

Wildlife Program

Week of July 1-7, 2013

REGION 1

Wolf Management

District 1: Conflict Specialist Shepherd and Private Lands Technician Bendixen responded to a wolf location in the Tiger Hill grazing allotment and found a deer carcass. The location was near an area where part of the cattle herd was observed a few days prior. Shepherd discussed location data with several allotment holders and IS Forest Service Range lead Travis Fletcher.



Left: Deer carcass found in the Tiger Hill allotment. Right: Wolf track in cow pie near this deer carcass.

Specialist Shepherd and Officer Parkert responded to a depredation in the Wedge. Coyote and wolf sign were in the vicinity and the cause of death was predation by one of those species, but a lack of evidence did not allow for a conclusion beyond coyote or wolf. Bendixen and Shepherd responded to a possible wolf sighting in the Tiger Summit area where a deer carcass and wolf tracks were found by Bendixen, Shepherd confirmed that it was killed by a wolf.



Left: Calf killed by coyote or wolf predation in the Wedge. Right: Officer Parkert searched for evidence at this calf depredation.

Specialist Shepherd and a contract range rider visited the Fountain Ranch in Pend Oreille County to discuss how to effectively monitor cattle and wolves on the federal allotments held by the ranch. Specialist Shepherd discussed hazing and monitoring techniques with volunteers from the greater Colville area. Specialist Shepherd met with a satellite internet provider in Smackout Meadows in order to obtain a signal so the range rider could receive wolf locations at camp every morning.

District 3: District Biologist Wik contacted the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Wolf Coordinator for an update on current Oregon collar data and activities. Conflict Specialist Rasley and Officer Jim Nelson responded to a possible livestock kill that appeared to be from a predator according to the cattleman. The kill was located in southern Asotin County. Officer Nelson and Rasley met with the Cattleman in a very remote forested area.

After our investigation, we were all convinced the adult cow was killed by a mountain lion and then a large bear was able to drag the dead cow down the hill away from the original kill site. Five piles of bear scat along with two more piles of lion scat were found near the carcass. A trail camera was deployed at the site as well.



Left: Dead adult cow killed by a mountain lion. Above: A different view of this site where a bear dragged this cow (above).

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Common Loon Survey: Assistant District Wildlife Biologist (ADWB) Annemarie Prince returned to Big Meadow Lake in Stevens County on July 5 to confirm common loon nesting activity. Two loons were observed. One was on the nest and the other was feeding in close proximity. ADWB Prince will return to the lake in the coming weeks to determine loon reproductive success. The latest egg hatching date on record for common loons in Washington is July 7 which occurred at Ferry Lake in 1999.



Common Loon on nest at Big Meadow Lake observed on July 2, 2013.

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

Private Lands/Access

Steptoe Butte: Biologist Lewis continued working with a cooperator who has been in the Hunt by Written Permission program to begin the process to switch over to the Hunt by Reservation program. The landowner owns 1,200 acres on the south side of Steptoe Butte and has a very unique hunting opportunity. Lewis met with landowner to discuss the reservation program and to begin planning to make the program switch.



Part of the access property on Steptoe Butte.



View looking south from part of the access property on Steptoe Butte.

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Large-Scale Releases of Pygmy Rabbits: Research Scientist Penny Becker, graduate student Steph DeMay, Scientific Technician Brooks Kohli, and a team of staff and volunteers worked to capture and release pygmy rabbit kits from all breeding enclosures to the wild at Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Area before July 1 and before a heat wave hit the Columbia Basin. This week 75 kits were captured from the three breeding enclosures and 62 of them were released to the wild on June 28 and June 29, making this the largest number of kits to be reintroduced from the enclosures at once. The total number of rabbits released this year reached 173 kits, greatly surpassing the 104 released last year. Smaller releases of kits born in this late part of the breeding season will continue in the coming two-to-three weeks, which should lead to a final 2013 release total that is approximately double that of 2012. The released kits that had glue-on transmitters will continue to be tracked to monitor their movements post-release.



Girl Scout Olivia Hallquist holds a pygmy rabbit kit ready for genetic sampling.

