

# Wildlife Program

Week of July 2-8, 2012

## **LANDS DIVISION**

**Recreation Users Display Discover Passes: Compliance Rate: 82 percent:** This spring the Discover Pass partner agencies, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and State Parks, established a process for assessing Discover Pass compliance. Each agency has identified at least six sites throughout the state and agreed to count the number of vehicles displaying the Discover Pass, or Vehicle Access Pass (VAP) on WDFW lands, at three different times of the year (spring, summer, fall). April/May was the first count. Results aren't compiled for all three agencies, but for the six WDFW sites the compliance rate is 82 percent. Thanks to all staff who helped develop the strategy and are collecting the counts!

## **WILDLIFE OUTREACH DIVISION**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

**Scientific Collections Permits (SCP):** Mike O'Malley, Tricia Thompson, Bruce Baker (Fish Program), Bruce Thompson, and Joe Buchanan met to discuss the Scientific Collections Permit application and review process. The intent is to streamline the process and make it easier for the reviewing biologists to detect any conservation and management concerns or conflicts with other researchers and projects. We are getting close to launching the new applications and instructions that incorporate the changes. The next phase is discussing the process for approving, denying, and conditioning these permits.

**Wildlife Rehabilitation:** The outcome of the burrowing owl rescue is happy – they were well cared for at their nest, and three chicks fledged. Thanks to everybody but particularly the private residents of Mosses Lake who provided for these little owls.

This time of year WDFW and licensed wildlife rehabilitators get many calls regarding injured and orphaned deer. Most of the time, the fawn is **not** abandoned and should be left alone. A few times the fawn does need help. This week a person called and said he had a fawn that had aborted from the mother when she was hit by a car. The man took the fawn home and called a wildlife rehabilitator asking how to care for it. The rehabilitator explained that the caller needed to bring the fawn into the rehabilitator; as the deer needed critical care and it is illegal to possess wildlife. When asked his name the caller hung up, alerting the rehabilitator to the fact the caller was unlikely to relinquish the fawn. Getting the phone number from caller ID, the rehabilitator was able to get a hold of a Wildlife Officer who contacted the man with the deer. This week, the fawn was taken to the WDFW Montesano Office and turned in. The fawn is now recovering at the appropriate Wildlife Rehabilitator's hospital. At 8 lbs. it is very tiny and has respiratory problems and diarrhea, but those issues are resolving.

**Falconry:** An injured gyrfalcon wearing falconry jesses, a falconry band, and a radio transmitter was turned into one of a wildlife rehabilitator who contacted Tricia Thompson and gave her the band number. She was able to trace the band number and contact the falconer who lost the bird. Unfortunately the gyrfalcon died in the hospital.

**Cougars and Public Safety:** Door hangers on “We Live in Cougar Country” and “A Cougar Has Been Seen in Your Area Recently” were developed and approved by Wild Futures, Grizzly Bear Outreach Project, and WDFW. The door hangers emphasize cougar safety tips and what to do if one encounters a cougar. The intent behind the door hangers is to give focused information in cougar hotspot areas, as called for in the Cougar Outreach Plan.

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

*Prepare for Hunting Seasons Now* is the first of a series of documents related to hunting prospects that will be released this summer. The focus of this piece is to encourage hunters to get active now in order to have a successful hunt this fall. Subject headings are: *Study the regulations; Take a Hunter Education Course, Buy licenses, tags and stamps, Spend some time with maps, Do some scouting, Get to know landowners, Shape-up, Work with your dog, Get home on the (shooting) range, Get organized, and Start scheduling.* This is planned to be available on the WDFW web page on July 8, 2013.

**Citizen Science, Ecological Inventory Monitoring:** Wildlife Outreach staff Margaret Tudor, James Chandler and Chuck Gibilisco finalized details on the first WDFW citizen science collaboration between scientists and a diverse array of community members from across Washington, with a predominance of participants from eastern Washington. Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area is the first of WDFW lands to be targeted for the ecological integrity assessment.

