

Wildlife Program

Week of December 8-14, 2014

WILDLIFE DIVERSITY DIVISION

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Proposed Fisher Listing: Biologist Jeff Lewis and Listing and Recovery Section Manager Penny Becker attended a meeting to discuss ideas with representatives from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Defenders of Wildlife, Conservation Northwest, and the Center for Biological Diversity. The purpose of the meeting was to find consensus in ways to respond to the proposed rule to list the fisher in all or part of its west coast range (western Washington, western Oregon, and California) in a way that has the most certainty to achieve recovery throughout the range. One large concern was for the status and recovery of fishers in Oregon if the DPS for the entire west coast range was not listed. This was brought up because of our concerns with achieving recovery in Washington if the fisher is listed in our state, as well as our interest in not having fishers listed in Washington.

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

Nongame Migratory Bird Technical Committee: Natural Resource Scientist Joe Buchanan attended the winter meeting of the Nongame Migratory Bird Technical Committee (NTC). A special session (1.5 days) was held with bird conservation partners from the western United States, with a goal to enhance bird conservation and management across the western states through improved coordination and collaboration between the NTC and regional partners. The session will increase awareness of partner organizations and current activities, and was the NTC's first action to address recommendations from two national reviews of the function of NTC groups in four flyways across the country. Those reviews indicated a likely need for the role of NTC groups to evolve, but a shift of function will require an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of other bird conservation partners. A short summary of the meeting will be prepared and presented to Council. Partner organizations represented at the meeting included American Bird Conservancy, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Central Valley joint Venture, Intermountain Bird Observatory, Intermountain West Joint Venture, National Audubon Society, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, Partners in Flight Western Working Group, Point Blue Conservation Science, Sonoran Joint Venture, Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and United States Shorebird Conservation Plan Council.

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Northeast Washington Moose Captures: Assistant District Wildlife Biologist Annemarie Prince served as mucker for this winter's moose captures. In total, we caught twenty-four moose in District's 1 and 2. Fourteen of those moose were captured within District 1.



Moose calf with immobilized cow moose



ADWB Annemarie Prince with immobilized moose

Deer Surveys: Biologists Wik, Vekasy, Fortin, and Oyster all participated in aerial deer surveys in GMU 149 throughout the week. Poor weather prolonged the survey through the weekend without us being able to complete it. We changed the survey objectives and will be able to apply the data to a different geographic scale.

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

Wildlife Areas

WT Wooten WA – Campground Relocation: The Yakima crew returned this week and continued work on the new campgrounds. Fire rings were installed, as were handicap parking signs. Campground 9 still has some finish work that needs done and the disturbed areas need to be seeded with grass seed.



Handicap parking sign installed in Campground 6



Fire rings installed in Campground 6

Winter Conditions

Wildlife Management

District 1: This week was warm (for this time of year), wet, and rainy on virtually a daily basis. Temperatures typically ranged from the mid-30's for the overnight low to the high 40's for the daily high in degrees Fahrenheit. Due to the "warm-storm" effect, there was little accumulation of snow in the mountains except at the highest elevations. The 49 degrees North Ski Resort currently has no snow at the lodge and only 10 inches at the top of Chewelah Mountain, which is the main ski hill.

District 2: Temperatures were mild, ranging from the low 40s to low 50s, with fog and scattered rains throughout the week.

District 3: Mild and wet conditions prevailed through the week. Some snow fell above 4,500', but no significant accumulations.

Northeast Washington Wildlife Areas: Warm (up to 51 degrees F), wet weather through most of the week, cooling down and drying up by weekend. No snow cover at Swanson Lakes. The actual "Swanson Lakes" are beginning to fill, after being dry, mostly, since late spring.

Blue Mountains Wildlife Areas: Conditions at the beginning of the week were warm and wet throughout the wildlife area complex. However, a weather system moved into the area on Friday, dumping 8" of new snow in the Blue Mountains. Lower elevations received rain. Temperatures are cooling and becoming more seasonable with snow forecasted each day next week for higher elevation areas.

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

Wildlife Areas

KFES Forest Health Education: WAAM Palmer visited the Kettle Falls 4th graders at their school this week to discuss with them what WDFW does in comparison to other public resource agencies and the purpose of the Sherman Creek WLA as winter range for deer, elk, and moose. Palmer also talked about noxious weeds and the importance of their consideration in any land management activity.

REGION 2

WOLVES:

Okanogan County: Biologist Heinlen was notified by the USFS of a wolf report they received in the Antoine Creek area. The sighting was by an elk hunter during the last day of the modern firearm season who observed two wolves come out of the woods in front of him then disappear back into the woods. Biologist Heinlen will continue to monitor this area.

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Chelan Butte Bighorn Sheep: Biologist Gallie conducted a survey of the Chelan Butte herd during the rut period to focus on ram numbers and age structure. A total of 150 sheep were observed, including 80 ewes, 34 lambs, and 36 rams (23 of which were mature). When combined with totals from the spring surveys that targeted ewes, lambs and young rams, the Chelan Butte herd has a minimum of 173 sheep (97 ewes, 34 lambs, 42 rams). This herd continues to show a steady growth rate.

Mature rams in the Chelan Butte herd –
Photo by J. Gallie





The breeding season is ending, but rams are still associating with bands of ewes and lambs – Photo by J. Gallie

Private Lands/Access

Carlton Complex Fire-Pateros Unit Deer Fence:

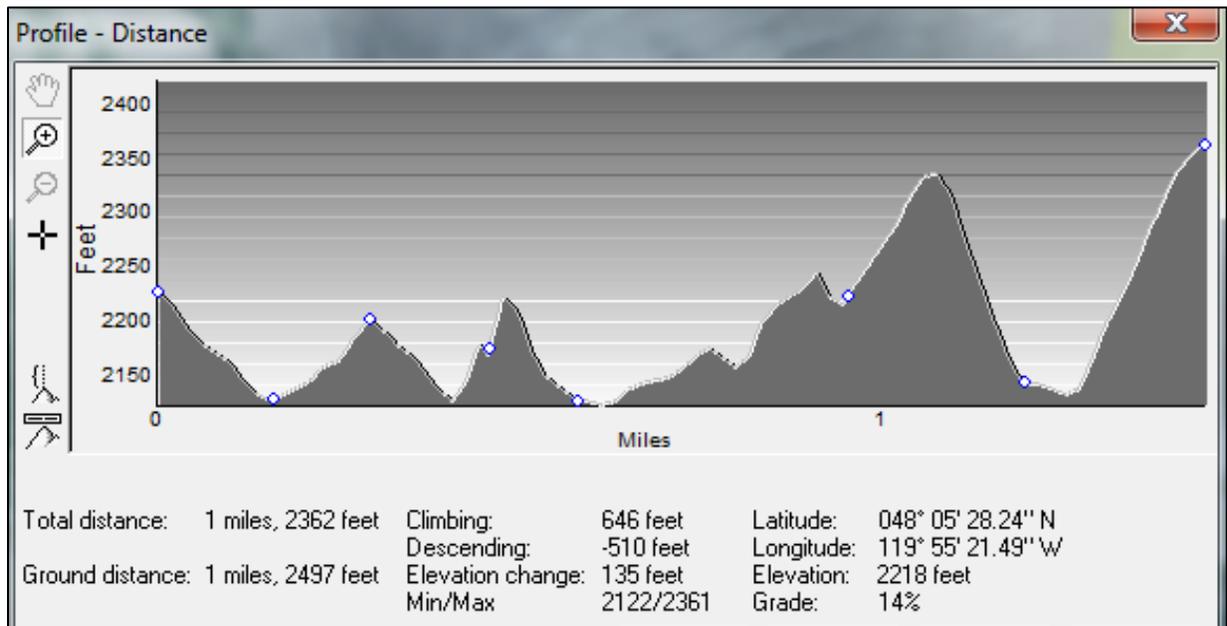
Beginning December 1, a large effort was undertaken by all Chelan Wildlife Area staff, several staff from Wells