Lake Chelan Fire: A fire was started along the north shore of Lake Chelan on July 4 that spread to over 1,600 acres by Sunday, July 7. The fire started on private land and moved onto adjacent U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands. Several campgrounds and residences were evacuated. The fire is burning below the Grade Creek Road, which is giving firefighters an established break from which to stop its spread. Other than the road, the area is only accessible from the water. Several crews, along with air support, are engaged in stopping the fire burning in grass and shrub habitat. The fire has already burned into bighorn sheep habitat along the lake. An assessment of impacts will be done once the fire is out and access is allowed.

Waterfowl: Biologists Finger and Duvuvuei conducted duck brood surveys on the West Canal. These surveys are part of an ongoing project that was started in 1995 to monitor trends in waterfowl production in the Columbia Basin. Biologists Finger and Duvuvuei counted 23 duck broods and 2 coot broods along the 30 mile route. A total of 14 duck broods were counted on this route in 2012. Although the counts on this route increased compared to last year, overall waterfowl production in the Columbia Basin has been steadily declining in recent years. Further, the remaining three routes in the district had record low counts.



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

Wildlife Management

Wetland/Beaver Restoration Project: Project partners just submitted the final report to the Department of Ecology (DOE) summarizing the first four years of the Methow Beaver Restoration Project. Project accomplishments include:

- Thirteen beaver colony sites successfully established.
- Fifty-five stream monitoring stations initiated in 16 sub-watersheds.
- Beavers removed from 21 nuisance locations and 738 trees caged.

- Permanent development protection for 0.6 miles of river riparian habitat.
- Education programs conducted for at least 5,000 people.
- Ongoing collaboration with the Methow Restoration Council.
- Direct contact with 101 local landowners.
- Innovation of new techniques shared with seven other projects in three states (four sites in Washington).
- One publication on beaver sexing techniques developed jointly with University of Idaho.

In addition, the project produced an educational video available to view on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=qAIkYR5wAmg. The educational video was showcased in a Canadian Broadcasting Company documentary, “Beaver Whispers.” A summary of the project is available on the Methow Conservancy website at http://www.methowconservancy.org/beaver_project.html.

Cougar Management: Biologist Fitkin assisted Officer Treser investigate a report of a cougar being frequently sighted at close range on the Sun Mountain trail system. We did confirm cougar activity in the area (see photos); most likely a female with at least one kitten. Deer density in the area is high and to date we have not had any reports of any aggressive behavior, so no immediate management actions were taken.



Adult (left) and juvenile (right) cougar tracks – Photos by Scott Fitkin.

REGION 3

None

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Snoqualmie Bear Project: Biologist Smith assisted Bear and Cougar Specialist Beausoleil and Carnivore Specialist Maletzke with bear captures and collaring throughout the week. A total of five bears were collared this week. This represents a very successful week for the project, particularly considering the heat levels encountered.



Bear and Cougar Specialist Beausoleil checks the fit of a collar during the Snoqualmie Bear Project.

North Cascades Wolf Project: Biologist Danilson completed an 18 mile hike to retrieve several remote cameras from the area east of Ross Lake in northern Whatcom County. More than 1,000 video clips were obtained over the past two months from these cameras. From a cursory review of the footage, the species detected includes: black bear, mountain lion, snowshoe hare, black-tail/mule deer, pine marten, and ruffed grouse. The objective of this remote camera monitoring effort is to document wolf presence and breeding status in this area. While it appears that wolves may not have been detected by the camera stations during the last two months, probable wolf scat was observed.

Lower Columbia River Goose Capture: District 13 staff assisted Region 5 with their annual goose capture and marking project. This was likely Biologist Pat Miller's last goose round-up and many volunteers came out to make this a memorable day for him.



Above: WDFW Biologists Miller and Kraege supervise banding activities. Below left: Oregon State University Professor Emeritus Bob Jarvis (seated) determining the sex and age of geese. Below right: Student volunteers wait to have their geese banded.



Hozomeen Lake Loon Survey: Biologist Danilson conducted the second of two loon surveys on Hozomeen Lake. Both adult loons were observed foraging throughout the lake but without young, indicating that their nest attempt (documented earlier by National Park Service staff) was unsuccessful. Due to the remote nature of Hozomeen Lake, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and National Park Service (NPS) personnel share the duties of monitoring loon breeding success here. Adult loons were also seen and heard on Ross Lake, but no young of the year were observed.