Eleven participants responded to the WDFW invitation to meet with WDFW scientists and land managers and get involved collecting ecological data for a long-term view of our managed lands [http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/volunteer/swanson\\_lake](http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/volunteer/swanson_lake). Monitoring and analysis data will help determine the status and trends in the condition of various ecological resources with some respect to a defined range of variation. This will provide WDFW staff and the public with a scientific basis for adaptive management strategies used on our lands.

The long-term project is similar to WDFW wildlife area ecological monitoring projects, utilizing a citizen science approach for specific tasks of the projects. Information gathered will provide baseline data for WDFW resource, management, and policy decisions regarding WDFW wildlife areas.

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

**Volunteer reimbursement:** With the upcoming maiden voyage of volunteer monitors for wildlife areas for Ecological Inventory Monitoring, the subject of reimbursement to volunteers for their mileage and other expenses, along with discover Pass implications, was discussed at the

previous Quarterly Meeting of Wildlife Program Senior Staff. A condensation of this conversation was drafted for Wildlife Program review and has been shared with the Hunter Education program.

## **REGION 1**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

#### **Wildlife Management**

**Wolf Management - Smackout Range Rider Update:** Assistant District Wildlife Biologist Shepherd sent general Smackout Pack information to Range Rider Leisa Hill. Wolf Technician Tiffany Baker rode horseback with Leisa Hill and conducted radio telemetry and located cattle.



*Dawson cattle in Smackout Pass area within the Smackout pack home range.*

#### **Wildlife Areas**

**Custom Spray field on Swanson Lakes W/A:** Wildlife staff arranged for the McGregor Company to custom spray 103 acres (Roundup) set for full restoration this fall. This was the second application of Roundup. The first application the wildlife area staff did with a 50' sprayer in early May. That particular Roundup application held excellent considering we had over 2.5 inches of rain in the month of June alone.



*The McGregor Company 100' custom sprayer. Photo by Mike Finch.*

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

**Private Lands/Access**

**Private lands access provided:** Habitat Biologist Dotts met with two landowners this week who are interested in joining the NEW-HAB program. One 240-acre parcel is located in GMU 121 near Addy in Stevens County. The other 270-acre parcel is located just north of Metaline on the west side of the Pend Oreille River in GMU 111.

**Feel Free to Fish:** Private Lands Biologist Davis spoke with a private landowner in Walla Walla County interested in participating in the Feel Free to Fish Program. The landowner owns approximately 5 miles of river frontage along the Walla Walla River and would potentially enroll about 4 miles of the river for fishing access. In addition, the landowner is interested in enrolling 1,350 ac in WDFW's Feel Free to Hunt access program. The landowner is discussing the programs with their family and Davis will follow up with them in the upcoming weeks to address any questions they may have.

**Voluntary Public Access (VPA) and Habitat Initiative:** Private Lands Biologist Davis met with 3 private landowners interested in enrolling in the VPA program under access only agreements. One contract in Walla Walla County, which would provide 1,277 ac of public hunting access under Feel Free to Hunt, has been entered into CAPs and is in draft status. Davis will continue to contact private landowners in Walla Walla and Columbia counties to inquire about their interest in enrolling properties in the VPA program.

