

Wildlife Program

Week of January 14-20, 2013

REGION 1

Gray Wolf Management

District 1: District Wildlife and Enforcement Staff responded to one of the radio-collared male wolves from the Smackout Pack that traveled west and was “hanging out” near a bone pile at a winter livestock operation in Ferry County. Staff worked with the ranch owner in removing and hauling away four freeze-dried cow carcasses from the bone pile. Biologist Shepherd attended the informational talk concerning wolf management. Speakers included Mike Jimenez, Rocky Mountain wolf coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Wyoming, Carter Niemeyer, retired wolf specialist with the USFWS and the U.S Department of Agriculture’s Wildlife Services, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Carnivore Section Manager Martorello. Shepherd gave a wolf presentation to the Deer Park Rotary at their lunch meeting and also discussed wolf sightings with various members of the public.



Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife District staff helped load and haul away four freeze-dried cow carcasses to a disposal site in Ferry County.



District staff worked with the ranch owner in loading and hauling away four cow carcasses (above) to this disposal site at a livestock ranching operation in Ferry County (below).



District 3

U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Wolf planning meeting: District Biologist (DB) Wik and Assistance District Biologist (ADB) Vekasy attended a meeting with the range and wildlife staff of the Pomeroy Ranger District to initiate discussions regarding potential future wolf livestock conflicts. The USFS is currently unable to incorporate preventive measures into their Annual Operating Permits, but wants to work with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to minimize conflict.

Wolf/Livestock: DB Wik coordinated and prepared for a meeting with the Asotin County Cattlemen's organization on Monday night January 21. The meeting was well attended by local cattlemen (22 people) and went very well. The department was represented by Joey McCanna, Scott Rasley, Jason Earl, Brendan Vance, and Paul Wik. There were lots of good questions about Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement (DPCA) contracts and Scott will likely be getting numerous inquiries in the future.

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

Wildlife Management

Blue Mountains Cougar Seasons: DB Wik met with Officer Nelson to discuss the process used to implement the current cougar hunting season structure. Officer Nelson has been meeting with members of the Garfield County community and county commissioners regarding the closure of cougar seasons in their area. A letter to the department asking for more liberal hunting season opportunities is being discussed at the county level.

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

Wildlife Management

Nuisance Deer in the Town of Republic: District Wildlife and Enforcement Program Staff met with officials from the Town of Republic along with wildlife co-managers from the Colville Confederated Tribes to reach a management prescription for the deer population there. A humane, practical and effective solution to safely euthanize problem deer was outlined and agreed upon by all parties at the meeting. The Enforcement Program will be issuing the wildlife damage control permit soon with implementation expected in February.

Private Lands/Access

New NEW-HAB contract: Habitat Biologist Dotts signed up a landowner for NEW-HAB this week and submitted the contract for approval in CAPS. The 298-acre property is located in Stevens County about five miles south of Northport in Game Management Unit (GMU) 108. Access is from Bodie Mountain Road off of Onion-Clungston Creek. The parcel is mostly open

Douglas-fir with lots of deer browse. Habitat improvement will be six acres of weed control, including plumeless thistle, a Stevens County Class-B designate weed.

Potential NEW-HAB contracts: Habitat Biologist Dotts met with a landowner with 300 acres just north of Chewelah along Hwy 395. The landowner is interested in the “Hunting by Reservation” program and youth bow hunting. About 70 percent of the property is farmable or being farmed.

Dotts and Private Lands Technician Bendixen met with another landowner who is currently signed up for the Hunting by Written Permission (HBWP) access program to discuss the NEW-HAB program. He opted to stay with HBWP because he isn’t interested in growing deer forage and attracting more white-tails to his otherwise very suitable mule deer habitat.

