

Wildlife Program

Week of June 23-29, 2014

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Waterfowl Brood Surveys: Biologist Atamian ran the Sprague-Lamont route, 17 broods, 57 ducklings, for 7 species were observed. No great pictures of waterfowl, but a Wilson's Snipe remained still for a picture.



Golden Eagle Survey: Wildlife biologist Annemarie Prince, Research Scientist Jim Watson, Tribal Biologist Jaspers, and 4 volunteers successfully banded and placed a GPS backpack on a juvenile golden eagle at Lake Ellen.

Bi-State Cattlemen's Meeting: Supervisor McCanna gave a two hour PowerPoint presentation to the Oregon and Washington bi-state cattlemen's association meeting in Pendleton Oregon regarding how WDFW works with cattlemen in Washington to prevent wolf-livestock conflicts. Several members of the Oregon Wildlife Advisory Group were present. The entire audience had several questions and was impressed on how Washington is working with cattlemen on preventative measures.

Compost Facility: Specialist Shepherd and Technician Bendixen worked on placing ecology blocks delivered by Colville Valley Concrete to construct compost bins at the new Sherman Creek Wildlife Area carcass compost facility.



Completed compost bins at the new Sherman Creek Wildlife Area carcass compost facility.

Whitman County CREP: Biologist Lewis met with the Regional CREP coordinator to discuss a potential project in the Steptoe Canyon area along the Snake River. The project will include riparian habitat restoration and replacing a culvert with a culvert that will allow for fish passage. Steptoe creek has been confirmed to be used by young steelhead and replacing the culvert will allow the young steelhead to travel another 1.5 miles up the creek.

Wildlife Areas

Water for wildlife: SLWA staff turned on a well this week at the west end of SLWA, to fill the trough for wildlife use. This site was originally windmill-driven, for cattle watering. Solar panels replaced the mill to run the pump some years ago, during an effort to propagate shrubs around the mill. ok



SCWA Habitat Improvement Project – Sherman Creek WLA staff worked with the WDFW Prescribed Burn Crew who returned this week intending to complete the Canal Unit and burn as



much of the Rail Unit as possible. Burning was limited to one day due to precipitation and DNR denial of smoke approval at the end of the week. The Canal Unit was completed and a small portion, less than ten acres, of the Rail Unit was treated. Two days were spent on mop-up and demobilization, completing the spring burning at SCWA for this year.

This photo was taken near the completion of prescribed burn treatment of the Canal Unit on Sherman Creek Wildlife Area.

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

Wildlife Management

Hazing Deer near Deer Park, Washington: Conflict Specialist Bennett, a Master Hunter, and a volunteer hazed deer with spotlights and paintball guns from an irrigated alfalfa field near the Spokane and Pend Oreille county border.

Private Lands Access: NRW Wade posted access boundaries in Garfield County this week. Wade focused on the Sweeney Gulch and Richman Gulch areas. While out posting, Wade was approached by a neighboring landowner who was interested in learning more about the WDFW access programs. NRW Wade gave them the details of each option and Biologist Earl will be meeting with them in the near future to see if they wish to enter into an agreement for public access. Biologist Earl and NRW Wade also spent additional time this week brainstorming a list of landowners in Garfield and Asotin County to contact and try to expand the public access program.

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Lookout Pack: Biologist Fitkin made an attempt to howl up the Lookout Pack from near the suspected den site in an attempt to confirm pup presence. The lack of success coupled with more recent GPS data from a collared yearling suggest the pack may have already moved to a first rendezvous site. Additional



*Lookout Pack alpha male wolf.
Remote camera – WDFW*

monitoring attempts will continue. In the interim, remote cameras deployed by the WSU wolf research crew produced photos of at least 4 adults including a great photo of the alpha male.

Bighorn Sheep Management: Biologist Heinlen retrieved a dropped collar from an earlier capture effort in the Sinlahekin herd, and coordinated with volunteer Fisher who is beginning a multi-day effort to survey the Sinlahekin sheep and assess lamb production. In addition, arrangements were made to get GPS locations from the collared bighorn infected with the *Psoroptes* mite that has moved into Canada sent directly to Canadian biologists monitoring his movements. This will help managers take proactive measures to insure the animal does not move to areas with unaffected herds.



Reptile monitoring: Biologist Fitkin monitored Patterson Mountain for pygmy short-horned lizards and worked on developing some a long-term status/distribution monitoring strategy suitable for a citizen science effort. Survey time was limited, but the effort yielded one lizard and sign of several others.

Pygmy Short-horned Lizard
Photo – Scott Fitkin

Common Loon Management: Biologist Heinlen checked lakes for nesting Common Loons this period. Status to date: *Lost Lake:* One pair with two chicks hatched. *Bonaparte Lake:* One pair, no nesting. *Beaver Lake:* One pair, nesting but no chicks. *Beth Lake:* One pair; no nesting. *Crawfish Lake:* One pair, nesting but no chicks.

