing and correspondence to devise short and long-term efforts and planning in order to manage white-nose syndrome and increase bat knowledge from a management standpoint, research wise, and within the general public. District 12, along with Dr. Haman and other staff members, are in conversation with national partners, such as Bat Conservation International, regarding management efforts and similarities and differences from east to west. District 12 is working to keep field recorders up and running, replacing batteries and memory cards and depositing data. District 12 is working to organize past data from emphasis areas for baseline reference and access by all. District 12 is also engaging with volunteers to increase their efforts in the lower Snoqualmie Valley to provide repeated measures acoustic encounter data from areas surveyed before white-nose syndrome was detected. District 12 is coordinating the removal of guano traps with Dr. Haman, and is assisting in extending an invite to local grotto groups regarding an upcoming USFS environmental sample

training effort. Dr. Haman is also networking this opportunity to other staff members and partners. District 12 has responded to a request for information from the National Speleological Society.



Little brown bat found in western Washington in March 2016. The fungus damaged the bat's wings, making it unable to fly – Photo by Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS)

WDFW and collaborators are asking the public to report dead or dying/sick bats via our hotline found at the link below. District 12 is working with local volunteers to review and pilot a roost emergence count.

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

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

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

Protected Wildlife Management – Golden and Bald Eagles: Biologist DeBruyn confirmed occupancy at a golden eagle nest site when in the area on other business. District 12 received a number of calls regarding bald eagle management, documentation, and disturbance concerns. District 12 passed parties off to web references and USFWS as appropriate for the situation.

Protected Wildlife Management – Assistance to Habitat Regarding Priority Habitats and Species Non-jurisdictional Management Consultation in District 12: Anderson assisted the area habitat biologist, when requested, to provide for project and local jurisdictional requests for wildlife management consideration centered around the WDFW Priority Habitats and Species Wildlife Management Program. More information can be found at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/phs/>

Protected Wildlife Management – District 12 Management Efforts for Osprey and Peregrine Falcon: District 12 touched base with a number of entities wanting to remove osprey nests and/or work around nests. District 12 has been working with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) regarding active peregrine falcon nesting efforts on a local bridge. Local researchers and members of the Falcon Research Group have been monitoring the birds, and they have banded four individuals on this particular bridge, where chicks have been fledging the past week. Future efforts will likely involve exclusion from the

bridge to encourage the pair (new female) to move back to the long-used scrape box that was provided to this territory years ago.

Perched osprey – Photo by Alan Bauer

Nesting Boxes: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman coordinated with Assistant District Biologist DeBruyn in relocating a barn owl nesting box in Whatcom County. The nesting box was relocated due to a scheduled demolition of the supporting structure for safety concerns. When Biologist DeBruyn responded he discovered it was a nesting box he installed over 25 years ago.



Bat Roost Surveys: District 13 staff members checked out two areas on the Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest for signs of bat maternity colonies. At the Verlot Ranger Station, a maternity colony was found many years ago associated with the buildings. A check this week found only three bats at the old site. The other site no longer supports a maternity colony.

The Verlot Ranger Station was the site of a bat maternity colony many years ago. Only three bats were seen last week.



Wildlife Areas

Agricultural Leases: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that corn and barley were planted at the Cherry Valley Unit this past week. Farmers took advantage of the great weather to get crops in for harvest and wildlife forage and cover.

Corson Preserve: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm provided barley and millet seed to be planted by volunteers for wildlife forage at the unit. Manager Boehm also facilitated the development of a short term Right of Entry agreement for the construction project scheduled for this summer. Additionally, Manager Boehm joined CAMP engineers, Habitat Program, and others to discuss the logistics for the construction project with a neighboring landowner. The project addresses fish passage barriers and future maintenance requirements for the unit.

Lake Terrell Unit and Intalco Unit Field Mowing: Natural Resource Technician Deyo mowed fields and walking paths at the Lake Terrell and Intalco units for dog walkers, hikers, and runners.

Leque Island Preliminary Design: Ducks Unlimited and Projects Coordinator Brokaw completed a draft preliminary design and report for the Leque Estuary Restoration Project. The report and design are currently under review. Additionally, they completed a more refined cost estimate for grant applications.

