

Wildlife Program – Bi-weekly Report

April 1 to April 15, 2020

DIVERSITY DIVISION

Nothing for this installment.

GAME DIVISION

Nothing for this installment.

HUNTER EDUCATION

Nothing for this installment.

LANDS DIVISION

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Nothing for this installment.

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Nothing for this installment.

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Nothing for this installment.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Grazing Permits and Agriculture Leases: Range Ecologist Burnham worked on several grazing management efforts. Burnham assembled materials for a permit renewal on the Methow Wildlife Area and forwarded it to Section Manager Dahmer for further review. Burnham also communicated with Lands Operations Manager Haug about a prospective interagency effort to work on alternative pasture (fire, predators, etc.) proactively. Additionally, Burnham prepared materials for a temporary permit with an existing permittee for newly acquired lands on the Simcoe Unit, and discussed neighboring landowners and fencing with Manager Van Leuven. Also, Burnham prepared materials for a temporary fire relief permit on the Scotch Creek Wildlife Area and sent it to Wildlife Conflict Specialist Heilhecker for review. Vegetation

Ecologist Merg reviewed six agricultural leases in the first half of April. Section Manager Dahmer reviewed and signed seven agreement packages making a couple of slight revisions and forwarded to Division Manager Wilkerson.

Maiagrazing: Range Ecologist Burnham attended a virtual meeting with a MaiaGrazing company representative discussing benefits their products could provide for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and its permittees. Burnham also viewed recorded presentations about Outcome-Based Grazing (a multi-state Bureau of Land Management project), shared monitoring efforts around the West, data management, and other conservation topics with an eye toward the application of these ideas on the wildlife areas.

Climate Change Risk Assessment: Vegetation Ecologist Merg represents the Lands Division on the WDFW Climate Action Team (CAT), which is charged with advancing the agency's climate policy. Merg spent considerable time in the first half of April preparing for the climate risk assessment exercise done by wildlife senior staff on April 15. This was the Wildlife Program's version of the exercise by which each program in the agency will identify both current activities most vulnerable to impacts from climate change and how we could address that vulnerability. As part of a larger exercise, Range Ecologist Burnham joined Vegetation Ecologist Merg and Lands Operation Manager Finger in identifying possible effects of climate change on leases, permits, ecosystems, and operations on the wildlife areas.

WDFW Controlled Burns on Eastern Washington Wildlife Areas: All federal and state agencies that perform controlled burns in Washington have decided to postpone controlled burns until the COVID-19 situation has lessened. Conversations will continue to take place while monitoring the situation.

Vancouver Lake Vegetation Management Plan: Statewide Weed Coordinator Heimer sent Justin Collell (Clark County Weed Coordinator) the Region 5 biologists' contact information who had commented on the vegetation management plan. Approved a request by Kevin Tyler (Clark County) for an extension to May 29, 2020, to complete the plan because of major changes to staffing as part of the Covid-19 response.

Rx Fire: Since the "Stay home, Stay healthy" directive, Rx fire staff members have been using the time to plan for upcoming field seasons, cleaning files, and getting in front of office-related planning projects. Some staff members have taken online fire classes to help build new skills for the future. One training focus has addressed the skill of being a class presenter. Teaching a class can be a bit overwhelming. Even when you know the materials, it can still be stressful. Fire or environmental topics are chosen either by the supervisor or the fire team member to research and present. The team member uses presentation technology like PowerPoint to build their presentation, and then present a five to ten-minute virtual class to other staff members with a question and answer time afterward. Team members have said this has been very useful and they have gained a better understanding of what it takes to put together and present classes.

Weed Management: Puget Sound Weed Managers Zimmerman and Noteboom following the "Stay home, Stay healthy" order, conducted projects such as addressing computer needs, completing five North American Invasive Species Management Association online seminars,

attending a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Incident Command System course about national emergencies, three Mountain Rescue Association training courses and reading several scientific weed management papers provided by Manager Heimer. Zimmerman sent a draft of the Island Unit operations and maintenance (O&M) estimates for several vegetation management alternatives to staff members tasked with planning restoration and worked with Curran Cosgrove and River Refuge Seed on a robust seed mix for the marsh.

Montesano weed managers Holcomb, Nunez, and Morgan conducted projects such as addressing computer and technology needs, reviewing and cleaning up photos and computer files, completing training, studying for Right-of-Way pesticide test endorsements, and reading several scientific weed management papers provided by Manager Heimer. Nunez worked on the Grays Harbor spartina report, and Morgan worked on Scatter Creek projects by reviewing old files, studying the burn plan, and creating a volunteer list.

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Nothing for this installment.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Real Estate Services: Significant work was involved in researching and verifying the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) for fourteen counties requesting that payment. Elyse Woodruff coordinated with the counties to explain the process, that an eight-year “cap” on payments has been removed. For this year the payments will be made from the State Treasurer’s Office by April 30. The counties include Adams, Asotin, Chelan, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, and Yakima counties.

Future Funding Decision Packages: Section Manager Dahmer summarized initial funding need estimates for the fiscal year 2021 wildfire suppression and wildfire recovery and restoration, forest health authority, O&M for newly acquired lands, road maintenance, and grazing program management.

Wildfire Reporting: Forest Management Team Lead Tveten rolled out new methods for tracking wildfires on wildlife areas and managing wildfire-related records. He formed an Office 365 team in which all managers directly record wildfire information in a single tracking file. Also, fire-related documents will be kept in a single, shared directory. These changes will increase efficiency, eliminate the possibility of transcription errors, facilitate information sharing, eliminate duplication of records, and reduce the level of effort needed to comply with public disclosure requests.

Funding for Water Meters Associated with Irrigated Agricultural Leases: Vegetation Ecologist Merg helped Water Right Specialist Knudsen update a funding request to the legislature for water meters, which will help WDFW properly monitor the use of water rights. Merg added several irrigated agricultural leases that are supplied with water from a water right held by WDFW. The request is slated for the next biennium.

Bonneville Power Administration Funding Spending Plan: Vegetation Ecologist Merg summarized the draft spending plan for \$216,000 of additional O&M that is available on Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) funded wildlife areas this year. This growth is part of a one-million-dollar increase agreed to by BPA over five years beginning in 2018. Merg sent the draft plan out to regional wildlife program managers for review and approval.

Weed Control as an Essential Function: Statewide Weed Coordinator Heimer reviewed a survey sent to county weed boards and districts by the State Noxious Weed Control Board regarding their activities and expectations during the COVID-19 epidemic. Heimer summarized the information in a table and sent Section Manager Dahmer an email describing the survey high points. Executive Management Team (EMT) used valuable information and added weed control as an essential function under limited circumstances. Heimer sent an email to the State Noxious Weed Control Board for distribution to weed boards and districts outlining the WDFW's position on essential weed control.

7) Other

Nothing for this installment.

SCIENCE DIVISION

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Harvest Estimate Processing: The harvest statistics framework developed in 2016 continues to improve the efficiency and accuracy with which we process hunter reports of big game harvest and effort. Our partners at Washington State University interviewed 5,200 individuals that failed to report their hunting activities by the department's deadline. These interviews yielded a sample of 10,964 reports of deer (41%), elk (26%), bear (19%), turkey (12%), and several special permits (2%) to be integrated with 196,112 reports submitted by compliant hunters. This year, Science Division staff members completed the process, from pulling and compiling data from the WILD system, through checking for misreporting and other errors, to analyzing and disseminating products in record time. Harvest estimates at the game management unit (GMU) level provide district personnel and game managers with a better picture of hunter efforts and success rates across the 2019 seasons and the status of resources across the state.

Survey Data Processing: Biologist Blatz completed the data import of several WDFW and partner survey datasets into the corporate Web Search and Data Mining (WSDM) database. Data for sagebrush songbirds (17000 records), western gray squirrel forest practices surveys, and prairie falcon volunteer surveys were analyzed.

WDFW South Puget Sound Butterfly 2019 Project Data: Biologist Jenkerson processed 2019 South Puget Sound Long Distance Sampling butterfly data (estimated 5000 reported detections). The monitoring of and incorporation into WSDM, of these butterflies, will provide much needed key information on species site occupancy and distribution, and support the rare, oak woodlands, and native grasslands planning actions of Thurston County's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), WDFW and other prairie managers.