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

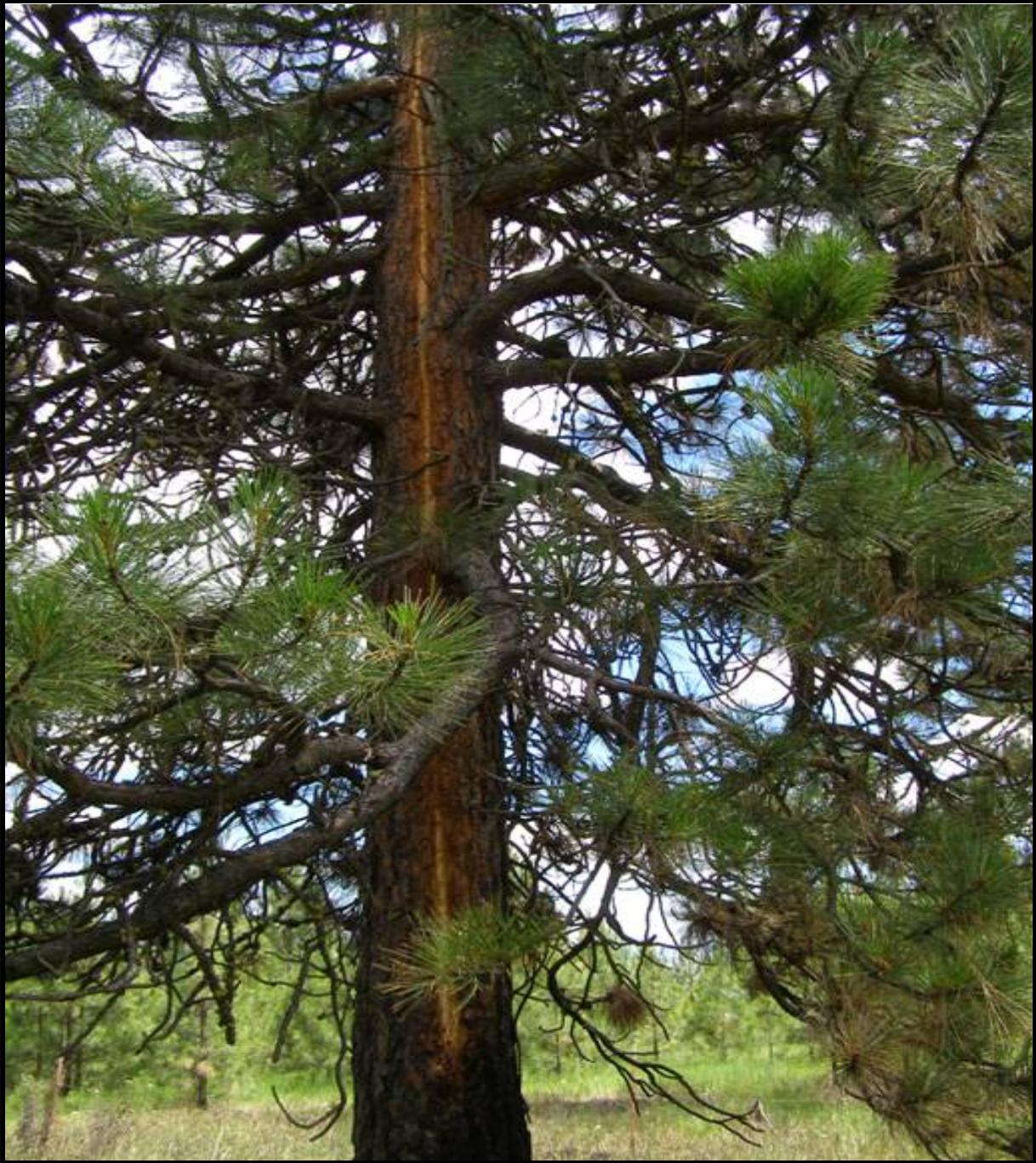
**Wildlife Areas**

**Chief Joseph Wildlife Area – Grande Ronde Fire:** Wildlife Area Manager Bob Dice was notified by DNR that a small fire had broken out on the wildlife area on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. According to DNR, the fire was put out by neighboring landowners. Dice responded to the site on July 5<sup>th</sup> and found a few acres of riparian vegetation that had burned along the river at the Ebson 1 and 2 access site. There were still a few hot spots and some open flames which Dice put out with a firefighting hose. There was no indication on how the fire was ignited.



***July 4<sup>th</sup> Grande Ronde Fire at Ebson 1 and 2 access site.***

**4-O Ranch Wildlife Area-Wildfire:** Biologist Woodall visited the site of a lightning caused wildfire. The site is located just down the trail from the old mill site. The area burned amounted to no more than 100m<sup>2</sup>. Lightning had struck a Ponderosa Pine and burned some grass and snowberry bushes. As Bio Woodall was unloading his ATV, the adjoining landowner pulled up in their fire tanker truck. The ground was still smoldering so we put down a couple hundred gallons of water.