Wildlife Area, and four WCC crews to reconstruct 2.5 miles of burned deer fence on the boundary between the Pateros unit and a 400 acre neighboring orchard. The Pateros unit has historically wintered a large number of mule deer and they seem to be showing up earlier and in larger numbers this year as a result of the Carlton Complex Fire. Without the fence, between 200 and 250 deer are currently foraging in the orchard.

Work began in subfreezing temperatures, snow, and frozen ground last week and gave way to above freezing temperatures, rain, dense fog, and mud during this week. In spite of challenges presented by the weather and rather difficult terrain, nearly 1.5 miles of posts, braces and corners were completed, along with 0.4 miles of wire. The emphasis for the crew next week will be to get all posts, braces and corners completed before the ground again freezes solid as a rock.



Pateros unit deer fence: Day 1 (left) cold, snow and frozen ground. Day 8 (right) warmer, rain, fog, and mud



Profile of rather rough terrain covered during first 2 weeks of Pateros unit deer fence

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

Wildlife Management

Carlton Fire Supplemental Deer Feeding Begins: Friday, Natural Resource Technicians Brad Zabreznik and Kevin Vallance from the Chelan Wildlife Area and Maintenance Mechanic Ed Pierson from the Douglas County Wildlife Area Complex joined District Biologists Scott Fitkin and Jeff Heinlen to place and fill deer feeders on the Pateros unit at two sites adjacent to Naumes Orchard. The Carlton Fire destroyed the existing deer fence and it is now experiencing a large influx of deer. Employees of Naumes report daily sighting of more than 100 animals inside the orchard. It's hoped that the deer feeders will be useful in reducing orchard damage while DFW rebuilds the deer fence. Once feeders at that site were placed and filled, the crew then filled six feeders that had been placed on the west side of the unit by Eric Braaten in November.

DFW employees (left to right) Ed Pierson, Jeff Heinlen, Kevin Vallance and Scott Fitkin on deer feeder duty. The small red flags seen next to the trucks mark the route of the new deer fence currently under construction. Naumes Orchard in background – Photo by Dan Peterson



Winter Conditions:

District 5 (Grant and Adams Counties)

Past Weather: Mild with the exception of two freezing events which were relatively short lived. Rainfall has resulted in a good fall green-up of native (Sandberg's bluegrass) and invasive (cheat grass) cool season grasses.

Short-Term Forecast: The 10-day forecast is for warmer and wetter conditions than normal.

Long-Term Forecast: The winter season is forecasted to be warmer and drier than normal.

Habitat: Forage is available at all elevations. Winter wheat and cool season grasses are available due to lack of snow cover.

Snow Depths: 100% snow-free.

Animal Concentrations: No unusual concentrations noted to date.

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

Mortality: None reported or expected in short-term.

District 6 (Okanogan County)

Recent Weather: The District has experienced wild swings in temperature and precipitation over the last three weeks. A heavy snowfall and below zero readings gave way to mild temperatures and heavy rain that melted much of the lower elevation snow pack.

Short-Term Forecast: Normal to slightly above normal temps with light off and on precipitation are forecast throughout the District for the next 7-10 days. In the Methow Watershed (Winthrop) the precipitation is forecast as snow with 1-2 inch total accumulation anticipated. The Okanogan Watershed (Omak) is expecting a rain/snow mix with no significant snow accumulation.

Long-Term Forecast: Above normal temperatures with normal precipitation is expected for the remainder of December. For January and February, above normal temps and below normal precip is forecast.

Snow Depths: Lower elevations are snow-free, particularly in the Okanogan Watershed. Snowpack is below average at middle elevations and south facing slopes on traditional winter range areas are largely bare in most areas. Only the highest elevations near the Cascade Crest have normal or slightly above normal snowpack.

Snotel sites –*

Hart’s Pass (6500 ft): 55 in
Salmon Meadows (4,460 ft): 8 in
Muckamuck (4,470 ft): 10 in

*No snotel sites exist in core deer winter range areas.

Habitat: With considerable bare ground, forage is available throughout the District on most deer winter range areas. Outside of the burn, even snow-covered areas have shrubs protruding well above the snowpack and animal movements are not impeded. Within the burn, recent rains bared many slopes and deer are once again utilizing the considerable fall green-up.

Animal Concentrations: In general, deer remain well distributed on the landscape and the mild conditions are allowing some animals to even drift back up in elevation now that breeding season is largely finished. The one exception to this pattern appears to be the deer concentrated in orchards near Pateros as noted above.

Animal Condition: Deer generally look to be in good to excellent condition for early winter. Some individual exceptions have been noted; however, they are likely the result of some other compromising factor, not snow and range conditions.

Mortality: None reported other than normal levels of road-killed animals.

District 7 (Chelan and Douglas Counties)

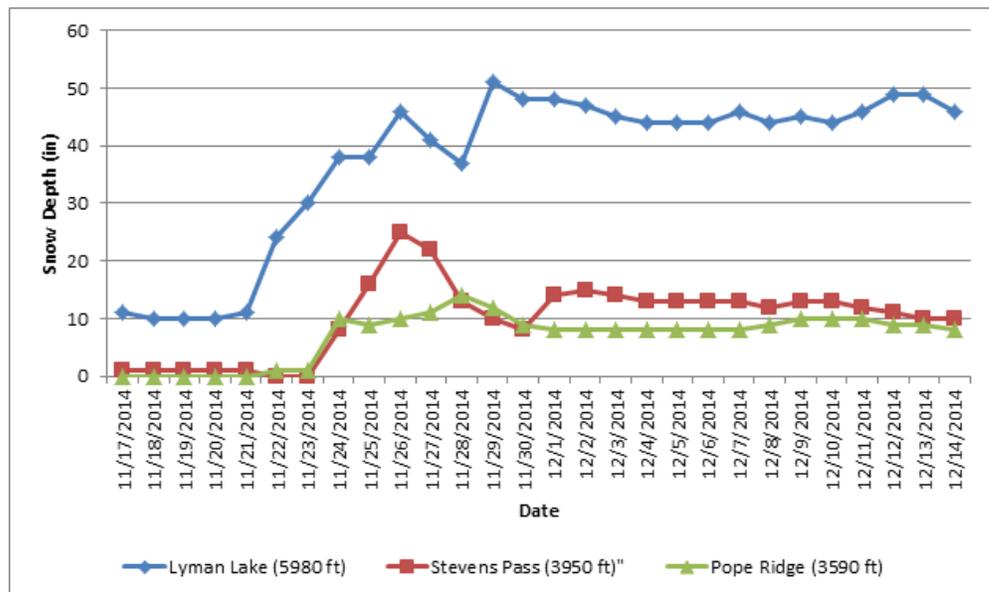
Past Weather: Low precipitation and higher temps have characterized the early portion of the winter.