Jim Creek Navy Pika Surveys: Biologists Milner and Cyra met security and management staff at the Jim Creek naval installation and toured the site to identify suitable habitat. Surveys will begin in the next couple of weeks.

Wildlife Areas

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with Wolfkill Feed and Fertilizer and the lessee to plant two fields of barley. Approximately 20 acres of barley was planted on the east side of the unit and a new 10 acre field was planted on the west side of the unit. The barley will provide forage and cover for waterfowl and pheasant this coming fall. Additionally, the parking area by Homeacres Road was cleared of weeds using the field mower. A highly-visible parking area has helped to deter people from dropping litter and waste in the parking areas on this unit.

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm and the Sky Valley Tractor Club continue to mow a portion of the leased field to provide a groomed area for dog training. Over an acre of grass is kept short for users to enjoy, as well as an adjoining walking trail. On the other agricultural fields within the unit, approximately 80 acres of corn and 20 acres of barley are growing very well.

Cherry Valley Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm worked with Citizen Advisory Group member Paul Gilmore and a local farmer to mow a portion of the Unit for dog training and trials. Approximately 20 acres have been mowed for dog training areas. Additional mowing will take place while the sun shines and the equipment is working. Various members of local dog clubs have expressed interest in providing volunteer labor to keep the mowed areas in shape for dog training and user access in coming months. A permit is required for commercial use activities and can be applied for at the Mill Creek office.

Additionally, Manager Boehm has worked with Frohning Dairy to prep and plant approximately 20 acres of corn and barley in the unit. This difficult effort is the first attempt at returning productive fields to an area that has been fallow for a number of years.

Stillwater Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm teamed up with staff from Sound Salmon Solutions for a day of herbicide control. Blackberry was targeted by using backpack sprayers. Approximately six acres of control work was completed in a restoration area along the Snoqualmie River. Additional spray days are planned followed by mowing.

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

Wildlife Management

North Cascades Elk Herd Management: Biologist Danilson coordinated with graduate student Anna Yost from Central Washington University in preparation for her field work to begin the week of July 8. Ms. Yost is using elk habitat models developed by U.S. Forest Service staff at the Pacific Northwest Research Station to develop refined habitat models for the North Cascades elk herd. Additionally, she will evaluate potential habitat management scenarios that could be implemented to address ongoing elk related agricultural conflicts and/or elk-vehicle collisions on State Route 20.

Band-tailed Pigeon study: Biologists DeBruyn and S. Anderson monitored and tracked 10 transmittered pigeons in Skagit and Whatcom counties. One of the first radioed pigeons may have died and plans are being made to recover the transmitter. Given the time elapsed between capture and mortality it is thought that this may be a normal predation event. The other nine pigeons appear to have moved away from the bird feeders they were frequenting to their breeding habitat. Elderberries and salmon berries are ripening, giving these birds an alternative food source. DeBruyn and Anderson also cleared encroaching blackberries, horsetail and canary grass from a mineral spring to facilitate use by band-tails and enable a survey later in the month.

North Cascades Elk Management Group: Restoration Projects Coordinator Brokaw compiled comments, questions, contact information for potential workgroup volunteers, and email addresses collected at the public meeting on June 26 into a spreadsheet. Wildlife Program Manager Link used email addresses collected at the meeting to email attendees to thank them for coming to the meeting.

Wildlife Areas

Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP): Restoration Projects Coordinator Brokaw reviewed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Project Partnership Kit to better understand how the USACE partners with project sponsors. This information is useful because PSNERP is a partnership between USACE and WDFW, and involves working with local project sponsors. It is important that we understand the roles of all partners as the project advances.

Fir Island Farm Final Design Project: Restoration Projects Coordinator Brokaw had a call with Planner Williams to discuss next steps and budget in the new biennium for the Fir Island Farm Final Design project. Brokaw will continue to focus on the water quality monitoring equipment and will assist in forming an Adaptive Management Plan.

Skagit Agricultural Enhancement and Lease Program -- Island Unit: Manager Belinda Rotton with the assistance of Permit Biologist Chris Gourley completed the Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application (JARPA) for the Island Unit Ditch Maintenance Plan. The JARPA was submitted to Skagit County, WDFW and the Army Corp of Engineers for review. State

Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process for review and comments has started for the project. As part of the review process Manager Rotton toured portions of the Island Unit with Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) Biologist Wendy Cole.