*Tree struck by lightning at WDFW 4-O Ranch Wildlife Area.*



*Burned area around lightning struck tree at 4-O Ranch Wildlife Area.*

## **REGION 2**

### **District Biologists**

**District 5: Grant / Adams District - Rich Finger / Vacant**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

**Western grebe:** Biologists Finger and Becker made a 3<sup>rd</sup> weekly visit to monitor the Western grebe colony at Job Corps dike. This visit follows high winds (20-30mph) which occurred earlier in the week. Water levels dropped 8" over 8 days, which was a slower decline than the last weekly period. Total estimated number of nests since last week has decreased by 19% (Week 1;  $n=196$ , Week 2;  $n=247$ , Week 3;  $n=201$ ). Of 62 individual nests monitored for this period; 1) 74% were active, 2) 5% hatched, and 3) 21% failed. Average clutch size in active nests decline by 0.6 eggs.



*Western grebe nest either finished or still in process of hatching. There were five eggs on this nest during the last visit. At least two membranes have been kicked out of nest as seen in photo. Young are probably on back of adult. A couple other adults were seen with young on the back during the survey effort.*

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

**Wetland Projects:** Biologist Finger checked water levels at Mansfield Pond. The pond is reaching full pool and lower storage ponds, kept mostly dry, are beginning to respond with strong smartweed and lambsquarter production, both species are heavily used by waterfowl.



*Dotted smartweed (Polygonum punctatum) and Lambsquarters (Chenopodium album) production on the large storage basin below Mansfield Pond. Springs will eventually run too heavily to keep holding water back from this basin but plants should be plenty developed to take the flooding at this point.*

#### **Species Recovery**

**Pygmy Rabbit Recovery - Penny Becker**

#### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

**Releases of Kits:** This week on 7/2 we released nine individuals into the wild in the fifth round of 2012 kits. To date this year 87 were released. All released kits in this round have glue-on transmitters to monitor their dispersal and survival post-release.



*Research Scientist Becker and graduate student DeMay glue a transmitter on a kit before release.*

**Monitoring of Released Kits:** Biologist Eidson and graduate student DeMay performed radio telemetry to track the pygmy rabbit kits that still had transmitters attached. The longest amount of time the transmitters have stayed on the kits is four weeks.

**Pygmy Rabbit Husbandry:** Becker, Eidson and DeMay spent time on Sagebrush Flat wildlife area providing supplemental feed to the pygmy rabbits in the large enclosures and kits in the nursery area. Breeding season continues with more small kits emerging, but at a slower rate than earlier in the season. Thus far, more than 130 kits have been produced in the large enclosures. In addition, 16 kits were born at the Oregon Zoo and brought to Sagebrush Flat. In the coming two weeks up to three more litters of kits will arrive from the zoo and then the adults will be moved by the end of the month also.



*A kit born near the beginning of the breeding season looks nearly adult size now (left) and a hot rabbit.*

## Wildlife Areas

### **Methow Wildlife Area Complex - Tom McCoy / Rob Wottlin / John Haegan**

#### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

**Forest health project:** On Monday the 3rd, Tom McCoy completed the finishing touches and submitted a grant application for the RCO, State Lands Restoration program. We are taking another run at getting supplemental funds to conduct an ecologically driven thinning project on approximately 3,600 acres. At present most of the forested lands on the Methow are set up for catastrophic fire (much like the Tripod fire that burned to the MWA boundary in 2006) and extreme pine beetle damage. Our stand reconstruction surveys show that 82% of our remaining old growth ponderosa pine are currently experiencing moderate to severe beetle attacks. Unfortunately, more than 80% of the trees in the Methow are, at best, pulp grade. Thus, supplemental funding will be required to break even on this project.