Survey Planning and Data Collection Support: Biologist Blatz, in collaboration with the survey, leads and WSDM IT staff members, designed, developed or enhanced data collection protocols and mobile survey forms for multiple upcoming species surveys, including streaked horned lark, ground squirrels, goose species, and western gray squirrel.

Beaver Relocation Project: IT App Developer Simper worked on mobile data forms, an associated web map displaying predicted habitat quality data, and a project-focused website utilizing the ArcGIS Online Hub software. These forms will allow permitted beaver relocators (i.e. non-WDFW staff) to view, assess and select sites, and to submit field-collected data on-site quality and follow-up monitoring as well as share this data easily and seamlessly with WDFW staff members and other relocators.

Dusky Goose Survey: Simper, in collaboration with other Science and Diversity section staff members and several district biologists, created a draft data form for collecting dusky goose survey data electronically. This involved creating interacting forms and web maps using Survey123 or Collector mobile apps. The use of these data forms will allow enhanced data sharing among survey staff members in several districts and Diversity Division personnel at headquarters, as well as capturing this data in a consistent analyzable format potentially useful for future management decisions.

Rocky Mountain Tailed Frogs eDNA: The Rocky Mountain Tailed Frog (RMTF) was designated a state candidate because of its limited range in Washington, its specialized habitat requirements, and its known susceptibility to several habitat impacts. Biologist Sato collaborated with the Fish Program Molecular Genetics Laboratory to develop eDNA protocols and analysis. Biologists Sato and Vekasy, then conducted sampling at streams where RMTF have been detected pre-burn. The results of the study indicated that the RMTF can persist in habitat burned as recently as 2015. Biologist Jenkerson, in turn, has incorporated this new cutting-edge data into WSDM.

2) **Providing Recreation Opportunities**

Nothing for this installment.

3) **Providing Conflict Prevention and Education**

Nothing for this installment.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Nothing for this installment.

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Nothing for this installment.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Video Tutorials for Field Applications: IT App Developer Simper worked on creating a series of explanatory videos to help staff members learn how to use the field collection applications and forms, such as ESRI's Collector and Survey123, and explored posting these videos on the Office365 software platform. These video tutorials will supplement written tutorials and help guides and field staff to better adopt and use these tools in surveys such as dusky goose surveys, Deer Road surveys, streaked horned lark surveys, and Oregon spotted frog surveys.

Telemetry System Enhancements: IT App Developer Whelan re-developed code for an improved Telemetry Data System. These enhancements better meet the ever-growing needs for GPS collar data management and improve the processing efficiency of incoming locational fixes. The new system will now check for new point locations hourly (from the previous, once per day), and if new data is present, we will add them to the appropriate telemetry project and update any related derivative products such as the lines connecting the GPS locations. The data will not only be coming in closer to real-time but views on this data will now provide more detailed telemetry information such as the unique animal identification and capture date, which will help staff members as they monitor their deployments.

Harvest Estimates and Regulations Database and Interfaces: IT App Developer Whelan completed the development of a server database, historical data cleanup and database views for an Integrated Harvest Regulations and Harvest Information System (IRHIS) database. A web application was also developed for staff members to view and query the IRHIS database and a test version of this web application should be available to personnel in May with the goal of putting the interface into full production by August. In collaboration with Public Affairs IT staff members, views of this data will also be used in a new harvest estimates webpage to provide the public with a better user experience for viewing and querying this data.

7) Other

Nothing for this installment.

REGION 1

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Nothing for this installment.

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Hunting Access: Natural Resource Technician Fish contacted landowners about our hunting access programs, worked on electronic records and ARC GIS to map properties enrolled in our access programs. Biologist Baarstad worked with contract staff members on Novatus issues and sent hunting access contracts to two landowners for signature. Baarstad also worked with Program Manager Strickland to ensure that hunters with turkey season reservations were contacted regarding season postponement.

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Town Fox: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Westerman spoke with Silver about a fox in a small town that was trapped because it had an injured leg, then was taken to a local rehabilitator and released back near town. Now the town is up in arms about the situation and realizes they made a mistake and is looking for help in clarifying the laws on nuisance animals and what can and cannot be done. Westerman is coordinating with eastern Washington WDFW Communications Manager Lehman to provide them with a document to help clear things up and provide accurate resources.

Deer Damage to Vineyards: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley responded to several deer damage complaints this past week. With the warm weather, the deer are hitting the new buds even though there is plenty of fresh alfalfa near every vineyard.



Depredation Investigation: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Samsill responded to a report of a depredation event that occurred in the Smackout pack territory on April 3. According to the report Samsill received, a man was driving down Aladdin Road early in the morning when he saw four gray wolves chasing and attacking a cow/calf pair in a nearby pasture. The witness shot at the wolves five times to scare them away from the cattle. The witness observed a couple of the wolves biting the young heifer calf on the hindquarters before running off. WDFW staff members responded and performed a depredation investigation with County Specialist Flood on the heifer calf. After shaving the hindquarters, WDFW personnel observed several bite marks and hemorrhaging consistent with a wolf attack. Samsill also documented several wolf tracks nearby. Samsill validated that wolves were in the area during the reported attack using wolf collar data software. Samsill then contacted the producer and provided her with several handouts and two Fox-Lights.

Grouse Flats Wolf Report: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Wade responded to two reports of wolf activity this week. The first was forwarded through Wildlife Area Manager Dice of two wolves seen crossing a WDFW grazing allotment near an adjacent home. The second was from a producer who reported that a large herd of elk had shown up in his hayfield and the following morning found what he believed to be a yearling elk calf killed some time during the night by wolves.



Elk herd the night before and dead elk calf the following morning

Asotin and Garfield County Turkey Issues: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Wade continued to remotely assist a producer in Asotin and Garfield counties with addressing issues of turkeys in and around their feedlots.

Walla Walla Foxes: Wade also took a call from a Walla Walla homeowner who has a family of foxes inhabiting a condemned home adjacent to her property. The homeowner lets 4-H kids keep their sheep and lambs on her six-acre pasture and was concerned that the foxes might kill the newborn lambs. The homeowner has guard llamas and is keeping the animals in a closed barn at night. Wade offered advice on other preventive measures she might be able to take and forwarded the report to Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley for further action.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

4-O Ranch Wildlife Area Fences: Wildlife area staff members continue to rebuild and stand-up fences at the 4-O Ranch Wildlife Area in preparation for spring grazing permits. An especially difficult stretch of fence that divides the breaks pasture on the east permit area was stood up and reinforced with steel t-posts and wood stays last week. All steel posts and tools including a rock drill and Honda generator to run the drill were carried on our backs off the top of the hill towards the bottom to fix this fence. Eyebolt anchors were drilled into a rock face at one location to attach a wire. Ozeran Ranch turned livestock out on the Bott pasture on April 9. More cows are coming for the breaks pasture in the next few days. Doug Jones and Dennis Moss completed a drift fence along Cougar Creek road. Staff members also completed driving steel t-posts along Grouse creek in preparation for hanging poly-wire when cows arrive next month. The drift fence along the western edge of the Porter Fields is completed. Efforts are now concentrating on a division fence for the airport fields and a new fence with gates around the airport field water trough. Other fences dividing pastures in “the park” area will be gone over and rebuilt to be functional.



Dave Meisner drills a hole in the rock for a t-post while Scott McGee, David Woodall, and Greg Heimgartner are hard at work!



David Woodall hammering a hole in rocky ground



Installed eye bolts in the rock to anchor wire



Completed interior drift fence at the Airport fields on the west permit area



Passing snow shower that hit in Oregon across the Grande Ronde valley from the 4-O Ranch Wildlife Area

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Hunting Clinic: Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley participated in an online meeting with Wildlife Program and Pheasant Release Program Manager White along with WDFW Hunter Education and Volunteer Coordinator Garcia regarding a hunting clinic to be held in Walla Walla County this fall. Hadley will follow up with members of the local Pheasants Forever Chapter committee members to discuss the hunting clinic.

Grizzly Bear Outreach: Wildlife Biologist Prince and Kalispel Biologist Megan Wright worked with a local (Chewelah) artist to design grizzly bear specific magnets and stickers. We are excited about the final designs and can't wait to hand them out at bear presentations as soon as we can.



One of the magnet/sticker designs for bear education

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements: Wildlife Conflict Supervisor McCanna put a meeting together for staff members in Districts 1 and 2 regarding the hunting access component of the Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements (DPCA). Private lands personnel and conflict staff members discussed current contracts, expired contracts, and new contracts. This meeting was to get new personnel on board for consistency throughout Region 1.