Mosquito Control – Biologist Finger participated in a meeting with GCMCD#1 to discuss a process whereby WDFW would provide approval for the use of adulticides within the North Potholes in accordance with the state NPDES permit. Finger revised GIS shapefiles of categorized zones representing avoidance priorities for the protection of Northern Leopard Frogs. Biologists Duvuvuei and Finger, with assistance from Wildlife Area's Eidson and Bechtold, constructed, deployed, and stocked 20 enclosures with fish and amphibians to monitor for potential mortalities associated with the use of adulticides in the North Potholes. An additional 20 enclosures will be deployed next week to serve as a control group within the “core” of the Northern Leopard Frog Management Area (i.e. subunits A and B).



A 3'H x 2'W x 2'L enclosure deployed to monitor for potential fish and amphibian mortalities in North Potholes Reservoir. – Photo by Orrin Duvuvuei.

Private Lands/Access

Weed Control: Access Manager Graves released about 500 *Larinus minutus* insects for diffuse and spotted knapweed biocontrol on the Dryden Dam and Dryden Depot Access Sites. With success the bugs will help manage the knapweeds that persist in the area. *Larinus minutus* were released in the boulder field north of the Buckshot Access Site several years ago and were extremely effective.



*Dryden Depot, biocontrol agent
Larinus minutus release - Graves*

Chelan County Yellow Star Thistle: Chelan Wildlife Area staff, Kevin Vallance and Brad Zabreznik, Wells Wildlife Area Maintenance Mechanic Fidel Rios and volunteer James



Schroeder, along with three US Forest Service Technicians sprayed yellow star thistle on the Knowles area of the Entiat Unit. Over the course of three days the hillsides adjacent to the old farm fields were sprayed on foot with backpack sprayers and the fields were spot sprayed using ATV's. In early August another two or three days of spraying will be needed to find plants missed this go around.

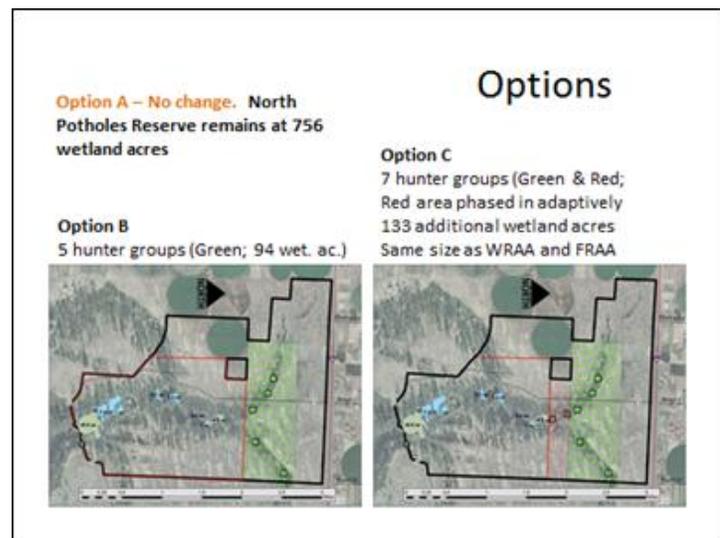
*Yellow star thistle plant found on the Entiat Unit,
Chelan Wildlife Area.*

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

Wildlife Management

Waterfowl Advisory Committee Meeting:

Biologist Finger participated in the Waterfowl Advisory Group (WAG) meeting at North Bend to discuss upcoming seasons, regulated access areas, proposed reserve boundary changes at North Potholes and Winchester Reserves, and Duck Stamp and Print Projects both in progress and proposed for 2014-15. By unanimous vote, the WAG supported Option C for the North Potholes Reserve boundary change and supported the change for the Winchester Reserve which would eliminate ¼ section from the east end of the reserve which is not functioning to provide waterfowl sanctuary.



Boundary change options for North Potholes Reserve. Option B would take 94 wetland acres out of reserve to establish a 5 spot regulated access area. Option C would take 133 wetland acres out of reserve to establish a 7 spot regulated access area.

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

Wildlife Areas

Habitat Conservation: Biologist Fitkin assisted Olympia staff in conducting a tour of habitat



conservation work in the Okanogan District for US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) staff. We visited a variety of fee simple and conservation easement properties purchased at least in part with USFWS dollars. In addition, we met with individual landowners, all of whom were very supportive of our land conservation work and encouraged us to continue with our efforts.

*Upper Similkameen River
Photo – Scott Fitkin*

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

LT Murray Wildlife Area: Technician Kyle Hill surveyed the release sites for the biological control on the LT Murray. He received our shipment of *Larinus minutus* weevils Thursday morning. Hill, Schnebly, and Hunt distributed the bugs to 8 sites on the Wildlife Area, instructing them to wage war mercilessly on Diffuse knapweed. Photos and GPS coordinates for the release sites will be sent to WSDA staff to assist in their monitoring efforts.

Biological Control release site.



Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Sak received another 100 pheasant chicks from the Yakima Valley Pheasants Forever chapter to raise on the wildlife area.