Leque Island Grant Applications: Projects Coordinator Brokaw worked most of the week preparing grant materials for a Salmon Recovery Funding Board opportunity and an opportunity with NOAA Fisheries with a partnership with The Nature Conservancy.

Snohomish Delta Outreach Needs: Projects Coordinator Brokaw participated in a meeting with Habitat Program to give input on outreach needs in Snohomish County regarding estuary restoration projects. The Habitat Program has hired new staff members to add capacity for communicating with stakeholders and the broader public.

Private Lands/Access Management

While inside the North Skagit spring bear unit, Natural Resource Technician Otto observed multiple blue grouse involved in mating displays

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



Wildlife Management

Master Hunter Coordinator Program Review: Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell reviewed and submitted comments on revised Master Hunter Coordinator position descriptions, duties, goals, and expectations, as well as other related documents.

North Cascades Elk: Biologist Yarborough met with Elk Specialist Hoenes to review recommendations for elk management for the North Cascades elk herd. Items discussed included harvest scenarios, survey methodology, and herd objectives.

Purple Martins: District 12 continues to assist the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) on erecting martin gourds on some of their mitigation sites. The number one comment from District 12 was, “Do not put up gourds if you can’t maintain them annually and manage non-target species within the season.” USACE is now examining those two essential items to ensure they can be provided for and will get back with District 12. Otherwise, District 12 does not wish to engage with inappropriate gourd establishment that would be a detriment rather than a boost to local populations. District 12 hopes that something appropriate comes to fruition.

District 12 staff members continue to assist the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers on erecting martin gourds on some of their mitigation sites



Wildlife Areas

British Petroleum Land Use Agreement:

Manager Kessler started the process to update the Land Use Agreement we have with British Petroleum that allows hunting access on their property north of their Refinery. A meeting to discuss the updated agreement is scheduled with the new head of security at BP.

Lake Terrell Trail Clearing: Natural Resource Technicians Deyo and Otto cleared the trail to the handicapped hunting blind at Lake Terrell. They removed trees and trimmed branches to make the quarter mile trail more easily accessible. Very soon, we will be placing gravel on the part of the trail that disabled hunters use to get to the blind.

Island Unit: Natural Resources Technician Cosgrove, with the assistance of Natural Resource Specialist Meis, ferried herbicide spray equipment to the Island Unit, sprayed 20 acres of corn, and, with assistance from volunteers, ferried equipment back off the Island Unit the following morning. Cosgrove coordinated with volunteers to assist with ferry operations. Cosgrove disked about 12 acres of Lorenzen field on the Island Unit multiple times following plowing that occurred last week. Cosgrove cultivated a portion of the Fireman's 2 field on the Island Unit in preparation for supplemental millet planting.

Samish Unit: Natural Resource Specialist Meis continued to mow and monitor noxious weed areas at the Samish Unit.

Samish River Unit: Manager Rotton continues to monitor the vegetation on the Samish River site following the habitat restoration project to spot any emergence of weeds in the disturbed areas.

Private Lands/Access Management

Spring Bear Hunt: Private Lands Biologist Wingard and Natural Resource Technician Otto completed gate checks on the Monroe and North Skagit spring bear units. Otto found minimal issues with gates and locks and was able to correct any issues onsite. Otto cleared vegetation at many gate locations, allowing for better access while avoiding blackberry foliage entanglement.

Migratory Bird Forage Enhancement Project: Private Lands Biologist Wingard worked on creating and submitting contracts for partner landowners who are planting migratory bird forage. This forage will be left standing all winter for migratory birds to use.

Pheasant Hunting Access: Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell and another private lands biologist worked on pheasant hunting site access negotiations with landowners. Within the coming month, staff members will review farming plans with local farmers and negotiate hunting access contracts. Staff members will also survey areas for potentially new access locations in Skagit County.

