

Wildlife Program

Week of September 16-22, 2013

REGION 1

Wolf Management

District 1: Specialist Shepherd retrieved remote cameras near the site of an alleged large canine attack on a thoroughbred colt near Sherman Pass that he, Officer Anderson and Sheriff Allen responded to two weeks ago. The determination was injuries occurred from an unknown cause. Only coyotes, deer, and horses were detected.

Specialist Shepherd discussed payments for range riding with Olympia staff. Specialist Shepherd discussed range riding, wolf observations, and carcass removal with Commissioner Kehne. Specialist Shepherd discussed wolf issues with a Wedge rancher and his family for several hours.

Specialist Shepherd and Assistant District Biologist Prince deployed remote cameras on Hope Mountain in the Wedge. Bendixen worked with Shepherd on several Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement-Livestock (DPCAL) contract renewals.

District 3: Conflict Specialist Rasley talked with some elk hunters that were camped on the Saw tooth trail head. They said the hunting was very good, but during the night they could hear wolves howling in the head of the North Fork of the Wenaha. They also said it sounded like at least four wolves.

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

Wildlife Areas

Sherman Creek Wildlife Area staff visit with kids at the Lake Roosevelt Water Festival: Natural Resources Technician (NRT) Christensen and Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Palmer participated in the annual Lake Roosevelt Water Festival on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week.

The wildlife area staff had a station where kids learned about predator/prey interactions and the difference between horns and antlers. This year we were joined by Enforcement Officers Nick Parkert and Keith Kirsch who hosted a predator/prey game with the kids.



Natural Resources Technician Jerry "Chris" Christensen gave kids an up-close look at the leading edge of a great horned owl wing at the Lake Roosevelt Water Festival, showing them what makes the silent flight of owls possible.

REGION 2

Wolf Management

Pasayten Wolf Mortality: Biologist Fitkin and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Biologist Rohrer assisted Officers Christensen, McCormick and Treser with an investigation of a wolf killed by a hunter in the Pasayten Wilderness. The animal appeared to be a young, uncollared adult female in good condition. We have not previously verified wolf activity in this portion of the wilderness area and don't know if the animal is part of an active pack or a solo wanderer. The circumstances of the animal's death remain under investigation.

Deer Kill: Biologists Fitkin and Heilhecker assisted Officer Treser with a response to an individual that reported a deer killed in his yard by an unknown predator, possibly a wolf. On-site investigation indicated the deer was likely killed by some kind of canid, rather than by a bear or cougar. We did not have enough evidence to determine what species (dog, coyote, or wolf) was responsible, although a domestic dog of unknown ownership showed up and went directly to the kill site while we were investigating. We moved the carcass away from the house and staked it out with cameras, so hopefully we will get more information.

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDIFE

Wildlife Management

Inland Avian Predation Working Group (IAPWG): Biologist Finger participated in a conference call with the IAPWG to stay abreast of the plans and schedules for Caspian tern dissuasion on Potholes Reservoir, Goose Island. The action agencies are still planning to dissuade terns on Goose Island during March 2014. October 4 is the anticipated date for release of the Environmental Assessment, Finding of Significant Impact, and Management Plan. A public meeting is scheduled on October 16 at the Pasco Convention Center and November 4 is the deadline for public comment. Mitigation for the dissuasion is scheduled for 2016 but to date; no viable mitigation site has been identified. Additionally, several thousand pairs of terns will be dissuaded from the Lower Columbia River next year.

North Cascades Wolverine Research Project: Biologists Fitkin and Rohrer completed the midterm check on the most remote run-pole camera survey sites deployed earlier this summer. We had less animal activity than expected, but did manage to at least capture an image of something in the weasel family (American marten). This is part of an ongoing interagency effort to develop a summer monitoring technique for wolverines.