7) Other

United States Department of Agriculture Online Training: Private Lands Biologist Gaston completed all required online training for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) towards completion of his Certified Conservation Planner role.

Training: Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley completed required online training through the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

REGION 2

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Lynx Monitoring: A paper from the Washington lynx occupancy model research that biologists Fitkin and Heinlen have collaborated on with Washington State University (WSU) was recently published in the Journal of Wildlife Management. The New York Times also did a story about the work which can be found at this [link](#). We hope to continue refining the model and work on long-term monitoring methodology with additional wilderness lynx survey work this summer. In the meantime, Biologist Fitkin received some incidental lynx detections from camera work conducted by the [North Cascades Wolverine Project](#) and from Sara Bassing the graduate student engaged in a camera project as part of the University of Washington (UW) portion of the ongoing [Predator-Prey Project](#). One was of a study animal from a past research project several years ago. These detections were added to the WDFW database and add to our knowledge of current lynx distribution and longevity.



Lynx detection above Mazama – Photo courtesy of University of Washington remote camera

Pygmy Rabbit Acclimation and Release Pens: In preparation for kit release efforts this spring and summer, we relocated fence materials for seven pens in the two active recovery areas in Beezley Hills (three) and Burton Draw (four). Materials were dismantled from their previous sites and hauled by foot and UTV to the new sites. Each release pen is about one-acre in size and 740 perimeter feet. These pens are temporary and remain in place until kits begin establishing burrow systems within them. They have been very successful over the past two years, improving post-release survival to roughly 40 percent compared to the previous method of artificial burrows, which had an overall post-release survival rate of 12 percent. Recovery efforts are still struggling to gain a footing in these recovery areas due to the low number of kits being released.

Typically, this effort has relied on big volunteer numbers, often needing at least ten people per day. Due to the limitation in place by the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” orders, we made it work with the Wells Wildlife Area crew (A. Pavelchek, D. Williamson, M. Chouinard, and V. Ruiz) and pygmy rabbit technicians Smith and Soltysiak. We were able to complete the task while observing all the proper social distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements.



Coordinator Gallie observes proper technique for taking a group selfie under social distancing guidelines



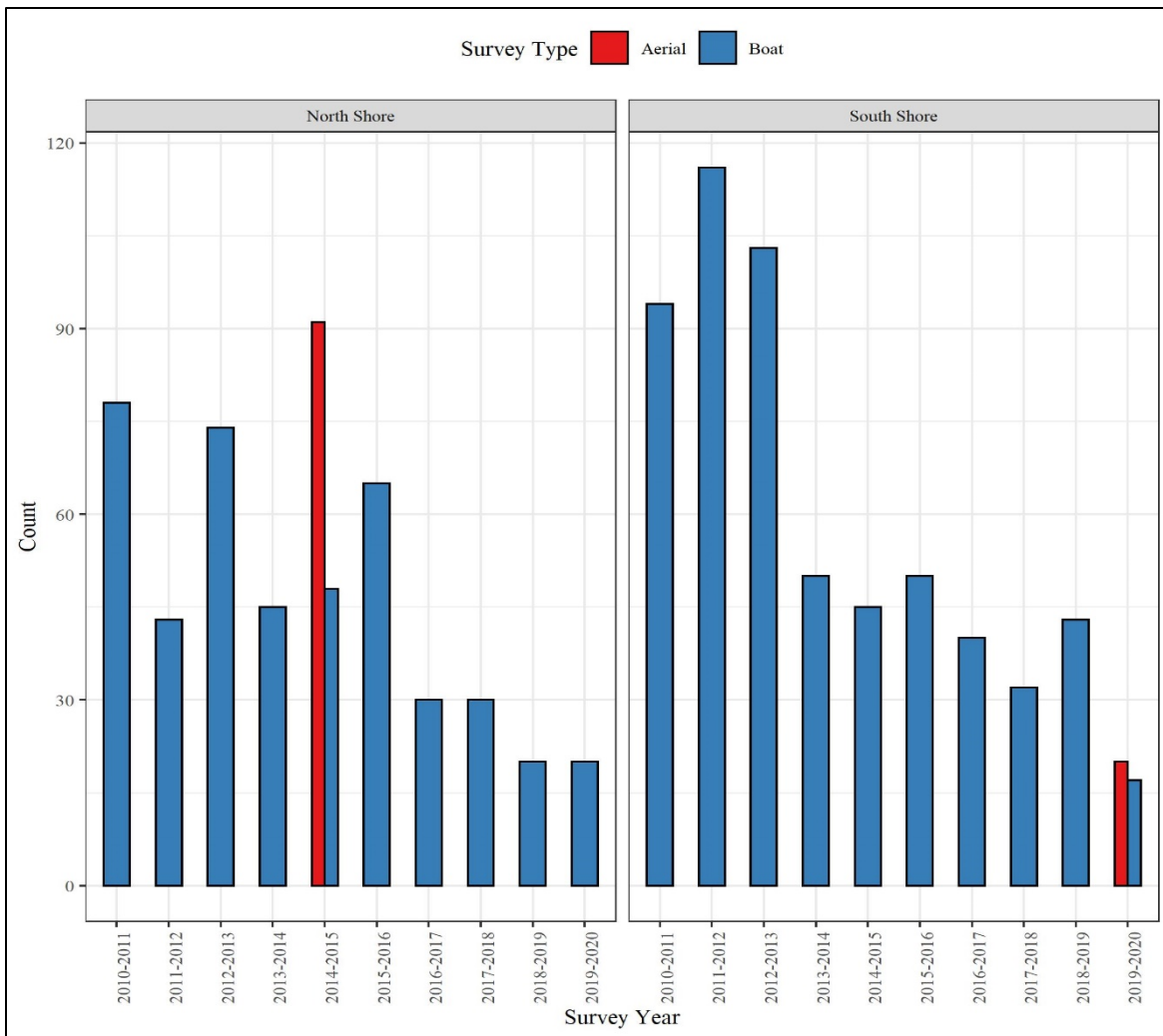
While not typical in pygmy rabbit habitat, we enjoyed a rare cactus bloom near the Beezley Hills field sites

Northern Leopard Frogs: Biologists Grabowsky and Dougherty continue to work on their proposal and coordinate with partners to align budgetary needs for future northern leopard frog (NLF) reintroduction work. The work at home order has allowed Biologist Grabowsky to look through data collected in the past several years to make corrections and begin analyses that otherwise may be pushed to the side. For example, metamorph DNA from 2019 is currently being used to determine population structure and genetic variability at the Potholes Reservoir

site. Biologist Grabowsky is working with our partners at Washington State University (WSU) to ensure the DNA samples and geospatial information line up correctly. The NLF team has also developed contingency plans for continuing the work planned for this spring once the work-at-home order is lifted. Luckily, our partners and personnel across the state have been accomodating and we're hopeful that the reintroductions planned for this 2020 can still move forward.

Washington Ground Squirrels: Biologist Rowan delineated sixteen possible areas to focus surveys in 2020. The areas chosen were on public land, generally fell within areas modeling indicated good squirrel habitat should exist, were in areas that could act as corridors to additional good habitat, and were adjacent to other large parcels of decent habitat. Areas were prioritized based on these factors and whether they were in distant regions that have gone overlooked due to higher priority areas in previous years. Lands Operations Manager Finger took advantage of his small Washington ground squirrel ranch and collected audio recordings to assist the Wildlife Program in developing survey training materials.

Lake Chelan Mountain Goat Survey: After receiving substantive comments from Chelan Public Utilities District (PUD) on the 2020 mountain goat survey report, Biologists Comstock and Jeffreys spent time reviewing mountain goat literature, compiling data and revising the final report to satisfy the requirements of the PUD. There is a concern about the status of this population, as our most recent aerial surveys have had low detections, and previous boat-based surveys have also indicated a decline in observed mountain goats in the South Shore Lake Chelan Herd.



Ten years of winter Lake Chelan mountain goat observations by survey platform

Moose in Horan Natural Area: The young cow moose that first appeared in the Horan Natural Area around July 2019 is still happily inhabiting the wetland preserve. Recent public reports indicate that she is molting heavily. Further reports and photos indicate that she is healthy and feeding well in her adopted home. Even though the Horan Natural Areas is managed by Washington State Parks, which are closed due to COVID-19, they have not instituted a closure for this popular walking area.

