

# Wildlife Program

Week of May 5-11, 2014

## **WILDLIFE DIVERSITY DIVISION**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

#### **Wildlife Management**

**International Research on Red Knot Status:** Natural Resource Scientist Joe Buchanan, after arranging for an international travel grant that supported travel for 3 Mexican wildlife biologists to visit Washington, met the biologists at SeaTac Airport on 8 May. The biologists – Nallely Arce, Victor Ayala, and Adriana Hernandez – have been conducting research on aspects of the ecology, behavior, and migration of Red Knots in Mexico. Their team, under the leadership of Roberto Carmona, Director of the Laboratory of Ornithology at Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur, in La Paz, has attached leg flags with unique alpha or numeric codes to over 800 Red Knots in northwestern Mexico. Since 2008, we have observed over 300 of these individually identifiable knots during spring migration at Grays Harbor or Willapa Bay. The biologists will participate for 9 days on a Red Knot project at Grays Harbor, a site that may support the greatest aggregation of spring migrant Red Knots in the Pacific Flyway. In addition, the field team, which includes among others, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist who studies the breeding biology of Red Knots in northwestern Alaska, spent 1 day finalizing plans for joint field work during 10-17 May.

**Western Pond Turtle Management:** Listing and Recovery Section Manager Becker, and Biologists George, Hallock, Holman and Bergh, all participated in this week's continuation of the 2014 study of western pond turtles at the Sondino site. Priorities for this year include continuing to evaluate the shell disease condition among the population, collecting specific individuals for veterinary biopsies related to the shell disease condition, capturing sufficient individuals to generate a population estimate for the Sondino site, collecting young for the head-starting program and conducting bull-frog control. May 9th was the conclusion of the large-scale capture effort involving 52 traps set in 5 of Sondino's primary water bodies. An abbreviated effort will continue. Through 24 days of trap checks, 321 total captures have occurred comprised of 142 individual turtles. Additionally, six hatchling pond turtles have been captured and delivered to the Oregon Zoo. Also, eleven bull frogs were captured in hoop traps and removed. One animal found dead by predation has been submitted for necropsy. Finally, all 12 of the animals targeted for biopsy have been captured and transferred to the Oregon Zoo. In addition, she reviewed amphibian and reptile information regarding the 2015 SGCN species list.

**Teanaway Community Forest:** Section Manager Wilkerson attending an all-day field trip in the Teanaway CF with the TCF Advisory Committee and experts from DFW, DNR, the Yakama Nation, Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, and long-time grazer Sam Kayser. The field trip looked in-depth at issues of forest health, fish restoration, wildlife populations, grazing, recreation, roads, and community in-holdings. DFW staff that participated included: Eric Winford (co-managed with DNR, coordinated field trip); Mike Livingston – Regional Director;

Rich Mann – Enforcement; William Meyer – Habitat; Perry Harvester – Habitat; Bruce Botka – Public Affairs; Michelle Dunlop – Public Affairs; Scott McCorquodale – Wildlife; Ben Maletzke – Wildlife; Jeff Burnham – Wildlife. The field trip was a resounding success, with many of the AC members complimenting the agencies on both the presentations and their enhanced awareness of the complexity of the issues as well as the work that the agencies are engaged in on behalf of the Community Forest goals. The TCF AC also held a meeting that evening to debrief from the field trip and to discuss how they will be approaching the next several meetings.

**Wildlife Area Planning:** Several Diversity staff contributed to a write-up of diversity values for species, ecological systems and connectivity and associated management recommendations that were produced to inform the Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area planning effort. Biologists Stinson, Hays, Hallock, Johnson, Stacey Plumley, Brian Cosentino, Section Managers Wilkerson and Becker, and others all contributed to this body of work.

## **REGION 1**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

#### **Wildlife Management**

**Golden Eagle Survey District 1:** Assistant District Wildlife Biologist (ADWB) Annemarie Prince accomplished a mid-season check on 2 nest territories. A single chick (~2-3 weeks old) was observed at Lake Ellen and a good view of the nest at Sherman Creek was obstructed by the nest tree's trunk. Another check will be done at the end of the month on these two territories, and other territories in the District will be checked at that time too.

**Golden Eagle Surveys District 2:** Biologist Atamian checked the Rattlesnake Territory to get an estimate on chick age and thereby set productivity surveys for the priority nests in District 2. Two downy chicks, approximately 3 weeks old, were present and being feed by adults.



**Left: Adult and two chicks. Right: Adult leaving nest to get more food.**



**Pheasant Crow Count Survey:** Biologist Atamian ran the Hay route in Whitman County this week, at the third point winds picked up and were pushing the maximum allowance, but died down soon after. The males were out this week, a total of 288 crows were recorded, and hens were still attentive.