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

Wildlife Management

Elk Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman met with an environmental planner to discuss proactive elk mitigation efforts that may be necessary to protect a future plantation of over 50 acres of hardwoods. The hardwoods are intended for production of musical instruments. Additional information and maps were requested from the producer so the elk technical group can discuss appropriate measures that may be necessary. Witman met with a landowner in the Acme area of Whatcom County to discuss the integration of the private lands access program to assist with addressing potential elk damage complaints on a recently planted corn crop. The landowner was provided information on the private lands access program and asked to consider if the program would be feasible for the upcoming hunting season. Witman inspected recently completed elk exclusionary fences in the Day Creek area and found the fences have been working and remain free of damage from elk. Two minor repairs were made to insulators that had slipped off the metal posts and caused the fence to short out. Witman also met with two Skagit County landowners and discussed preparations that are needed for upcoming elk exclusionary fencing projects. Witman entered several Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements into Novatus. Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell and Witman provided comments on a draft version of the North Cascades Elk Technical report. The finalized report will be presented at the upcoming technical meeting next week.

Group of cow elk – Photo by Kim Chandler



Deer Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman responded to an Arlington apartment complex that had a deer trapped behind fences for several days. The deer was herded off the property and jumped into another fenced yard. The landowner was contacted and was able to open fences to allow the deer to escape.

Black Bear Damage Surveys: Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell and Private Lands Assistant Otto toured private industrial timber company lands in Whatcom County in search of

bear-related timber damage. Access location, routes, tree damage, damage age, and other conditions were recorded for later use. These surveys will later be used to inform timber companies of where high levels of damage occur and where potential recreational access may be needed.

Regional Drug Coordinator: Biologist Yarborough worked with WDFW personnel and the Pharmacist Investigator to ensure all drug storage and record keeping policies were being followed in District 14.

Falconry: Biologist DeBruyn banded a young peregrine for a falconer who had legally taken it from an eyrie.



Barn Owls: Biologist DeBruyn responded to a local dairy farmer about barn owls in a barn that was to be demolished. He determined that no young or eggs were in a nest box in the structure and relocated the box to another building of the landowner's choice.

Barn owl

Wildlife Areas

Wildlife Area Planning Team: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with Core Team members to discuss plans for the next phase of the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area

Management Plan update process. Outcomes of this meeting will provide the basis for the upcoming planning team meeting.

Drainage Districts: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with Drainage District 1 (Ebey Island) representatives to discuss developing a memo of understanding agreement that details shared concerns over the district's right of way for dike maintenance and repair and WDFW wildlife area management responsibilities. Manager Boehm also met with Drainage District 7 (Cherry Valley) representatives to discuss ditch maintenance and levee breach repair projects planned for this summer.

Fir Island Farm: Manager Rotton attended the weekly Fir Island Farm construction meeting and the Dike Breach pre-activity meeting.

Skagit Headquarters: Meis mowed around the shop and interpretive center areas at the Headquarters Unit. Manager Rotton monitored water levels in Wiley Slough and worked with Drainage District 22 on water management levels as the Dike District prepares for the irrigation season.

Private Lands/Access Management

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program: Private Lands Biologist Wingard began drafting hunting access contracts for the upcoming waterfowl season. Private Lands Access staff members tried to obtain signatures at many of these locations early in the year to avoid losing a site to private hunting clubs. Natural Resource Technician Otto checked multiple Waterfowl Quality Hunt sites in Whatcom, Skagit, and Snohomish counties to see what 2016 crop rotations are being used this season. Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell and Otto made contact and met with a landowner near Stanwood who is interested in enrolling property in the upcoming waterfowl season. Follow-up and a property walk will follow soon. Biologist Caldwell and Biologist Wingard began compiling and updating Private Land Access Program summary data on acreage, hunt types, cost, and other measures for program overview on sites enrolled. This data is used and provided to Olympia staff members to gauge program efforts across time and to provide valuable information to Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) funding sources.

Private Land Access Program Sign

Change: Within Region 4, Private Land Access Program staff members received comments from concerned hunters about the Hunt by Registration sign symbols. Hunters stated that the arrows on the signs indicated that a person was to go directionally either left or right to register. This caused hunters to walk to nearby houses and ask for registration cards, when the registration cards were actually on the registration post. As a result, Private Land Access Program staff members worked with other statewide officials to develop a new Hunt by Registration sign that promotes less confusion on where to register for the recreational site. The new signs will no longer have a red arrow that points left or right, but instead will have a red triangle. This new sign will hopefully reduce confusion for hunters by not pointing in any directions.



Region 4 Private Lands Access GIS Database: Private Lands Biologist Wingard began creating a database of all properties enrolled in the Private Lands Program. This database will serve as a master list of all the sites previously or currently enrolled in the program. The database will increase the efficiency of contract development, and summarizes information about the program.