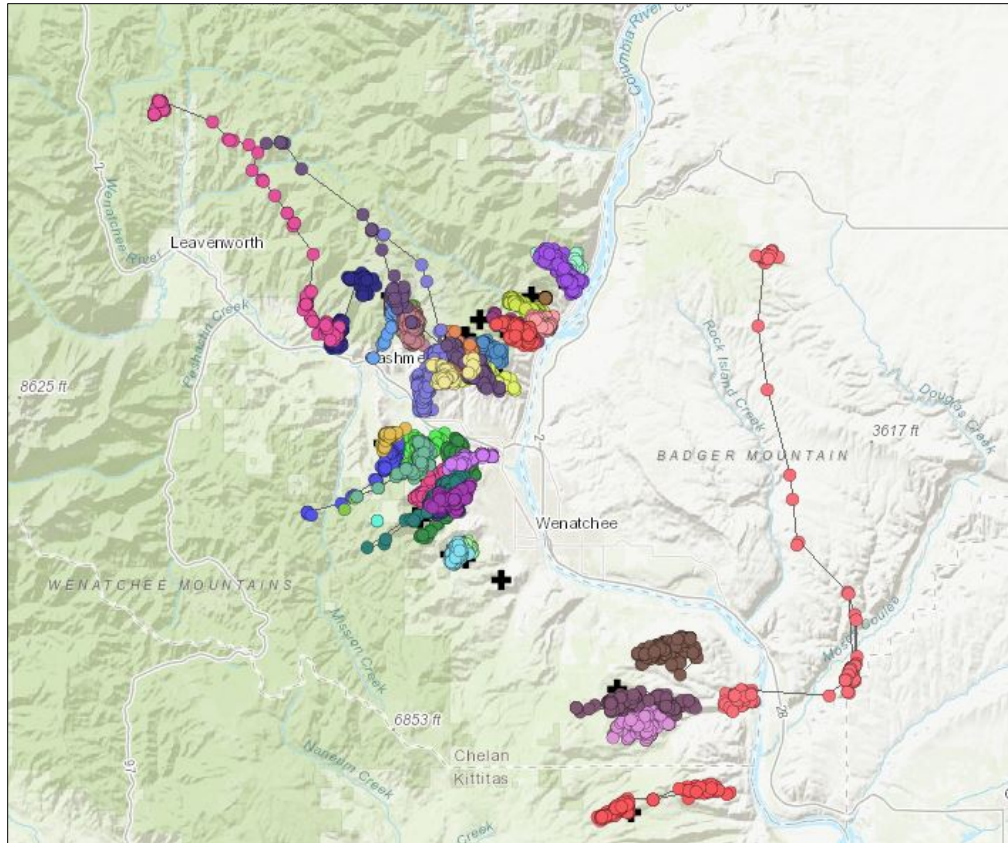
The other well-known wildlife residents of the Horan Natural Area include a bald eagle pair, which took up residence in 2019, building a nest in a cottonwood tree. This was the first bald eagle nest reported in the natural area in the last 30 years. Reports from local birders indicate that there is at least one nesting this spring.



Cow moose in Horan Natural Area - Photo by Beau Patterson

Greater Sage-Grouse: Approval has been granted to move forward with a planned translocation of yearling male sage-grouse from Douglas County to provide critical support for a dwindling Lincoln County population. The goal is to capture up to six sage-grouses from three different lek locations in Douglas County, taking no more than two birds from each lek. To maintain maximum physical distancing, only a small core team of trappers will be deployed to accomplish this task. Biologist Comstock made contact with all relevant landowners to gain permission to access lands for these captures. The captures will occur on or near April 22.

Mule Deer Migration: Some of the mule deer does within the East Slope Cascades Mule Deer Management Zone that were collared in January are beginning to migrate from core winter ranges. Some interesting movements have been detected in the past two weeks. One doe, collared near the Colockum Wildlife Area has crossed into Douglas County. Biologist Comstock is working on a report detailing the capture event that took place earlier this year.



Locations of collared mule deer does in Chelan County (n=39)

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Nothing for this installment.

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Nothing for this installment.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Pygmy Rabbit Safe Harbor Program: Biologist Hughes worked with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on finalizing an amendment that adds 40 acres to an existing Safe Harbor Agreement for The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Hughes forwarded the agreement to TNC for the final review and signature. The new USFWS point of contact for the pygmy rabbit Safe Harbor Program is Biologist Veverka. Biologist Hughes, and Veverka discussed plans for the Safe Harbor Program, recently completed transfers and future workload. Biologist Hughes contacted a landowner in the Safe Harbor Program to provide an update of no active burrows found on his property during the last survey season. The landowner is planning on adding gravel to a roadway and had concerns that the noise could affect any pygmy rabbits nearby. Hughes explained that the road work can proceed as there are no active burrows in the area and no habitat will be altered.

Supplemental Feed Route: Lands Operations Manager Finger participated in conference calls with Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and Capital Asset Management Program (CAMP) to discuss supplemental feed route operations and necessary infrastructure repairs and modification to have functional projects before feed water runs again.

Columbia Basin Planning: Lands Operations Manager Finger and the planning team held a virtual meeting to discuss plan development strategies while the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order is in effect. The team is shifting to shorter meetings with increased frequency to accommodate the needs of juggling planning with the needs of parents who are multi-tasking as daycare providers.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grant: Biologist Dougherty continued coordinating portions of a wetland enhancement projects along the Winchester Wasteway, including finalizing small North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) implementation, prescribed fire and next steps for when the Washington “Stay at Home, Stay Healthy” order is lifted.



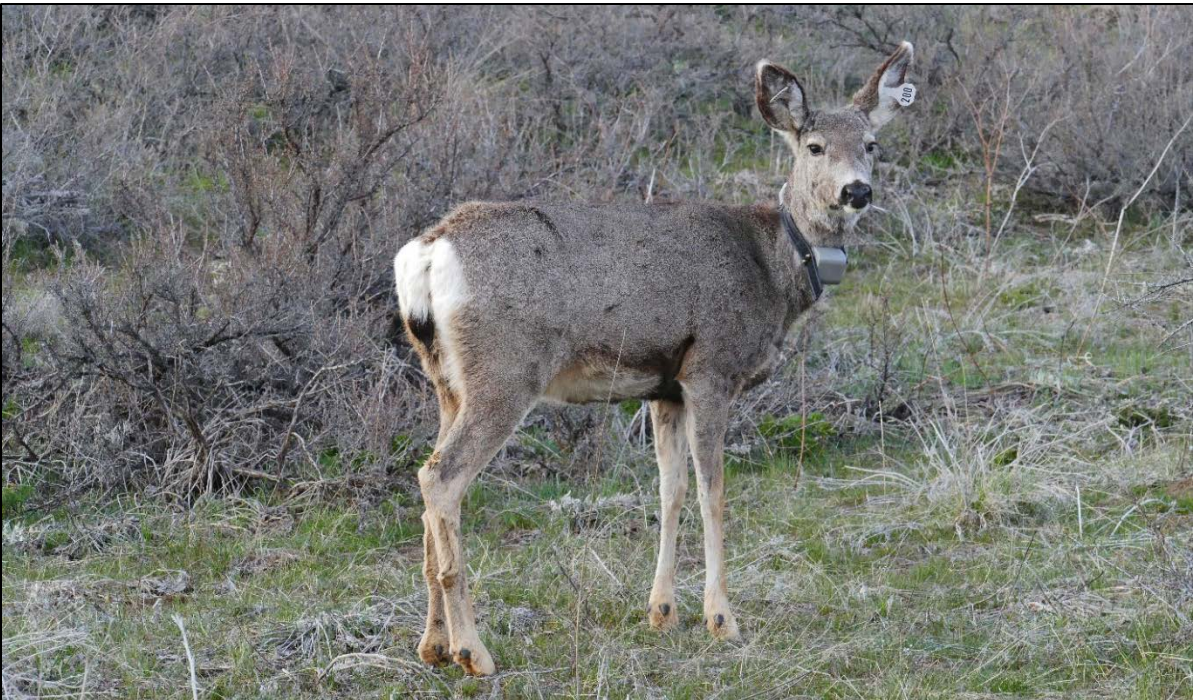
Wild Turkey gobbling - Photo by Eric Braaten



Red-tailed hawk light morph – Photo by S. Fitkin



Bird feeder commandeered by red squirrels – Photo by S. Fitkin



From top: Early spring in the Upper Methow, Predator-Prey Project mule deer – Photo by S. Fitkin

REGION 3

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Oak Creek Wildlife Area Manager Mackey responded to a call about an elk in poor health that was stuck in a flowing irrigation ditch in the Nile Valley. Upon arrival, the mature cow elk had been laying with her body entirely submerged in flowing water. She was unable to get up and was very drained due to some incident. The otherwise very healthy elk appeared to have suffered injuries from a vehicular accident.

