

Wildlife Program

Week of May 27 – June 2, 2013

REGION 1

Wolf Activities

District 1: Conflict Specialist Shepherd delivered Damage Prevention Contracts to two Smackout wolf territory ranchers. Various wolf management issues were discussed and little resolution occurred. Equipment was delivered to a ranger rider in the Smackout wolf territory. Conflict Specialist Shepherd checked and removed a camera in the Lyons Hill area southwest of Springdale in an area where the Huckleberry pack may potentially occur. Only coyotes, deer, and turkeys were detected.

Conflict Specialist Shepherd toured the Smackout wolf pack territory with a Northport area resident who would like to develop a range riding business and another potential volunteer. Conflict Specialist Shepherd produced maps of Smackout wolf locations and discussed them with officers and a rancher throughout the week.

Conflict Specialist Shepherd received a signed Damage Prevention Contract including range riding and other preventative methods with a cattle producer in what is suspected to be the Huckleberry Pack territory. Conflict Specialist Shepherd discussed a wolf attack on a dog with an Addy area resident and deployed a remote camera.

Conflict Specialist Shepherd discussed meeting to help develop a plan to detect wolves for the District and new assistant district biologists. Conflict Specialist Shepherd discussed bear damage to young trees with a Stimson forester and will issue two removal permits. Conflict Specialist Shepherd participated in a conference call concerning the dissemination of wolf location data to open range ranchers.

District 2: Conflict Specialist Shepherd, Wildlife Program Manager Robinette, and Regional Director Pozzanghera discussed wolf issues and management with an audience at Recreational Equipment Incorporated (REI).

District 3: District Wildlife Biologist Wik placed remotely activated cameras in Game Management Unit (GMU) 175, Lick Creek. A number of wolf reports were received and checked this week without confirmation of any.

Assistant District Biologist Vekasy and Conflict Specialist Rasley both followed-up on reported wolves in the McKay Creek area north of Waitsburg. It seems an unlikely place for a pack, but there are large numbers of deer and scattered groups of elk out in mix of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and agricultural lands, so it is possible dispersing wolves have found a temporary home. We did not make any sightings or find any tracks, but Biologist Rasley collected two large scat piles for analysis.

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

Wildlife Areas

WT Wooten WA – Campgrounds: Assistant Wildlife Area Manager Dingman checked the campgrounds and cleaned up garbage after the Memorial Day weekend. State Parks staff took pictures of the crowds over the weekend.



Garbage picked up from Campgrounds 6-10 and Curl Lake after Memorial Day Weekend.



Campground 5



Curl Lake Parking Area where 37 parked cars were counted at one point over the weekend.

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

Wildlife Areas

Reardan Mule Days display – Anderson manned the Audubon Ponds Wildlife Area display on the morning of June 1, at Reardan’s annual Mule Days celebration. Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area volunteer Thorburn, who is also the current president of the Spokane chapter of the Audubon Society, was kind enough to man the display in the afternoon. Several folks who stopped by the booth were already familiar with the wildlife area, and many others were also curious about not only Reardan Audubon Ponds, but also the other NE Washington Wildlife Areas.

The 2014 Pend Oreille County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan – Parks and Recreation Consultant Dixie Chichester requested information on recreational lands managed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) within Pend Oreille County to include in the 2014 Pend Oreille County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan. Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Palmer compiled the requested information for two Wildlife Areas and nine Water Access Sites that WDFW owns and manages in Pend Oreille County.

REGION 2

Wolves

Nothing to report

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDIFE

Wildlife Management

Sprague Lake Water Birds: Biologist Finger and Seasonal Waterfowl Banding Guru Becker surveyed Sprague Lake to assess western grebe nesting activity and to retrieve two escaped buoys which mark the no-fish zone around Harper Island. Established during 2010, the no-fish zone is a 50-foot buffer around the island and is intended to reduce disturbance to colonial nesting water birds such as gulls, terns, and cormorants. Since establishment of this zone, double-crested cormorant nests have increased four-fold, from 35 active nests to 140 active nests (birdresearchnw.org). Caspian tern presence and nesting activity varies, but is typically less than 20 individuals and no trend is apparent. A total of 35 adult western grebes were observed during our survey, most of which occurred around Harper Island where nesting has occurred in the past. However, no nesting by western grebes was observed at this time.