REGION 2

None

REGION 3

None

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Pine Siskin Mortalities: Biologists DeBruyn and Danilson responded to several calls and emails regarding large kills of pine siskins. Working with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Biologist Kelly McAllister, WDFW Veterinarian Mansfield, WDFW Enforcement Officer Jones, and others, Danilson was able to help document four locations where large flocks of pine siskins (and possibly other species) were killed along roads. The current understanding of this situation is that most/all of these incidents are related to application of salt by local road crews to address road icing. Ingestion of salt by finches in particular results in poisoning, which inhibits their ability to avoid vehicles or kills them outright. Specimens were collected by WDFW personnel from three sites and will be sent off to the National Wildlife Health Center for necropsy. WSDOT is coordinating with local road crews to determine what was applied and to provide guidance. The latest addition of WDFW’s “Crossing Paths” discusses this and other issues that affect urban wildlife during the winter months. To learn more, or sign up for the “Crossing Paths” email news notes, go to http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/crossing_paths/



Several calls and emails reported large kills of pine siskins in Skagit and Whatcom counties, including this location.

Northern Puget Sound Lesser Snow Goose Study: Biologist Danilson conducted an aerial photography survey with Canadian Wildlife Service Biologist Dr. Sean Boyd on January 17. While fog in southern Skagit County precluded the survey from being completed, several flocks were observed in Richmond, B.C., on Westham Island, in the Samish Flats and West Mount Vernon. A VHF collar was located from the air during this survey, which allowed Danilson to conduct a ground search and find the collar. This was the second VHF collar located by Danilson during the week. Evidence from each site was indicative of scavenging, but cause of mortality was inconclusive.

Winter Marine Waterfowl Aerial Surveys: Annual winter marine waterfowl surveys continued this week with Marine Bird Specialist Evenson and Assistant District Biologists Cyra and Murphie completing two days of surveying before the thick layer of fog that plagued the sound for the remainder of the week took hold. The area surveyed is now around 70 percent of the survey routes needed to complete the survey. Time on the ground was used to transcribe data from days flown earlier. These annual surveys are used to determine trends in marine waterfowl species – both game and diversity species; and results are used to help inform the Pacific Flyway in season setting for sea ducks. Maps, data, and species information from the nearly 20 years of annual surveys can be found at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/mapping/psamp/>

Swan Mortality and Morbidity Project: Technician Anderson continued to respond to hotline calls reporting dead, sick and injured swans. Frozen fresh water and dense fog added to the challenges of collecting swans. Citizens who see dead, sick or injured swans are reminded to report these to the WDFW swan and nutria hotline at (360) 466-4345 ext. 266.

Summary of Swans collected to date.

	Skagit	Snohomish	Whatcom	Sumas	TOTAL
Powerline suspect	20	5	25		50
Pb suspect	18	1	7	5	31
Trauma/Aspergillosis*	5		6	3	14
Unknown	12		2		14
Feather Pile	5		2	4	11
TOTAL	60	6	42	12	120

As usual, this table does not include two swans collected in King County and one Swan from an unknown county.

** Trauma includes suspected vehicle collision, wing fracture, unspecified injuries*

** Two swans from Sumas confirmed Aspergillosis during post-mortem exam*



Swan Technician Anderson prepares to net a sick swan.

Wolf Recovery and Management Public Meeting: Manager Link and Biologist Milner attended the public meeting in Seattle. This was one of the three meetings scheduled around the state, hosted by WDFW and Western Wildlife Outreach. Speakers included Mike Jimenez, Rocky Mountain wolf coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Wyoming; Carter Niemeyer, retired wolf specialist with the USFWS and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services, and WDFW Carnivore Section Manager Donny Martorello.

WDFW has confirmed the presence of eight wolf packs in Washington. There is also evidence of unconfirmed packs near Kettle Falls in northeastern Washington, in the Blue Mountains of southeastern Washington and in the North Cascades, as well as transient wolves.

Gray wolves are currently listed as endangered under state law throughout Washington, and under federal law in the western two-thirds of the state. More information on wolves is available on the agency website at http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/gray_wolf/



Approximately 250 people attended the Wolf Recovery and Management Public Meeting in Seattle on Friday, January 18.

Wildlife Areas

Whatcom Wildlife Area – Lake Terrell Unit: Lake Terrell has been half frozen for the last couple weeks. Parts remain thawed out due to the large numbers of ducks and geese using the lake. All three of the boat launches have been frozen solid, with only a few hunters trying to break through the ice to use them.



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

Wildlife Management

North Cascades Elk Herd Clover Trapping Project: Biologists Danilson and DeBruyn baited and conducted trap checks at two active Clover trapping locations. The primary objective of this work is to maintain a broad distribution of radio collared elk in the herd as part of the “mark-resight” methods used to estimate the population during late winter aerial surveys.