*A hen follows male off the side of the road.*

### Wildlife Areas

**WT Wooten Wildlife Area – Large Wood Projects:** Assistant Wildlife Area Manager Dingman attended the “Implementers Meeting” in Dayton. Progress and plans of upcoming large woody debris projects on the Tucannon River were discussed. She assisted Habitat Biologist Dave Karl with movement of trees and rootballs that were hazard trees in Campground 3 on the Wooten WLA. The trees were moved to an area near the fish ladder for use in a Large Wood (LW) fish habitat project below the dam.



*Left: Hazard trees in Campground 3 that were pushed over for use in a LW project near the fish ladder. Right: Location of stockpiled trees for use in LW project near the fish ladder.*

### Private Lands/Access

**National Wild Pheasant Conservation Plan Update:** Supervisor McCanna and Specialist Bennett spent one day updating the region one portion of the plan which includes Idaho, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. All crop, CRP, and pheasant harvest data was updated for all states.

**Habitat Enhancements:** Biologist Baarstad and Technician Bendixen assisted landowners enrolled in hunter access programs with habitat enhancements for upland game birds, deer and turkeys.

**Union Flat Pheasant Route:** Conflict Specialist Bennett completed the first of two pheasant crow counts near Colfax, Washington. Several pheasants were recorded vocalizing and seen during the count. Many birds were also observed during the survey including; turkey, marsh hawks, mourning doves, black-capped chickadee, California quail, great horned owl, and red-winged blackbirds.



*View near the Union Flat Pheasant Route.*

**VPA-Habitat Incentives Program:** Biologist Lewis continued working with Voluntary Public Access (VPA) program cooperators and contractor to complete forb enhancement plantings into existing grass stands. So far this spring 1,779 acres of forb habitat enhancements have been planted into existing CRP grass stands. Wildlife Technician Clements also assisted by delivering the no-till drill to 2 cooperators this week to complete plantings.



**Wildlife Conflict:** Natural Resource Worker Wade worked with Conflict Specialist Rasley this week on elk damage issues in Garfield County. Wade spent several hours searching for the herd of elk causing the problems in the fields outside the WDFW Elk Fence. Wade was able to locate a smaller group and started to move them out of the fields and towards the one-way gates.

*Elk get moved towards the one-way gates in the Pomeroy Elk Fence.*

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

### **Wildlife Areas**

**Walk-through gate for Z-Lake on Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area:** Wednesday and Thursday, Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Finch and Natural Resource Worker Bauer installed a “V”-style walk-through gate at the south entry trail to Z-lake, where the trail meets Telford Road.

***NRW Jim Bauer and completed walk-through gate at turn-off from Telford Rd. to south trail to Z-lake.***



## **REGION 2**

### **GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE**

#### **Wildlife Management**



**Common Loon Management:** Biologist Heinlen assisted staff from the Loon Lake Loon Association and other volunteers with an effort to capture a breeding adult loon on Lost Lake that has a fishing lure stuck in its cheek. The crew attempted to lure the bird into a submerged net using a decoy playing territorial calls. Both loons responded to the decoy and calls but ultimately evaded capture. Another capture attempt will be made during chick banding later this summer. In the interim, the interested parties will continue to monitor the loon's status.

***Common Loons with decoy*** – Photo by J. Heinlen.

**Kit Capture:** We began our second round of kit captures this week. On Thursday we captured 29 rabbits (27 new kits, 1 recap kit, and 1 adult) at the Dormaier enclosure. Fourteen kits were released to wild on Sagebrush Flat (SBF), 13 were retained in nursery to reach 150g weight requirement for release and the adult and recaptured kit were retained in the Dormaier enclosure. The recaptured kit was captured previously in different enclosure and moved to Dormaier for genetic diversity in the breeding stock. On Friday we captured 31 rabbits (30 new kits, and 1 recap kit) in one of the SBF enclosures. Twenty-Five kits were released to wild on SBF and 5 were retained in nursery. The recaptured kit was returned to the enclosure for breeding stock. We were assisted with this week's captures by volunteers Ashlee Mikkelsen and Miranda Crowell, and Conflict Specialist Joe Bridges.



***Kits await release.***

**Washington Ground Squirrels:** Biologists Finger and Duvuvuei continued pre-baiting 290 traps at Sage Hills Golf Course in preparation for the upcoming translocation. Finger and Duvuvuei worked with Columbia National Wildlife Refuge staff and volunteers to finish enclosures, construct artificial chambers, and place netting over the tops of enclosures

**Golden Eagles:** Biologist Gallie has also been checking out areas with no known golden eagle territories. The searching has paid off as 5 new territories in Chelan County have been identified. I have been able to find nest locations with adult pairs in Fairview Canyon (west of

Wenatchee), Gold Creek (Lake Chelan), Mitchel Creek (Lake Chelan). The two other areas had numerous detections of both adult and subadult pairs, but no nest has yet been found in Swakane Canyon and Orondo (Columbia River).