Wildlife Management

Mourning Doves: Capture and banding of doves in District 4 has begun for the 10th year with 59 (20 adults, 39 juvenile) birds marked in the first day of trapping. Since banding was initiated in 2003, biologists have marked 626 doves in Benton and Franklin Counties. Returned bands



provide valuable information about dove movements and age structure. With the recent cessation of the USFWS coo count surveys, band recovery is the only method available to track dove populations in Washington. Trapping this year will continue into mid-August.

A successful first day of mourning dove banding in District 4 (circles highlight traps containing doves). Photo: S. Gregory

Private Lands Biologist: Biologist Stutzman completed the point count surveys for the wildlife-directed, continuous CRP enrollments in Benton and Franklin counties. The surveys, 4 in Upland Habitat buffers and 2 in CRP SAFE, help fulfil the monitoring requirements of the contracts. Meadowlarks and Horned Larks were far and away the most common species detected although a handful of Pheasants were heard as well.

Golden Eagles: Biologist Bernatowicz contacted Researcher Watson regarding the Oak Creek and McDaniel Canyon territories. Both chicks at Oak Creek banded and 1 radioed. The chicks at McDaniel were 2 weeks apart in age. By protocol, a survey will have to be conducted next week when the youngest bird reaches 7 weeks old. Biologist Bernatowicz surveyed the Horseshoe Bend site and found 2 young >7 weeks old.

Hunting Prospects: Biologist Bernatowicz spent considerable time working on the 2014 Hunting Prospects.

Sage Grouse Management on Wildlife Areas: Biologist Bernatowicz contacted Researcher Schroeder regarding Sage Grouse, shooting ranges, and management on the Wenas. A radioed bird nest in 2014 and previous radios/sightings suggest at least a few birds nest/use the Wenas WLA annually. The area has fairly heavy human use and frequent fires. There are discussions on the sighting of target shooting ranges and researcher Schroeder's expertise was sought. A field visit with manager Confer-Morris was arranged for next week.

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

Wildlife Areas

LT Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Winegeart met with Jennifer Hackett from Manastash Mapping/GIS to clarify mapped features of the wildlife area, and check some boundary issues. Jennifer creates maps for public use that are available online, and is very detail oriented, resulting in getting accurate information available to Wildlife Area users.

Wildlife Management

Wildlife Conflict: Specialist Wetzel coordinated with a Master Hunter to provide needed project materials. Two master hunters came by the office to discuss the new damage permits.

General Inquiries: Several general hunters called or stopped by the office to discuss elk and deer prospects for the fall.

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: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand monitored harvest of DPP permits in Elk Area 3721. Three bull elk (1-5pt. and 2-6pts.) were reported harvested this week. Total harvest for the summer bull season is 29 bull elk. It is anticipated that we will reach our harvest authority of 30 bull elk this coming week. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand coordinated with landowners and hunt managers on elk locations to pressure them away from valuable crops. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand updated the damage permit issuance and harvest reporting spreadsheet on SharePoint. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand spent a considerable amount of time contacting landowners in elk area 3721 to suspend their DPP permits as the harvest quota for this elk area is getting close to being reached. The last of these permits will be authorized on an individual basis, until the quota is reached. Surprisingly, the feedback from the landowners and hunters has been supportive. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand conducted one late night spotlight patrol on Rattlesnake Mountain. Almost all fields bordering ALE had elk presence in them. Most were hazed to the north, back to Hanford.

Busy Biologist: Biologist Bernatowicz responded to large numbers of inquiries from hunters who drew special permits, responded to a call regarding dead ospreys/vultures, a company looking to move an osprey nest, and provided advice to a family having problems with an aggressive hawk.

Landowner Elk Interactions: A landowner on Brick Mill Road called to report that 5 bull elk were in a pasture area. The landowner likes the elk; however the landowner was reminded by Specialist Wetzel that it would be best if the elk were to move out of the area if possible. Another landowner in Cle Elum reported elk damage to his Timothy crop and a field visit was conducted by Specialist Wetzel to look at potential damage. A new DPCA contract and elk permits were delivered. A landowner in Reecer Creek reported 10 elk and some new calves in a hay field. These elk were hazed from the area.

Wildlife Areas

LT Murray Wildlife Area: On Wednesday Manager Winegeart and Habitat Bio Mark Teske gave a presentation to a Kiwanis group about the Gnat Flat purchase. They also toured burned areas of the Taylor Bridge Fire, looking for potential cooperative habitat restoration projects with the Mule Deer Foundation.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman set up a new volunteer project in CERVIS for this summer. Volunteers from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) will be back out to work on tree thinning and old stock fence removal. Manager Huffman organized a volunteer clean-up day with volunteers from the Central Washington Chapter of Safari Club International (SCI). A total of seven volunteers drove roads in the Rock Creek Unit picking up five truckloads of trash at about 20 hunting camps.



Volunteers from SCI picking up campsite trash on the Rock Creek Unit of the Oak Creek Wildlife Area.

Volunteers from Safari Club International spent the day picking up trash on the Rock Creek Unit.



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

Wildlife Management

Access Technician Hiring: Stutzman completed the career seasonal hire paperwork for Access Technician Pat Kaelber. Kaelber starts this week and will assist with posting Access sites, contacting landowners, and other district priorities.