Jackrabbit Pellet Surveys: Biologist Heinlen conducted Jackrabbit occupancy surveys this period. This survey is designed to validate a GIS model of white-tailed and black-tailed jackrabbit habitat concentration areas in the Columbia Basin. Surveys consisted of two 12-meter plots in each randomly selected area. Historically, white-tailed jackrabbits occurred throughout the shrub-steppe habitats in the District but have not been observed for many years. So far no evidence of jackrabbits has been detected in these surveys.

Jackrabbit Plot – Photo by Jeff Heinlen.

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

Wildlife Management

Youth Waterfowl and Pheasant Hunting Weekend: We had a very successful youth hunting weekend. In partnership with the local Pheasants Forever Chapter we had good participation and success for these young hunters.

Roosters take flight after being released at the Quincy Lakes unit of the Columbia Basin Wildlife Area – Photo by Rich Finger.





Above: A youth takes aim at a pheasant at an upland restoration unit. Below: A youth takes aim at some ducks during the 2013 youth hunt. Photos by Rich Finger.





A youth successfully recruited into the sport of waterfowling at the 2013 youth hunt – Photo by Rich Finger.

National Snake Survey: Biologists Fitkin and Rohrer led a North Cascades Institute class on our annual snake survey on a portion of the Methow Wildlife Area as part of a national citizen science inventory effort. Unseasonable hot temps made finding snakes difficult; however, some previously captured legless ambassadors made sure a good time was had by all.



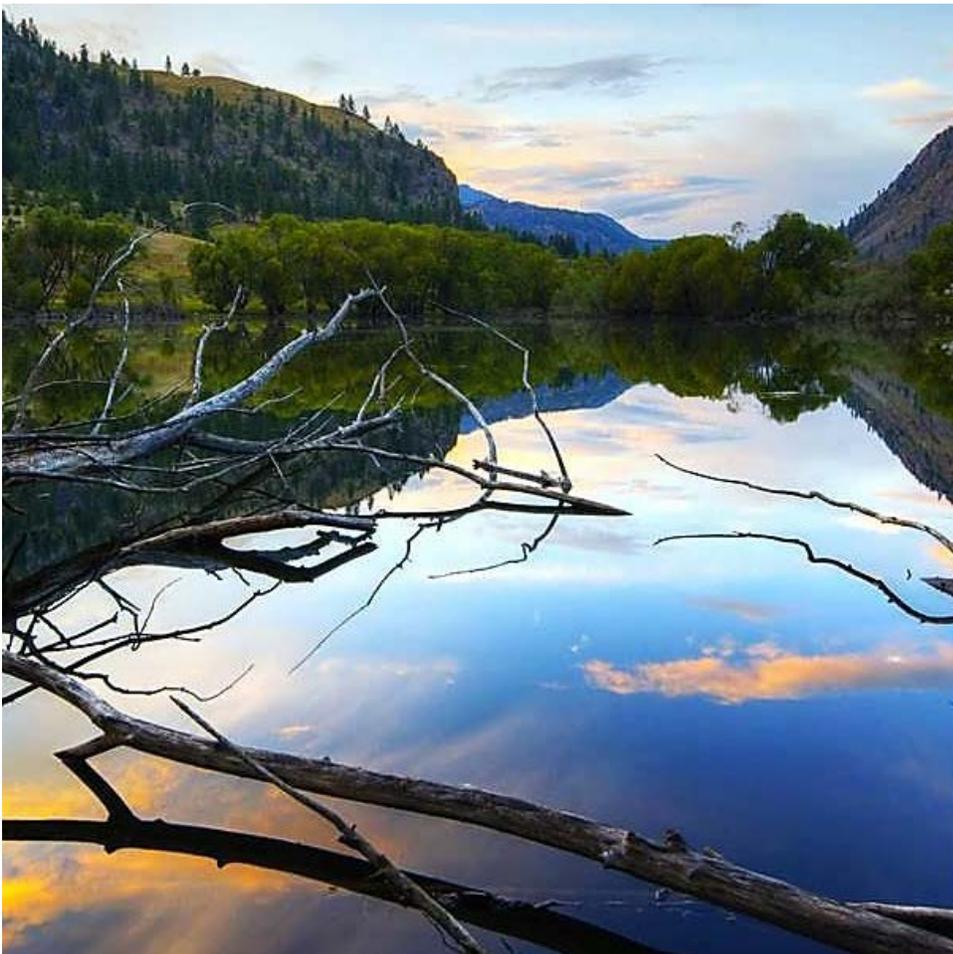
Gopher snake spotted on the Methow Wildlife Area – Photo by Scott Fitkin.