*View of the new Gold Creek GE territory. Test your eye and find the four nests.* Photo by J Gallie

### Wildlife Areas



**Chelan Butte Restoration:** Natural Resource Technicians Brad Zabreznik and Kevin Vallance along with help from Wells W. A. Assistant Manager Noel Winegreart completed herbicide applications to control broadleaf weeds on 2 fields that were seeded with grass in 2001 and 2012. These fields have especially challenging weed assemblages but it appears we are making progress in establishing the native grasses in spite of the rather intense competition from purple mustard, Russian thistle, and cereal rye.

*Purple mustard dies a slow death among emerging native grasses in Field C on Chelan Butte.*

### Private Lands/Access

**Columbia Basin pygmy rabbits – Safe Harbor:** Biologist Comstock followed up with a landowner in the Beezley Hills area who then agreed to enter into a Safe Harbor Agreement for 444 acres of private lands. Specialist Bridges and Biologist Cotton assisted in the capture and release of pygmy rabbits.



*Rainbow spotted over the Pickering Acquisition, Sinlahekin Wildlife Area – Photo by Justin Haug.*

## **REGION 3**

### **GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE**

#### **Wildlife Management**

**Waterfowl** – Biologists Gregory assisted Waterfowl Specialist Evenson with annual aerial waterfowl breeding surveys around Yakima, Tri-Cities, and Moses Lake. Biologist Stutzman was also able to participate for a training opportunity. Water levels and duck numbers seemed consistent with long-term averages however more specifics will be available after the data are analyzed.



**Left: Waterfowl Specialist Evenson during the annual breeding waterfowl survey. Right: The white bluffs area along the Hanford Reach of the Columbia River** – Photos by S. Gregory.

**Burrowing Owls:** Biologist Gregory made a visit to the webcam site and observed 5 newly hatched owlets and 3-4 eggs that will be hatching soon. The nest box at the webcam site is one of 4 customized boxes installed in the area that have an extra chamber for a camera to capture activity inside the burrow. However, it is the only nest box of the 4 that contains eggs/owlets. In the coming weeks, the Global Owl Project will be installing infrared lighting and a camera to document the growth of the owlets.

**Deer Collar:** Biologist Bernatowicz investigated 1 deer mortality this week when MIT biologists could not follow up in a timely manner. The transmitter had been pulled off the collar and left in

the brush at the sheep feed site a parking lot. No sign of deer at the previous GPS location, which upon further review was probably the person carrying out the transmitter.

**Bighorn Sheep Survey:** Biologist Bernatowicz helped survey a portion of the Yakima River Canyon with Idaho Fish and Game bighorn sheep researcher Frances Cassier. Lamb recruitment is normal, but one adult was seen coughing. Lamb mortality due to pneumonia, when it occurs, typically takes place later in the summer.

**Bighorn Sheep Domestic Conflicts:** Biologist Bernatowicz, Region 2 biologist Volsen, and Section Manager Harris met with the USFS to discuss ongoing and future big horn sheep/domestic conflicts. The USFS will not work on grazing plans until after the forest plan revision is final. If all goes well, the forest plan revision will be complete December 2014. Grazing plans will be written in 2015, with a 2016 target completion. No changes to allotments could be made until 2017.

**Golden Eagle Sample Collection:** Biologist Bernatowicz collected a few samples of golden eagle prey items for work being done by Research Scientist Watson.

### Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Berry, Manager Huffman and NRW2 Smith sprayed whitetop on the Worrell Ranch and Cowiche Units. While spraying around a stock pond on the Worrell Ranch, Huffman and Berry observed a pair of shorebirds swimming on the pond in circles. It was determined they were red-necked phalaropes which nest in the arctic and winter in the southern hemisphere. They are rarely seen inland. They swim rather than wade and feed by swimming in tight circles. Staff observed the birds for over 2 hours and took video and pictures.



*Red-necked phalaropes feed on a stock pond on the Worrell Ranch of the Cowiche Unit of Oak Creek.*

**Sunnyside Wildlife Area:** Assistant Manager Sak received chicks from Pheasants Forever that will be raised at the Sunnyside Headquarters.



*Pheasant chicks in the rearing box.*

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

**Wildlife Areas**



**LT Murray Wildlife Area:**

Assistant Manager Hunt ordered and picked up 15 new “Open Public Road” signs for the Quilomene and Whiskey Dick roads. Tech Schnebly posted the signs in the Skookumchuck area on Wednesday, and repaired or replaced other signage where necessary. Manager Winegeart sent a map and information about the road postings to Region 3 Enforcement.