Mid-Winter Waterfowl Surveys: Biologist DeBruyn conducted an aerial survey for dabbling ducks in the marine waters from Port Susan to the Canadian border. Following a survey last week when all the dabblers were inland, this flight occurred during frozen conditions inland that forced most of the ducks into the salt water where they could be counted. Mallards prevailed in Skagit Bay, wigeon, mallards and pintails were evenly represented in Padilla Bay while pintails were more prevalent in Whatcom County.

Aerial Waterfowl Survey - Port Susan to Drayton Harbor

Survey Date: 1/14/2013	Aircraft/Pilot: N734QQ 172 Sky Hawk /Jeff			Observer: Paul DeBruyn	
Weather: Overcast 34 Deg. F		Tide @ Beginning: 7.5		Tide @ End: 5.4	
Location	Mallard	Pintail	Wigeon	G/W Teal	Totals
Port Susan Bay	325	100	75	0	500
Livingston Bay	400	225	25	25	675
Skagit Bay	21575	3950	5800	500	31825
Fidalgo Bay	50	0	0	1000	1050
Padilla Bay	19350	19300	24475	150	63275
Samish Bay	9400	12400	14400	2100	38300
Nooksack Delta/Portage	200	125	0	0	325
Lummi Bay	4000	9000	3000	1000	17000
Birch Bay	485	200	0	0	685
Drayton Harbor	425	475	0	50	950
Totals	56210	45775	47775	4825	154585

The mid-winter waterfowl count is used to estimate waterfowl populations across the country, so it is critical to get an accurate count.

DeBruyn also conducted the inland portion of the mid-winter waterfowl count, which accounts for diving ducks and that portion of dabblers and other species that may not be roosting in marine waters during the day. Although most lakes were partially frozen, good numbers of divers and dabblers were present in open waters. Canvasbacks were present in a number of Whatcom lakes and a nice flock of Redheads was at Tennant Lake (part of the Whatcom Wildlife Area). A lone Cinnamon Teal (rare in winter) was observed with 200 snipe at Beaver Lake east of Mt. Vernon.

Duck Stamp Proposal Development: Biologist Danilson assisted Biologists Roozen and Milner in drafting proposals for the current request for proposals for the migratory bird stamp project

ideas for the 2013-15 biennium. The two proposals under development for Districts 13 and 14 are: (1) supplemental funding for forage plots on lands enrolled in the Private Lands Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program, and (2) funding to support and improve the snow goose reserve in Port Susan Bay. Manager Kessler finalized potential bird stamp projects for the wildlife area and submitted them to Wildlife Program Manager Russell Link for review.

Private Lands/Access

Snow Goose Quality Program: Region 4 private lands staff monitored and noted hunter use in units. Cold temperatures through the weekend concentrated flocks around Quality Hunt units both in Stanwood and on Fir Island. Foggy weather held snow goose flights close to the ground and assisted patient goose hunters.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program: Region 4 private lands staff continued scheduled surveys of hunt units and attended to unit repairs as needed. Cold, sunny, calm weather made for slow hunting throughout the week. However, weekend surveys showed heavy use on the units and some hunter success.

Private lands staff began preparing payment documents for cooperating landowners in both the Snow Goose and Waterfowl Quality Hunt Programs. Staff will meet with partners over the next two weeks, ensuring payments and discussing the 2012-13 hunting season.



Decoys are on display at this Waterfowl Quality Hunt unit during the heavy fog.



The Cascade foothills are featured in the background of this Waterfowl Quality unit.

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

Wildlife Management

Waterfowl Banding Collaboration: Biologists Danilson and DeBruyn met with a representative from the Washington Waterfowl Association (WWA) to discuss a proposal for club members to provide volunteer assistance to WDFW in banding ducks. The local chapter of WWA has allocated funding for trapping materials and is interested in assisting WDFW with annual duck banding efforts.

Wildlife Program Business Plan: Biologist Milner attended a staff meeting to discuss development of the Wildlife Program business plan and assign tasks for the project.