Tree Damage Survey: Natural Resource Technician Otto and Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell toured private timberlands north of Mount Baker to look at recent and historic tree damage caused by bears.

Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator

Hunter Education Instructor Support: Hunter Education Coordinator Steven Dazey met with the instructors for the Stilliguamish Tribe and assisted the new instructors in laying out a field course for their upcoming hunter education class. The class will be held June 21 through June 24. This class will be offered to tribal members. However, future use of the venue has been offered to open classes. Coordinator Dazey assisted Capital Asset Manager Jason Harlow to verify inventory assigned to two hunter education instructors and assisted one of the instructors to transfer their inventory in the system. Dazey sent out three instructor applicant packets and activated one hunter education class. Coordinator Dazey assisted the teaching team at the Region 4 office to conduct a hunter education class.



Instructors Chaar and Templin teaching hunter education at the Region 4 Mill Creek office

2015 Terry Hoffer Nominee Recognition: The Terry Hoffer Memorial Firearm Safety Award honors Terry and recalls his tragic loss in 1984 by annually recognizing one hunter education instructor whose outstanding commitment and/or teaching excellence over the previous 12 months clearly indicate exceptional performance. Out of the 950 instructors statewide, WDFW received nominations for 11 instructors whose peers felt that they rose to the level of excellence meriting recognition. Coordinator Dazey traveled to three teaching teams and presented recognition certificates and a finalist plaque to three instructors. Horatio Delgado, who teaches at the Kenmore range, and Bob Cromwell, who teaches at the Issaquah Sportsman Club, were presented certificates for being nominated by their peers for the Terry Hoffer Memorial Safety Award. Cathy Lynch, who teaches at several venues, was presented a certificate and a plaque for being a finalist for the Terry Hoffer Award.

Cathy Lynch receiving recognition as a finalist for the Terry Hoffer Award



GOAL 4: SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY

Wildlife Management

Performance Development Plans: Staff members worked on performance expectations and evaluations that will be completed by the end of June.

Training Opportunities: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm completed the final Crucial Conversations training class at the Lacy Camp facility. Biologist DeBruyn and Manager Rotton completed a Comprehensive Development Action Plan for Leadership 1. Private Lands Biologist Wingard completed module 4 of Leadership 1, and has nearly completed the entire Leadership 1 series. In the coming weeks, Biologist Wingard will meet with Supervisory Biologist Caldwell to develop the leadership action plan, which is the final requirement of the training.

Staffing Levels: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm joined Region 4 Access Program Manager Derek Hacker for interviews and the selection of the new Maintenance Mechanic 2 position offered for Region 4. The temporary position will assist the Access Program and Wildlife Area Management with field operations and the pheasant release program.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Oregon Western Pond Turtles: Biologist Bergh and Washington State University Veterinarian student Iredale joined Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Biologist Moore to trap western pond turtles around Mosier, Oregon. Iredale collected young turtles to get CT scans at the Oregon State University Veterinarian hospital in Corvallis as part of her research project investigating Undefined Shell Disease (USD) in Washington western pond turtles. The CT scans of the Oregon turtles will be compared to the CT scans of similar aged Washington turtles. Biologist Bergh also examined the Oregon turtles for signs of USD and thankfully found no signs of that disease. WDFW staff members are very grateful to ODFW staff members for helping Iredale collect Oregon turtles for her study, which is one of several investigations into the etiology of the disease that affects all populations of western pond turtles in Washington.