***New Open Road signs on the Skookumchuck Unit.***

**Colockum Wildlife Area:** Staff responded to numerous inquiries from the public about mushroom gathering opportunities in the area of the 2013 Colockum – Tarps wildfire. Since most of the public’s questions were about access to the wildlife area, the staff followed up the inquiries with mailing out green-dot road management maps of the Colockum and Quilomene units.

**LT Murray Wildlife Area Trek:** Assistant Manager Hunt continued discussions with Mike Davidson, LDS Church, regarding a planned hand cart trek on the LT Murray in June. Mike was able to get out on the Wildlife Area Thursday, so they are close to finalizing a route now that he has a better understanding of the Green Dot Road system.

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

**Wildlife Management**

**District 4 Conflict Specialist:** Prepared and delivered Damage Prevention Permits and Hunt Reports to a few landowners in the Corral Canyon elk area. The new damage tag and reporting

requirement was discussed with each of them. I still have two landowners to deliver DPP permits to prior to the May 15 opener.

### **Wildlife Areas**

**Colockum Wildlife Area:** Colockum WLA staff attended the Stemilt Basin Acquisition meeting held at the Malaga fire hall Thursday evening. Chelan county personnel provided an update to the Stemilt Partnership of the Weyerhaeuser – Longview property acquisition. The sale is expected to close next week, if all goes as well. Currently, Chelan County is developing a management plan for the property. The transfer of Section 16 and 22 from the DNR ownership to WDFW is still being negotiated between the two agencies. No time table has been set when the transfer would be completed. Also that evening, DNR personnel presented an update of the Naneum Ridge to Columbia River Recreation Plan to the Stemilt Partnership. The presentation was well received. The Stemilt Partnership shares a similar vision with the Naneum Ridge to Columbia River Recreation plan, but the Partnership wants to have a larger voice in the plan's development as it pertains to the county's holdings in the Stemilt Basin.

**LT Murray Wildlife Area:** Manager Winegeart initiated the 30-day tribal consultation period with the Yakama Nation and Colville Tribes on the Parke Creek fence. We had to modify the project to avoid disturbing an archeological site whose boundaries expanded with the most recent survey. Worked with CAMP staff Casey Davidson and Cindy Knudsen to make project changes.

**Wenas Wildlife Area:** Manager Confer-Morris met with regional staff and Kittitas County Planning Department staff to discuss the Durr road/Umtanum Creek bridge installation. The county was concerned about not being notified of a crossing structure being installed within their right-of-way. Our engineer, Kristen Kuykendall, did speak with someone from the county prior to the project and SEPA was completed for the project. Kristen, included by teleconference, agreed to send all future crossing structure installations/replacements, as well as details of the new Durr road bridge, such as load rating, to Kirk Holmes, Kittitas County Engineer. The county also needs biannual inspection reports on crossing structures within the ROW of non-system (not maintained by county) county roads. We also discussed the benefits of having an MOU in place so the two agencies have the ability to share resources if the need arises. Lands Agent Hendrix and Manager Confer-Morris will pull together some example MOU's that could be modified for this use.

**Wenas Wildlife Area – Install Work:** Staff installed a post and rail fence at Buffalo road entrance to stop people from mudding through the ditch when leaving the parking area. We had received complaints from neighbors about mud being tracked into the Buffalo road and the area being torn up. We will rehab the area along the fence this fall.



*New Post and Rail fence installed along ditch at Buffalo Parking Area.*

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

**Wildlife Management**

**Survey Methodology Training:** Biologist Stutzman rode along with waterfowl specialist Evenson and District Biologist Gregory during a waterfowl survey flight in the Columbia Basin. Stutzman was training on the survey methodology and getting experience being in the air. Stutzman also familiarized himself with the new mourning dove survey methodology in preparation for upcoming surveys.



**REGION 4**

***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

**Wildlife Management**



***Purple Martin gourds and nest box management in Seattle City Limits (Duwamish River).***

**Caspian tern occupancy check:** Biologist Milner checked on the status of Caspian terns at the Everett waterfront site. Several hundred terns were seen loafing in the gravel area near the water. Additional birds were flying to and from the Kimberly Clark building roof, many of them were carrying small fish.

**Lowland pika surveys:** Biologist Milner conducted a survey but no pika were seen or herd.

**Sharp-tailed snake cover board mapping:** Biologist Milner updated the locations of cover boards for surveys on Orcas Island and mapped them to use in the field.

## **Nutria Monitoring at Debay Slough**

**Unit:** In response to reported sightings of nutria, Biologist Danilson placed motion-activated cameras over bait intended to attract nutria and conducted a follow up to retrieve images. Field observations and motion activated camera footage from last week confirmed the presence of beaver, muskrat, Norway rat, raccoon and a possible mink.