Wildlife Areas

Leque Island: Natural Resource Specialist (NRS) Meis and Natural Resource Technician (NRT) Cosgrove improved parking access at the Eide Road parking site by placing gravel along

the entry. At the request of one of the Audubon groups the ecology blocks were adjusted to allow wheel chair access to the end of the road for additional viewing opportunities.

Restoration Projects Coordinator Brokaw gave a Leque Island presentation to the Stillaguamish Technical Advisory Group at their monthly meeting. The presentation outlined the current status of the Island and next steps to be undertaken to reach a land use decision, which begins with public outreach. This Advisory Group consists of representatives from local groups and agencies interested in salmon recovery in the Stillaguamish River.

Other: Natural Resource Specialist Meis and Natural Resource Technician Cosgrove checked the east boundary of the Swan Reserve and placed additional markers.

NRS Meis and NRT Cosgrove mowed the edges of the entry field and controlled the blackberry along the viewing area and parking lot at the Fir Island Farms Game Reserve. Additional work will be completed as the viewing season winds down.

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN A HIGHLY SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE

Wildlife Management

Radio Communication: Assistant District Biologist Cyra provided radio communication training and assistance to several program staff per contract with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Oregon Spotted Frog Project: Biologist Danilson worked with Human Resources personnel to help get the job announcement for the seasonal Oregon Spotted Frog positions posted. The job recruitment notice is posted at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/employment/>.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Golden Eagle Survey: Biologist Stephens surveyed a historic golden eagle territory near the John Day Dam for eagle activity. One golden eagle was observed; however, it moved quickly through the territory and was not observed again. Late in the afternoon several bald eagles moved into the area to roost.



Bald eagles moved into a historic golden eagle territory near John Day Dam to roost.

Black-tailed Deer Research Project: A fawn mortality search associated with the Region 5 portion of the black-tailed deer research project was conducted. 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 (568) and Coweeman (550) Game Management Units. To date, in the Washougal cluster of 5 remaining does, 4 fawns remain alive.

Mid-Winter Waterfowl Survey-District 9: Biologist Anderson completed the annual mid-winter waterfowl survey from Bonneville Dam to the John Day Dam. Waterfowl numbers were lower this year in comparison to past surveys, most likely due to mild weather conditions. Some backwater areas were covered in ice, but most areas were open and in good condition. A rare tufted duck was observed in a small group of ring-necked ducks near Maryhill State Park. The tufted duck breeds in Eurasia and is a rare visitor in the winter to the west coast of the United States.

Biologist Holman completed the mid-winter waterfowl survey from the mouth of the Washougal River upstream along the Columbia to Bonneville Dam. Survey conditions were favorable with light winds on the River. Consequently, 3,600+ total waterfowl were observed during the survey. Typical of most survey years for this route, western Canada geese on land and in protected waters along with concentrations of dabbling ducks associated with Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge, and concentrations of scaup on the Columbia made up the majority of the birds. Survey results have been summarized and submitted to Olympia Staff for inclusion in the overall cooperative effort to monitor waterfowl populations in North America.



A rare tufted duck was observed in a small group of ring-necked ducks near Maryhill State Park.

Those interested in wildlife viewing opportunities in the Vancouver area should try the William Clark trail along the Columbia near Washougal. Tundra swans, Canada geese, mallards, pintails, gadwal, shovelors, widgeon, ring-necked ducks, scaup, merganzers, buffleheads and coots along with bald eagles, harriers, etc., were all seen from this convenient Clark County location.

Mid-winter Waterfowl Survey-District 10: Biologists Miller and Bergh conducted the annual Mid-winter Waterfowl Inventory survey from the ground in Cowlitz and Lewis counties. During the survey, temperatures ranged from just above to just below freezing. Many areas of sheet water in western Lewis County were partly frozen, which affected the distribution and counts of waterfowl. Water levels were slightly lower than normal as were counts of ducks. The lower duck counts may also be attributed to less of a migration push. Interestingly, more swans than normal were observed, especially mixed flocks of tundra and trumpeters.



Mallards, Coots, Shovelors, Swans.



Western Pond Turtle: Biologist Anderson conducted a site visit to the Bergen Road western pond turtle habitat area. A local contractor was recently hired to mow approximately 10 acres of upland nesting habitat around several wetlands. In addition, the USFS recently burned slash piles from this summer's habitat improvement project of clearing blackberry and Scot's broom. The

Harvey Pond, which was constructed 10 years ago for western pond turtles, was three-quarters full and looking in good condition.