Short-Term Forecast: Snow levels rose above 5,000 feet due to warmer temps and rain.

Long-Term Forecast: The long-term forecast for winter 2014/2015 is for higher temperatures and drier conditions.

Habitat: Recent fires have reduced landscape capability. A mild winter will offset the reduction; however a normal to severe winter will result in increased mortality.

Snow Depths



Animal Concentrations: Migratory mule deer are dispersed across large areas at this time. Snow depths on mid-elevation ranges are not high enough to force deer onto formal winter range.

Mortality: Anticipate normal rates of winter mortality. There is no evidence of mortality over normal rates.

Public Contacts: None

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman checked on the WCC crew working on the Oak Creek Large Wood Replenishment Project. Crews are making good progress with three of the six locations having been completed in the current work area. Due to warm, wet conditions, crews are no longer yarding trees from the thinning units to the staging area.



Logs placed in a side channel of Oak Creek by the WCC crew



WCC crew moving logs from the staging area to Oak Creek for placement

Manager Huffman met with a writer for Ruralite Magazine for a story on the winter feeding program. Huffman provided several pictures from past years for use as winter feeding has not started yet so the writer could not take current pictures of elk.

Manager Huffman drove into the Nile feed site on Friday and checked the area for elk presence. There is no snow and the area is very muddy with green grass coming up all over the place. There was no sign of elk so there is no need to start feeding yet.

Winter Weather

Weather was mild over the past week with a lot of rainfall. Seasonal weather is expected this coming week with chances of rain or snow. No snow accumulation is expected.

Elk are in seasonally good condition.

Wildlife Management

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand spent the better part of three days conducting the Franklin County mule deer survey with Private Lands Bio Stutzman, Access Technician Kaelber and Volunteer Larry Martin.

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand continued to coordinate with USFWS staff and Olympia HQ on the planning for the Rattlesnake Hills annual elk survey. Cost estimates were developed and forwarded for approval.

Biologist Stutzman and Access Technician Kaelber, along with Conflict Specialist Hand and Volunteer Larry Martin, conducted the District 4 ground surveys for deer this week. After getting fogged out on Monday, the surveys were completed on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Stutzman entered and organized the deer survey data and downloaded waypoints for archiving. Overall deer numbers were down slightly compared to 2013 with total deer counted dropping from 1075 to 1051. The buck/doe ratio was down again this year, dropping from 14.6 bucks/100 does to an average of 12.9 bucks/100 does. The percentage of legal bucks fell as well, from 18% in 2013 to 11%. The fawn ratio stayed consistent with 2013 at 63.9 fawns/100 does.

Bighorn Sheep: Biologist Bernatowicz worked on logistics (Transport boxes, veterinarian availability, trailers, etc.) for capturing bighorn sheep on Clemans and moving to Quilomene. Skulls/horns available for clubs to auction were located and pinned.

Deer Rescue: Biologists Bernatowicz and Moore responded to a report of a deer stuck in Roza Canal. The young buck was tranquilized with BAM, moved to the Yakima Training Center, and released. The deer went down in less than five minutes after being darted and was up ~ten minutes after receiving reversal.

Biologist Moore preparing the deer to be moved from the canal





The deer on YTC after release

Training: Biologist Bernatowicz completed Endangered Species Act 2 online training.

Colockum Antlerless Body Condition Sampling: Biologist Moore worked with Regional WPM McCorquodale and Biologist Bernatowicz as well as Statewide Specialists Hoenes and Hansen to score organs collected from the Colockum during the modern firearm antlerless elk permit season. A total of 48

samples were collected and scored, 20 of which were complete, having all information and organs requested. The scores still need to be analyzed to determine overall body condition estimates (% body fat) from the cow elk sampled.

A high scoring heart from the Colockum Elk Body Condition Sampling

Golden Eagle Offal Study: Biologist Moore used undamaged elk organs from the Colockum body condition sampling to create an offal pile camera station.



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

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Oak Creek Staff completed upgrades to the tour trucks and got them ready for the year by cleaning and charging the batteries. Extensions were built and installed on the sides of the canopies to reduce water runoff onto riders. In addition, a PVC frame was added to increase support under the canopy to reduce water pooling. Hopefully the additions will keep visitors dry and make the tours more comfortable.

Wenas Wildlife Area: Manager Confer Morris attended the Lands Division workshop and helped present a talk on wildlife areas and shooting ranges.

Regional Access staff installed a new reader board at Vernita (photo below).

New reader board at Vernita Access Site. Modified rock jack base avoided ground disturbance.

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Bjornstrom incorporated comments from enforcement and wildlife program into the revised hunter registration cards. Manager Bjornstrom will put out one last call for revisions before sending the final draft to printing. These revisions will result in a more user friendly registration card for hunters in 2015.



Wildlife Management

Stutzman monitored the corn stubble access sites over the weekend for both waterfowl and hunter use. The absence of both birds and hunters on Saturday reflected the clear and calm conditions that aren't great for waterfowl hunting. Sunday's conditions were much better for hunting as early fog gave way to wind and a low cloud ceiling. As the fog moved out, large groups of both ducks and geese starting flying, some of which landed in the corn fields in the access program, however, no hunters were using the fields.

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 Specialist Hand received a deer damage complaint from a vineyard in the Alderdale/Bickleton area. Several non-lethal techniques were discussed and will be implemented in an attempt to reduce deer activity in the area.

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand inspected habitat enhancement projects at Robert Ranch and checked the condition of fencing that was installed to protect the plantings from elk. The plantings are now mature enough to handle deer and elk use, so the fencing may be taken down and re-used on additional developments.

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand traveled to the Cold Creek area to monitor elk activity near Gilbert Orchards and Ste. Michelle Vineyards. A small herd of elk (<20) were observed near the vineyard, but no damage was observed. After some effective hazing, they were moved further onto ALE.

Deer were again hazed this week from an area in Thorp. Two Region 3 permit hunters hazed over the weekend. No deer were harvested.

Several landowners signed pyrotechnic agreements and were issued fused rope salutes for use to deter elk and deer from crop areas. Soft field conditions have increased the potential for damage on newly seeded areas.