Danilson also contacted a landowner who lives in the area and believes he has observed nutria and has observed damage to the dikes that he believes has been caused capabilities on his property, which would be necessary.



*Clipped and piled grasses along bank of Debay Slough to confirm the presence of muskrat.*



The Debay Slough Unit of the Skagit Wildlife Area is the site where nutria were originally reported to WDFW back in 2005 and were trapped (and ultimately eradicated) in subsequent years. Danilson has contacted US Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services, who will assist with monitoring and trapping efforts.

*Biologist Anderson provided outreach and wildlife management information at the annual Tukwila Backyard Wildlife Festival. Find out more about this festival at <http://backyardwildlife festival.org/index.html>.*

## **Wildlife Areas**

**Leque Island Alternatives Analysis and Design Project:** Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Wildlife Area Manager Rotton met with City of Stanwood and Stillaguamish Flood Control District to update them on project status and to provide opportunity for input on design selection criteria. These two groups are part of the project Stakeholder Committee, but were unable to attend the previous week's meeting due to scheduling conflicts. Notes from this discussion will be added to the Stakeholder Committee meeting notes as an addendum and will be posted on the project webpage once completed.

**Fir Island Farm Final Design Project:** Projects Coordinator Brokaw met onsite with staff from The Nature Conservancy who are involved with organizing large-scale funding requests for restoration projects in the area. The group toured the property, reviewed site plans, and discussed delta-wide restoration strategies in the Skagit.

**Pacific Coast Joint Venture Meeting:** Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Wildlife Area Manager Rotton gave presentations at the Washington Pacific Coast Joint Venture partners meeting. Brokaw presented a project overview and status update on the Leque Island Alternatives Analysis and Design Project and Rotton presented on lesser cattail management efforts in Skagit Bay. The meeting was attended by agencies and conservation groups interested in waterfowl and shorebird conservation.

**Ebey Island Unit:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with Sno-Valley Farms to discuss the planting plan for the new Ebey Island agricultural lease. Soil has been prepped for planting approximately 90 acres of corn and barley as early as next week. Manager Boehm also responded to a cattle break-out last Thursday on the west grazing area. Cattle were quickly contained and herded back into the grazing area. Additionally, Manager Boehm reports that the watering plan that was implemented to keep cows out of Deadwater Slough is working nicely. Happy cows hang out and drink from one of two natural depressions that are watered using a mechanical pump. The cows would rather drink there than walk along the steep slopes of the slough.



**Left:** *Approximately 90 acres of corn and barley will be planted on Ebey Island. Right:* *Cattle enjoy lush vegetation on Ebey Island.*

**Whatcom Wildlife Area Noxious Weed Control:** Natural Resource Tech Deyo sprayed herbicides and mowed areas to treat scotch broom, poison hemlock and Japanese knotweed on the Lake Terrell, Intalco and Nooksack units.

**Lake Terrell Barley Fields:** Natural Resource Tech Deyo worked to prep the agricultural fields at Lake Terrell for barley plantings. He plowed and disked the fields.

**Port of Bellingham Wetland Enhancement Project:** Manager Kessler coordinated with the Port of Bellingham managers on the wetland enhancement project south of Tennant Lake. Activities for this spring and summer include: manual reed canary grass control, replacing dead

plants and remodeling the water delivery system. WDFW will be mowing the reed canary grass in the phase 2 area, before it goes to seed. Phase 2 of the project is scheduled for 2016-17.

**Lake Terrell Dam Tour:** Manager Kessler led a tour of the Lake Terrell Dam Reconstruction project in coordination with Rachel Vasik of the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association. Whatcom County Council members toured the site to learn about the project and see how successful it has been.

**Crescent Lake Unit:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with Werkhoven Dairy during winter wheat harvest and initial soil preparation. All of the wheat is harvested and one field is prepped for planting. Barley and corn will be planted in a similar fashion as last year.

**Stillwater Unit:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager met with Frohning Dairy to finalize the planting plan for the Unit. Approximately 55 acres are planned to be under plow as soon as the soil dries. A mix of barley, corn, and grass is planned to be planted on the Unit this spring.

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

### **Wildlife Management**

**Mount Baker Wilderness Area High Buck Hunt:** Biologist Danilson responded to a request from Section Manager Nelson to attempt to increase non-hunter awareness of the high buck hunt in the Mount Baker Wilderness Area. Although this area (Game Management Unit 418) is open to hunting for archery, muzzleloader, and modern firearm, this is the first time that the high buck hunt, which runs from September 15-25, has taken place in the Mount Baker Wilderness Area. Increasing non-hunter awareness would potentially reduce conflicts between hunters and non-hunters and increase safety.