Double crested cormorant colony at Harper Island, Sprague Lake.

Bighorn Sheep: Biologist Volsen met with U.S. Forest Service (USFS) staff to discuss the movement of four bighorn ewes into occupied domestic grazing allotments in Chelan County. Local residents and USFS staff has been reporting incidental observations of the bighorn group along the Entiat River over the past week. Additional reports indicate that the bighorns traveled as far west as the Fox Creek Campground, which is significantly outside their normal ranges for the past five years. The most recent report had the sheep across the Entiat River at the edge of the Mosquito Ridge grazing allotment.

During the meeting the USFS agreed to alter the grazing route of domestic sheep in that allotment to avoid the area where we suspected the bighorn to be. There are roughly 2,000 domestic sheep in three adjoining allotments, increasing the chances of the contacting domestics. Due to the potential risk of disease transfer, we have decided to remove the bighorn sheep if they can be located. WDFW, USFS staff and local residents have been alerted to report any unusual sights of bighorn sheep directly to Biologist Volsen. If the opportunity presents itself the bighorn will be removed.

Pygmy Rabbit Kits Captured For Release: Research Scientist Becker, Scientific Technician Kohli and graduate student DeMay captured 25 pygmy rabbit kits from the Dormaier enclosure and released them at Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Area on May 28. The kits were weighed, sexed, treated for parasites, sampled for genetics and some were fitted with glue-on transmitters to track their movements post-release. The next kit round up will be on June 5 at Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Area.



Left: Scientific Technician Brooks Kohli holds a kit while a glue-on radio transmitter is fitted. Center: Two kits huddle together in a transport carrier while they await sampling. Right: Research Scientist Penny Becker assesses the pile of rabbit carriers full of kits for release.

Wildlife Areas

North Central Washington Prescribed Burn Team – The weather was not conducive to burning this week so the team worked to clean, repair and maintain equipment. High pressure, bringing sunny weather is settling in with the promise of drying fuels so the team began installing a hoselay around the Blue 6 and 7 Burn Units on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area in anticipation of burning them next week. Fuels Manager Leuschen drafted a burn plan, and Restoration Specialist Guse provided the maps and technical review for the Rail and Canal Units on the Sherman Creek Wildlife Area. Once the Blue Units are completed the team will move back to Sherman Creek and complete burning the Cougar Units along with the Rail and Canal Units. The team will continue to burn as long as environment conditions will allow us to meet first entry, post-logging management objectives.

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

Wildlife Management

Foal Investigation: Biologist Volsen responded to a call from a local resident that a 4-day old foal was attacked by a predator during the night. Wounds on the head and neck of the foal were confirmed as those from an attack and tracks were found in the muddy portions of the pasture. Biologist Volsen enlisted the assistance of Officer Klump and Biologist Gallie for confirmation and to formalize the investigation. The final report is being distributed internally today.



Left: Mating pair of Tree Swallows near Sinlahekin Creek. Right: Bullock's Oriole near the Headquarters facility. Below: A Cinnamon Teal near the headquarters bridge.



REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Tieton Bighorn Sheep: Biologist Bernatowicz, with help from Biologist Moore, Conflict Specialist Hand and Wildlife Area Manager Winegeart, continued trying to remove the last few



Tieton herd ram locations for June.

Tieton bighorns. Observations and reports indicate that less than five bighorns remain in the area. One very skittish ewe was seen during the project, but no one was able to get within shooting range. A few tracks (probable rams) were seen in the west portion of the range. Biologist Moore plotted locations from GPS rams collared in previous years. One trail camera was placed in an area of historic use but that has not been searched recently.

Wildlife Areas

Target Shooting Caused Fires: The Wenas Wildlife Area had two fires over the weekend, both started by target shooting. The first occurred Saturday afternoon along the Buffalo Road, just north of the BPA power line, and burned 25 acres. The second occurred Sunday afternoon on the north end of the wildlife area at the “Durr East” target shooting area and burned ~half-an-acre. The Durr East fire started in a rocky area, which allowed fire fighters to get it contained in spite of the windy conditions.