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Natural Resource Technician Blore has continued to check state land closure signs on the wildlife area and put up another sign near the Shadow Creek camping area. There have been no signs purposely taken down; however, several cases of camping and parking next to “State Lands Closed” signs are showing the signs are ineffective. Neighbors in Parke Creek have reported lots of traffic headed up to shed hunt on the Quilomene Wildlife Area.



Adding a closure sign to the entrance of Shadow Creek

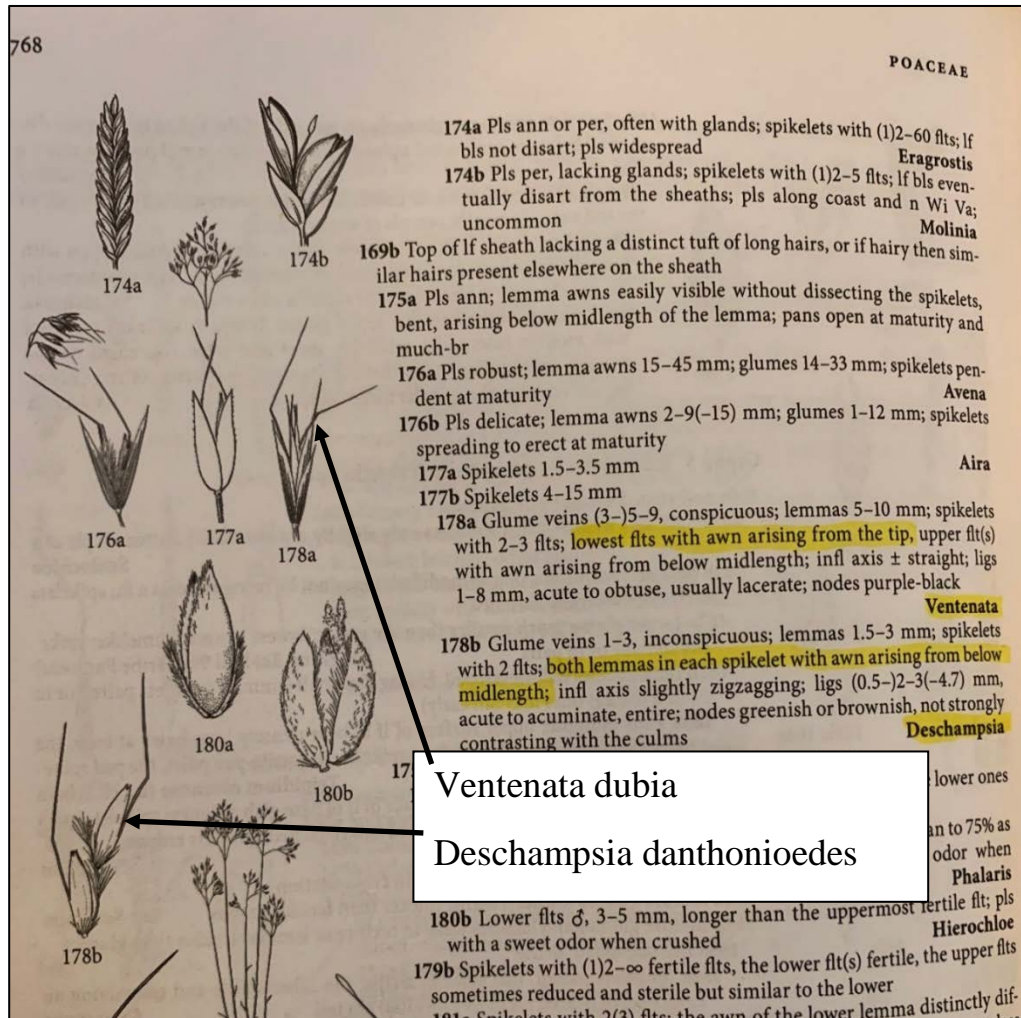
3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

District 4 Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received and responded to a call from a landowner near Ice Harbor Dam in Franklin County concerning a dead and fed upon beef calf. Hand and officers Seiss and Horn responded, investigated and completed a necropsy on the fed on carcass,

but unfortunately were unable to completely identify the cause of death. The landowner was greatly appreciative of our immediate response and effort in the investigation.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Winegeart is working to create a document of the most common L.T. Murray plants. He is researching “look-alike” plants such as *Ventenata* and *Deschampsia* to help staff members distinguish between native and invasive plants that are very similar.



*A page from the new Flora of the Pacific Northwest showing the break between the introduce weed *Ventenata dubia* and the native grass *Deschampsia danthonioides**

As an essential function, Natural Resource Technician Blore and Nass repaired boundary fencing and closed gates in part of the Quilomene Wildlife Area as the grazing season has begun.



A small sample of fencing in need of repair in the Quilomene Wildlife Area

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Region 3 Private Lands Biologist Hulett completed required Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) training to maintain Certified Conservation Planner status. Trainings included:

- Document Retention (required yearly)
- Cyber Security for 2020 (required yearly)
- Environmental Evaluation Webinar Series: Primer on NRCS Environmental Compliance
- Environmental Evaluation Webinar Series: Documenting the Environmental Evaluation
- Overview of Water Quality for Conservation Planners
- Nitrogen Management and Concerns
- Sediment Management for Water Quality

Private Lands Biologist Hulett completed Region 3's Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) quarterly report and submitted it to Farm Bill Specialist Kuttel.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Oak Creek Wildlife Area Manager Mackey met with other wildlife area management staff members within District 8 to discuss strategies for managing the influx of recreationists when state lands closures and winter closures are lifted. Many options were discussed with the primary goal to limit large concentrations of people at any one place or time. Notes were presented to executive management for consideration and to coordinate a consistent message statewide.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area staff members continue to telecommute. We were able to conduct a very productive monthly safety meeting to discuss ways to stay physically and mentally healthy during the current "Stay home, Stay healthy" order.

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area personnel have participated in numerous webinars regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and are transitioning into working from home. Staff members are getting caught up on required training, online weed certification, P-card training, and digging into great opportunities for professional development. L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Manager Babik participated in the Region 3 wildlife area manager quarterly meeting. Managers shared safety debriefings, ideas for engaging wildlife area staff members in meaningful remote work, upcoming RCO grants, and tools to improve communication with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding fire protection.

Manager Babik checked in with law enforcement. Infractions ranged from poaching turkeys to illegal camping, drug use, felons in possession of firearms, shed hunting in the winter closure, to hiking on closed lands. A huge thank you to law enforcement during this difficult time. Manager Babik continues to work on the L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Plan rewrite. She created a voice-over PowerPoint to engage the public.

Assistant Manager Winegeart worked to finalize the purchase of a new Honda Pioneer 1000-5 UTV. Delivery of the UTV should take place the first week of May if the "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order is lifted. Assistant Manager Winegeart accepted the delivery of a new truck that

will be used for the elk feeding program on the L.T. Murray Wildlife Area. The truck has the same size bed as the older feed truck but is longer and has a lower profile.