Conflict Specialist Wetzel hazed elk from an area in Reecer Creek. Some elk have been migrating through this area and not engaging in crop damage. Master Hunters have been trying to harvest these elk, sometimes intercepting them and causing them to enter crop damage areas. Field contacts with hunters urging them to refrain from harassing these elk have had mixed results.



Conflict Specialist Wetzel met with a landowner in Cle Elum to sign a DPCA. The landowner does not like elk being hunted, but frequent hazing of elk has caused the elk to not respond to hazing efforts. This landowner may allow one harvest to see if this can change elk behavior.

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

Wildlife Areas

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Bjornstrom met with a volunteer to discuss organization of slides and pictures that have been taken over the years on the wildlife area. The volunteer will attempt to compare photo points and match similar perspectives for comparison. The first step in this process will be getting copies of the archived slides and photos from Olympia.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: NRW2 Farias started all the feed trucks, cleaned them up and lubed up the feeder chains in preparation for winter feeding. In addition, Farias got the dump truck ready for the winter by getting the sander and dump bed ready.

Colockum Wildlife Area: Colockum staff inspected the Yoyo Rock boat launch at the request of Grant County PUD. All launches on the reservoir are being looked at to determine if they will be useable this winter after the reservoir was partially refilled. The water now just barely covers the end of the launch, so it will remain closed to public use to prevent damage to the launch.

Wenas Wildlife Area: Staff completed drill seeding areas burned in the Cottonwood #2 fire. They also seeded and harrowed the four one-acre forb plots at Sheep Company. They ran out of seed a half a plot short due to difficulties with the extremely low seeding rate. We will finish up with forb seed from a previous project as time and weather allow.



Staff seeding and harrowing forb plot

Staff moved all the equipment used for the seeding projects back to the Mountain Vale facility. They spent the rest of the week finishing up loose ends and getting equipment ready for winter. They pulled the racks off the feed truck and installed the hay feeder, installed the snow plow and sander onto one of the one ton trucks, replaced a tire on the equipment trailer, and took a final herbicide inventory.

Assistant Manager Taylor met with Engineer Tech Davidson on the Wenas fence project. Contractor is moving along, but has been slowed down due to wet conditions. They have been moving around trying to work on flat and/or rocky areas to minimize ground disturbance. Assistant Manager Taylor checked on the fence crew throughout the week to monitor for rutting due to the wet conditions. Assuming we get dry and/or frozen conditions, they plan to move into a section that will require drilling due to a solid rock bench.

LT Murray Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Hunt completed the draft Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan Form A's and Base Maps for our recent acquisition in T18N, R15E, Sections 1, 2, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, or portions thereof (over 4,500 acres). He submitted the draft to Richard Tveten as requested, and had follow up discussion with Richard and Tony Gilmer (DNR Southeast Region RMAP Coordinator) regarding the status of some roads. Richard will be finalizing funding requests for needed work with the help of Kristen Kuykendall in Engineering. Hunt will continue with field evaluation of the road systems in the spring. Much inspection work remains due to the road density being up to as much as five miles per square mile in some of the sections, and many closed roads are not formally abandoned.

Tech Schnebly and Tech Hill removed a boulder that had fallen onto the Robinson Canyon View Road and was partially blocking the road. Two smaller boulders are still on the side of the road, but may require the aid of the backhoe to remove.

Tech Schnebly pulling boulder out of the road

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Westside Bear Project: Biologist Smith assisted Bear and Cougar Specialist Beausoleil and Carnivore Specialist Maletzke with ongoing bear den work. This portion of the project entails locating dens, placing cameras to document emergence and cub numbers, recollaring/adjusting collars on sub-adult males, and potentially collaring yearling cubs. Work where newborn cubs are known to be present will be limited (camera placement only) to avoid den abandonment.

Western Washington Black bear den site in a large log

Westside Cougar Project: Biologist Smith assisted Wildlife Research Scientist Kertson and others with re-capturing an adult female cougar for collar replacement.





Adult female cougar in the tree branches

Swan Mortality and Morbidity Project:

Science Tech Anderson and Biologists DeBruyn and Yarborough, as well as cooperators from Puget Sound Energy and the Trumpeter Swan Society, continued to conduct field surveys this week to monitor for sick and injured trumpeter and tundra swans. This week, 29 swans were collected in Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom counties. Gizzard and liver samples were collected for contaminant analysis. Tracheal and Cloacal swabs were taken to monitor for other diseases. To date, 62 swans have been collected. Power line strikes continue to be the leading cause of mortality.

Swans collected to date:

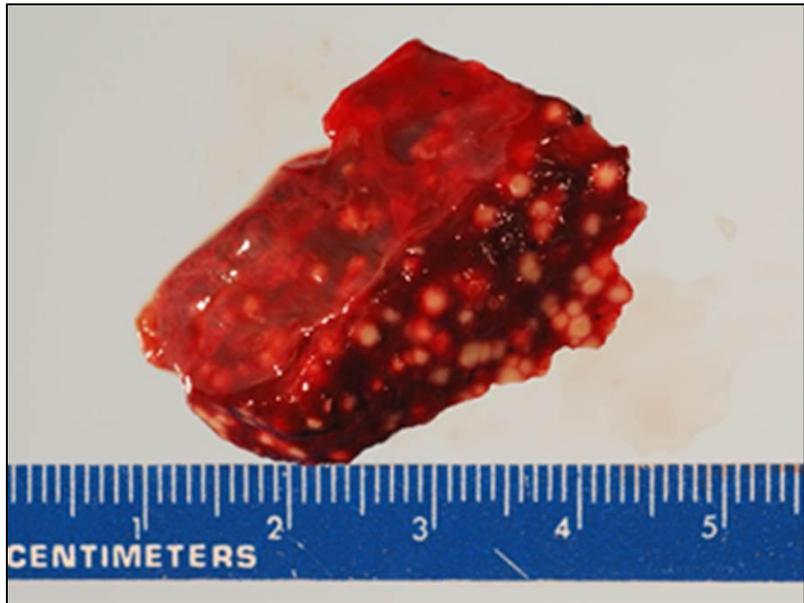
	Lead	Power line Strike	Trauma	Unknown	Feather Pile	Total
Sumas						
Whatcom		13	2	3	3	21
Snohomish	2	6	5			13
Skagit		10	3	6	3	22
San Juan				1		1
						57

Waterfowl Mortality Survey: Biologist DeBruyn and Science Tech Sherman Anderson searched Wisner Lake for waterfowl carcasses. The lake was the site of an outbreak of aspergillous fungi in ducks last year. There were 63 sets of duck remains located, of which 53 were in good enough shape to collect. DeBruyn submitted eight carcasses to the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison Wisconsin for necropsy. Lesions consistent with severe acute pulmonary to systemic fungal infection (likely aspergillosis) were seen in four of the five birds

autopsied. Further tests are being done on the ducks. The site will be monitored and any more carcasses will be collected to prevent secondary poisoning.

Lung Tissue from a duck showing aspergillosis nodules

North Puget Sound Aerial Waterfowl Survey: Biologist DeBruyn took advantage of light and variable winds on Saturday to survey dabbling ducks in marine environs from north Snohomish County to the Canadian border. Given the warm and calm conditions most dabblers were rafted up in huge groups far from shore. A preliminary analysis of the data showed very little change in duck numbers from the November flight with about 280,000 birds counted.