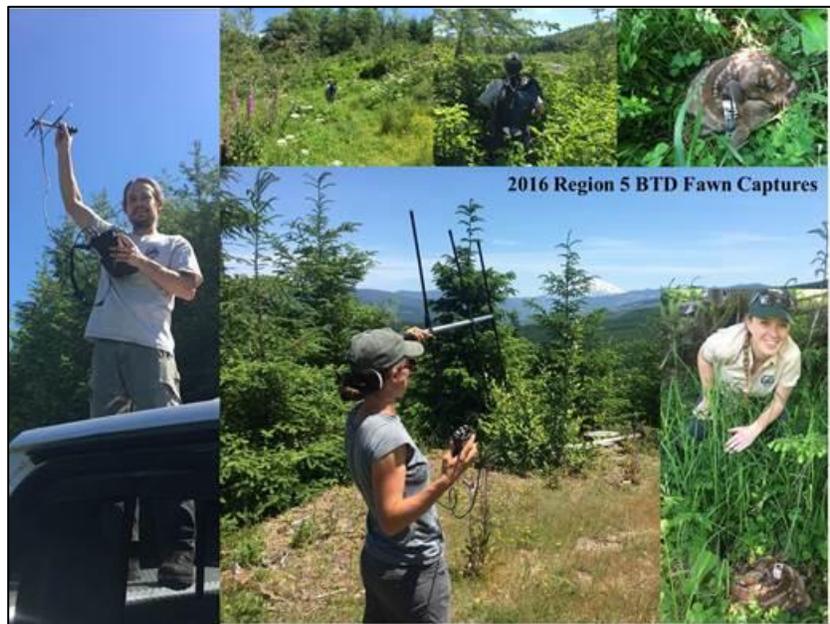


Bergh and Iredale in the field near Mosier

Sandhill Crane Management: District Biologist Anderson met with Wildlife Biologist Stinson from the Olympia Headquarters to discuss management issues associated with the current periodic status review for the sandhill crane in Washington. The primary focus of the meeting was to develop a list of potential nesting habitat sites in need of survey in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. As the breeding population expands in Washington, there will be a need to survey potential nesting sites within a 50 mile radius of the core population in Klickitat County. There have been several reports of sandhill cranes on USFS lands over the last six years, but little effort has been given to follow up on these sightings.

Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp: District Biologist Anderson met with Zoologist Fleckenstein with the DNR Heritage Program to assist in the identification of vernal pools (seasonal wetlands) in Skamania and Klickitat counties. These pools may support populations of fairy shrimp (small crustaceans). Little is known about which common or rare species of fairy shrimp are found in Washington. DNR is taking the early initiative to document their occurrences throughout the state. Vernal pools are a highly disturbed wetland habitat that has been significantly reduced by a variety of human-caused activities, including urban development, flood control projects, and land conversion. Of special interest to WDFW is the fact that the fairy shrimp that depend on these vernal pools are an important food source for a variety of Washington's waterfowl in the early breeding season.

Black-tailed Deer Research Project: Regional Wildlife Biologists continued with fawn searches and captures for this year's work on the black-tailed deer research project. Currently in the Coweeman cluster, seven out of 10 adult does that were captured in 2016 remain alive, while in the Washougal cluster, all four captured adult does remain alive. During the May-June birth period, all adult females associated with each study cluster will be monitored frequently by a combination of satellite, VHF, and Vaginal Implant Transmitter (VIT) technology, and multiple attempts will be made to capture their fawns. To date, a total of 12 fawns have been captured during the 2016 effort.



Shillapoo Wildlife Area

Wetland Restorations for 2016: Assistant Manager Hand began working up selected wetlands and moist soil impoundment areas of interest last week, which began the 2016 wetland restoration efforts. Over 40 acres are on the list for this season, including Blaker's Lake and 12 acres in the Lakebed area of the North Unit, Twin Ponds, and Pencil Lake in the South Unit. All

of these sites were treated with a fall herbicide application targeting reed canary grass followed by inundation during the winter months. Each site will be disked, potentially tilled, and planted with a cover crop. This management approach is designed to set back reed canary grass, provide a substantial food source for wintering waterfowl, and produce a predominant stand of native vegetation for subsequent years. The cover crops for this year are buckwheat, sorghum(milo), poco barley, and fava beans. Fava beans are a new crop to Shillapoo Wildlife Area and



managers have high hopes for its success. Skagit Wildlife Area has planted fava beans in the past and had great use by migrating geese and wintering ducks.

Fava beans planted in Lakebed of Shillapoo's North Unit

Mt. St. Helens Wildlife Area

Scotch Broom Clearing: Wildlife Area Manager Hauswald and Assistant Manager Sample, along with a dozen volunteers from the

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, worked this past weekend on the Mudflow Unit, clearing 100 acres of scotch broom. This was the third two-day work party this year to control scotch broom and improve forage habitat in the unit. With the help of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation volunteers, over 150 acres of habitat were improved for elk, deer, and other wildlife by controlling this noxious weed this spring. This habitat improvement work will continue, as next year's work parties are already being planned.