Buffalo Road Fire – June 1, 2013

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Bear Project: Biologist Smith accompanied Cougar and Bear Specialists Beausoleil and Maletzke while checking trap locations. A couple traps were sprung without a capture and one young cub was caught but able to free itself unharmed as we approached. The adult was pursued for two hours (by Karelian Bear Dog Cash) but refused to tree, continuing to move whenever Beausoleil approached.

Biologist Smith assisted in obtaining characteristic measurements of and fitting a GPS collar to a male (3 ½-year-old) bear captured by Officer Capelli in Issaquah. The bear was released by several officers (and dogs) at a neighborhood interface with Squak Mountain State Park Natural Area.



A bear captured by Officer Capelli in an Issaquah neighborhood.

Elk Crop Damage: Biologist Smith accompanied Officer Krenz to meet with farmers and discuss potential scenarios to combat elk caused crop damage in the Green Valley area.

Bald Eagle Data Management Support: Assistant District Biologist (ADB) Cyra researched archived data on a Bald Eagle roost location that is impacted by a proposed Forest Practices Application. Based on roost count data from the 1980s it appears the roost as delineated in Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) is incorrect. ADB Cyra coordinated with Biologists Bell and Stinson to modify the boundaries of the roost. While no longer a state or federally listed species, WDFW is responsible for the management of the Bald Eagle site data that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) use in their management of the species in Washington State.

Marbled Murrelet Training Assistance: Assistant District Biologist Cyra provided additional survey related information and location data to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Tribal staff looking for sites for a mid-season Marbled Murrelet survey refresher.

American Pika: Assistant District Biologist Cyra reviewed appropriate scientific literature on American Pika in preparation for beginning surveys under a contract from the U.S. Navy at a low-elevation naval installation where there have been reports of pika presence. While the USFWS declined to list the American Pika, it was found that climate change was the leading likely cause of Pika population reductions. With increased temperatures, low elevation populations, while rare, may be at increased risk in the future.

Oregon Spotted Frog: Biologist Danilson resolved data related issues and continued work on the final draft report for the 2013 Oregon spotted frog surveys. Danilson also assisted the biologist at the Mount-Baker Snoqualmie in locating data related to this project and has arranged a meeting with the biologist and Baker District ranger to discuss ongoing projects and access issues on U.S. Forest Service lands.

Wildlife Areas

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm continued to monitor the delivery of cattle on the Unit. DFW has a grazing lease that allows 400 cow and calf pairs on the Unit. Approximately 300 pair has been delivered so far. Additionally, Manager Boehm discussed the fencing plan for the Unit and purchased enough fencing supplies to run approximately 1.5 miles of fence. The lessee has also completed plowing 50 acres that will be planted with barley for forage and cover for wildlife and waterfowl.

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm and Werkhoven Dairy finalized the planting plan for 2013. A number of changes to the existing lease were added, including planting barley as a leave crop, providing a mix of corn and barley in all of the fields, and maintaining access paths for recreational users and DFW staff. Currently, approximately 60 acres of corn has been planted.

Cherry Valley Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with the agricultural lease holder for Cherry Valley and Stillwater Wildlife Area to discuss this year's planting plan. Between the two locations, approximately 75 acres will be planted with corn and barley. The plan is to leave 25 acres of grain for forage and cover for wildlife, pheasants and waterfowl.

Lake Terrell Field Prep: Natural Resource Tech Deyo continued disking the fields at Lake Terrell in preparation for barley planting. Manager Kessler discussed the seeding with the local Wilbur Ellis rep. If all goes well with this week's weather, we should be able to plant the fields next week.

Lake Terrell Noxious Weed Control: Natural Resource Tech Deyo weed whacked blackberries and controlled Scotch broom on the Lake Terrell Unit.