New L.T. Murray elk feeding truck

7) **Other**

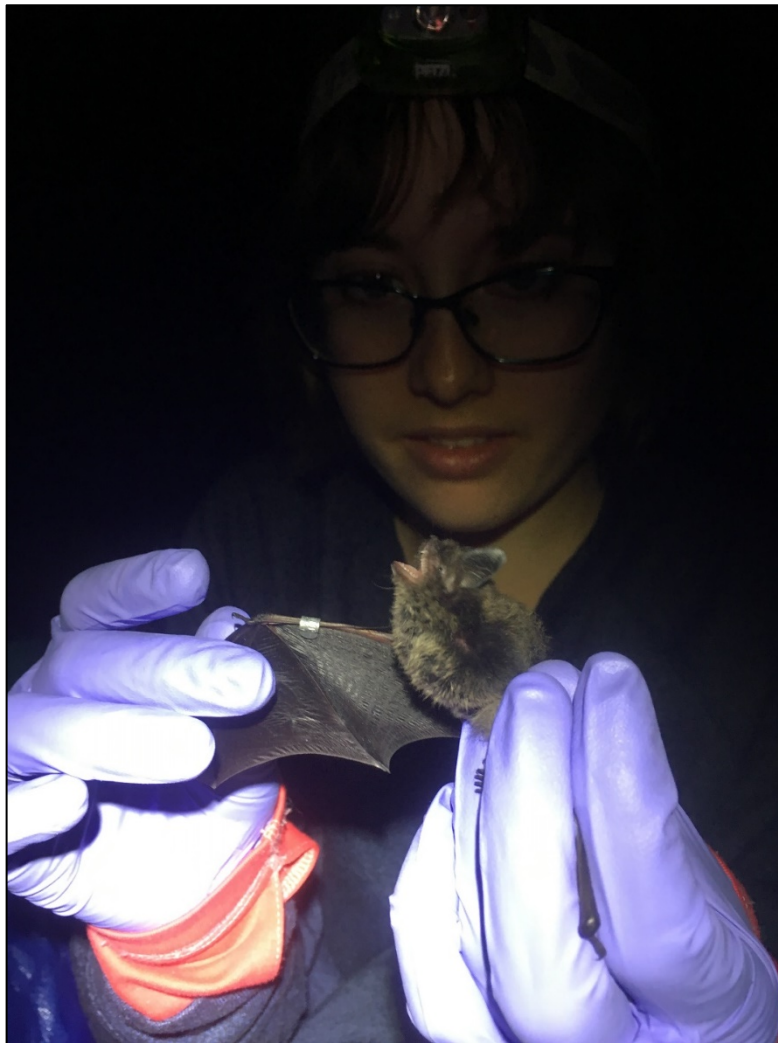
Nothing for this installment.

REGION 4

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Bats in the San Juans: University of Washington graduate student Rochelle Kelly defended her dissertation last spring. Biologist Milner took time to read her dissertation titled “Diversity, distributions, and activity of bats in the San Juan Islands”. Congratulations to Dr. Kelly, whose work provides the most comprehensive analysis of bat distribution in the San Juan Archipelago.



A banded bat ready for release on San Juan Island - Photo by R. Kelly

Island Marble Butterfly Conservation: Biologist Milner attended several remote meetings discussing many aspects of butterfly conservation with partners. Travel restrictions limit the amount of hands-on assistance WDFW staff members can provide to island-based partners currently. However, our commitment to helping landowners and conservation partners do what they can to move conservation efforts forward remains strong. Among other topics, District 13

received a new application from a landowner enrolling in the butterfly Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) and helped strategize on ways to educate our CCAA enrollees in how to develop their habitat patches for island marble butterflies.

Interesting Find: District 12 received a report out of Kirkland (from the nephew of a WDFW employee!) that a young man had found a salamander in his backyard. After some back and forth with District 12 and one of WDFW's herptile specialist it was determined the salamander is not native and likely one of the many slender salamanders (*Batrachoseps* species). These species range from Oregon (Siskiyou area), south through California, and northern Baja, Mexico. More pictures illustrated that this fascinating, extremely long-tailed salamander was not a native Washingtonian species. A tail of over four inches with a body of 2.5 inches (all tail). Researchers at the University of California Berkeley are attempting to determine what actual species of slender salamander this is. A follow-up survey may be requested of District 12 by WDFW headquarters to determine if a local population is there. However, it is plausible this animal came in on some landscaping or horticultural plant materials in ongoing speculation. From marmots at Discovery Park, spotted bats in downtown Seattle, caiman at Green Lake never dull for odd wildlife in greater Seattle! Just a reminder, please do not collect wildlife. We want our wildlife populations to stay wild and healthy and it is against state law to capture and collect state wildlife without permits outside of transitory holding of amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates for field identification (i.e. hobby identification which you examine in the moment, in the field, in as little of an intrusive manner as possible and put it back from where you found it, therefore, limiting any handling as much as possible).



A recently reported likely slender salamander species from a backyard in Kirkland. Look at that tail! - Photo by reporting party

Mountain Goat Translocation 2020: 2020 is scheduled as the final year to remove mountain goats from Olympic National Park and release them into the North Cascades. A two-week capture and release session is planned for the last week of July and the first week of August. Biologist Milner met remotely with Ungulate Specialist Moore and Assistant District Biologist Hamer to share our knowledge of past releases over the last two years in the North Cascades and begin planning for a successful project this summer.

Elk Survey: District Biologist Waddell worked with various Point Elliott Treaty Tribe staff members to analyze data from the annual survey of the North Cascades elk herd. The survey is conducted by helicopter in established survey units in Skagit and Whatcom Counties during March or April. The data was analyzed to estimate a herd population size, sex ratio (number of bulls per 100 cows), and age ratio (number of calves per 100 cows) for the herd in the core area. The 2020 population estimate was $1,339 \pm 313$, with a bull to cow ratio of 22 and a calf to cow ratio of 37.



2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

North Leque Island Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw submitted a grant pre-proposal to the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program for the North Leque Island Dike Removal and Channel Re-connection Project. The project involves removing the remainder of the dike on the portion of Leque Island that is north of Highway 532 and reconnecting tidal channels in seven locations. The site is already intertidal because a tide gate failed in 2005, but this project will better connect the site for fish access and to natural processes that maintain tidal marshes such as sediment transport and tidal energy.



3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Nothing for this installment.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Nothing for this installment.

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Nothing for this installment.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Agriculture: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Boehm completed agricultural leases for the Stillwater and Cherry Valley units. Many thanks to all involved with that process. Good weather brought many farmers out to prepare and plant fields for the 2020 growing season. Currently, we have approximately 500 acres of cropland for lease at four wildlife units.



Field prep at the Stillwater Unit

7) **Other**

Nothing for this installment.

REGION 5

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Release of Western Pond Turtles After Treatment: Biologist Wickhem released ten western pond turtles back into the wild that had recently been treated for shell disease. Shell disease is a novel turtle disease first discovered and described in western pond turtle populations in Washington state. The disease causes lesions to develop on the carapace and plastron which can expand, penetrate the body cavity of the turtle and impede organ function and mobility. WDFW, along with many partners, are investigating the disease trying to determine the cause, how to treat the disease, if treatments are effective, and if the disease affects the reproductive rates of affected females. The turtles who were most recently treated were captured and assessed for disease in July 2019 and were transported to the veterinary hospital at Oregon Zoo for treatment. After treatment, the turtles were sent to the Larch Corrections Center outside of Vancouver, Washington to recover over the winter while being cared for and monitored by inmate technicians as part of the [Sustainability in Prisons Project](#). The turtles were transferred back to the Oregon Zoo this spring for a final health check before their release. All turtles were active, appeared to be healing from their treatment, and happy to be back in the ponds



Two western pond turtles return to the wild after treatment. The white markings on their shells are from bone cement that was used to fill in shell disease lesions to prevent the lesions from spreading. The colored spots are nail polish which caretakers use to distinguish individual turtles. The nail polish does not harm the turtle and wears off quickly in the wild.

Golden Eagle Recovery: Biologists in District 9 received two reports of a dead golden eagle alongside a popular trail in Klickitat County. The reporting parties could not see an obvious cause of death and were concerned foul play was involved. Biologist Wickhem and Officer Whipple were able to locate the eagle, however by the time they arrived, the bird had been

scavenged on, and it was not possible to determine the cause of death. The eagle was collected and will be transported to the National Eagle Repository operated by the USFWS. The Repository uses deceased eagles for public education programs and distributes the feathers and eagle parts to Native Americans. For more information on the National Eagle Repository, visit this [website](#).



Deceased golden eagle found along a trail in Klickitat County

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Nothing for this installment.

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Bear and Cougar Mailers: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Jacobsen, with the tremendous help of Region 5 customer service specialists Koppi and Rainwaters and bear and cougar specialists Beausoleil and Welfelt, mailed out informational brochures to over 800 residents around Klickitat County regarding preventing bear and cougar conflicts. With the warm weather and emergence of black bears from their dens, reminding landowners to secure trash and remove bird feeders is critical in many areas to reduce the potential for conflict issues. Thank you to Customer Services Specialists Koppi and Rainwaters for printing, stuffing, and stamping over 800 envelopes!