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Boulder Placement at Stinson Flats Campground: The WDFW road crew completed strategic placement of boulders at Stinson Flats Campground to improve driver safety and protect riparian habitat near the campground. A double row of boulders was placed near the edge of the river where the boat ramp was washed away last winter, creating a barrier to prevent people from driving off the edge into the river. Also, boulders were set in two areas where, despite signs advising otherwise, people frequently drive out sandy trails to the river. Logs have been used as barriers in the past. However, they have been moved or burned as firewood. The new barriers should be more effective in protecting the riparian corridor from vehicle traffic.

Road Improvements: Rock was added to improve two roads on the Soda Springs Unit. The rock will make the roads more durable during wet seasons and also protect culverts. Both roads had culverts showing through the soil in the road surface, making them vulnerable to damage. Manager Van Leuven worked with a volunteer to build a headwall at the upstream end of one culvert to armor the bank against erosion. A segment of Sheep Canyon Road about two miles up from the Glenwood Highway was rocked, as was an agricultural access road in the vicinity of the Canyon Creek Campground. Additionally, the WDFW road crew graded the road at the Mineral Springs Campground.



Road improvements

Weed Control: Manager Van Leuven applied herbicide to weeds in various locations on the Soda Springs Unit. Sulfur cinquefoil, oxeye daisies, knapweed, and everlasting peas were treated during three days of work.

Grazing Monitoring: As of Thursday, cattle were still present on the Kayser/Davenport permit area. The permittee had indicated that the animals would be moved by the end of the day

Wednesday. Manager Van Leuven contacted the owner and was assured that the livestock would be taken off the WDFW range on Friday. Van Leuven made another foray to move tadpoles from the stock pond to a protected pond. The stock pond was very low and fouled with manure. About 800 to 1,000 tadpoles and salamanders were captured by net and moved.

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

Private Lands

Hunting Access: Biologist Meyer renewed a Feel Free to Hunt contract in Klickitat County.

Access

Leidle Access: Access staff members Spangler and Rhodes limbed and cut along sides of the boat ramp at Leidle access on the Klickitat River. The loss of the boat ramp at Stinson Flats over the winter will cause higher use at Leidle until the ramp can be replaced.



Leidle access

Trash Pick-up: Access staff members Spangler and Rhodes picked up and hauled 250-300 pounds of common trash on access sites this week.

Barbers access site

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



Wildlife Areas

Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area Advisory Committee Meeting: Wildlife Area Manager Hauswald, Assistant Manager Sample, and Regional Wildlife Program Manager Jonker conducted an advisory committee meeting for the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area this past week. Members from the local community, USFS, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation attended the meeting. This meeting gave wildlife area staff members an opportunity to update members on the recent and future management and strategies of the wildlife area and its many satellite units. The topic that sparked some of the most interest was the upcoming forest thinning project that is aimed at improving forest health and creating better wildlife habitat. Other topics of discussion included forage and habitat improvements, weed control, and recent land acquisitions.

District 10 Wildlife Conflict

Wolf and Cougar: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin traveled to Region 2 to learn more about wolf conflict issues. Conklin assisted Conflict Specialist Heilhecker in tracking the Loup Loup wolf pack using telemetry. Conklin and Heilhecker also toured the Beaver Creek area with the range rider to find fresh sign of the newly identified Beaver Creek pack. Conklin also toured Region 3 with Conflict Specialist Wetzel. Conklin and Wetzel responded to a depredation of a goat. After a necropsy was performed it was determined the goat was likely killed by a cougar. The goat had trauma only to the throat region. Conklin and Wetzel set the cougar trap and baited it with the remains of the goat.



Goat depredated by a cougar



The only thing caught in the cougar trap is the elusive Wetzel

District 9 Wildlife Conflict

Range Rider Program: Conflict Specialist Peterson, Biologist Meyer, and Wildlife Program Manager Jonker met with several private industrial timber companies to discuss the Range Rider program in Klickitat County and access to their lands to implement this program.