## **Sinlahekin Wildlife Area Complex - Dale Swedberg / Justin Haug**

**Weekender Opportunities:** A former Intern on the Sinlahekin, Caitlin LaBar made a 4 day visit to the Sinlahekin to photograph butterflies in the Sinlahekin butterfly collection and in the wild for the Sinlahekin butterfly atlas she is working on. Additionally she documented a new species of butterfly for the Sinlahekin bringing the total number of different species to 88. Caitlin also documented Northern Cloudwings ovipositing on 2 plant species – this year’s and last year’s observations are the first ever documentation of this species ovipositing in the wild west of Colorado. Additionally these observations extended the range of Northern Cloudwings northward from Chelan County. Photos and more information about Caitlin’s visit can be see here <http://northwestbutterflies.blogspot.com/>

## **REGION 4**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

#### **Wildlife Management**

**Common Loon Monitoring:** Biologist Anderson worked with Biodiversity Research Institute to assist in night chick capture efforts in eastern Washington. This was an opportunity for more training in regards to similar work in King Co., as well as to assist in overall loon monitoring efforts in WA amongst various collaborators.



***Biologist Chris Anderson holding a banded Common Loon chick.***



*Common loon work being completed by Biodiversity Research Institute, Loon Lake Loon Association, WDFW, USFS and wildlife biology undergrads at WSU and Gonzaga.*

**Peregrine Falcon Surveys:** Biologists Danilson and DeBruyn attempted to answer lingering questions about a federal survey site by visiting it in a helicopter. There was one unhatched egg in the scrape and signs that there had been small young that probably did not fledge. No falcons were observed in spite of an intensive search of the area. Another federal survey site in the vicinity had two 21 day old young in the nest which makes it almost the latest nest in history. The flight was cut short by encroaching fog.

**Mt. Si:** Anderson received word from a local Peregrine researcher who has also been helping monitor this federal site with Anderson that a juvenile fledged Peregrine has been observed in the same spot Anderson and other volunteers have seen an adult. This nest site has eluded professional observers for many years.

**Pelagic Cormorant Nesting Colony Surveys:** Assistant Biologist Cyra completed preliminary analysis of this spring's surveys for Pelagic Cormorant colonies in the northern Puget Sound. All historically known colonies were surveyed along with more recently noted locations, all appropriate navigational aids, and appropriate looking natural and human-built features. Only one historical colony appears to remain active. One new active, but abandoned natural structure colonies were also located. The remainders of the birds nesting were located mainly on aids to navigation.

**Over Ocean Flying Citizen Science Project:** District Biologist Milner continued summarizing data provided by citizen scientists last winter to assess the phenomenon of over ocean flying by

shorebirds at high tide in Port Susan Bay. The volunteers observed high tide flying by dunlin at several locations.

### **Wildlife Areas**

**Stillwater Food Plot Prep:** Manager Paulson had a Stillwater Unit neighbor till a part of a field adjacent to the oxbow lake at the Stillwater Unit for a food plot. The food plot will be planted with barley that has a short growing season.

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

### **Wildlife Management**

**Mountain Goat Augmentation:** Biologist Milner sent out the meeting announcement to participants who will get together in July to pick up discussions regarding augmenting goat herds in the Darrington Ranger District. Goats in this area have not re-bounded in numbers so assessment of the possibility of bringing in goats from healthy herds will begin shortly.

**Mountain Goat Data Entry and Population Estimates:** Having resolved issues with the mountain goat sightability database, Biologist Danilson entered data from earlier surveys of the Darrington area, which had not been entered into the local WDFW database. Sightability corrected estimates for the Darrington area surveys between 2004 and 2009 were provided to Biologist Milner. This data will inform planning efforts for mountain goat translocation/augmentation, which include an upcoming meeting with potential partnering entities on July 19<sup>th</sup> in Mill Creek.

**Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Urban Wildlife Habitat Grant Evaluation Team:** Biologist Anderson finalized review of the 14 projects requesting grant funding in relation to the Urban Wildlife Habitat Grant. [http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/uwh-cons\\_grants.shtml](http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/uwh-cons_grants.shtml)

**Band-tailed Pigeon Mineral Site Investigation:** Biologists Danilson and DeBruyn met with former WDFW employee Doug Huddle, who is volunteering for the department in trying to locate new mineral sites. Huddle will continue to focus on investigating areas with known band-tailed pigeon concentrations in Skagit and Whatcom Counties through the month of July. Huddle has been provided with keys and an “authorization letter” that identifies him as a volunteer for the department. Identifying new mineral sites is a priority for WDFW because pigeons are surveyed once a year in July at mineral sites and there are only four known sites in Skagit and Whatcom County. Biologist DeBruyn visited one of the known mineral spring sites to remove vegetation to facilitate a survey next week. He also installed a trail camera over the spring as an experiment to see if images can be used to count pigeons at the spring.