Annual Marine Waterfowl Aerial Survey: Assistant District Biologist Cyra joined Marine Waterfowl Specialist Evenson and Assistant District 15 Biologist Murphie in the initial surveys of the 2014-2015 survey. These surveys, the longest running trend surveys of their kind on the west coast, are used to monitor the population health of waterfowl, marine mammals, and other marine avian species throughout the Salish Sea. Additionally, the data are used to help establish season setting along the Pacific Flyway.

Biologists Cyra and Murphie observing marine waterfowl along track lines in the Salish Sea from a DeHavilland Beaver aircraft



Low Elevation Pika Survey:
Assistant District

Biologist Cyra assembled season survey data and presented results and data products to District Biologist Milner for creation of a final project report.

A Pika (Ochotona princeps) at a low elevation site in Snohomish County

Wildlife Management

Consultation/Permitting Requests; Municipal, Private Utilities, other:

Biologist Anderson continued work and review for requests of assistance regarding species or habitat management consultation for urban wildlife (e.g. osprey nests, eagle territories, heron colonies) given construction or land-use alteration work; per local municipal code requirements to work with WDFW. More on WDFW Priority Habitat and Species Recommendations and how WDFW provides assistance at the local and broader planning levels can be found



here: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/phs/> Anderson assisted Restoration Projects Coordinator Brokaw in bald eagle management permit and review needs for due diligence work regarding ongoing planning for a Region 4 project. Anderson provided consultation regarding wildlife due diligence review for a project in Kenmore. A private consultant contacted WDFW seeking confirmation of PHS data and also inquiring as to the status of Threatened and Endangered species, in particular Marbled Murrelet, within Kenmore. Anderson provided thoughts on local urban occurrences of this species in general and also recommended the consultant seek brief consultation with US Fish and Wildlife to round-out their due diligence efforts.

Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary Collaborations: Biologist Anderson assisted the City of Edmonds Parks Department in review of a draft “Wildlife of Edmonds” poster.

Sharp-tailed Snake Project: Biologist Milner delivered a sharp-tailed snake specimen to Dr. Marc Hayes for curation and received some outstanding advice on ideas for improving our citizen science project, which we are planning to conduct in the San Juan Islands. We hope to engage local residents in locating additional sites where the snakes occur in the San Juan Islands.

Wildlife Areas

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm teamed up with Region 4 Access Supervisor Derek Hacker to remove a large cabinet TV, carpet, and construction debris from the unit. Unfortunately, the very next day, DFW Enforcement reported another pile of debris was dumped on another part of the unit. Manager Boehm coordinated cleanup efforts with Snohomish County Environmental Cleanup Staff to haul the load away later in the week.

Spencer Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that volunteers continue the trail clearing work at Spencer Island. Manager Boehm will continue to coordinate with the WDFW Volunteer Coordinator to keep the trail clearing momentum going.

Fir Island Farm Project Management Meeting: Projects Coordinator Brokaw met with Habitat Planners Williams and Friebel, and well as project partner Jenny Baker from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to discuss project and construction management as the project moves forward. Planner Williams is retiring at the end of the month, and project management duties will be transferred to his replacement, Jenna Friebel. Projects Coordinator Brokaw and TNC will continue to provide support for the project as needed.

Leque Island Alternatives Analysis and Design Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw worked on drafting an Alternatives Analysis document and set dates for upcoming WDFW, Stakeholder, and Public meetings in January.

A high tide, combined with high river levels, low barometer, and high winds caused a portion of the dike to overtop on Leque Island on Wednesday morning. No major damage was immediately identified.



Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP): Projects Coordinator Brokaw submitted a response to comments received by stakeholders regarding PSNERPT. There is currently an open public comment period on PSNERP that runs through January 8th, 2015. More information on this process, the documents under review, and how to comment is available at: <http://pugetsoundnearshore.org/outreach.html>.

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

Wildlife Management

Swinomish Brant Survey: Biologist DeBruyn did the first age/race survey of brant just arriving from the north at the Swinomish reserve in Padilla Bay. High tides and strong winds had destroyed a blind on the spit that was years old, but DeBruyn managed to hide in the bushes and see fifty individual brant. Although it was a small sample size a fair number of young birds were seen, boding well for a hunt in January. These are western high arctic brant (gray Bellies) that winter almost exclusively in Padilla and Samish Bays.

Wildlife Areas

Skagit Wildlife Area Waterfowl Program: Tech Cosgrove checked hunter survey cards at the Samish unit and monitored hunter and waterfowl use at the Leque Island unit. Specialist Meis toured Samish, Debay's Slough, and the Island units monitoring water levels, waterfowl, and public usage of the site. Cosgrove monitored waterfowl and hunter use as well as water levels on the Island unit. Ducks are feeding heavily on the unit, with evidence of feeding in corn, barley, millet, and fava bean plots. Water levels are high due to a high river and high tides. Cosgrove measured the north water control structure at the Samish unit and fabricated and installed another stop-log to increase water-holding capabilities.

Nooksack Unit Homeless Camp: Manager Kessler coordinated with Enforcement on an apparent homeless camp on the Nooksack unit. The camp site was located on the bank of the Nooksack River. Wildlife Agent Ryan Valentine checked the site and found it was an abandoned fishing camp, with a derelict gill net left in the river. Valentine removed as much of the net as he could. Manager Kessler will work this week to remove the rest of the garbage from the site using the John Deere Gator.

The Boardwalk renovation on the Tennant Lake unit of the Whatcom Wildlife Area funded by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office grant was started. The project to make one section of the boardwalk Wheelchair Accessible, and to raise the low underwater sections of the loop trail is being constructed by our Capital and Asset Management Program workers.



Cherry Valley Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm worked with a disabled hunter to reserve the ADA accessible blind at Cherry Valley. The hunter is very excited for the opportunity to hunt water fowl and have WDFW assist him.

Samish Unit Enhancement Project: Project Coordinator Brokaw talked with the Project Engineer from Ducks Unlimited to discuss the timeline for finalizing the plan set, technical specifications, and the bid process. The plans and specifications will be completed by May, to allow time to incorporate any potential feedback from permitting agencies. Brokaw then submitted the permit-level design plans and timeline to the WDFW Capital Asset Management Program (CAMP) for review.

Samish River Unit Wetland Restoration Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding a bald eagle nest recently discovered near the project area, to learn which precautions may be necessary to minimize disturbance to the nest during construction.

Private Lands/Access Management

Tech Deyo met with a volunteer from the late season 418 deer hunt and retrieved his gate key. Tech Otto cleaned up the Flynn Road parking area in Whatcom County. Otto and Deyo toured flood prone sites in Whatcom and Skagit counties. The technicians fortified Waterfowl Quality Hunt signs so they would not float away, preparing for another potential flooding of rivers in the area. Otto and Deyo completed survey of use at access sites in Whatcom, Skagit, and Snohomish counties.