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman contacted Engineer Kuykendall about the status of FPA's for RMAP work in Oak Creek and Rock Creek. The construction shop is waiting to start, hopefully the FPA will be submitted to DNR this coming week and work can begin 30 days after that.

Colockum Wildlife Area: Methow Wildlife Area Maintenance Mechanic Rob Wottlin visited the Colockum this week and trained staff to obtain the B-felling certification for chainsaw use. This is chainsaw safety and tree-felling training that should come in handy as we begin to remove hazard trees along roads and campsites. Manager Lopushinsky and Assistant Manager Hagan participated in the Interdisciplinary Team Review of the HPA for the timber salvage and hazard tree removal project. The team identified much work that still needs to be done, including marking hazard trees in the riparian zones, widening some RMZ's, culvert installations, improving road drainage, etc.

LT Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Winegeart and staff continued working with Engineering to prepare for the start of work on the Whiskey Dick/Skookumchuck fence project. Winegeart, Hunt, and Schnebly met at Joe Watt to inventory the fence materials stored there, and Hunt made arrangements with a local lumber company to transport them to the staging area at the Wild Horse Wind Farm on July 8th.

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Sak continued working on fire restoration efforts. Assistant Manager Sak was able to get the grass seed and shrubs ordered for the restoration work this fall. Also Assistant Manager Sak worked on getting cost estimates for shop replacement. Assistant Manager Sak worked with irrigation specialists on getting the Snipes pump station finished. Assistant Manager Sak coordinated with Pacific Power on getting the electrical hooked back up to the Snipes pump station. Spray crew finished with all the small scale spraying for the fire restoration. Another 78 acres were sprayed by a two person crew for the week.

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

East/West Bear Project: Biologist Smith assisted Bear and Cougar Specialist Beausoleil and Carnivore Specialist Maletzke with bear captures and collaring throughout the week. A total of five bears (including an enforcement capture) were collared this week. This brings the season total (including enforcement captures) to 16 bears fitted with collars on the west side of the state.



A young buck encountered during bear capture work.



Checking the teeth on a ~200 pound male black bear.



Westside Cougar Project: Biologist Smith assisted Research Scientist Kertson and some of the KBD team with re-capturing an adult female Cougar. The previously fitted collar had malfunctioned and was replaced.

An adult female cougar in a tree prior to replacement of a malfunctioning collar.

Species of Greatest Conservation Needs (SGSN): Assistant District Biologist Cyra assisted Regional DNR biologist staff with a mid-season refresher survey for marbled murrelets. Surveyors will use refreshers to reacquaint themselves with visual and audio murrelet detections if the sites they have been surveying have a low detection rate. This refresher was held at a long-term marbled murrelet survey station that continues to have murrelet presence. The dozen or so visual and two dozen various audio detections provided surveyors with a nice variety of detections.

Low Elevation Pika Surveys: Assistant District Biologist Cyra continued with Pika presence surveys at this low elevation site. Visual confirmation of a pika was obtained at the original location of WDFW surveys for the second year in a row.



Wildlife Habitat Protection: Assistant District Biologist Cyra reviewed DNR timber sale plans and reviewed and corrected locations and data for a peregrine falcon in the area.

Lower Snoqualmie Acoustic Bat Monitoring – Citizen Science: Biologist Anderson worked with members of Bats Northwest and a student intern to conduct acoustic bat use surveys of the three Lower Snoqualmie Valley WDFW wildlife management units; Stillwater, Cherry Valley, and Crescent Lake. Crescent Lake was surveyed this week. The area was quite active with bats, as well as young of the year barn owls, western screech-owl, great horned owl, feeding herons and way too many bullfrogs.

Common Loons – Monitoring: Biologist Anderson two area lakes that have loon breeding activity. One lake showed adults with one less than five day old chick riding poppa's back. The other still shows birds incubating. Anderson received note that two chicks are present on the Howard Hanson Reservoir from Tacoma Water staff. Anderson communicated with Seattle Public Utility biologists to discuss status of Chester Morse Reservoir loons. One pair has failed, the other two have unknown status but one perhaps may be on eggs. Further survey is needed in collaboration with Seattle.

Great Blue Heron Conservation Management: Biologist Anderson worked with a number of applicants regarding heron management plans under city of Seattle development permits. Anderson provided direction for one project and is in review and development of recommendations for another currently.

Pre-fledge Urban Peregrine Falcon Needs: Biologist Anderson received a call over the weekend from a local falcon watcher regarding a nest site in Seattle. The "runt" of the eyrie had

decided to take leave from the nest area way too soon. The bird was spotted by a local who stood watch over it until the volunteer could come to retrieve it. Anderson coordinated with the volunteer and a local rehabilitation facility that was closing for the evening to provide for drop-off after hours.