**Migratory Bird Habitat Project Proposal Non-waterfowl Projects:** District Biologist Milner wrote and submitted a proposal to investigate Wilson’s snipe breeding habitat on the Skagit and Snoqualmie Wildlife Areas.

## **Wildlife Areas**

**Skagit Agriculture Program:** Weather and river conditions continue to hamper field preparations on the **Island Unit**. Natural Resource Specialist Meis and Natural Resources Tech Cosgrove monitored drainage but higher than normal water levels on the Skagit River sub-irrigate fields and allowed limited drainage even during lower tide cycles.

District Fisheries Biologist Brett Barkdull indicated that Seattle City light representatives believe river conditions may continue to run higher than normal for most of the summer due to reservoir capacities and the need to release water when possible. On the Island, portions of the fields that have been disked are underwater now and other areas are saturated. Ability to plant the area is uncertain based on current field conditions; the decision to plant will need to be made next few weeks in order to get a productive crop.

**Leque Island:** Natural Resource Specialist Meis coordinated barley planting with contract seed spreader and Oxborough Farms. Fields were planted and seed incorporated.

**Samish River Unit:** Manager Belinda Rotton and Natural Resource Specialist Meis toured the Samish River Unit to discuss the proposed design for the freshwater wetland enhancement. Wildlife area staff is working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service on a freshwater wetland enhancement proposal funded by the Wetland Reserve Program. The Wildlife Area Staff hope to minimize weed control issues while improving habitat and recreational access to the site. Staff continues thistle control mowing on the Samish Unit.

**Intalco Unit:** The Custer Sportsman's Club held 3-D Archery Shooting Event that was very well attended.

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

## **Wildlife Management**

**Urban Wildlife Interviews:** Biologist Anderson was interviewed by Lyanda Lynn Haupt, author of Crow Planet, in regards to urban wildlife, in particular urban predators. Anderson was also interviewed by Mercer Island Historical Society staff regarding wildlife on the island in 1940, when the human density was akin to current day Whidbey Island, versus present day.

Biologist DeBruyn shipped 4 dead bats collected in a homeowner's yard to the National Wildlife Health Center for necropsy.

## **Wildlife Areas**

**Freshwater Slough Moorage Facility:** Wildlife area staff worked to dislodge large woody debris that has developed small log jams against the boat house and dock. The dock needed minor repairs after one log pushed up through the floor boards.



*Natural Resource Tech Cosgrove photographed the eagle nest on Headquarters site; two eaglets have been observed most of the nesting season and may fledge soon. The nest is close to the dike trail and is a popular viewing site.*

**Ebey Island Unit Food Plot:** Manager Paulson scheduled a 30 acre food plot to be planted at the Ebey Island Unit. Barley will be planted in the same spot as it was last year.

**Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Pheasant Pens:** A master hunter volunteer mowed the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area pheasant pens with a weed eater. Length of the grass and the contour of the hill limited the choice of tools. Once the mowing is complete, minor changes to the pens will make rounding up the pheasants a safer for the volunteers.

***GOAL 4: MAINTAIN A HIGHLY SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE.***

### **Wildlife Management**

**District 14 Staff Meeting:** Biologists Danilson, DeBruyn, and Roozen and Technician Otto met on July 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss upcoming activities/meetings/events and coordinate schedules and identify deadlines and priorities. July looks to be a fairly busy month, with several things ramping up in the Private Lands Program – including pheasant release site work, landowner leases for the waterfowl program, and coordination of the GMU 418 elk hunt. Danilson will be out of the office at the Flyway Council meeting (9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>) and conducting mountain goat surveys (23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>).