Wildlife Areas

Okanogan County: Fall is here!



Summer send-off – Photo by Scott Fitkin.



Left: Downed trees in Blue Lake before sunset on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area. Right: A trio of great blue herons in a snag above Forde Lake on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area. Photos by Justin Haug.



Above: Morning fog north of headquarters blanketed Sinlahekin Creek on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area – Photo by Justin Haug. Below: Pasayten Wilderness – Photo by Scott Fitkin.



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

Wildlife Management

Wetland Management Workshop: Biologists Wehland and Duvuvuei attended the Wetland Management Workshop that was instructed by renowned wetland manager and researcher, Dr. Leigh Frederickson. During this three-day event, attendees learned different tools and techniques to provide resources for wetland dependent wildlife. Attendees also learned the importance of disturbance in maintaining healthy wetlands.



Above: Students listening to Dr. Fredrickson (center, in pit) describe the importance of soil profiles for managing wetland habitats. Below: Students listening to Dr. Fredrickson discuss the ecology of functioning wetlands. Photos by Rich Finger.



REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Fire and Flood Response: Colockum Wildlife Area staff continued making repairs to fire and flood damaged areas on the wildlife area. A contractor was used to fill ruts in the boat launch road, while another contractor delivered and spread gravel in the headquarters yard around equipment areas and buildings. Staff started replacing signs along the game reserve in preparation for fall hunting seasons and rebuilding post and rail fencing at the headquarters. Volunteers from the Wenatchee Sportsman's Association continued work on burned spring developments, spending several days purchasing materials and pre-cutting wood, drilling spring boxes, etc.



Repairs being made to the flood damaged road to the Yoyo Rock boat launch, Colockum Wildlife Area.

Work also continued on refining the seed mix that will be planted in the riparian draws. Riparian shrubs such as chokecherry, water birch and rose are sprouting nicely, but we will be seeding native grasses to augment restoration and help reduce weed problems.



Chokecherry is resprouting after the fire on the Colockum Wildlife Area.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area Roads: Manager Huffman coordinated with the Capital and Asset Management Program (CAMP) construction crew on the Road Maintenance Abandonment Plan (RMAP) bridge installation on South Fork Oak Creek. The work is moving along on schedule and the bridge is in place. Backfill and cleanup should be completed this week. The bridge replaced a failing undersized culvert.



Bridge installed on the South Fork Oak Creek. Crew will continue with backfill and grading this coming week.

Manager Huffman checked on the progress of repairs to the Mud Lake Road and roads in Sanford Pasture that were damaged by flash flooding and a landslide a couple weeks ago. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) dozer operator was opening and repairing the green dot road from the top of Cleman Mountain on Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and DNR ownership.

In four days, the operator was able to repair all the damage and Huffman removed the road closed signs and put them back up in Garrett Canyon where roads still need major work on WDFW ownership. This was a good coordination project between DNR and WDFW that will allow access to a popular hunting area before the season opens. It is likely that the areas will need additional work in the spring until the slopes stabilize.



Mud Lake Road before (above) and after (below) being repaired from the mud slide damage that occurred a couple of weeks ago.



REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

2013 Oregon Spotted Frog Survey Project: Biologist Danilson made edits to the final report based on review and input from project partners. The final report will be sent to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) next week, when a final internal review has been completed.