### **Wildlife Areas**

**Samish Unit:** Manager Rotton and Restoration Projects Coordinator Loren Brokaw talked with DU representatives to discuss the next steps for the Samish Wetland Enhancement project to include public process and permitting timelines. Public meeting is likely to occur in sometime in early June.

Natural Resources Technician Curran Cosgrove sprayed broadleaf weeds with the boom sprayer on a portion of the Samish Unit. Natural Resource Specialist (NRS) Greg Meis spot sprayed weeds targeted include Canada and bull thistle, mustard, hogweed, and nightshade. North Sound Weed Crew Supervisor Tom Wampler assisted WLA staff with spraying and repairs made to the sprayer both before and after treatments.

**Johnson DeBay's Slough:** Staff mowed and weed wacked DeBay's Slough Swan Reserve entry road, fence lines and parking lot. Staff also monitored agricultural lease activities on the site.

**Samish River Unit Wetland Restoration Project:** Projects Coordinator Brokaw submitted copies of public comments and WDFW responses received through the SEPA process to Skagit County. Skagit County staff is preparing for the project to go before a Hearing Examiner, as required by the Special Use permit needed for the project. The Hearing Examiner meeting will likely be on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Community Outreach & Hunter Education:** Volunteer Coordinator Dazey continued to refer Master Hunter applicants seeking volunteer service hours to the Upper Snoqualmie Valley Elk Management Group for their elk fence repair project and also to the Snoqualmie wildlife area manager Boehm for the numerous projects he has need of volunteers for.

**Hunter Education**  
Coordinator Dazey started 10 applicants on the path to becoming certified as volunteer hunter education instructors' by conducting the first session of a two part Pre-Service training at the Issaquah Sportsman's Club. Instructor applicants will complete their training Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup> by actually conducting a hunter education Field Skills Evaluation with actual students. With the addition of these 10 instructors to the volunteer teaching team of Region #4 and the two addition PST's scheduled later this month and June Region 4 will be better positioned to meet the demand for classes this coming fall.



*Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey started 10 applicants on the path to becoming certified as volunteer hunter education instructors by conducting the first session of a two part Pre-Service training.*

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



**Wildlife Management**

**Region 4 (District 12) Ungulate**

**Conflict:** Biologist Smith, the landowner and Master Hunter volunteers erected an experimental deterrent fence to reduce deer and elk damage to agricultural crops in the

*Electrified turboladry fencing around agricultural crops in the Snoqualmie Valley.*

flood plain of the Snoqualmie Valley. The fence is an electrified string of flags, called turbofladry, powered by a solar energizer. The fence will be monitored using a remote camera to document elk and deer activity in the vicinity. Smith also met with a landowner to discuss temporary deer exclusion fencing alternatives and using Master Hunter volunteer labor in another flood prone agricultural area in the valley.

**Skagit County Deer & Elk Conflict:** Conflict Specialist Griffith worked with a farmer in the Day Creek area regarding elk damages that will inevitably occur on two fields of potatoes. Currently, the fields are fallow but are supposed to be planted in the coming weeks. The farmer has been working with Manager Link and WDFW headquarters staff on a range of options to include issuance of kill permits throughout the summer months. Griffith is initiating a new DPCA with the farmer and issue the kill permits.

**Black Bear Depredation:** Biologist Danilson and Conflict Specialist Griffith met with a forester for private timber company in Skagit County to validate bear peeling damage in a Douglas fir plantation. The meeting involved a site visit to the stand that has had bear damage issues for the past several years. Newly peeled trees, older trunk scarring/girdling, and dead and dying trees were observed in a very concentrated portion of this stand. Danilson followed up with Conflict Section staff to indicate that the claim is valid and a depredation permit should be issued.

**Graduate Student Thesis Review:** Biologist Danilson began reviewing the Master's degree thesis of graduate student Anna Yost from Central Washington University. Anna is using GIS-based habitat models previously developed by the US Forest Service to conduct modeling scenarios where habitat manipulations can be implemented to improve habitat preferences and potentially influence the elk distribution within the managed range of the North Cascades elk herd.



*Recent and historic tree peeling damage caused by black bears*

**Whatcom County Deer Conflict:** Conflict Specialist Griffith and District Biologist Danilson met with two berry producers in the Lynden and Ferndale areas. Both producers have deer foraging and defecating on strawberry and raspberry fields. Both producers have concerns surrounding the new Food Safety Act proposed rule and the third party certification/audit requirement for food crops. According to both producers, wildlife defecating in the fields could cause them to fail the safety audit. One producer has been unsuccessfully utilizing non-lethal deterrents and will be issued kill permits. The other producer has not, so Griffith and Danilson discussed and provided guidance for a number of non-lethal deterrents that the landowner intends to pursue.