Volunteers completed installation of a ramp and pulley system on the barge used to transport equipment and supplies to the island. The first ferry operation on Friday morning went well due to the assistance of volunteers, Natural Resource Specialist Greg Meis and Access Area Manager Derek Hacker. Final field preparations were completed and corn was planted this weekend.



Newly rigged barge used to ferry equipment to the Island Unit.

Private Lands/Access

Migratory Forage Plots: Natural Resource Technician Otto checked green up on Harksell's 20 acre barley planting. All acres have substantial growth. Otto also assisted a grower with 20 acre barley planting for the Old Guide Unit.

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

Wildlife Management

Wildlife Conflict Response: Biologist Danilson followed up with a landowner in Whatcom County who called to complain about deer damage to his commercial gardens. Danilson spoke to the farmer briefly to discuss options and forwarded the complaint to Enforcement personnel. Biologist DeBruyn responded to calls about wildlife issues ranging from a snapping turtle to raccoons under a house.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Key Return: Natural Resource Technician Otto met with a DNR Forester and returned issued keys collected from spring bear hunters in the North Skagit and Monroe units. They discussed topics on how the hunts went and what can be improved for next year.

Wildlife Areas

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm hosted the monthly Citizens Advisory Group meeting on July 2. The topic of discussion was pheasant hunting and the pheasant release program that is supported by volunteers. Invitations to local hunters and landowners produced a crowd of approximately 20 individuals that provided historical content, a “fix-it” list of problems to resolve, and a desire to assist with various tasks that will improve hunting at the various units. Manager Boehm was pleased to hear that hunters are willing to volunteer their time and equipment if provided with a task list and schedule. Manager Boehm will be working with the local hunters to develop work parties in the coming weeks and in getting the pheasant release program ready to go before hunting season begins.

Leque Island Unit: Natural Resource Technician Meis treated poison hemlock on the site and checked the planting areas.

DeBay Slough: Manager Rotton has been coordinating with sharecrop farmer for the remaining 20 acre share of DeBay Island that needs to be planted.

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

Wildlife Management

Conflict Specialist and Private Lands Biologist 2 Recruitment: The District 14 Conflict Specialist position was successfully filled on July 1. Brandon Griffith, from New Mexico Game and Fish, accepted the position and will begin work August 1. Danilson and DeBruyn worked to get equipment and supplies ready for his arrival.

Flight Safety Training: Biologists Danilson and S. Anderson attended training in Ellensburg.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Western Pond Turtle Management - Shell Disease Investigation: June 28 marked the conclusion of the field portion of this year’s work on investigating the shell disease situation in western pond turtles in the Columbia River Gorge. Two-week trapping sessions were conducted at each of the four pond turtle sites. This work involved a total of 88 trap sets, 8 start up and takedown days, 5 moves from site to site, 9 different water bodies, cleaning and disinfecting per the aquatic invasive species regulations, 32 days of trap checking/animal handling, procurement of veterinary supplies, hardware, trap construction material, bait, etc., and data management.

A total of 338 captures comprised of 177 individual western pond turtles were recorded during the effort. In addition, 111 painted turtles were captured. Each animal was identified and evaluated for the shell disease situation, photographed, weighed, measured, etc. All data and photographs have been compiled and submitted to Olympia Wildlife Diversity Staff for further analysis with Dr. Mansfield and the western pond turtle health team. Biologists Anderson, George, Stephens, Bergh, and Holman all participated in various aspects of project.



Biologist George checking turtle traps at the Sondino site.

Sandhill Crane Recovery: Biologist Anderson and Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge Biologists McFall and Wilson captured and banded a sandhill crane colt (this year's young) at Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge. This effort is part of a long-term population monitoring program for breeding sandhill cranes in Washington, a state endangered species. This is the second colt banded this season. Sandhill cranes are banded when they are approximately 60 days old, prior to fledging which is at around 70 days. Sandhill cranes will remain near their breeding areas in Washington until late September when they migrate to their wintering ground in the Sacramento Valley.