Techs Otto and Deyo disassembled and removed fencing around the perimeter of the parking area at the Bow Hill pheasant release site. This was the last year for this WDFW release site



Flooding at Waterfowl Quality Hunt Site

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

Wildlife Management

Urban Coyote Conflict: Biologist Anderson provided information on coyote ecology, conflict reduction, and management techniques to a journalist working on a piece regarding local coyotes in Ballard. In late fall and winter, sub-adult coyotes often get kicked-out of family groups and are learning to be independent. They are generally solitary and may, at times, be seen a bit more briefly upon independence as they are not territorial and trying to find their own spaces while dealing with other territorial coyotes and needing to find food and cover. If one sees a coyote in urban areas, please follow our guidance at our Living with Wildlife – Coyotes website:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/coyotes.html> The article can be found

here: <http://www.ballardnewstribune.com/2014/12/08/news/it%E2%80%99s-not-invasion-spike-coyote-sightings-autumn>

Wildlife Areas

Skagit Wildlife Headquarters: Manager Rotton worked with Habitat Biologist Jenna Friebel and Brian Williams on development of the marsh restoration planting plan for the Fir Island Farms Restoration Project. Rotton worked with WDFW Permit Biologist Chris Gourley on the Skagit Headquarters' boat launch permitting process. Rotton coordinated with Habitat Biologist Wendy Cole on the hazard tree removal HPA application work to be completed on the Wiley Slough site. Tech Cosgrove completed tasks related to the end of the pheasant season, including cleaning out the catch room and loading chutes and feeders. Cosgrove used the John Deere 5300 and graded the washout on the spur dike at the Wiley Slough tidegates at the Headquarters unit. Scouring occurred during high river flows and high tides over the Thanksgiving weekend. High tides this week overtopped the spur dike at the same location but did not cause severe scouring. Cosgrove monitored dikes at the Headquarters, Leque Island, Island, and Fir Island Farms Reserve units throughout this week's high tides. Meis and Cosgrove monitored debris build-up during high river conditions on the boat house and moorage facilities to reduce concerns of more logs catching and causing damage to facilities and equipment and creating safety issues for boaters in the area.

Island Unit: Cosgrove toured the Island unit with the Sergeant Brian Fairbanks. Three groups of duck hunters were checked. All were in compliance. Meis and Rotton met with stakeholders about the Island unit plans and issues, barge retrofits, and tidegate process update.

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area: Manager Brian Boehm reports that the unit's parking areas and structures survived the recent wind storm with no damage. Interior roads at some sites will be monitored next week to determine if removal of debris is required. Additionally, Manager Boehm reports that five hazard trees at the Cherry Valley unit were either felled or topped in response to a request from the Washington State DOT. The five trees were very close to state HWY 203 and DOT requested that they be treated before they blew down onto the highway. The trees were treated prior to the recent wind storm so no negative impacts were experienced.

Wildlife Conflict Management

Wildlife Conflict Monitoring & Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman signed DPCA with landowner in Whatcom County experiencing deer damage to raspberry crops. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman had a meeting with Skagit County landowner to discuss elk damage in the Day Creek area, and also monitored elk movements in the Minkler Lake area. Conflict Specialist Witman responded to Wildcomm calls for current elk damage occurring in the Minkler Lake area of Skagit County. Enforcement also responded to the area after one landowner became threatening over the elk damage and possible injuries to a horse. Biologists Yarborough, Witman, and DeBruyn attended a meeting with the co-managers to discuss herd numbers, damage issues, and clover trapping. Biologist Smith consulted with landowners in King County regarding elk damage to agricultural lands and potential harvest options. Biologist Yarborough met with landowners and began pre-baiting for upcoming elk trapping in January.

Wildlife Conflict Follow Up: Biologist Caldwell conducted a follow up contact on a landowner from Whidbey Island that has experienced deer-related damage on his tree farm. The landowner was not interested in allowing public access for hunting. Therefore, Biologist Caldwell discussed several preventative options that the landowner could use to detour the unwanted deer behavior and damage. Biologist Caldwell will keep in touch with this landowner over time to see if anything changes.

Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordination

Hunter Education support: Hunter education coordinator Steven Dazey assisted students from completed classes who had not received their Hunter Education cards. One card had been returned due to an incorrect address and the other card had been lost in the mail. Dazey also entered four new instructors into the Kalkomey system and sent emails to them appraising of the completion of their certification. HE Coordinator Dazey also sent out two instructor applicant packets for instructors who had passed the newly restarted background check process. Dazey started to follow up on instructor applicants who had not turned in their authorization to conduct a background check. With the new contractor performing these checks, this new authorization form is required. The HE Department is in the process of rewriting the instructor application to include this authorization. Applications already received but still needing background checks need to include this additional form.

Hunter Education Instructor assistance: Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey assisted volunteer instructor Bill Vincent in ordering supplies for his series of 2015 classes, including ammunition for the live fire portion which requires coordinator approval. Dazey will pick up the supplies from the warehouse when he is attending classes in Olympia and have them at the Mill Creek office for instructor Vincent.

Snohomish County Parks: Hunter Education and Volunteer Coordinator Dazey provided Director of Snohomish County Parks Tom Teigen data on Snohomish County classes. Snohomish County Parks recently acquired a piece of land in the Sultan basin and is in the planning process of developing a shooting sports park. Information provided on the need of venues to conduct classes in Snohomish County and the demand for those classes will help to provide justification for the direction of the development process and the facilities developed on the park property.

Volunteer presentation at Dec. Lands Division Meeting: Volunteer Coordinator Dazey, along with Hunter Education Program Manager Dave Whipple, Volunteer Program Manager Christine Redmond, and volunteer Mike Brittain, made a presentation highlighting the benefits of using volunteers at the statewide Lands Division meeting. The why, how, and after of using volunteers was presented to show the attendees the benefits that they gain by working with the volunteer coordinators to recruit volunteers to expand what they can accomplish towards meeting agency goals.

Volunteer Recruitment and Outreach: Volunteer coordinator Dazey worked with Biologist Cole Caldwell to recruit welders who will fabricate up to three Clover traps to be used in the

Skagit Valley. The response was great and Dazey now has a database of qualified welders in Region 4 who can complete the project and will be available for future projects as needed.

Inactive Instructor Notifications: Hunter education coordinator Dazey followed up on decertified instructors who had Department supplies checked out to them. Two instructors still showed in Department records as having inert orange gun sets checked out to them. After follow up, it was determined that one set had been turned in to Coordinator Boes and one set had been transferred to the Chief Instructor of his old teaching team but the transfer paperwork had not been completed.

GOAL 4: SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY

Flight Follow: Assistant District Biologist Cyra provided flight following for Waterfowl Specialist Evenson during a training flight for marine waterfowl surveys.

Radio Communications: Assistant District Biologist Cyra assisted Program staff with training and assigning call numbers per our DNR contract.