Drone Activity near State Protected Wildlife: Biologist Anderson received two reports of drone activity near local raptor nests. Anderson answered questions regarding wildlife regulations at the state level, suggested reporting parties contact local city enforcement for any local law consideration, and overall recommended outreach to “drone enthusiasts”. This is the fifth report this breeding season of drone activity near actively nesting areas of protected wildlife. Please don’t fly drones near wildlife, particular during sensitive breeding periods. This acute, novel intrusion has much potential to create disturbance and likely negative response in wildlife. Use a spotting scope or camera with some consideration for wildlife watching concealment on the ground like the rest of us!

Mute Swans in King Co.: Biologist Anderson received note from a number of entities, both internal and external, regarding free-flighted Mute Swans in the King County Area. Next steps are being examined regarding management of this state Deleterious Exotic Species. These birds are quite aggressive and have created a host of issues with habitat and native breeding waterfowl in other areas of North America, in particular the eastern and mid-western United States. They can eat up to eight pounds of aquatic vegetation a day. This drastically alters local aquatic habitats. Further, they can interbreed with our native Trumpeter Swan which is re-establishing itself within the Pacific Flyway; migrating between wintering and breeding grounds. As good-looking as they may be – they are more detrimental to our environment, both habitat and wildlife, than most would think. Anderson urges folks to read up on the Mute Swan issues and management efforts in the United States.



Mute swan

Drayton Harbor Cormorant

Survey: Biologists Danilson and DeBruyn counted Double-crested cormorants and their young and nests at a colony on a breakwater near Blaine Wa. The survey is part of a larger effort to document cormorant distribution on the west coast in relationship to manipulation of their breeding colonies on the Columbia River. The survey was conducted from a boat at high tide and included a “walk through” by DeBruyn to

DeBruyn counting cormorant nests at Drayton Harbor colony





accurately enumerate nests and young. Over 600 adult cormorants were present. Two hundred and seventy six occupied nests were counted and 385 chicks.

Double-crested cormorant chicks of various ages

Wildlife Areas

Leque Island Alternatives Analysis and Design Project: Ducks Unlimited and WDFW submitted a quarterly progress report to one of the agencies providing grant funds for the project. To date, the project has met all of the deliverables in the timeline proposed in the grant contract. The next major project milestone is completion of the hydrodynamic modeling report, which is due at the end of August.

Deer Harbor Bridge Replacement Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Environmental Planner Theresa Mitchell met with San Juan County staff regarding a bridge replacement project on Orcas Island that is included in the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP) suite of projects. The project involves replacement of a road bridge that is currently undersized with a longer-span bridge to allow for less restricted tidal flow in one of the largest estuaries in San Juan County. The County has secured a grant and is targeting summer of 2015 for construction. More information on PSNERP is available at: www.pugetsoundnearshore.org.

Terrell Creek Water Flows: Manager Kessler coordinated with the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association on the water flows in Terrell Creek. Water is released from Lake Terrell during the Summer to keep Terrell Creek charged, and help salmon survive. Further down Terrell Creek, it was noted that the creek had started to dry up in places. It was found that beavers had dammed up Terrell Creek at the new Lake Terrell dam. Natural Resource Tech Deyo removed the beaver dam, and the creek will continue to be monitored to make sure the beavers don't dam it up again.



Lake Terrell Barley Field Weed Control: Natural Resource Tech Deyo sprayed herbicides on the barley fields at Lake Terrell. All the 60 acres of planted barley is doing very well, and growing fast.

Rainbow Pond Water Control Replacement: Manager Kessler coordinated with Ducks Unlimited engineers on the designs for the Rainbow Pond water control replacement. The old control collapsed in on itself earlier this year. The water level in Rainbow Pond is crucial to the Lake Terrell – Terrell Creek summer water flows.

Skagit Wildlife Area Agricultural enhancement program - Island Unit: Natural Resource Technician, Curran Cosgrove continued field preparation and with the assistance of Natural Resource Specialist Greg Meis completed barley planting on the Island Unit. To date, about 30 acres of barley, 20+ acres of corn, 10 acres of fava beans and a few acres of millet have been planted. Cosgrove will continue to work up lower/wetter areas and plant millet until mid-July. First plantings of corn and barley are growing and well established. Field repairs of cultipacker were needed to complete the planting effort. Manager Rotton met with Island volunteer Curt Tronsdal to discuss the ferry operations and to plan for group training for WDFW staff for barge operation and safety.

Skagit Wildlife Area Agricultural enhancement program - Skagit Headquarters: Staff mowed and maintained the pheasant pens.

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

Wildlife Management

Ruffed Grouse: This Ruffed Grouse chick was photographed in GMU 460, Snoqualmie Unit hiding from the biologist and hanging near its hen. These cryptic little ones are out and about now. Watch out for them while out recreating in the back country and driving forest roads. Photo: C. Anderson, WDFW



Elk Movement Patterns and Population Estimate Efforts: Biologist Anderson and Smith, along with members of Wildlife Enforcement Detachment 10, provided recommendations regarding study efforts to track elk in the North Bend area. Discussion involved volunteer management, participation and ethics regarding project participation and hunting activity in the project area. Anderson also worked with State Wildlife Veterinarian Mansfield to update drug use protocol and policy needs with external researchers trapping elk in this same area. Anderson is working with the Volunteer section regarding outreach and identification needs for local coordinated volunteer implemented Master Hunter efforts.