Elk Damage: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Jacobsen was contacted by a landowner in Skamania County who has been incurring damage to their hay crop and orchards from elk. Over the last few years since their new seeding, their hay yield has decreased by 85 percent despite good crop maintenance. Jacobsen will likely enroll the landowner in a Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement and will work with the landowner to deter elk damage to their crops.

Injured Raccoon: Jacobsen also responded to a report of an injured raccoon that was walking up on porches and leaving pools of blood behind it. One individual who observed the raccoon reported that blood was coating the back end of the animal. Jacobsen looked for the raccoon but was unable to locate it.

Beaver Issues: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Jacobsen was contacted regarding an issue with beavers routinely blocking irrigation ditches in Klickitat County. Some advice was provided to the landowner on dealing with the beaver blockages.

Deer: Regional Wildlife Program Manager Jonker conducted an impromptu deer rescue in Clark County. Drawing upon wildlife handling experience gained on four continents, Jonker armed with a Labrador and a Subaru was able to successfully negotiate traffic and conduct the rescue.

Goat Depredation: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Aubrey responded to a goat depredation. Aubrey conducted an investigation on the carcass of the goat but was ultimately unable to confirm what caused the animal's death. The producer who called the event in had recently seen a cougar in the area and was concerned it may cause more issues with his young calves in the same area as the goat. Advice on proper animal husbandry and predator deterrents was given.

Injured Bald Eagle: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Aubrey responded to look for an injured bald eagle. Many residents had observed the eagle on the ground being harassed by other eagles and crows. While in the area, Aubrey was informed the eagle was still capable of flying to some degree and was last seen in a tree. Aubrey was unable to locate the bird.

Elk Damage Issues: Aubrey also worked with many landowners throughout District 10 to address elk damage concerns. Information and supplies were given out to assist landowners with hazing efforts.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Nothing for this installment.

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Nothing for this installment.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Nothing for this installment.

7) Other

Nothing for this installment.

REGION 6

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Oregon Spotted Frog: Department biologists Butler and Tirhi, along with Technician Pignatelli collected geospatial data on Oregon spotted frog surveys during the spring for 2020. This data was recorded utilizing multiple collection techniques to determine the most useful and effective way to record, display, and analyze survey data. The 2020 survey tracks have been examined and erroneous or duplicate data has been removed. The clean dataset is in the process of being standardized, consolidated, and incorporated into a multiyear database.



2020 survey track

This comprehensive database will allow biologists to compare current and historic datasets. This will result in the ability to evaluate survey efforts and coverage helping identify any potential data gaps. Additionally, the “Stay home, Stay Healthy” order has allowed Technician Pignatelli to look closer at the data. He was able to identify new areas to survey, collect property owner information, and draft individual letters requesting survey access in 2021.

Western Pond Turtle: Biologist Butler and Technician Pignatelli released eleven western pond turtles at the Pierce County recovery site this week. These eleven turtles were originally trapped in September of 2019 and sent to the PAWS Wildlife Center for shell disease treatment. Once the treatments were completed, the turtles were sent to the Cedar Creek Correctional Facility to overwinter and finish recovering. As part of the Sustainability in Prisons Project, trained inmate

technicians provided daily care for the turtles and took detailed notes of each turtle's recovery. Due to the "Stay home, stay healthy" order, these turtles were transferred from Cedar Creek back to PAWS in March where PAWS staff members could care for them until they could safely be released back to the ponds. While the inmate technicians were not allowed to attend this year's release, we are very thankful for the excellent care they provided these turtles.



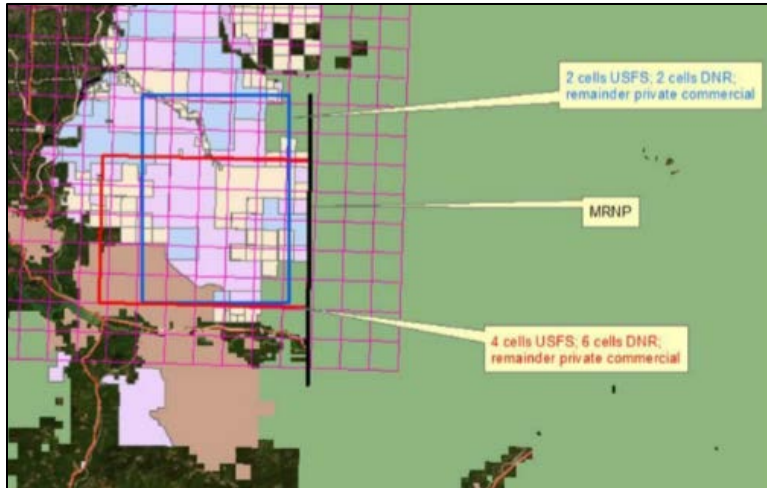
A recently released western pond turtle enjoying pond life again



Biologist Butler ready to release a western pond turtle

Black Bear Density Monitoring: In preparation for bear monitoring in District 11 this season, Biologist Tirhi submitted two draft monitoring grids to carnivore specialists Beausoleil and Welfelt for review and comment. Per the WDFW bear monitoring protocol, the sampling grid

within each a barbed-wire corral baited with a scented lure (fish oil and blood) will be constructed and hair will be collected over four weeks. Both of Tirhi's draft grids contain a mixture of USFS, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and private commercial timberland. Tirhi will finalize the grid and continue with planning next week.



District 11 draft bear monitoring grid locations (2020)



Barbed-wire corral baited with a scented lure for bear monitoring in District 17 (2019)

Dungeness Elk: Biologist McMillan shipped a Vectronic GPS elk collar to Vectronic in Germany to have the battery replaced. When this collar is shipped back to WDFW it will be put on a cow elk in the Dungeness herd to provide information regarding the conflict issues. Department of Transportation (DOT) staff members contacted Biologist McMillan regarding their plans for a Highway 101 crossing just east of Sequim at Johnson Creek. DOT is considering designing an underpass that would allow elk to use it.

Coastal Watershed Institute Science Seminar: Biologist McMillan and Biologist Ament participated in an online science seminar that included projects and studies within District 16. The institute has many resources that you can access at this [link](#).

Bird-scaping Program: Biologist McMillan attended a [bird-scaping program online](#) offered by the local extension service. The title for talk was “Helping Native Birds through Gardening and Landscaping”.

Barn Owl Nestling Returned to Nest: On April 15, 2020, Biologist Ament got a call from the Director of the Dungeness River Audubon Center, Powell Jones. He reported that a volunteer from the center was on a walk and found a nestling owl on the ground directly beside a heavily used road. Following COVID-19 guidelines from the Wildlife Program related to wildlife in distress, Biologist Ament promptly contacted local WDFW Enforcement and a wildlife rehabilitator. Sara Penhallegon from the Center Valley Animal Rescue requested that Biologist Ament respond since there was high traffic volume in the area. Biologist Ament advised all involved that they must have proper PPE for the project.

The young barn owl was collected by Powell and taken to Greywolf Vet Clinic for a wellness check. A search was conducted and the nest for the owl was found in a nearby overpass located on Highway 101. Several dead pigeons and numerous owl pellets were found on the ground below the ledge where the nest was located. A tall ladder provided by John Heck from the Center Valley Animal Rescue was used to access the nest. There were two other alert nestlings found at the nest on the concrete ledge. Sara gave the nestling some fluids before returning it to the nest. The weight of this young owl and the two others were also taken. No adults were observed in the vicinity. Hopefully, they will return in the evenings to feed the three nestlings. Biologist Ament contacted several DOT staff members to let them know of the owl nest, which is in a rather precarious location. She also contacted Olympic National Park Biologist Scott Gremel that evening to get some advice. Some further monitoring of the nest site may occur.



Barn owl nestling after wellness check



Powell with a big grin under mask



Sara and Shelly with owl nestling



Owl nestling placed back in the nest



Two other barn owl nestlings thinking, "we don't want him back.... more food for us"!

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Washington Recreation and Conservation Office Grants: The water access team has been working on a Boating Facilities Program Grant for the Chehalis River Fuller Bridge Launch and a State Lands Development Grant for improvements at the Bogachiel River Leyendecker site. Additionally, we are working with the Statewide Access Program to come up with a reopening plan for the currently closed water access sites.

COVID-19 Emergency Site Closures: Staff members were requested, on two separate days, to respond and repair the vandalism of property at four different access sites. The vandalism occurred in the following four counties (Thurston, Mason, Jefferson, and Kitsap). Staff members have been working hard to order required PPE and sanitation materials (in bulk) for the projected reopening of our precious state lands.