### Wildlife Areas

**Skagit Headquarters:** Staff monitored dike conditions and weed growth at the Headquarters Unit. The spur dike fissure continues to deteriorate. Manager Rotton coordinated with the Attorney General's office for review of the agreement for management of the pump station on Wiley Slough. Wildlife Area Staff provided comments and corrections on the latest drafts of the Game Reserve boundaries and descriptions for the regulations updates.

**Leque Island:** Manager Rotton attended meeting with the City of Stanwood and Dike District representatives to provide them the information presented at the stakeholder committee meeting. The City was unable to attend due to a conflicting meeting that evening. The group provided comments that will be included for the others to review.



***Region 4 Hunter Education Coordinator Steven Dazey presented the Terry Hoffer Memorial Firearm Instructor of the Year Award to Carnel Hagen***

**Wildlife Area Advisory Committee Meeting:** Manager Kessler held the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee Meeting at the Tennant Lake Interpretive Center. The WAAC meeting is a part of the management planning process. Attendance for the meeting was low, but there was still much accomplished. Several members who could not attend in person, sent in comments.

### Private Lands/Access

**Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program:** Biologist Caldwell and Technician Otto continued coordinated efforts to utilize Migratory Bird Enhancement funding in Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish Counties. Biologist Caldwell created payment structure scenarios for five new

Whatcom and Skagit County landowners. These scenarios were produced to show potential payments based on WQH enrollment in 2014.

**Spring Bear Hunter Management:** Biologist Caldwell contacted hunters to verify any unreported harvests in the Monroe and North Skagit Areas. Biologist Technician Otto responded to hunter concerns regarding locked, damaged and unlocked gates (gates #13 & 16) in the Monroe Hunt Unit. Technician Otto resolved gate maintenance issues.

**Stolen Vehicle Recovery:** Technician Otto reported a suspicious vehicle that was apparently abandoned at one of the Monroe Spring Bear Hunt access gates. This vehicle was verified as stolen. Law enforcement responded and contacted the vehicle owners.

**Bow Hill Pheasant Hunt Parking:** Biologist Caldwell spoke and met with private landowners regarding parking accommodations for the upcoming 2014 pheasant hunting season. Follow up contacts will be made in the upcoming weeks.

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

**Wildlife Management**

**Novatus Contracts Management System:** Staff attended the Novatus Contracts Management System training in Mill Creek, WA.

**New Gator XUV Proposal:** Biologist Caldwell met with regional staff to discuss equipment (John Deere Gator XUV) problems and the potential to purchase a new vehicle in order to meet program goals and objectives. Currently, different cost sharing scenarios and other purchasing options are being explored.

**Other:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with two WDFW Master Hunters and two college students to discuss volunteer opportunities with them. With support from Steve Dazey, the WDFW Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator, eight Master Hunters are interested in volunteer projects. Various projects are already underway at the Cherry Valley barn and net pen facility including tree removal, trash sorting, mowing, and spacing plants in the nursery. A work party is planned for May 17<sup>th</sup>.

**REGION 5**

***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

**Wildlife Management**

**Red Crossbill Mortalities:** District Wildlife Biologist Anderson sent a second group of red crossbill mortalities to the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison WI for clinical

evaluation. Red crossbills in particular appear to be attracted to winter highway chemical salt treatment on roads for snow and ice. Biologist Anderson is currently working with WDFW Veterinarian Mansfield and Biologist McAllister from the Washington Department of Transportation to determine if birds are poisoned from the actual ingestion of extreme salt levels or from vehicle collision while they are feeding on the highway surface. It's possible that it is a combination of both events. A total of 14 specimens from the winter of 2010-11 and 2013-14 have been sent to the National Wildlife Health Center for evaluation.

**Western Pond Turtle Management:** Listing and Recovery Section Manager Becker and Biologists George, Hallock, Holman, and Bergh, all participated in this week's continuation of the 2014 study of western pond turtles at the Sondino site. Priorities for this year include continuing to evaluate the shell disease condition among the population, collecting specific individuals for veterinary biopsies related to the shell disease condition, capturing sufficient individuals to generate a population estimate for the Sondino site, collecting young for the head-starting program, and conducting bull-frog control. May 9th was the conclusion of the large-scale capture effort involving 52 traps set in 5 of Sondino's primary water bodies. An abbreviated effort will continue.

Through 24 days of trap checks, 321 total captures have occurred comprised of 142 individual turtles. Additionally, six hatchling pond turtles have been captured and delivered to the Oregon Zoo. Also, eleven bull frogs were captured in hoop traps and removed. One turtle found dead by predation has been submitted for necropsy. Finally, all 12 of the animals targeted for biopsy have been captured and transferred to the Oregon Zoo.