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

Wildlife Management

Western Washington Pheasant Release Program: Biologist Danilson participated in an internal meeting to discuss the results of the resident and hunter surveys related to the Bow Hill pheasant release site and to help develop "next steps" for this particular site. Additionally, Danilson accompanied Lands Agent Iris and Wildlife Area Manager Rotton to two WDFW owned properties in Skagit County being considered for surplus. These small isolated parcels were acquired decades ago with the intent of using them in the pheasant release program. Since Region 4 has had difficulty fulfilling prior commitments to find new pheasant release/access sites, Danilson is drafting recommendations that will hopefully help guide the property surplus process in Skagit and Whatcom counties in a way that addresses this situation.

Waterfowl Survey Assistance: As part of the annual evaluation and work plan development process, Assistant District Biologist Cyra assisted Waterfowl Survey and Sea Duck Specialist Evenson with identification of work tasks and completion timelines in the coming year.

Wildlife Areas

Leque Island: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) held a meeting to discuss EPA's review of the groundwater study. EPA has not made a final determination on whether or not the study met their originally outlined protocols, and needs additional time for review. When a final determination is released, WDFW will forward the result to the Leque Island Stakeholder email group. To be added to the group, email Loren.Brokaw@dfw.wa.gov.

Lake Terrell Road Grading: Manager Kessler discussed road grading on the fishing pier access road at Lake Terrell with the WDFW Grading crew manager. He will visit the site this week to assess the grading needs.

Lake Terrell Dog Training: Manager Kessler discussed dog training opportunities on the wildlife area with more hunters. One group of hunters used the Intalco Unit for training. Dog training with live fire is allowed on certain parts of the wildlife area, including parts of Lake Terrell and Intalco.

Island Unit: Regional Director Bob Everitt and Manager Belinda Rotton met with local waterfowl hunters interested in the program needs for the Island Unit. The hunters are interested

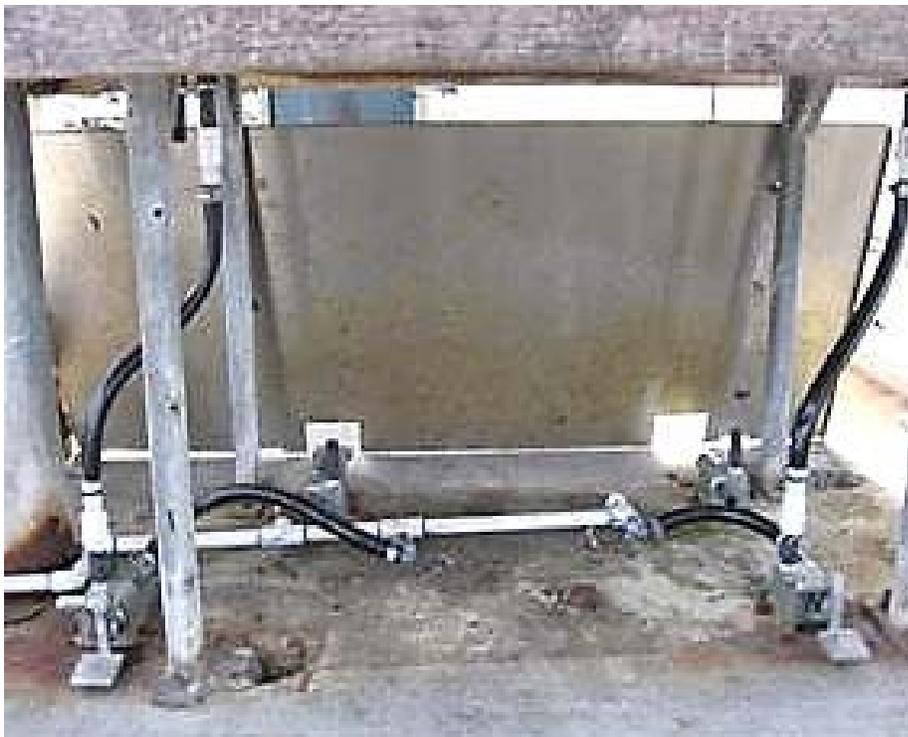
in donating heavy equipment services to WDFW to assist with the drainage maintenance on the Island Unit. Manager Rotton will begin the process of investigating the permitting needs inside and outside of the Agency.