Harvey Pond, constructed 10 years ago for western pond turtles, was three-quarters full and appeared in good condition.

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

Private Lands/Access

Partnership Opportunities: Biologist Stephens and Technician White met with employees of the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Conservation District in Goldendale. Discussion included potential partnership opportunities with private landowners in Klickitat County.

New Access Agreements: Biologist Stephens and Technician White met with a landowner about the Feel Free to Hunt (FFTH) Program. The landowner agreed to sign-up 680 acres under a Feel Free to Hunt agreement. The landowner owns forested property adjacent to Western Pacific Timber land.

In addition, Biologist Stephens and Technician White met with a current cooperator to extend the date of his contract for an additional three years. The landowner is enrolled in a Feel Free to Hunt agreement and allows pheasants to be released on his property. Overall, he is happy with the program and would like to continue to allow hunting access to his property; however, he did express discontent about the non-toxic shot rule on pheasant release sites. He owns two shotguns

that have been passed down from his grandfather and he can no longer use them to hunt game birds on his property.

Silver Lake Access: Access staff Spangler and Rhodes removed the outermost dock/piling holding bracket to repair the welds, reinforce, repaint, and re-install. These brackets tend to get bumped into by boats and fishermen sometimes use them as a step when getting in and out of their boats. The brackets are heavy and the design limits the way they can be attached to the dock. They might have to be redesigned with aluminum or a lighter material and how they attach to the dock if this keeps being a problem.



Other

District 10 and Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area Winter Conditions

Past Weather: December temperatures were average and precipitation was above average for the month. The weather this past week has been cold and dry, with highs in the 30's and 40's, and lows in the 20's.

Short-Term Forecast: The 6-10 days forecast is for normal temperatures and above normal precipitation and the 8-14 days forecast is for below normal temperatures and normal precipitation.

Long-Term Forecast: The January forecast model shows an equal chance for above average, below average, or normal temperature and precipitation. The three month forecast model is for

below normal temperatures and an equal chance for above average, below average, or normal precipitation.

Habitat: Forage is available at lower elevations, while most areas above 2,000 feet currently have some snow cover, and areas above 3,000 feet have significant snow cover.

Snow Depths: The Mudflow Unit had one to two inches of snow cover on January 14. See table below for detailed information.

Animal Concentrations: No unusual concentrations of elk noted to date. On January 3, 2013, a total of 58 elk were present on the Mudflow Unit monitoring area. The wildlife area manager observed 165 elk on the mudflow unit on January 14, 2013.

Animal Condition: No reports of animals in poor condition that can be attributed to winter conditions. Animals observed to date appear to be in good condition.

Mortality: None to report.

Public Contacts: None to report related to winter conditions.

The public is reminded that the Mudflow Unit of the Mt. St. Helens Wildlife Area lying east of a line defined by Hoffstadt Creek, The North Fork Toutle and Deer Creek is closed to public access through April 30 to minimize disturbance and associated energy demands on elk wintering there.

District 9 Winter Conditions

Past Weather: There was no measurable precipitation this week as cold east winds from the Columbia Basin kept marine weather systems from the South Cascades and eastern Klickitat County. Continued cold weather has persisted.

Winter Severity: The Klickitat Wildlife Area is mostly free of snow as January has had below average precipitation. The eastern portions of Klickitat County are now snow free and dry cold weather has remained through the week.

Habitat: Habitat is generally open below 1,500 feet with snowpack above 2,000 feet in the south Cascades, below normal levels. In the lower reaches of the Rock Creek drainage of eastern Klickitat County, habitat is open and there are no reports of habitat limitations at this time below 2,000 feet.

Animal Concentrations: No unusual concentrations have been reported for big game this past week. Small groups of elk have been reported in the lower Wind River drainage as is normal this time of year.

Animal Condition: Deer and elk appear to be in very good condition and no winter stress/mortality has been reported this week.

Mortality: None reported this week.

Public Contacts: None.