Skagit County Nutria Issues: Biologist Danilson spoke with a representative from Western Washington Agricultural Association (WWAA) about tying up loose ends on the cooperative nutria project. The contract between WWAA and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Wildlife Services has ended and the few remaining dollars are insufficient for long-term support for USDA to conduct site follow-up and trapping. With no recent nutria sightings in the area, WDFW and WWAA have agreed to wrap up this project and brainstorm next steps for nutria surveillance and follow-up. Danilson has agreed to coordinate a meeting with the original project partners.

Elk Highway Collision Issues: Conflict Specialist Griffith and Biologist Danilson were notified of and responded to a cow elk that was hit and killed by a vehicle on north State Route 9 near Sedro-Woolley. Griffith responded to the scene while Danilson coordinated a response from local Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) employees. The animal was not removed by WSDOT because it was outside of their right-of-way. The Upper Skagit Tribe, which often responds and attempts to salvage meat from road killed elk, was not available to respond. Biologist DeBruyn met with GIS Specialist Christopher to work on a smart phone app to record elk/vehicle collisions and observations on Highway 20. They also discussed an upcoming GIS inservice that Christopher will be giving to Region 4 staff when he attends this week's Elk Working Group meeting.



Cow elk involved in a lethal collision along State Route 9.

Osprey Management: Biologist Anderson returned approximately 15 calls regarding removal of osprey nests in the greater Seattle area. Anderson also spoke with USFWS regarding nest

management. Anderson spoke with Sound Transit regarding voluntary installation of a platform at their South Seattle rail yard.

Priority Species Management – Peregrine Falcons: Biologist Anderson continues to work with Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) regarding retrofitting activities and retention of the long-term peregrine eyrie on the Ballard Bridge. Structural changes are creating a need for redesign of the scrape box. Anderson, SDOT and volunteers have come up with an alternative that may work and assist in keeping the birds at the scrape, not having them try to nest in areas of the bridge undesired for nesting or risking take of birds.

Municipal Wildlife Management – Seattle: Biologist Anderson met with the Wildlife Work Group with Seattle Parks as well as Seattle Department of Neighborhoods and collaborating non-profits such as Heron Habitat Helpers. The group discussed citizen efforts to assist WDFW in mapping priority species limiting areas to provide adequate coverage for planning needs and development consideration, as well as Anderson summarizing new Priority Species changes to Great Blue Heron management recommended by WDFW via a summarized flier to be provided to Seattle Department of Planning and Development and any land-use applicants.

Enforcement Detachment 10/Wildlife District 12 Field Effort: Biologists Anderson and Smith along with Officer Krenz spent part of a day examining areas of the Kent Valley and Green River Watershed for regular damage reports, wildlife occurrence areas that were surveyed by previous biologists and enforcement, as well as gaining institutional knowledge from Officer Krenz.

Bald Eagle Management: Assistant District Biologist Cyra searched for and documented a new-to-us bald eagle nest near Lake Ballinger that was reported by a local wildlife enthusiast. The nest had been reported as being active with one young fledged in 2012. Location and history of the nest was submitted to the Wildlife Survey Data Management (WSDM) database in Olympia so that it can be accessible to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who is responsible for Bald Eagle management. Biologist Anderson followed-up on an eagle nest report in Federal Way provided by USFWS. The nest was a crow's nest. The tree the nest is in is desired to be cut.

American Pika Lowland Survey: Assistant District Biologist Cyra worked on compiling survey activity and locations, along with pika detection locations resulting from this past summer's pika surveys at the U.S Navy's Jim Creek Naval Radio Station outside of Arlington. Several pika detections were made during the late summer at a low elevation talus complex, and follow-up surveys are planned for next year. While the USFWS declined to list the American Pika under the Endangered Species Act, it was determined that climate change was the leading likely cause of Pika population reductions in other parts of the country. With increasing temperatures, low elevation populations while rare, may be at increased risk in the future.

Wildlife Areas

Skagit Agricultural Enhancement and Lease Program -- Island Unit: Natural Resource Tech Cosgrove monitored field conditions on the Island Unit. The later plantings of millet are doing well, and the earliest planted corn is forming kernels on the cobs.



Winter waterfowl forage is ready for the fall flight to arrive on the Island Unit.