Equipment Maintenance: Assistant District Biologist Cyra took aerial survey EBD's in for servicing, and repaired flight following equipment prior to the survey start. Cyra also had maintenance performed on the agency vehicle, ordered replacement field equipment, and processed paperwork to obtain replacement computer hardware.

Annual Lands Division Training: Lands staff attended the Lands Program Winter Meeting in Wenatchee.

Pesticide License Renewal: NRT Otto and Deyo completed all necessary paperwork for renewing pesticide licenses for 2015.

Continuing Education: Hunter education Coordinator/Volunteer Coordinator Dazey completed the mandatory AIS Fire Extinguisher Review course through LMS on-line.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area Elk Survey: Wildlife Area Manager Hauswald, along with Biologists Holman and George, conducted the first monthly winter elk survey on the valley floor of the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area. The purpose of these winter surveys is to keep track of the number of elk using the valley floor, spot elk carcasses, and assess winter conditions. Sixty-three elk were distributed in several groups primarily located on the eastern half of the Wildlife Area. Composition for the survey included 51 bulls, 9 cows, and 3 calves. The majority of the

animals appeared to have normal pelage and condition. There was no snow on the valley floor, and snow level in the surrounding hills was above 3,000 feet. Temperatures were in the mid 50's, but very windy during the survey.

Black-tailed Deer Research Project Washougal Study Cluster: Biologist Bergh downloaded data from the GPS collars of the study deer this week. Currently two does and three fawns remain alive.

Wildlife Areas

Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area

Mudflow Unit Intensive Forage Management: Natural Resource Technician Sample finished collecting and weighing forage clippings, and compiled data used to measure the change and effectiveness of previous fertilizer treatments intended to increase forage on the Mudflow unit of the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area that was completed mid spring. Forage clippings are taken randomly from six areas of the Mudflow unit in early fall. Three sites were treated with fertilizer and three sites, serving as control sites, were not treated. Each of the three fertilized plot areas are compared with one of three non-treated control plot areas that are within equivalent habitat zones. Averages of Treated and Non-Treated plot data are also compared within the given year as well as with previous years. The graph below shows the Treated compared with Non-Treated averages for 2013 and 2014. The Treated averages are higher than the Non-Treated averages for both years, indicating that applying a fertilizer soil enhancement treatment does increase available forage. This year's data show a 36.6% increase in forage compared to last year's 22.8% increase in forage.

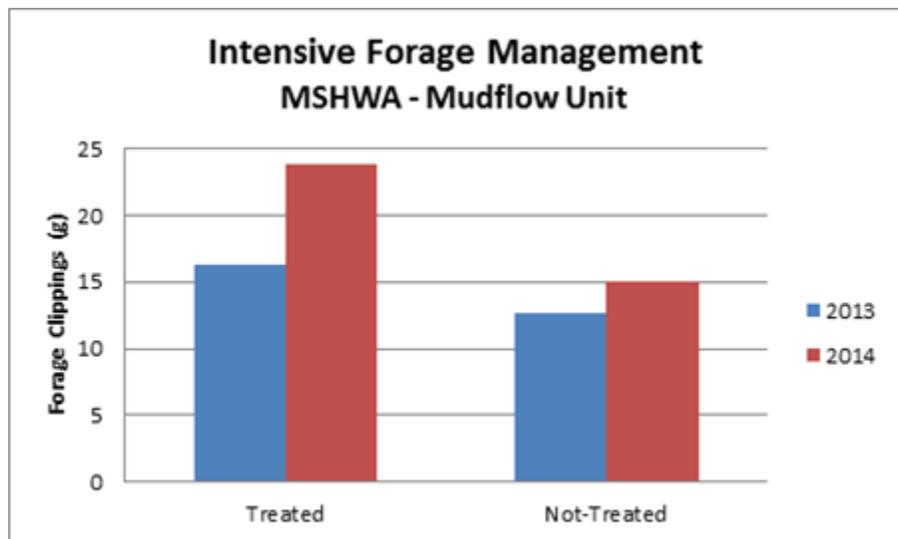
Comparison of forage areas of the Mudflow Unit that were treated with soil enhancements compared to areas of the Unit that were not treated

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Fuels Reduction Project:

Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven worked on developing a spending plan for the fuels project and finalized the budget for the contract between WDFW and DNR to implement this effort. Van Leuven also marked trees within the project area that might strike power lines when cut and will work with PUD to cut those trees.

Soda Springs Unit Agricultural Lease: Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven met with the lessee for this site to discuss the 2014 season's activities and review plans for 2015. WDFW has



already received its share of the wheat crop and will receive the remainder of payment for harvested hay soon.

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

Wildlife Management

Southwest Washington Management Area 2A and 2B Goose Hunt: The 2014-2015 SW Washington goose hunting season reopened this week on Wednesday, December 10th. The regular hunting season will continue through Sunday, January 10th, 2015. As of Sunday, December 14th, 263 hunters have checked a total of 630 geese at three check stations at a ratio of approximately 2.4 geese per hunter over the entire regular hunting season. At the moment, all zones remain open for Management Area 2A. A total of 80 duskies are distributed amongst five zones in Management Area 2A and 2B. Zones may close to hunting geese if dusky quotas are exceeded. For information regarding up-to-date zone closures, hunters can call the Region 5 office at (360) 696-6211 and follow the menu options for hunting and waterfowl. Hunters interested in participating in this season can refer to pages 3, 6-7 and 9-10 of the Migratory Waterfowl and Upland Game Season Pamphlet for further details regarding requirements for participation <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01535/wdfw01535.pdf>.



Technician Johnson, along with hunters K. Weil, G. Glass, and bird dog in-training, Leroy, with their geese at the Vancouver check station – Photo by Stephanie Doorly

Access

Langsdorf Landing: The redevelopment of the Langsdorf Landing access site on the Shillapoo Wildlife Area using RCO Boating Facilities funds has been completed. Improvements included replacement of the existing boat launch, piling, boat loading float, concrete walkways and abutment, ADA loading platform, kiosk, paved parking, accessible parking, expanded gravel parking, stormwater treatment, CXT vault toilet, and fencing. These improvements were mitigated with LWM, landscaping, and floodplain fill removal.

Completed redevelopment of Langsdorf Landing



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

Wildlife Conflict

Wildlife Conflict – D-10: Conflict Specialist Conklin signed a DPCA with a land owner in Wahkiakum County. The farmer has 300 acres and raises hay and Wagyu Kobe cattle. This land owner is also allowing public access for the Grays River Damage hunt. Conflict Specialist Conklin continues to respond to calls from hunters who are seeking land owner information for the Grays River Damage Hunt.

Wildlife Conflict – D-9: Wildlife Conflict Specialist McDonald met with four Klickitat County agricultural producers this week. Two orchards renewed their Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements with WDFW. Two Trout Lake dairies each received a kill permit to deter elk damage, and master hunters were scheduled to hunt their properties. One dairy emailed a photo of 100+ elk on an alfalfa field Saturday morning, and the other dairy chased twenty elk out of a barn Wednesday night. Damage prevention permits were issued to two Klickitat County producers experiencing deer damage.