## **REGION 5**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

#### **Wildlife Management**

**Pika:** Biologist Anderson was informed that Erik Beever, wildlife researcher from the USGS in Bozeman Mt, will be receiving some grant funds for work on pikas in the Columbia River Gorge in Washington. Pika is a high elevation alpine mammal that has been at the center of a long prolonged debate over whether to list it under the Endangered Species Act. American pikas are generally found in rocky areas (talus) within alpine regions of the western United States and southwestern Canada. The Columbia River Gorge represents a unique area of pika distribution as its one of the few places where the species occurs at low elevations.

The goal of the project in the Columbia River Gorge is to help wildlife biologists and managers increase the knowledge base of the species for future conservation and management opportunities. The initial work will be to buy a temperature and relative-humidity sensors and install them in select talus areas that are known or suitable pika areas. This information will form the basis for a better understanding of climate variation in the Columbia River Gorge. Follow-up presence absence surveys will be conducted to document pika distribution in the Columbia River Gorge.

**Sandhill Cranes:** Biologist Anderson and staff from the Conboy National Wildlife Refuge have been banding colts (juvenile sandhill cranes) over the past two weeks. A total of 12 colts have been identified to date of which 9 have been banded. Water conditions were excellent this year, which contributed to the successful sandhill crane nesting season.



***Banding sanhill crane colts with USFWS.***

**Black-tailed Deer Research Project:** Fawn mortality searches associated with the Region 5 black-tailed deer research project continued during the first week of July. Twelve study does and their associated young are being monitored by a combination of remote (satellite) and field (VHF) methods. The does are located in two study clusters concentrated within the Washougal and Coweeman Game Management Units. To date, in the Washougal cluster of 5 does, 11 fawns have been captured and 6 remain alive. Doe 180 of the Washougal cluster was an additional mortality this week; found predated upon on 7/5/2012. Coyotes are the likely predator but definitive evidence determining that to be the case was not found within the vicinity of the location. Her remaining fawn was found to be alive on 7/5/2012, but did not survive beyond the 6<sup>th</sup>.



*Black-tailed doe mortality.*

In the Coweeman cluster of 7 does, 9 fawns have been captured and 5 remain alive. Fawn 201COM's collar was on mortality signal during this week's checks. The intact carcass was found beneath a small alder next to a small stream. Bruising was found on both sides of the ribcage, with two ribs broken. The fawn was found just below a well used logging road and may have been hit by a vehicle or undergone some sort of trauma.



*Fawn mortality.*

**Peregrine Falcon Survey:** Biologist Stephens conducted a survey of a Peregrine Falcon nest site near Lyle. Three juveniles were observed on the nest ledge and were very close to fledging.



*Juvenile Peregrines.*

**Band-tailed Pigeon Survey Scouting:** Biologists Bergh and Miller visited the new Soda Springs Band-tailed pigeon survey site to establish viewing points for the upcoming survey. Last summer pigeon use was confirmed with a remote camera and many pigeons were seen in the trees surrounding the two mineral springs during this week's visit.

### Wildlife Areas

#### **Klickitat Wildlife Area**

**Slash Disposal:** Manager Van Leuven worked with the Youth Conservation Corps crew from Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge to chip slash remaining from the fuels reduction project work done earlier this year. The refuge manager generously offered the services of the crew for two days so they could gain experience working in a different place, on a different project. Although the crew chipped a good volume of thinned trees, tops, and limbs; more chipping remains to be done.



*YCC Chipping Slash.*

**Goldendale Hatchery Unit Agricultural Lease:** July 6<sup>th</sup> was the bid opening date for this agricultural lease. No one submitted a written bid for the lease and Manager Van Leuven did go to the Goldendale Hatchery at the appointed time and met with Tim Holder, who works there and served as a witness to the (lack of) bid opening. Manager Van Leuven removed the "For Lease" signs from the fences along Hill Road and Fish Hatchery Road.

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

**Private Lands/Access**

**St. Helens Land Access Program:** Program Manager Jonker, Biologist Stephens, and Technician Pyzik met with Weyerhaeuser and leaders of the SW Washington Land Access Coalition to discuss the implementation of the St. Helens Land Access Program for 2012-13. The program is planned to function similarly as it has been in the past by using the presence of volunteers to increase weekday motorized hunting access opportunities on Weyerhaeuser's St. Helens Tree Farm.