Natural Resource Specialist Greg Meis and Natural Resources Technician Curran Cosgrove continued to monitor field conditions and drainage on the Island Unit, Samish and Leque Island. Recent rains have slowed field preparations.

Private Lands/Access

The week of May 24 marks the final week of service for our Private Lands Biologist Brandon Roozen. Most of us here at the La Conner field office (and Region 4 in general) view Brandon's departure as a sad day in many ways. Brandon's commitment to the agency and to developing and implementing a strong private lands program here in Skagit County is reflected by the legacy of private lands hunting and wildlife watching opportunities he has developed during his term in this position.

As a lifetime Skagit Valley resident, Brandon's connection to the land and commitment to working with the agricultural community allowed him to build strong and lasting relations between WDFW and the local agricultural community. While we lament losing Brandon to a new position, he will continue to be engaged in WDFW activities in the region in his new position as executive director of the Western Washington Agricultural Association. Good bye and Good Luck Brandon!



Region 4 Access worked on hooking up water to fish cleaning stations on Pier 86 in Seattle.

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

Wildlife Areas

Stillwater Wildlife Area: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with two long-term hunters at the Stillwater Wildlife Area. The hunters provided Manager Boehm with a walking tour of the Unit while discussing changes across the landscape and hunting over the past 30 years. Various foot bridges and crossing locations were pointed out along Harris Creek that hunters have used in the past to gain access to less-utilized areas of the Unit. The exchange of information and an opportunity to meet face-to-face was appreciated by everyone. The hunters stated that they and other hunters they knew would be willing to do fieldwork in an effort to improve hunting conditions on the Unit.

Leque Island: Manager Rotton has been in communication with Snohomish County Weed Board Representative Sonny Gorman regarding poison hemlock. Mr. Gorman has monitored much of the weed control work in the area and wanted to coordinate remaining treatment areas with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) right of way. Staff mowed and sprayed hemlock in the southern fields and dike area.

Headquarter - Wylie Slough Restoration: Staff met with Brenda Clifton, Restoration Ecologist, from the Skagit River Systems Cooperative. Brenda is involved in much of the post-project monitoring on the site specifically related to the vegetation monitoring. Brenda has also been assisting with noxious weed control on the site. This meeting was to discuss the plan for this year and to develop an improved tracking and treatment system.

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

Conflict Specialist and Private Lands Biologist 2 Recruitment: Biologist Danilson reviewed and ranked applications for the District 14 conflict specialist position. Danilson facilitated input from potential interview committee members and made contact with some of the candidates that are likely to be interviewed. Danilson also coordinated with Section Manager Simek and biologists in other regions to coordinate the recruitment.

Danilson continued to meet/discuss next steps regarding the Private Lands Biologist position. This included conversations, emails, and phone calls with Manager Link, Biologist Milner, and Biologist Roozen.

Snoqualmie Wildlife Areas: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with a representative from the Snoqualmie Tribe for a follow-up discussion on the feasibility of using the Cherry Valley barn facility as a native plant nursery. The Tribe has been looking for a location to provide native plants to restoration partners in the Snoqualmie Valley, as well as

develop a cultural and educational component to the nursery. Manager Boehm will continue to hold discussions with the Tribe to see if and how this venture may work out.

Annual Performance Evaluation: Assistant District Biologist Cyra and District Biologist Milner completed paperwork for the annual performance evaluation and updated the position description.

Equipment Preparation/Maintenance: Assistant District Biologist Cyra continued equipment preparation and maintenance of survey equipment in anticipation of upcoming surveys.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Mourning Dove Survey: Wildlife Area Manager Hauswald conducted the annual mourning dove survey this past week, recording a higher than average presence of doves on the route despite the cool and sometime wet weather. The majority of the doves seen and heard were in the more rural part of the route, which starts along the Columbia River in the Vancouver Lowlands and ends west of the Clark County Fairgrounds. The survey is an effort to monitor nationwide population trends for the establishment of annual hunting regulations.

Black-tailed Deer Research Project: Initial fawn searches associated with the Region 5 portion of the black-tailed deer research project were conducted. Study does 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) GMUs. To date, two fawns have been captured in the Washougal cluster during 2013.