Manager Belinda Rotton received Skagit County Shoreline permitting requirements. Manager Rotton contacted the new project manager for Army Corp of Engineers and provided additional information for the permit application. A timeline for the receipt of the permit has been requested for the ditch maintenance project on the Island Unit.

Manager Rotton and Specialist Meis toured the Island Unit to monitor plantings and other progress made this year with the assistance of a volunteer.

Hunting Season Prep: Natural Resources Specialist (NRS) Greg Meis and Natural Resources Tech (NRT) Curran Cosgrove posted safety zone signs at Samish and Leque Island units for upcoming pheasant and waterfowl seasons.

DeBay Slough corn harvest is currently underway and safety zone sign installation was postponed until the harvest is complete.

Pheasant Release program: Meis and Cosgrove completed set-up of the pheasant pens for the beginning of the season. Wildlife area staff released pheasants for the youth hunt this weekend. Early reports indicated that regardless of the weather it was a good hunt with happy and successful customers. Preparation continues for the pheasant season general opener at the Bow Hill Road site where additional work on the parking area, signs and field entry points is being completed.

Skagit Wildlife Area staff completed set-up of the pheasant pens for the Youth Hunt. Regardless of the weather it was a good hunt with happy and successful customers.



Leque Island Alternatives Analysis and Design Project: Project Coordinator Brokaw attended a site visit with staff from the City of Stanwood, The Nature Conservancy, Stillaguamish Tribe, and Snohomish Conservation District to coordinate restoration and flood protection/infrastructure project planning efforts in the area.

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm installed “Safety Zone” signs and entrance signs at the new West Parking Lot near Homeacres Road in preparation for the upcoming hunting season. Pheasants were released by staff from the Skagit Wildlife Area for the youth and retiree hunts. Additionally, Manager Boehm worked with the grazing lessee on moving the cattle off of the unit by September 30, 2013.

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm discussed the harvest plan for the corn that was planted on the unit. Sixteen acres of barley and 14 acres of corn will be retained onsite for wildlife forage and cover. Harvest is scheduled for the end of this week, weather permitting.

Leque Island Alternatives Analysis and Design Project: WDFW staff met with Ducks Unlimited staff to plan and discuss next steps for the project, including setting a meeting date for the project’s first public meeting. When the meeting date is set and venue secured, WDFW will advertise for the meeting via its Leque Island email list, local print media, and hard copy mailers to nearby properties. To be added to the Leque Island email list, please make a request to Loren.Brokaw@dfw.wa.gov.

Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP): Projects Coordinator Brokaw is facilitating a review among regional cross-program staff to update and add to issues identified by PSNERP staff for PSNERP projects proposed on WDFW lands. PSNERP is seeking approval from the Army Corps of Engineers to advance projects to further design stages. More information about PSNERP and its projects is available at www.pugetsoundnearshore.org.

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

Wildlife Management

North Cascades Elk Management Work Group: Biologist Danilson and Manager Link coordinated with representatives from various agencies and tribes in preparation for the upcoming North Cascades Elk Management Work Group meeting, which is scheduled for the evening of September 26.

Game Management Unit (GMU) 418 Elk Hunt Coordination: Biologist Danilson responded to calls from hunters who either possessed special tags or merely had a general interest in hunting deer, elk, mountain goats, and band-tailed pigeons and waterfowl in District 14.

Seattle City Light Elk Forage Project Proposal: Biologist Danilson attended a site visit to Seattle City Light owned wildlife mitigation lands in the South Fork Nooksack watershed to review and discuss a proposed elk forage enhancement project. The project, being proposed by

Seattle City Light (SCL) and the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe, would involve some logging, site preparation, and planting of forage species. This proposal has been developed over the past year with the knowledge and support of most of Seattle City Light's Wildlife Management Review Committee (WMRC) members. A Forest Practice Application recently submitted to the Department of Natural Resources is nearing approval. Next steps include finalizing the project proposal and presenting to the WMRC, implementing a monitoring plan, and resolving some internal (to SCL) funding and legal issues.