Winter Conditions – Snow Depths: Mount Saint Helens Elk Herd 2012/2013 winter conditions. From web pages:

**MOUNT SAINT HELENS ELK HERD
2012/2013 WINTER CONDITIONS - SNO-PARK SNOW DEPTH, NRCS SNOTEL
DATA, AND SNOWPACK**

From web pages:

- <http://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/giffordpinchot/recreation/wintersports/?recid=31178&actid=91>
- http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/cgi-bin/sno_narr3.pl
- <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/snotel/Washington/washington.html>

SNOWPARKS:		12/28/2012	01/04/2013	01/11/2013	01/18/2013
Name	Elevation				
TRAIL OF TWO FORESTS MARBLE MT	2,200'	More than 2ft of snow	No new report	No new report	No new report
WAKEPISH	2,700'	More than 4ft of snow	No new report Sno-park inaccessible due to heavy snow	No new report Sno-park inaccessible due to heavy snow	No new report Sno-park inaccessible due to heavy snow

SNOWTEL STATIONS:		12/22-12/28	12/29-1/4	1/5-1/11	1/12-1/18	
Name	Elevation	Stats				
JUNE LAKE	3,340'	Avg Snow Depth (inches)	103.3	101.6	97.3	93.3
		Min Temp (F)	27.5	18.7	23.7	17.2
		Max Temp (F)	34.5	35.1	40.3	47.1
		Avg Temp (F)	31.1	27	33	28.8
		Year to date precipitation (inches)	84.6	85.9	86.3	98.6
Name	Elevation	Stats	12/22-12/28	12/29-1/4	1/5-1/11	1/12-1/18

		12/28				
SPIRIT LAKE	3,520'	Avg Snow Depth (inches)	27.8	26.1	19.7	20.1
		Min Temp (F)	22.3	20.3	25.3	9.9
		Max Temp (F)	35.6	41.7	46	54.4
		Avg Temp (F)	31.6	29.2	34.5	28.2
		Year to date precipitation (inches)	45.2	45.6	47.7	47.8

Name	Elevation	Stats	12/22- 12/28	12/29-1/4	1/5-1/11	1/12-1/18
PEPPER CREEK	2,140'	Avg Snow Depth (inches)	24	24.6	23.8	22.8
		Min Temp (F)	30.4	21.6	27	12.9
		Max Temp (F)	36.9	39	41.4	43.5
		Avg Temp (F)	33.8	28	33.3	26.5
		Year to date precipitation (inches)	31	31.3	33.8	33.8

Name	Elevation	Stats	12/22- 12/28	12/29-1/4	1/5-1/11	1/12-1/18
SHEEP CANYON	3,990'	Avg Snow Depth (inches)	96.3	93.6	88.4	84.7
		Min Temp (F)	25.5	20.5	23.7	14.5
		Max Temp (F)	33.6	39.9	39.4	54.4
		Avg Temp (F)	30.2	28.4	32.3	29.1
		Year to date precipitation (inches)	77.3	81.7	86.3	86.3

Name	Elevation	Stats	12/22- 12/28	12/29-1/4	1/5-1/11	1/12-1/18
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CALAMITY 2500'	Avg Snow Depth (inches)	22	18.7	17.7	15.3
	Min Temp (F)	31.3	23.7	28	21.2
	Max Temp (F)	36.3	36.1	43.5	56.7
	Avg Temp (F)	33.4	29.1	36	32.2
	Year to date precipitation (inches)	54.6	54.8	59.2	59.4

Snowpack % of Avg Snow Water Equivalent	12/28/2012	01/04/2013	01/11/2013	01/18/2013
JUNE LAKE SPIRIT LAKE SHEEP CANYON	134%	no data	no data	147%
	134%	447%	371%	350%
	165%	170%	184%	169%

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Western Snowy Plovers: Biologists Hoenes, Sundstrom, and Michaelis completed a mid-winter western snowy plover survey at Midway Beach and observed 24 plovers (15 banded, nine unbanded). This was the highest mid-winter snowy plover count at Midway Beach in several years. Biologist Sundstrom and Tribal Biologist Spencer also surveyed Graveyard Spit, but no snowy plovers were observed. Hoenes and Sundstrom will survey Damon Point, Oyhut, Copalis Spit, and Conner Creek sites next week.

Swans: Biologist Sundstrom completed the annual swan survey in Grays Harbor County and observed 196 swans (166 Trumpeter and 30 Tundra.)