WDFW Efforts to Map Fee Access Areas: Biologist Anderson worked with Private Lands Biologist Caldwell to revise Fee Access categorizations for major areas in District 12, King Co.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program: Biologist Caldwell finished and submitted new Waterfowl Quality Hunt contract requests via Novatus. Biologist Caldwell finished creating new waterfowl hunting sites via the Private Lands Access website. So far for 2014, Biologist Caldwell has added a total of 409.61 new acres of access lands.

Private Lands Management: Biologist Caldwell and Technician Otto met and formulated a list of private lands that require habitat management in 2014. A list was developed of new properties that require mowing and invasive plant spraying. Technician Otto began performing these duties on properties in Skagit and Whatcom Counties. This week he sprayed the Francis East unit for reed canary grass, took a load of wood chips to Ferndale unit parking lot, mowed and sprayed this unit for reed canary grass, sprayed reed canary grass at Ritter road parking area, mowed Sam Bell Road unit for reed canary grass and mowed Cook West road unit of reed canary grass.

Migratory Bird Habitat Enhancement Project Proposal: Biologist Caldwell continued drafting a new three year proposal for Migratory Bird Habitat Enhancement funding. As of 6/27/2014, all Migratory Bird Habitat Enhancement projects in Skagit County are now finalized. A total of 120 acres of barley is now planted and will improve habitat quality at three Waterfowl Quality Hunt sites near Padilla and Samish Bays.

Volunteer Coordinator Steven Dazey continued to work with Master Hunter applicants and renewals to link them up with service projects to assist the Department of Fish and Wildlife meet its goals. Ongoing projects from last week include I-90 elk fence repair, Pygmy rabbit catch and release, and various projects on the Snoqualmie wildlife area.

Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey is working on disseminating information to hunter education instructors about a scholarship opportunity for Hunter Education students from the International Hunter Education Association USA. This effort is designed as a recruitment and retention tool for our young hunters in Washington State.

Region 4 Game Management Plan Public Meeting: Biologist Danilson attended the game management planning meeting in Lynnwood on the evening of June 25th.

Wildlife Areas

Fir Island Farm Pre-Project Monitoring: Projects Coordinator Brokaw shipped a malfunctioning water quality monitoring device back to manufacturer for a diagnostic test and possible repair.

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

Wildlife Management

Bear Research: Biologist Anderson worked with biologists from the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe (MIT) and Biologist Smith to coordinate bear sample retrieval and future needs regarding bear harvest in an MIT study area.

Spring Bear Hunt Season Closure: Biologist Caldwell continued drafting a summary report of the 2014 Spring Bear Hunt Season. Biologist Caldwell contacted all private landowner participants and gave them preliminary results of harvest in their areas. Biologist Caldwell attempted to contact Olympia staff regarding biological samples related to bear premolar submissions. Follow up contacts will be made next week to verify if any samples were submitted directly to Olympia.

Migratory Bird Enhancement Proposal: Biologist Caldwell developed A-19 payment vouchers for completed work in Whatcom and Skagit Counties. He also met with local equipment and grain providers to discuss options for implementing work in the future.

Private Timberlands Access Meeting: Biologist Caldwell and Biologist Anderson met to discuss private timberland access areas. Areas were identified that require attention and classification according to access requirements.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Surveys: Biologist Caldwell finalized survey forms and gathered materials to begin work on hunter survey boxes. These new surveys will gather information on hunter success, use, participation, harvest, satisfaction, user demographics, and quality components related to each site.

Hunter Education Coordinator Steven Dazey sent out invites to hunter education instructor applicants for two upcoming Pre-Service Trainings. One in August and one in September were scheduled. Both PST's are schedule in the Snohomish/King county areas and should see 10 to 20 new instructors at the completion.

Wildlife Conflicts: Biologist Danilson worked with internal staff and a volunteer master hunt coordinator to develop a response to haze elk from a private property in Skagit County. Multiple phone and email communications between this landowner and WDFW staff have made developing a response challenging. The landowner sent emails over the weekend (cc'ing various elected officials) indicating he does not want anyone other than WDFW enforcement officers on his property due to unanswered concerns about liability.

Danilson worked with contracts staff to resolve issues related to fencing contracts in Skagit County. This included addressing issues associated with information in Novatus, contacting landowners, and conducting site visits.

Injured Deer Response: Biologist Danilson corresponded with a landowner in Bellingham regarding a black-tail deer with a piece of cable wrapped around her torso that has resulted in a severe wound on the animals back. Biologist DeBruyn visited the property to assess the situation. Landowners in this urban neighborhood would like to see the



Injured deer in Bellingham

deer captured and cable removed. However, the deer is otherwise healthy and has recently had a fawn and there are many complications/concerns (including limited staff resources) with trying to capture said deer. The decision is to do nothing at this time.