Biologists discuss the logistics of clearing, amending and vegetating an old gravel pit site.

Biologist Smith worked with landowners to arrange for hunt #2710 tag holders to pursue elk damaging crops in the area.

North Cascades Elk Management Group: The Facilitation Committee distributed meeting notes from the Damage Committee meeting on September 10, and continued planning for the next Work Group meeting on September 26. At the Work Group meeting, attendees will break out into five potential committees including Damage, Population Estimation/Science, Public Safety, Forage Enhancement, and Watchable Wildlife/Education.

Puget Sound Bird Fest Booth – Living with Urban Herons Presentation: Biologist Anderson ran the WDFW Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary Living with Wildlife (conflict reduction and legalities) booth at the annual Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds. Anderson also presented on urban herons in the King County area covering biology, limiting needs, predators, WDFW cameras, collaborative area groups/nonprofits that work to conserve and retain urban heronries, and how audience members can also be heron and urban wildlife stewards. There was a large

crowd and the highlight was a video of an eagle taking a heron chick (although a bit gruesome, circle of life).

Citizen Science Roundtable – Woodland Park Zoo, WA Sea Grant, Stillwaters Environmental Education Center, and WDFW: Biologist Anderson represented WDFW in a roundtable amongst area citizen outdoor education groups and how to move forward with projects in the Puget Sound area while meeting all collaborators needs. Big topics were developing data management on the front end, trialing projects via pilots, organizing data collection in an easy and accessible format that guides participants to accurate data entry with set fields, etc.

Wildlife Areas

Skagit Acquisition Team: The WDFW Skagit Acquisition Team is continuing to work with local stakeholders to refine its proposal to acquire waterfowl hunting lands in the Skagit Delta, as replacement for walk-in hunting lands displaced by estuary restoration projects.

Lands 20/20 Applications: Region 4 teams submitted two Lands 20/20 applications this week for technical review by the WDFW Executive Management Team. All proposed land acquisitions by WDFW must go through the Lands 20/20 process prior to seeking funds to acquire additional lands. Lands 20/20 review is intended to ensure WDFW acquires land thoughtfully, and engages stakeholders prior to acquisition. Region 4 submitted applications to pursue acquisition of recreational hunting lands in the Skagit Delta and a property on Ebey Island to improve access to sections of the Island that are currently inaccessible.

Lake Terrell Hunting Season Preparations: Manager Kessler opened the gated parking areas at Lake Terrell in preparation for the opening of the pheasant hunting season. He also mowed all the parking areas.

Whatcom Wildlife Area Pheasant Release: Manager Kessler finished the prep work on the pheasant pens, and purchased a pallet of poultry feed to fill the feeders. Kessler received 390 pheasants for the first week's releases. Birds were released on the Intalco and Lake Terrell units. A total of 260 were released for the Youth Hunt and 130 for the beginning of the Senior Hunt. The youth hunt was well attended.

Lake Terrell Bass Tournament: The Borderline Bass Contenders held a one-day Bass Tournament on Lake Terrell. Manager Kessler coordinated with the tournament planners to prevent disturbances with youth waterfowl hunters. Kessler posted signs to remind the fishermen to stay clear of the hunting blinds. No problems were reported from either group.

Private Lands/Access

Blind Building: Private Lands staff continued to construct layout blinds for waterfowl hunting in the warehouse. The layout blinds will be used in Waterfowl Quality Hunt fields to conceal hunters. Staff also built a permanent wooden blind at a site prone to flooding. The blind has a slightly elevated floor to keep hunters out of the water.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt site preparation: Natural Resource Technician Otto mowed vegetation at two quality hunt sites to increase the visibility of sheet water near the blind location. Technician Deyo began to cut and bundle Reed Canary Grass to add to the blinds. The bundles improve the blinds durability and concealment.

Arnold Farm setup: Private Lands staff prepared a pheasant release site for hunting access on Whidbey Island. Techs Otto and Deyo posted the unit boundary and safety zones.