Wildlife Areas

Klickitat Wildlife Area



Tour of Columbia Land Trust's Haul Road Project: Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven attended a tour of Phases 2 through 5 of the Klickitat River Floodplain Restoration Project, also known as the old Haul Road project, along with Biologists Byrne and Weinheimer of WDFW and representatives of the Columbia Land Trust (CLT), Yakama Indian Nation Fisheries Program, Washington Department of Natural Resources, Klickitat County government, rafting/fishing guides, and interested citizens. Staff members Cornelius (CLT) and Conley (YKFP) provided an

Tour of Haul Road Project

overview of the project and also discussed how hydrology, soils, and succession in the riparian plant community affect fish and wildlife habitat, and how these concepts are being used to restore the habitat with the best economy of funds.

The photo to the right shows an example of how the project site looks two years after completion of that segment. The Columbia Land Trust is preparing to undertake Phase 4 of the project this summer.



Hall Road River - Floodplain Reconnection

Private Lands/Access

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Workshop: Biologist Stephens attended Conservation Reserve Program training in Prosser. The CRP program was established in the 1950s and is a voluntary program administered by the Farm Service Agency. The program provides rental payments to landowners for converting cropland to vegetative cover to enhance the land for wildlife and prevent soil erosion. The group was trained in running belt transects to determine the density and diversity of desirable plant species in a field to evaluate if the land's current vegetation cover meets the minimum qualifications to be admitted into the program. The group also reviewed identification of grasses, forbs, and weeds.

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

Wildlife Management



Watchable Wildlife – Klickitat County: Biologist Anderson had his first observation of the season of a cow elk with this year's calf in GMU 560. There have been some limited reports of winter mortality of elk in the South Cascades, but overall elk numbers appear to be good for these GMUs.

Elk with calf in Klickitat County

Private Lands/Access

Vancouver Lake and Klickitat Access Sites: Access staff Spangler and Rhodes had to haul a 500 pound dump pile from the entrance and paved parking lot of the Vancouver Lake site. In addition, the reader board that was just re-painted two weeks ago has been tagged by vandals.



Vancouver Lake

Klickitat access sites had high use over the holiday weekend. Spangler and Rhodes cleaned limbs and leaves off roads, parking, and paved ADA parking areas as well as limbed up side roads going out to campsites. While working they observed the swifts were active flying in the wind around the old icehouse.



Swifts flying around the icehouse

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

Wildlife Management

Boat Safety Training: Biologist Miller assisted with a Motorboat Operator Certification Course (MOCC) class in Wenatchee this week. Many of the students were from the Wildlife program from both eastern and western Washington with a variety of boating experiences and backgrounds. The MOCC curriculum was recently updated and new training modules were available for use at this session.

Wildlife Areas

New Shillapoo and Mount St. Helens Complex Assistant Manager: Please welcome David Loomis as the new Assistant Manager for the Shillapoo and Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area Complex. David comes to us from Oregon State University where he has just finished his Masters in Wildlife Management. He has experience working with wildlife from Antarctica to Alaska and brings a wealth of knowledge with him to the Wildlife Program. Please stop by and introduce yourself and welcome him aboard in the upcoming weeks.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Black Tailed Deer Mortality Studies -- Capital Forest: Biologist Michaelis continued to monitor radio-collared deer in the Capitol Forest Cluster. It is fawning season so does are being checked every other day in an effort to capture fawns as soon as possible after they are born. With the thick vegetation, catching fawns can be a very challenging endeavor. Last week, Biologist Michaelis captured and marked his first fawn of the year, which was a single male. This brings the total number of deer being monitored in the Capitol Forest Cluster to seven does, two yearlings, and one fawn.

Black Tailed Deer Mortality Studies -- Mason and Satsop: Biologist Murphie spent the week monitoring collared does in the Mason and Satsop units. Eight of 13 deer have been fitted with a VIT that allows the remote detection of a fawning event, while the remaining 5 deer require physical tracking and observation. Of the eight Satsop deer, two have had fawns and one VIT appears to have been expelled prematurely. Of the five deer in Mason, two have fawned and a single fawn was collared for each; additional searches will continue in the coming days. Three Master Hunter volunteers assisted in the fawn searches/captures.