Wildlife Areas

Skagit Headquarters: Manager Rotton received comments from Wildlife Program Manager Link on the wildlife area plan update. Edits will be completed and forwarded to Olympia Lands program. Manager Rotton continues to work on a boundary line clarification for the Bald Eagle Natural Area property with Lands Agent Kye Iris and District Biologist, Chris Danilson. Also, Manager Rotton monitored agricultural leases and planting areas on the Samish, Leque Island, South Padilla Bay, and Cottonwood Island Units. Agricultural leases for Samish and Cottonwood Island Unit are being processed.

Manager Rotton met with Waterfowl program Manager Don Kraege to update and discuss a number of ongoing projects to include the Samish wetland enhancement proposal, Island Unit ditch maintenance work, Leque Island alternatives analysis project, game reserve boundary maps and recently submitted state duck stamp proposals.

Leque Island: Natural Resource Specialist Greg Meis mowed 10 acres at Leque Island to control various noxious weeds throughout the site.

Samish River Unit: Manager Rotton requested a quote from local vendors for the installation of fencing on the dike to decrease trespassing issues for the neighbors during the fishing season.

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

Wildlife Management

Volunteer Management: Biologist Anderson has been in coordination and contact with Woodland Park Zoo Citizen Breeding Amphibian Monitoring Project volunteers as well as Bats Northwest volunteers and a couple interns for ongoing amphibian volunteer management and data documentation assistance.

Radio Communications: Assistant District Biologist Cyra provided radio support to Program staff.

Equipment maintenance and preparation: Assistant District Biologist Cyra completed maintenance and field testing of the District 13 vessel in preparation for wildlife surveys in the north Puget Sound.

Performance Evaluation and Planning: Staff continued work on Performance Evaluations and Expectations.

Private Lands Access Program Management: Biologist Caldwell coordinated agendas with technician staff pertinent to program goals and objectives for the Private Lands Access Program.

Floodplains by Design Conference: Projects Coordinator Brokaw attended a conference organized by The Nature Conservancy regarding development of a program designed to advance projects in Puget Sound that benefit floodplain ecosystem processes, agriculture, and flood risk to infrastructure. Restoration and agricultural groups, as well as jurisdictions from throughout Puget Sound attended.

District 14 Wildlife Conflicts Staff Recruitment: Biologist Danilson and Caldwell conducted interviews for the non-permanent Wildlife Conflict Technician position. Danilson followed up with some reference checks, but has had trouble making contact with some references.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Golden Eagle Surveys: Biologist Anderson completed final productivity surveys for select golden eagle territories as per this year's east side population analysis. Only two know sites were observed to have produced young this year.

Highway 97 Wildlife Passage Project: Biologist Anderson recently received remote camera station photos associated with the Simcoe Mountain Highway 97 wildlife passage project from Biologist McAllister of the Washington Department of Transportation (WDOT). Recent photos from May and June indicate that deer are frequently using the highway underpass. The WDOT developed this project in cooperation with WDFW to attempt to reduce the number of wildlife mortalities along Highway 97 in the Simcoe Mountains.



Doe with Triplets Using Highway 97 Wildlife Passage

Black-tailed Deer Research Project: Does and fawns associated with the Black-tail Research Project continue to be monitored through a combination of remote (satellite) and traditional (VHF) equipment. The peak birthing period of late May / early June has resulted in the capture of numerous fawns. Please see the below-listed details for the Washougal (GMU 568) Study cluster and Coweeman (GMU 550) Study cluster.

Coweeman Study Cluster: Six does (out of 7) in the Coweeman cluster have given birth. Nine fawns (out of 12 biologically possible) have been captured from the six Coweeman does. Monitoring of the one remaining pregnant doe continues in Coweeman study cluster and fawns are being monitored for survival.

Washougal Study Cluster: Four does (out of 4) in the Washougal cluster have given birth. Seven fawns (out of 8 biologically possible) have been captured from the four Washougal does. Washougal study cluster fawns are being monitored for survival. During the final week of June one doe and two fawns died.

Wildlife Areas

Klickitat Wildlife Area Weed Management

Planning: Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven and Technician Davis met with Weed Specialist Heimer to assess the extent of the weed situation on several units of the Wildlife Area. Sites having known weed infestations were visited, past and current control efforts were discussed, as well as other possible alternative actions and prioritization of the work.

Klickitat Wildlife Area weed management



Klickitat Wildlife Area Weed Control: Technician Davis applied herbicide to more areas infested with sulphur cinquefoil, a highly invasive plant of both disturbed and undisturbed sites. Davis and Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven worked together to record the locations of all treated areas using a GPS. Everlasting peas were also treated incidental to the cinquefoil work, where both weeds occurred in the same area.



Slash Disposal: Technician Davis and Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven worked with Master Hunter volunteer Ihrig to chip slash along roads on the Soda Springs Unit. This is the last of the material left from a fuels reduction effort initiated two years ago. Mr. Ihrig has participated in this project on several occasions and his help is greatly appreciated!

Klickitat Wildlife Area slash cleanup

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

Access

Shillapoo North: Access Area Specialists Spangler and Rhodes report that 41 new parking spots were installed in the overflow lot across from Langsdorf Landing at the Shillapoo Wildlife Area, Clark County.