GMU 418 Modern Firearm Key Pick Up: Natural Resource Tech Otto made arrangements and met with hunters to give them keys for access on private timberlands for the GMU 418 hunt.

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

Wildlife Management

Skagit County Elk Conflict: Conflict Specialist Griffith met with one landowner in Day Creek this week to issue out additional damage permits in response to his ongoing elk issues. The landowner filled the last of two damage permits late last week and requested more as elk continue to forage on the hayfield and have shown no indications of leaving the area. Griffith is working with three additional landowners in the immediate area to assign hunters to harvest elk. So far, two hunters have been assigned and it was reported to Griffith that one hunter harvested an elk early Thursday morning. Griffith will assign another hunter in effort to keep hunting pressure on the elk in the Day Creek area.

Griffith continued to provide assistance to a potato grower in the Day Creek area in filing a damage claim. The grower has met all requirements thus far and contacted an adjustor to look at the potato field. The adjustor was on-site Sunday and the assessed damages due to elk are 28.4 tons. The adjustor is finishing up his official report for the landowner and Griffith will see that the completed packet is mailed to proper Olympia Wildlife Program staff for processing.

Whatcom County Deer Conflict: Conflict Specialist Griffith followed up with a chestnut orchard owner near Everson that is having deer browse damage to a commercial chestnut nursery. The nursery is very small and Griffith was able to temporarily loan out plastic barrier fencing to prevent any further deer browse. In addition, the owner is working with Griffith to deploy experimental sound devices in the future and as funding allows. The owner is amenable to collecting data on the effectiveness of the devices.

Carnation Area Elk Damage: Biologist Smith met landowners to inspect elk and deer damage to vegetable crops. Landowners were given suggestions on fence modifications for the deer problem. Smith will be investigating potential alternatives for an appropriate elk fence.

Upper Snoqualmie Valley Elk Management Group (USVEMG): Biologist Smith attended the monthly meeting of the Upper Snoqualmie Valley Elk Management Group. Group members

provided updates on collared elk locations, upcoming research projects and recent elk/vehicle collisions.

Problem Canada Geese at State Parks: Biologist Anderson met with State Park representatives regarding goose management at Lake Sammamish State Park and state parks throughout the state overall. Non-lethal measures and landscaping suggestions were suggested on site. Biologist Smith is looking into potential area organized herding dog groups that may be appropriate and interested in volunteering for parks to assist in hazing geese from preferred feeding areas prior to habitat changes implemented at the park, upon receipt of appropriate permits needed for such activities.

King County – Request for Coyote Management: Biologist Anderson provided references and discussed coyote ecology, particularly in urban landscapes, with King County ecologists. King County has received complaints and concerns over “presence of coyotes” in eastern King County. Coyotes exist from Panama all the way to Alaska, from the East Coast through the West Coast, from lowland areas up to mountainous areas. They have been in metropolitan areas and suburbs for years. The best thing to do to avoid conflict is avoid habituation of individuals and take measures to exclude animals, including other urban wildlife that may pose conflict at times, from situations that may lead to habituation.

Master Hunter Volunteer Needs: Biologist Anderson has received a number of calls for master hunter volunteer opportunities. Biologists Smith and Anderson will be working with the WDFW volunteer management group to establish a District 12 Master Hunter Volunteer Hunt Project, likely specific to activities with outside point-person leads to be the middle-management for volunteers. This will assist with a one-stop-shop place for District 12 inquiries and also allow for better tracking and management of volunteers internally and amongst collaborating organized groups.

Mandatory Pelt Sealing – Bobcat: Biologist Anderson spent time with Captain Hobbs in sealing the first bobcat of the season that came into Region 4. Captain Hobbs went through paperwork with Anderson and also dealt with a slight enforcement issue related to the harvest. Overall, the hunter went away happy and educated regarding harvest laws.