Pysht - Doe Mortality:

One of the Pysht collared does (Doe 298PYF/10713) had a mortality alert on May 27. Biologist McMillan arranged for Pt No Pt Biologist Cullinan to do the investigation during the Holiday. Biologist Cullinan discovered the doe dead, intact with evidence of a predator kill. Biologist Cullinan left the site with plans to return with WDFW staff the next day and do a necropsy.



Doe mortality in Pysht cluster

On May 28 the carcass remained almost entirely intact. Biologists Cullinan and Ament conducted a necropsy while Biologists McMillan and Loafman assisted. The doe had extensive wounds such as claw marks, punctures and a crushed rostrum. Extensive hemorrhaging was evident under the hide along the neck. The doe also had been impaled by a stick between the front legs and rib cage. This was a possible cougar attack but it remains unclear why the doe was not consumed. The necropsy also revealed that the doe carried two unborn fawns, both female. They were fairly small and were possibly a couple weeks from being born. The teeth wear on the doe indicated she was at least 10 years old according to Cullinan. A game camera has been set up overlooking the remains of this doe. Pictures indicate that at least a red-tailed hawk, bald eagle and turkey vulture have been feeding on the carcass.



Necropsy: Lower neck/throat internal tissue damage.



000001

05-30-2013 18:03:18



000002

05-31-2013 18:23:25



000003

05-28-2013 17:47:04



05-30-2013 11:31:28

Remote-sensing camera images of doe mortality in Pysht Cluster, May 31 2013

Black Tailed Deer Mortality Studies -- Vail: Biologist Tirhi and staff conducted two fawn searches in the Vail study area last week associated with the mortality study. All does in the Vail study site had been fitted with vaginal implant transmitters (VIT) in addition to satellite radio collars. The former allows staff to monitor parturition while the second allows staff to monitor movements and mortality. One doe prematurely expelled her VIT early in the study and thus has to be monitored both in terms of her movements (clustering) and visually for signs of pregnancy. Tirhi and staff spend one afternoon searching for this doe and potential fawns; a visual sighting suggested she has not yet given birth which is supported by her movement patterns (lack of clustering, which reflects fawning). A second doe expelled her VIT which staff was able to recover. Unfortunately, the location did not suggest parturition had taken place. Regardless, Tirhi and staff searched the location thoroughly for fawns and then proceeded to search her last GPS location, but did not locate fawns. Staff planned to return over the weekend.

VIT Alerts: On May 28, while the Crew was conducting the field necropsy on Doe 298PYF there was a VIT alert for Doe 299PYF/10711 at 3:30 pm. Doe 298PYF (the doe being necropsied) and 299PYF remained together most of the time since they were collared in February, always within the clear-cuts around the mortality site.

Biologist McMillan used a cell Hot Spot to connect her laptop to Vecronics website to get the most current locations of 299PYF. Fixes downloaded at noon in the office only included locations through May 25 and were not useful for knowing where the doe was when the VIT alert occurred on May 28. It was late in the day to be starting a searching effort, but with the current location information it made it feasible to make a collaring attempt. With the Vecronics website accessible via the Hot Spot, location fix records were downloaded and analyzed. The doe had moved north about three miles immediately after the 298PYF mortality event on May 27. After a day up north the doe moved back about 1.5 miles. When the VIT alert occurred Doe 299PYF was still 1.5 miles away from the 298PYF mortality site and in an area she hadn't been recorded to use before. The Crew was able to find the VIT and one fawn. Additional information is reported in the next section.

Fawns Collared: Three of the remaining seven collared Pysht Cluster does had VIT alerts during the week. Fawns from all three does were collared. One of the does abandoned the single fawn that was collared and the fawn was found dead three days after collaring.



Biologists Ament and McMillan measured a fawn for collaring.