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN A HIGHLY SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE.

Wildlife Management

Lands Division Workshop: Wildlife Area and Access staff from the region attended the Lands Division Workshop in Wenatchee this past week. During the three day workshop, presentations were made on the Lands 20/20 process, cultural resource management, master hunter program, disabled hunter access, budgeting, PHS, land management partnership opportunities, ecological integrity monitoring, and grazing. This workshop is conducted once a year to meet with other land managers from the Agency and to get updates on Agency priorities and initiatives.

Winter Conditions

D-10 & MSHWA Winter Conditions

Past Weather: November temperatures and precipitation were both below normal. Light accumulations of snow fell on the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area the last weekend of November. Temperatures have been above average the first two weeks of December with no additional snow on the Wildlife Area.

Short-Term Forecast: Snow levels will fluctuate between 2,500 to 4,500 feet during the upcoming week. The 6-10 and 8-14 day forecast are for above normal temperatures and precipitation.

Long-Term Forecast: The December and three month forecast is for above normal temperatures with an equal chance for either above average, below average, or normal temperatures.

Habitat: Forage is available at all elevations.

Snow Depths: Lower elevations are currently snow free, with minimal depths at the middle and upper elevations.

Animal Concentrations: No unusual concentrations noted to date. The first winter elk survey was conducted on the Mudflow unit December 8th, with 63 elk observed.

Animal Condition: Animals appear to be in good condition

Mortality: None reported to date.

Public Contacts: None to report regarding winter conditions.

The Public is reminded the portion of the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area lying east of a line defined by Hoffstadt Creek, The North Fork Toutle, and Deer Creek is closed to public access through April 30, 2014, to minimize disturbance and associated energy demands on elk wintering there.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Black-tailed Deer Study

Pysht Deer Monitoring: Five does (with Vectronic collars), four 2014 fawns, one yearling doe (collared as a 2013 fawn), and one doe (collared as a 2012 fawn) continue to be monitored in the Pysht cluster. A signal from a fifth 2014 fawn has not been heard since June 30th.

Mortalities – There were no known collared deer mortalities for the week of Dec. 7th – 13th.

Satsop/Mason Deer Project: The Mason cluster has seven does, three fawns and one yearling on air, while the Satsop cluster has two does and three fawns still transmitting. Biologist Murphie reports no new mortalities occurred this week, but no signal was heard for one Mason fawn during the most recent check.

Electrocution of a Juvenile Trumpeter Swan: Biologist Ament received a call on December 12th involving another dead swan. The juvenile was found dead approximately five meters SE of where she had collected two adult swans last week. She retrieved and examined the young swan. The swan had wound openings on the top of its head that had a distinct burnt odor, along

with another smaller opening in the middle of the shoulders. It was obvious that this swan had died from being electrocuted. Biologist Ament reported the swan mortality to the PUD, WDFW Animal Health Staff, and Martha Jordan.



Biologist Ament w/ dead swan



Electrocuted Juvenile swan

Contact with PUD (3rd Swan Electrocution): Biologist Ament had met with staff from the local Clallam County PUD on Dec. 5th to review the power lines that electrocuted the two adult swans last week. The PUD advised that they are not able to modify the lines at this time but they are willing to install reflective flappers to make the lines more obvious to the swans. Biologist Ament and PUD staff discussed the locations where the flappers should be installed on the lines. The devices were supposed to be installed last week. Unfortunately, strong winds caused many power outages in the area last week and the crew was not able to install the line markers in time to save the latest swan.

Trumpeter Swan Project: The Clallam County Swan Monitoring volunteers reported the following swan counts for December 14th. The total for the day was 63 swans (45 adults, 18 juveniles), all Trumpeters.

Sea Duck Surveys: Annual winter marine bird and sea duck surveys continued this week. Biologists Murphie, Evenson, and Cyra conducted surveys in the Central Puget Sound region last week. This effort will sample all the inland marine waters of Washington and take

approximately twenty days to complete. Due to mechanical and weather issues, only two days have been completed thus far.

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

Wildlife Management

Goose Check Station: Biologist Sundstrom worked the Raymond check station this week. Hunter participation has slowed and the number of harvested geese was low (Table 1). Sundstrom began to enter the check station information into the database for both the Reikkola and Raymond check stations. Table 2 gives a summary for comparison between the two check stations through December 13, 2014.

Date	Species																				Totals	
	# Hunters	Cackler	# Banded	Aleutian	# Banded	Taverner	# Banded	Lesser	# Banded	Dusky	# Banded	Western	# Banded	Vancouver	# Banded	GWF	# Banded	Snow	# Banded	Other		# Banded
12/10	2	3	1	0		0		0		0		1	1	0		0		0		0		4
12/13	2	2		0		1		1		0		0		0		0		0		0		4
Totals:	4	5	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8

Table 1: Geese checked this week

Location	Species																				Totals	
	# Hunters	Cackler	# Banded	Aleutian	# Banded	Taverner	# Banded	Lesser	# Banded	Dusky	# Banded	Western	# Banded	Vancouver	# Banded	GWF	# Banded	Snow	# Banded	Other		# Banded
Raymond	86	109	2	7	3	55	0	9	0	7	0	30	3	2	0	4	0	2	0	2	0	227
Reikkola	127	82	0	6	0	162	0	94	0	1	0	26	0	1	0	16	0	1	0	9	0	398
Totals	213	191	2	13	3	217	0	103	0	8	0	56	3	3	0	20	0	3	0	11	0	625

Table 2: Summary totals of Pacific County check stations through December 13, 2014

Access Areas

Humptulips River – Thorberg Site:

Removal of two dead danger trees leaning across road and fishing area.

Professional tree fallers were hired to fall the trees



Smaller sections used to block 4x4 trails that are ripping up the adjacent woodlands

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

Wildlife Conflict



Biologists Sundstrom and Harris, with assistance of WDFW Enforcement working “crowd control” along the Monte-Elma Road, were able to push the elk herd that has been causing havoc at the bulb farm in Satsop back across the Monte-Elma Road. Although this is probably a temporary reprieve, prior to the push, the herd was attempting to go back north voluntarily but were unable due to vehicle traffic and vehicles stopping alongside the roadway to have a look. Once the elk were back to the north, Sundstrom reinstalled the fladery fencing that the herd had torn down several days prior. It remains to be seen if the fencing will deter the herd from crossing back to the south to the bulb farm.

Biologist Novack met with the landowner representative and a Master Hunter near Tenino. A DPCA was provided for antlerless elk permits. Novack developed a formal set of guidelines and hunt area map to be provided to Master Hunter permit holders for hunting the property and adjacent DNR land. A Master Hunter will act as a volunteer hunt coordinator for the area. Two master hunters were released to hunt the area starting 12/16.

Biologist Novack discussed pending crop damage claims for Pierce and Clallam Counties with crop adjustor Smith. The damage claim for Clallam County is expected to be much less than previous years. Novack corresponded with HQ to confirm the claimant fulfilled their requirements under the DPCA.