Capture and banding a sandhill crane colt (this year's young) at Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

Resident Dark Geese Capture: Region 5 staff in addition to volunteers, WDFW staff from other parts of WA, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) staff collaborated to capture Resident Dark Geese at Miller Sands Island this week. We were able to install radio collars on some non-breeding birds which have eluded us in the past as well as continue to mark Resident Dark Geese to aid in subspecies identification in the field during surveys and at goose check stations. This was Biologist Miller's last banding operation and many friends and colleagues came to help him.



2013 Goose Banding

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

Private Lands/Access

Access Sites: Access staff Spangler and Rhodes pressure washed and painted the lower gate at Vancouver Lake and used the portable striping machine to repaint half of the paved parking lot. Rhodes caught some individuals painting graffiti on the restroom wall and recovered a backpack full of spray paint. It seems to be the same individuals that have been tagging the area in recent weeks. Enforcement is following up on the incident.

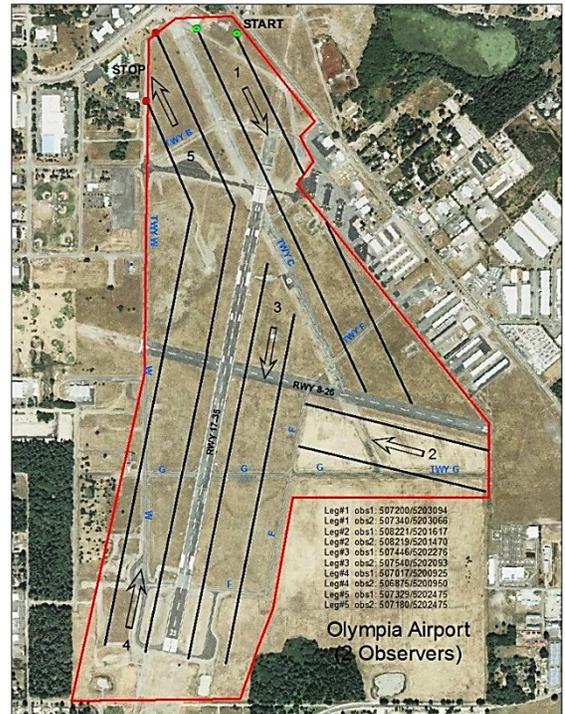


Vancouver Lake

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management



Above: Streaked Horned Lark. Right: Two-observer transects followed on standard Streaked Horned Lark surveys at Olympia Airport, Thurston County.

Bear Cub in a Precarious Situation: Biologists Hoenes and Michaelis responded to a report of a bear cub that was heard crying and appeared to be stuck in the brush just off a forest road in the Smith Creek area. Hoenes and Michaelis responded, but did not feel very confident they were actually going to locate the cub. Sure enough though, the reporting party led them to the spot and there was a bear cub whose back foot was stuck in the wedge of a small sapling (see photos).

Luckily, mama bear was hiding somewhere close and allowed biologists to cut the sapling below where the cub was stuck so it could be released. The cub hit the ground running and besides being a bit gimp, seemed to be no more worse for the wear as he scurried up the tree next to the one he was stuck in. From looks of the area, mama was in the area and had been working diligently to figure out how to get her cub unstuck. More than likely, she came back to retrieve the cub shortly after biologists left.



Western Pond Turtle - Mason County: Records at the Mason County turtle site continue to be broken. Seven nests have now been located for a total of 56 eggs recovered. All figures exceed totals from past years dating back to 2005. All eggs have been transported to Woodland Park Zoo for incubation.

Unfortunately, formerly productive female #7 was located by Scientific Technician Perry and was apparently killed by a mink while on land during a nesting attempt. Also, Biologist Skriletz observed an adult bald eagle catch a swimming turtle and watched from the kayak as the bird consumed the extremities. The eagle allowed the kayak to approach within 15 feet and it was noted that the turtle was considerably larger than those taken in the past. The carapace was approximately 13 cm in length and was apparently too rigid for the eagle to separate from the plastron as it had done with numerous smaller turtles. It appears that the turtles have no means of avoiding this very effective predator which, until recently, had shown no interest in this endangered species in Mason County. Monitoring of radio tagged females will continue for several more weeks.