Doe 299PYF-10711/Fawn 393PYM: On May 28 Biologists McMillan, Cullinan, Loafman and Ament began a search for the VIT and fawn at about 5 pm. The VIT was quite a ways from any drivable roads. The crew accessed the site walking in on motorbike trails. Biologist Cullinan was able to locate the VIT and one fawn. This male fawn was collared using 373PY. There was no success finding a second fawn and the crew left before 8 pm, returning to vehicles just as daylight was waning.



Biologist McMillan collared Fawn 393PYM.

Biologists Ament, Loafman and Manson (Elwha Tribe) conducted a search the following day in the vicinity of 393PYM on May 29 but could not locate a second fawn. On May 30 the doe had once again returned to her normal home range seeming to abandon the collared fawn. The collared fawn was discovered to have later died on Friday, May 31. The fawn carcass was intact.

Doe 297PYF-10711/Fawn 369PYF and 370PYF: On Friday, May 31 two female fawns were collared belonging to doe 297PYF by Biologists Cullinan and McMillan.

Western Snowy Plovers: Biologist Sundstrom continued to monitor snowy plovers at Midway Beach. There have been nine nests located so far this year, but eight of those nine have failed with predation by corvids (e.g., crows and ravens) being the primary cause of failure. However, the single nest that was not depredated hatched last week and the behavior of the attending male indicated he was tending to fledglings. Sundstrom hopes to confirm the number of fledglings next week.

Biologist Michaelis conducted snowy plover surveys at Conner Creek and Copalis Spit, but did not observe any. Historically, these two sites were used by nesting plovers, but none have been observed nesting in either location since 2006. It is believed the lack of nesting snowy plovers in these two locations is related to declines in the overall number of snowy plovers in Washington, rather than loss of suitable habitat.

Biologist Hoenes and Shoalwater Bay Tribal Biologist Spencer surveyed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Dune Restoration Project at Graveyard Spit for nesting snowy plovers. Weekly surveys are being conducted in cooperation with USACE to ensure construction activities do not disturb or result in the incidental take of nesting snowy plovers. Biologists Hoenes and Spencer did not observe any plovers during their survey last week.

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

Private Lands/Access

Sports People Clean-Up:

Biologist Harris worked with Eyes in the Woods organizing and implementing the annual clean-up. This event focuses on cleaning up private timberlands that are open to public recreation and receive a high level of public abuse. This year we had 16 total volunteers. Master Hunters made a strong showing this year with nine attending. The volunteers set a steady pace keeping Biologist Harris constantly shifting crews to dump sites. Overall the volunteers picked up 3.7 tons of garbage. This event is the start of the clean-up season. We will have more clean-ups in the future.



Master Hunter (MH) Clean-Up Machine: Recently, Biologist Harris received a call from a Master Hunter who wanted to get his 40 hours volunteer time ASAP for recertification. This Master Hunter was assigned to clean-up dump sites for a large private timberland owner who has a very liberal public access policy. Thinking that we could get a couple of sites cleaned up, Biologist Harris assigned him some areas and then had the MH work directly with the landowner staff. Recently this landowner had been notified that they had to get some sites cleaned up by county officials. The Master Hunter cleaned up multiple sites and collected approximately 1.5 tons of garbage over the two weeks it took him to get his 40 plus hours. Needless to say the landowner was very impressed with the Master Hunter. Biologist Harris plans to find something fun for him to assist on next.

Duckabush River Access: Access Supervisor Mitchell reports that in 2012 someone discarded a mobile home on the WDFW Duckabush River Access. No information tying the hulk to a responsible party could be found until WDFW Enforcement Division tasked Officer Balazs with gathering information on the hulk and possibly having it removed. Officer Balazs somehow identified and found the owner and cited her for abandoning the mobile home. The Jefferson County Court found this individual guilty on March 3, 2012, and ordered restitution of \$2,500 payable to WDFW.

During the week of May 27, Access Supervisor Mitchell had the Lacey Construction Shop Grade the Duckabush site and add several loads of rock to the parking area, spending the \$2,500 awarded by the court. The site looks better than it has in 25 years. This is the first time in 30 years that Access Supervisor Mitchell has been involved with vandalism or dumping on a WDFW Access site and felt WDFW came out whole. Thanks to Officer Balazs and the WDFW Enforcement Program for helping create this outcome.



Before



After