Western Pond Turtle Reintroduction Requests: Biologist Anderson has received a few requests to reintroduce state listed Western pond turtles into suburban areas. At this time, WDFW is not at a point to reintroduce such animals in these more dynamic landscapes where there are more factors they would have to deal with that may jeopardize their success of establishment. Anderson is following up with inquiring parties.

Wildlife Areas

Samish River Unit: Manager Rotton responded to additional questions from a reporter from the Skagit Valley Herald about the Samish River Unit Restoration public meeting. The reporter indicated the article would be in the paper this Saturday.

Restoration Project Monitoring – Manager Rotton scheduled a meeting with representatives from the Skagit River Systems Cooperative to discuss the South Fork Monitoring Report. The meeting is scheduled for October 1 at the La Conner District Office.

Fir Island Farms Final Design Project: Project Coordinator Brokaw met with Planner Williams, Engineer Barnard, and The Nature Conservancy to review and continue progress on the project Adaptive Management Plan. After the meeting, Project Coordinator Brokaw gave a site tour to the group to review surface and groundwater monitoring locations.

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm worked most of the week preparing the Stillwater, Cherry Valley, Crescent Lake and Ebey Island Wildlife Areas for the start of pheasant season. Safety and informational signs were posted, as well as maintenance work at the Cherry Valley net pen. Pheasants were delivered from the Centralia Game Farm and distributed to the three wildlife areas in the Snoqualmie Valley.

Fir Island Farms Final Design Project: Project Coordinator Brokaw attended a meeting with the project funding team to identify opportunities to fund project construction and monitoring. The majority of construction funding was secured through Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) program and Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) grants, but a small portion of the project is currently unfunded. The team identified several potential opportunities to meet this requirement, and will work together over the next year.

Private Lands/Access

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program Partners: Private Lands staff contacted five landowners in Skagit County to verify their participation in the Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program for the 2013-2014 hunting season.

GMU 418 Unit Monitor: Technician Deyo toured parts of GMU 418 checking for any issues. None were identified.

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Snoqualmie Wildlife Area: Manager Brian Boehm distributed a task list and request for local volunteers to assist with work that is needed to be completed for this coming hunting season. Six volunteers responded to the call and participated in the pheasant release program and assisted in repairing portions of the net pen facility. Additional volunteers will continue preparations this coming week.

Port of Bellingham Wetland Enhancement Project: Manager Kessler coordinated with the Port of Bellingham managers on the Wetland Enhancement project on the Tennant Lake Unit.

Wildlife Conflict: Biologist Smith participated in a bi-weekly conference call discussing issues related to the transfer of conflict duties to the Wildlife Program.

Seasonal Swan Technician Recruitment: Biologist Danilson forwarded the Position Description and HR Action Form for the seasonal swan technician position to Assistant Director Pamplin's office and Human Resources for approval and to initiate the job announcement. As in past years, the term for this position will be for four months, running from November 16, 2013 to March 15, 2014.

Boat Maintenance: Biologist Danilson briefly ran the Hewescraft and District 14 swan boat to make sure motors were functioning properly and determine whether there were any maintenance needs. Several minor issues were identified as needing attention and Danilson took care of a couple and will soon address others.

Radio Training: Assistant District Biologist Cyra assisted several staff in providing instruction on radio training, radio use requirements, and assigning radio call numbers.

Policy Review: Assistant District Biologist Cyra provided comments on a number of draft policies concerning motorized and non-motorized boat use and aviation use by Department employees and volunteers.

Wetland Ecology and Management Workshop: Skagit Wildlife Area staff attended Wetland Ecology and Management Workshop in Battle Ground, Washington. Manager Rotton and Waterfowl Program Manager Don Kraege worked with wetland and waterfowl ecologists, Dr. Leigh Fredrickson and Adonia Henry, to provide wetland training to over 30 biologists and managers from state, federal, and private non-profit agencies from Washington and Oregon. Many of these managers have wetland management and design responsibilities. The workshop included two field trips and many hours of lecture and discussion. The general feedback from participants was the training was practical and helpful.

REGION 5

None.

REGION 6

None.