Western Pond Turtle - Pierce County:

Biologist Tirhi and staff including one seasonal and one intern continue to be extremely busy with monitoring nesting Western Pond Turtles. Thirty-four females have been fitted with radio transmitters and are being monitored from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m., unless a female is out of the ponds and nesting at which point monitors stay with the female until she is finished nesting and/or returned to the point. Thirty nests have been laid to date including seven second clutches. Staff continue to transport half of the nests to the Woodland Park Zoo and left half in the ground to incubate 100 days, per the second year of testing which produces more viable eggs (as measured by hatch success) and hatchlings (as measured by weights).

Western Pond Turtle nests (caged and flagged to protect from predators) monitored at the Pierce County recovery site (with the ponds in the back ground). Temperature and humidity reading equipment can be seen at the surface under the cage of the furthest nest.

Western Snowy Plovers: Biologists Sundstrom conducted weekly monitoring of snowy plover nesting activity at Midway Beach. There is currently only one active nest with the majority of nests being depredated by corvids. Sundstrom observed no new nests this week and confirmed the known brood still contained two chicks and is only a few days from fledging.

Biologist Sundstrom and Shoalwater Bay Tribal Biologist Spencer surveyed the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) dune restoration project site at Graveyard Spit. No new nests were observed this week and when biologists “floated” the eggs of the known nests, it indicated eggs should be hatching early this week. Sundstrom and Spencer visited the nests on Sunday, but the eggs had not hatched yet. However, at one of the nests they noted the chicks were beginning to chirp and peck at the shell so it is anticipated they will be hatched out by Tuesday when Sundstrom and Spencer plan to return and band the chicks.

Biologists Hoenes and Sundstrom attended a meeting coordinated by State Parks Ranger Erik Plunkett and attended by landowners that live on Midway Beach Road and were requesting access through the snowy plover nesting area to the outer coastline. Currently, there is no vehicle access from Midway Beach Road because the access road was decommissioned after past construction activities caused the formation of a wetland that made the access road unusable. Foot access has also been minimal because most people do not want to wade through the wetland to access the beach. There are only a few weeks out of the year, and not every year, that the wetland dries out enough to allow foot access through the area.

Historically, the decommissioned road was included as part of the closed area and access was not allowed in an attempt to minimize human disturbance to nesting snowy plovers. However, it was brought to WDFW's attention that some landowners are willing to wade through the wetland to get to the outer beach and although the road is decommissioned, Pacific County still has a 40 foot easement through State Park Lands that is associated with the decommissioned road.

Consequently, landowners questioned the legal right to not allow access along that easement. Instead of refuting these claims, Hoenes and Sundstrom decided to use this as an opportunity to form a coalition with local landowners and make them part of the solution rather than the problem. This is very important because nearly half of core nesting area at Midway Beach is comprised of private property located south of the State Park and an effective community based coalition may go a long ways in providing those snowy plovers the protection they have lacked in the past. To begin this working relationship, WDFW is allowing access through the closed area from Midway Beach Road, but it will be foot access only and of the approximately 25 landowners that were in attendance, many of them volunteered to help mark the foot path through the area. The group agreed to meet and construct the trail on Saturday, July 20.

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

Wildlife Management

Master Hunters Helping Landowners in Game Management Unit (GMU) 667 (second update): On Saturday, June 28, Master Hunters and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) members completed the fence repair on a farm in GMU 667. The Master Hunters managed to find an individual who owns a bulldozer and is willing to donate his time to pile wood debris scarify soil in clear cut for seeding. Biologist Harris met with the bulldozer owner to discuss objectives. RMEF Olympia Chapter members will be submitting a grant application for funding of the forage seeding project.



Master Hunter and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation volunteers

Master Hunters help Landowners in GMU 666: Biologist Harris met with a Master Hunter who will act as lead on a deer depredation issue at an organic farm. Approximately eight Master Hunters have indicated that they would like to assist on the project. The lead will instruct and schedule Master Hunters for hazing. They met with the landowner and walked his fields. To date, the landowner has lost about 300 plants to deer. The damage was very evident. This is a problem that has been increasing over the past couple of years. Basically, one doe discovered that pumpkins were tasty and she has taught her young. Last year the deer started eating the plants. Needless to say the problem has become intolerable for the landowner. Master Hunters will begin a hazing routine to try and discourage the deer. Hopefully we will be able to remove some of the culprits once the designated permits are active. Stay tuned for further updates.