Amphibian Road Crossing Database and Collaboration: Biologist Tirhi organized a meeting attended by Thurston County Planning, Thurston County Stream Team and WDFW wildlife management and database management personnel to discuss options for collecting, storing, and disseminating data on amphibian hotspots and high road mortality locations in Thurston County. The meeting was prompted by increasing reports of high amphibian mortality, sometimes in the thousands, on particular roads in close proximity to wetlands and lakes in the county. Two stories ran in The Olympian last fall with residents reporting massive mortality events; WDFW staff have also conducted road mortality studies and found significant mortality. Tirhi organized

this meeting as a first step to identify that there is a problem and to seek ways in which the state, county, and hopefully cities can begin to collaborate on solutions. Joanne Schuett-Hames presented her findings on the amphibian road mortality project she coordinated on Gravelly Beach Loop Road, Steamboat Island which showed a seasonal pattern to mortality events. Michelle Stevie and Ann Marie Pearce (Thurston County Stream Team) discussed their current citizen science project as a way to engage citizens to assist with data collection. Biologist Tirhi spoke about how ways to collect and store data within the WDFW Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) system using the classification of Biodiversity Areas and Corridors. Lori Salzer and Terry Johnson discussed options for data submission, storage and dissemination within the WDFW data systems. Cliff Moore, Thurston County, was encouraged by the meeting and planned to discuss with Thurston County Public Works ways in which the data might be used in the future. Biologist Tirhi will convene a second meeting to formulate the data collection protocol and data sheets to be used by citizen scientists under the organization of Stream Team.

Wildlife Areas

Lower Dungeness Unit – 3 Crabs: The Washington Department of Natural Resources (WADNR) completed a beached creosote removal project on the newly purchased 3 Crabs site and neighboring properties utilizing a Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) crew. This project is the first important step toward the long term restoration goals for the newly acquired site. Further, WADNR's work was utilized as a matching component to several grants that are in process of being scored for other portions of the site restoration.



The Washington Department of Natural Resources completed a beached creosote removal project on the newly purchased 3 Crabs site and neighboring properties utilizing a Washington Conservation Corps crew.

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

Wildlife Areas

Nisqually Unit: Manager Guzlas attended the Nisqually Reach Nature Center Board Meeting at Luhr's Landing. The Center is involved with numerous new projects including being a fundamental partner in the newly created Nisqually Reach Aquatic Reserve. The board is interested in submitting several grant applications that could fund pier repair on the WDFW owned facility. The first possibility is an Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) proposal for the current cycle of ALEA funding administered by WDFW. Manager Guzlas offered to sponsor the proposal and will provide some technical support in the grant process.



View of the pier at WDFW Luhr's Landing, Nisqually Reach Nature Center.

Wildlife Management

Canada Goose Surveys: Biologists Michaelis and Sundstrom completed their bi-weekly surveys of migratory Canada goose species. Surveys are being completed as part of a regional effort to determine seasonal distribution patterns for Canada geese populations that winter in southwest Washington and northwest Oregon. Although the primary focus is cackling and dusky Canada geese, information is also collected for a variety of other species of Canada geese including lesser, Taverner's, western, and Vancouver. Biologist Michaelis observed 102 cackling Canada geese, 71 resident dusky Canada geese (aka wuskies), and 209 dusky Canada geese. Ten of the "wuskies" were collared. Biologist Sundstrom observed 345 cacklers, 752 dusky Canada geese, 350 western Canada geese, and 1,974 geese that could not be classified to species. Sundstrom also observed 445 geese that were either taverner or lesser Canada geese. Of all the geese Sundstrom observed only one cackler and three duskies were collared.

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

Wildlife Management

Public Contact: Biologist Hoenes fielded several calls this week from the general public. Topics included a citizen who needed someone to dart her male kangaroo so it could be neutered, master hunter permit hunts, waterfowl hunting access, and field trial regulations.

Bald Eagles: Biologist Schmidt made a site visit to Lake Tapps to follow up on a report of tree harvesting occurring in the vicinity of an eagle's nest. The nest tree was still standing, but many Douglas firs surrounding it were being removed. The RP stated that eagles have nested there for the past 10 years. This nest was not in the WDFW database, but it is now.