Shillapoo Wildlife Area Parking Lot Improvements

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

Wildlife Conflict

Elk Damage: Conflict Specialist Conklin met with a Chehalis land owner experiencing elk damage to his oats and barley. He has worked with WDFW for a long time. A Scary man will be implemented to help him with the elk. In addition a motion sensor noise device will be mounted on the main trail where the elk access his field. Other methods may be used if the elk continue to damage the crops. In addition, Conflict Specialist Conklin verified damage from elk on a farm on the Wahkiakum Pacific County line. The farmer requested Conklin verify and document the damage to his hay prior to him cutting it. He has been very active implementing Master Hunters and said it really made a positive impact on deterring elk. Biologist Stephens, Technician Sample, and Conflict Specialist Conklin met with Grays River land owners who are located within the new Elk Area 5056. One land owner will enter into a hunt by reservation agreement and two additional land owners have agreed to field calls from hunters and allow access during the hunt. Conklin issued pyrotechnics to one of the land owners. Conklin also has been working with several hunters who have already called inquiring about land owners and details of the area. She has sent maps and land owner information to several hunters so far.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Western Snowy Plovers: Biologists Sundstrom, Michaelis, Hahn, and Doorly continued to monitor snowy plovers at Midway Beach, Leadbetter, and Graveyard Spit. Western snowy plovers are a federally threatened and state endangered shorebird that nests along Washington's coastal beaches. The three locations where snowy plovers actively nest are Leadbetter Point,

Midway Beach, and Graveyard Spit. A summary of monitoring efforts at each location is provided below.

Leadbetter: Biologists Hahn and Doorly continued to monitor snowy plovers for nests and broods. Due to unfavorable weather conditions which included high winds and rain, surveys had to be cancelled on Tuesday June 24th and Friday June 27th. Biologists discovered 5 new nests this week, which brings the total number of nests discovered at Leadbetter to 22. Of the 5 active nests reported last week, all are still active. Of the 9 active broods reported last week, 2 were supposed to fledge this week, but biologists were not able to observe the broods to confirm fledging.



Snowy plover nest at Leadbetter that had an unusual egg arrangement.

Photo Credit: Jennifer Hahn

Biologists at Leadbetter have noted, most likely due to summer break, that human activity and disregard for posted signs and warnings has drastically increased. On Wednesday June 25, biologists Hahn and Doorly spoke with a member of the public about this. This gentleman told the biologists that he had also noticed an increased disregard for posted signs, and reported that it was worse on the weekends, with people even picnicking behind the plover signs. During a nest and brood survey of the Seaside Conservation Area (SCA), Biologists Doorly and Hahn



observed that a structure had been erected behind the plover signs. Many human tracks were also observed crisscrossing the plover area between the tower and the end of the signs. That same day the biologists also observed a car speeding (30-40mph) north up the beach. While the car was not observed crossing over the plover signs, plates and notes were taken and reported.

Photo of a teepee that was constructed behind signs that mark the boundary of core snowy plover nesting areas and are intended to keep the general public from recreating in these areas. Photo Credit: Stephanie Doorly

Leadbetter											
# Nests Found	# Nests Currently Active	# Nests Hatched	# Broods Found	# Chicks hatched	# Chicks currently Alive	# Fledglings	# Nests Failed				
							Pred	Sand Burial	Abandoned	Human Caused	Unknown Cause
22	10	9	9	32?	16	6			2	1	



Midway Beach: Biologists Sundstrom and Michaelis conducted nest and brood searches at Midway. Biologists discovered one nest had been predated by a coyote and one nest had hatched. Biologist Sundstrom banded the 3 chicks that were from the recently hatched nest.

Two of the 3 snowy plover chicks that biologists banded at Midway Beach this week.

Photo Credit: Cyndie Sundstrom

Midway Beach											
# Nests Found	# Nests Currently Active	# Nests Hatched	# Active Broods	# Chicks Hatched	# Chicks Currently Alive	# Fledglings	# Nests Failed				
							Pred.	Sand Burial	Abandoned	Human Caused	Unknown /Other Cause
10	5	2	3	4	7	1	1	0	1	0	1

Graveyard Spit: Biologist Sundstrom, with assistance from Shoalwater Bay tribal biologists, checked on the last known nest at Graveyard Spit. Biologists were pleased to find that it had successfully hatched. In addition to the chicks observed from that nest, biologists observed 8 more chicks, bringing the total number of chicks currently alive at Graveyard to 11. In addition, biologists discovered one additional nest in the initiation stage.

Graveyard Spit											
# Nests Found	# Nests Currently Active	# Nests Hatched	# Active Broods	# Chicks Hatched	# Chicks Currently Alive	# Fledglings	# Nests Failed				
							Pred.	Sand Burial	Abandoned	Human Caused	Unknown Cause
6	1	4	4	11	11	0	0	1*	0	0	0

* nest was destroyed by high tidal surge long before the actual discovery; 3 eggs were discovered upon 2nd nest check when only 1 egg was originally found