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN A HIGHLY SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE BY SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY

Training: Biologist Meyer attended the final Leadership 1 training in Olympia, as well as a workshop with other WDFW staff members to learn about increasing capacity for conflict transformation within the agency.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Taylor's Checkerspot Reintroduction: In lieu of releasing postdiapause larvae at TA7S this year, 224 captive-reared adult butterflies were released during May 2-12. These included females that had met their egg quotas, as well as excess females and surviving males. Biologists Linders, Randolph, and Radford were assisted by Dan Grosboll (JBLM) to also release 1,003 prediapause larvae at the site. All were excess larvae from wild females collected for oviposition in 2016. Vegetation was beginning to dry out in some areas, but deep soils and shading from oaks and conifers offered a variety of suitable microsites. Many larvae were already in the fifth instar and ready to diapause at the time of release.

Biologist Linders and Susan Waters (Center for Natural Lands Management) searched for oviposition locations at two reintroduction sites in the Puget lowlands. More than 45 sites were recorded at Scatter Creek Wildlife Area and 28 sites were located at Glacial Heritage.



Discovery of Edith’s Checkerspot at Dry Creek Transfer Station: On June 6, Biologist McMillan’s son, Sam Langley, rescued an adult Edith’s checkerspot from being watered at a vegetation restoration project at the Port Angeles Dry Creek Transfer Site in west Port Angeles just east of the Elwha River. The checkerspot is in USFWS custody and will be identified by Jonathon Pelham at the Burke Museum. McMillan and Biologist Ament searched the area for other sign of checkerspots and did an initial review of existing habitat. The area will be the target of further searches for both checkerspot occurrence and host plants, with the focus being in 2017 when butterfly surveys can be done during the expected entire flight period of April and May.



Bald Eagle Territories: Biologist Ament discovered a new bald eagle territory at Lake Pleasant on May 27 while surveying for loon nesting activity. One adult was observed flying into the nest and it is unknown if any eaglets were present. The nest may have been on the lake for several years, as WDFW has not surveyed this lake for eagles since 2005.

Bald eagle nest discovered in large spruce tree at Lake Pleasant during loon survey

Another new eagle territory was recently documented near Dungeness thanks to a report from a local resident. Ament met with Diane Hood



on May 15 to confirm two nests. One was active, but it is unknown how many eaglets were in the nest. These nests are in the vicinity of a controversial proposal to construct a cell tower, and Ament notified the cell tower company about them. Documentation for both new eagle territories will be entered in the WDWF database.

Western Pond Turtle: Biologist Tirhi, Biologist Holcomb, and three volunteers continue to monitor the western pond turtle nesting season at the South Puget Sound Wildlife Area reintroduction site. A total of 14 nests have been laid by turtles wearing transmitters, and an

additional unknown number of nests have been laid by those without transmitters. Eggs from ten nests have been excavated and taken to the Woodland Park Zoo for head-starting.

Fisher Monitoring: Biologist Murphie established three camera stations with hair snare cubbies in Capitol State Forest as part of a multi-agency effort coordinated by the Olympic National Park. This effort is attempting to document the distribution of fishers on the Olympic Peninsula following their reintroduction to the Olympic National Park in 2008.

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

Wildlife Areas

Wishkah River: The Water Access Site team removed and replaced four ramp planks. Connection tabs to each plank had rusted away, allowing the 10-foot planks to separate and start slough into the river. During a minus tide, ramp planks were removed as the water level exposed each plank. New planks were then aligned and bolted to the existing ramp. Old broken planks were taken to the concrete recyclers for disposal.



Before



After

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

Wildlife Areas

Volunteer Project: Manager Belson coordinated with Master Hunter Chaffee to arrange a volunteer workday by a local chapter of Safari Club International (SCI). Mr. Chaffee and six fellow SCI members spent the better part of a blazing hot Saturday dismantling a 2,000-foot stretch of dilapidated boundary fence at the South Puget Sound Wildlife Area in Lakewood. The 50+ year old, 6-foot tall chicken wire and creosote post bird fence, a vestige of the former South Tacoma Game Farm, was in extreme disrepair and was highly visible to the public along Phillips Road. The boundary was subsequently posted with standard agency signage, including a

prohibition of access by unauthorized vehicles. This work was part of a larger effort at the wildlife area to rehabilitate or remove old infrastructure in public areas. Hunter Education / Volunteer Coordinator Montgomery was instrumental in facilitating the initial contacts that led to this project.