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Dungeness Bear: Biologist Ament assisted local WDFW Enforcement with immobilizing and relocating a young bear that was roaming in the Dungeness area. Late afternoon on April 10, Ament was called by Officer Hillman who reported that a bear cub was up a tree at Dungeness Landing Park, north of Sequim. Residents had earlier observed the bear swimming east in Dungeness Bay before coming to shore at the park. When Biologist Ament arrived on scene the bear had moved to the base of another tree across the access road. Based on size it was determined to be a two-year-old bear that was most likely by itself. It was estimated at weighing 100 to 125 pounds. The young bear promptly climbed another tree when a woman violated the park closure and drove her vehicle into the park. A culvert trap was set at the park overnight. The bear was found sleeping at the base of the tree at first light the next morning. Officer Davidson was also on the scene this day. The trap was re-baited and left at the base of the tree for four more hours while the bear slept. When the bear finally awoke it showed no interest in the tempting smelly treats in the trap. It started to head up to the entrance of the park but then dropped back down and wandered east toward the Dungeness River.

Biologist Ament headed to the site where the bear was last seen heading into the brushy riparian zone of the river. Officers Hillman and Davidson drove to the Three Crabs Wildlife Area with hopes to try and keep the bear in the river corridor. The bear had other plans and then went on a four-hour walkabout on the tide flats directly north of Jamestown Beach. The enforcement and biology team re-grouped along Three Crabs Road. They all did their best to warn people and keep the bear away from the crowd of beach walkers and residents along Three Crabs and Jamestown Road. All people encountered were both shocked and quite thrilled to see a bear exploring the beach at low tide.

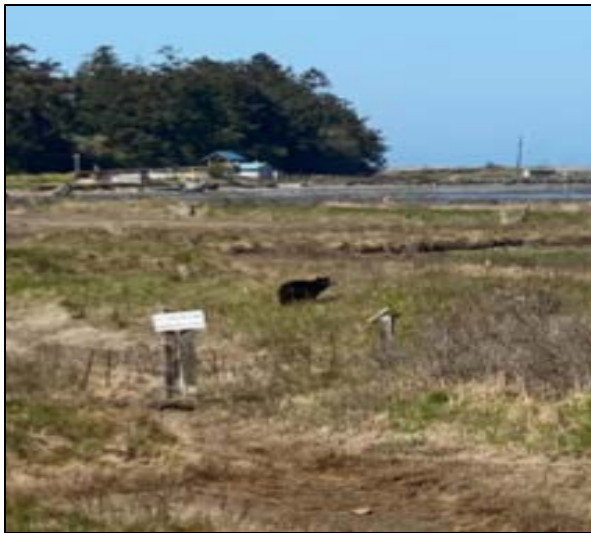
Officer Davidson did an exceptional job of casually strolling along with the bear while warning people to keep back. At one point the bear was heading around a corner where there were two sunbathers lying face down on the beach by some large beach logs. Biologist Ament was farther to the west clearing the beach. Luckily, Officer Hillman was there just in time to warn the sunbathers that a bear was just about to come around the corner. The bear then had a close encounter with two large dogs off-leash and started heading north. Eventually, it ventured back to the beach and was tracked to a quiet grassy location between two residences along Jamestown Road. The bear bedded down for another nap and was an easy target to be darted by Officer Davidson.

Quite unexpectedly, there ended up being a group of nine people on the scene at the property where the bear was immobilized. Biologist Ament removed the dart and examined the bear. It was a male. The teeth were yellow and quite worn so the bear was likely much older than suspected. He was somewhat thin but nothing extreme for this time of year. He had a small scab on his head but otherwise seemed healthy. The bear was situated in the hot sun, so Biologist Ament applied cold water under the front and back legs to help keep his body temperature down. A yellow ear tag was placed in his left ear. Biologist Ament has lived in Dungeness since 1993 and has never heard a report of a bear in the vicinity. Earlier in the week, there were a few reports of a small bear near Agnew which is approximately six miles southwest of Dungeness. It is possible the bear followed the McDonald Creek drainage to the shoreline and then headed west.

There was no history of this Dungeness bear being known to have gotten into garbage or showing any aggressive behavior towards humans. The bear was loaded back in the trap and relocated to a remote location on the east side of the Olympic Mountains. A local photographer, John Gussman, was encountered during the adventures along Three Crabs Road. He used a drone to get some great footage of the bear wandering the mudflats. His video can be seen at this [link](#). Most who watch this video are certainly not aware of what action went on behind the scenes when the bear was near homes, people, and dogs. Biologist Ament appreciated being able to be in the field and assist the enforcement officers with this project.



Bear after swimming in Dungeness Bay Trap set at base of tree with sleeping bear
- Photos by Bob Phreaner



Impressive view of Mount Baker with the rare sighting of a bear on the mudflats
- Photo by Jennifer Helpenstell-Resnick



Biologist Ament treats the dart wound

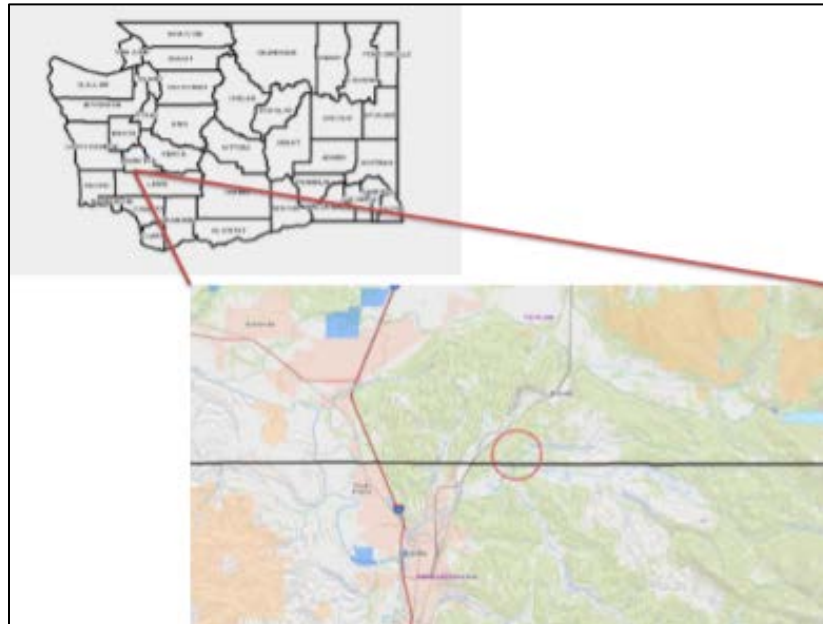


“Covi” the bear back in suitable bear habitat (given name since he likes to spread among humans)

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Centralia Mine Acquisition: Biologist Tirhi continues to represent Region 6 Wildlife Program in the ongoing planning for the acquisition of the Centralia Mine as a future WDFW Wildlife Area. This project is a partnership with mine owners, TransAlta. The Centralia Mine Acquisition Technical Team (CMATT) has been meeting twice monthly virtually throughout the COVID-19 shutdown to progress the project. Recently, Tirhi drafted a letter of interest on behalf of CMATT towards grant funds through TransAlta’s Energy Technology Board for funding for the acquisition of Phase 1 of the project, approximately 6,000 acres at a cost of up to four million dollars. A future Wildlife Area at this site may exceed 8,000 acres. Once Tirhi receives a response from the Board, she and CMATT will begin the process of submitting the WDFW Lands 2020 application for approval and then proceed with the grant application. This is a very exciting project and WDFW is extremely grateful for the continued partnership with TransAlta.

A future wildlife area would add to the lands WDFW already co-manages with TransAlta at the Skookumchuck Wildlife Area.



Location of the Centralia Mine and potential for future WDFW wildlife area

Mazama Pocket Gopher Acquisition Lands: Biologist Tirhi continues to have meetings and check-ins with WDFW Real Estate Program on the Wildridge Estates Conservation Easement and the draft management plan, Ames, Rogers, and Andres acquisitions for Oregon spotted frog and Centralia Mine. Acquisitions take an extreme amount of personnel time and Tirhi is very grateful for the support and collaboration of the Real Estate staff members including Beal and Hallock. WDFW could never buy the important conservation and recreational land it does without the strong partnership of biologists and real estate experts.

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Nothing for this installment.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Nothing for this installment.

7) Other

Nothing for this installment.