### **Wildlife Areas**

**Mt. St. Helens Wildlife Area – N-1 Meadow Test Plots:** Technician Sample set up two test plots at the N-1 Meadows on the far west end of the Wildlife Area to demonstrate the growth rate of pasture grass seed mixes across varying topography. Each test plot is approximately one acre in size and spans across a unique feature in the landscape (creek or evulsion). By observing which seed mix shows the highest abundance of grasses in each specific location, we will be better able to determine which seed and appropriate rate to apply across the entire meadow. Each test plot was first harrowed to break up the moss and expose bare ground and was then seeded with one of three seed mixes.



***Harrowing N-1 North Topography of N-1 West test plot.***

**Klickitat Wildlife Area – Hatchery Unit Fence:** Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven and Technician Davis continued work on the fence line along Hill Road, on the Hatchery Unit. They finished an end brace anchoring the south end of the fence along Hill Road. When we started, this end of the fence was down on the ground in a loose snarl of wires. Wildflowers are in full bloom on the Hatchery Unit in the rough areas between the cultivated fields. Golden-yellow balsamroot, purple lupines, and pink phlox are on glorious display. These patches of native forbs provide important habitat for western meadowlarks and other steppe-dwelling birds.



**Left: End Brace Anchoring Hill Road Fence. Right: Hatchery Unit Wildflowers.**

**Grazing Monitoring:** Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven and Technician Davis took pictures at the six photo points on one of the Wildlife Area’s grazing permit area. No cattle will be on this WDFW pasture this year; however, photos are taken annually to document condition of the range.

**Columbia Land Trust Tour:** Technician Davis joined the Columbia Land Trust for a tour of the Haul Road abandonment project, which follows the western edge of the Soda Springs Unit of the KWA. This is a large project that is progressing in phases. The overall objective is to reconnect low-lying wetlands and small tributaries of the Klickitat River with the main channel of the river to restore habitat for fish and wildlife that occupy riparian habitats.

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

### **Wildlife Areas**

**Klickitat Wildlife Area – Wildlife Area Advisory Committee Meeting:** The WAAC for the KWA met in Goldendale to review progress on action items identified in the last update to the Wildlife Area management plan, and to begin work on the larger planning effort that will get underway later this year. A list of people and organizations that may be interested in this process was started, as well as lists of topics to include in the document and thoughts on current and future recreation uses on the Wildlife Area. The Klickitat Wildlife Area staff is grateful to the

group members who participated in the meeting and helped us get the planning process off to a good start.

## **Wildlife Management**

**Wildlife Conflict – Klickitat County Commissioners Meeting:** Program Manager Jonker, Biologist Stephens, and Conflict Specialist McDonald presented information about WDFW’s Wildlife Conflict Program to the Klickitat County Commissioners. The focus of the presentation was the proactive Range Rider program between WDFW and several Klickitat County Cattlemen. Conflict Specialist McDonald provided information on the life history of wolves and current status of wolf recovery in Washington. The Commissioners asked many questions and were very interested in the topics discussed.



**Wildlife Conflict District 9 – Deterrents:** Conflict Specialist McDonald checked on the turbo-fladry fencing installed around a dairy’s hay field in early April. None of the fencing was knocked down. The majority of the elk are staying outside of the fladry, but trail cameras showed that a few elk are jumping the 6-foot fence.

**Wildlife Conflict:** Conflict Specialist McDonald met with a Goldendale area farmer with 20-25 deer regularly browsing on a 15-acre barley field. The farmer spends a great deal of time hazing deer off of his field and he allows hunters access to the property during the general season. The farmer was given bird bangers and screamers to help with hazing efforts. Fencing options, nonlethal deterrents, and crop claims were discussed. McDonald will schedule WDFW volunteers to haze deer this summer.

**District 10 – Deer Damage:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin met with a private land owner experiencing deer damage from approximately eight deer that frequent his land. Conklin gave advice and issued a bird banger, bird shot, and Mylar tape. Conklin also talked about maintenance of his fencing and offered him a volunteer to assist him with fence repair. The land owner was very happy with the service provided.

**District 10 – Bear Damage:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin met with individuals in a rural neighborhood regarding a bear that has been sighted in their yards. Conklin gave them the Living with Wildlife brochure and her business card. Conklin surveyed the neighborhood for attractants that may be bringing the bear in. The neighbors are doing a great job of keeping

garbage cans inside, cleaning barbeques, bringing in bird feeders, and feeding pets indoors. So far the bear has not come back.

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin checked the trail cameras on the Curtis property. One of the cameras captured a black bear. The bear was not fond of the paparazzi and reached up and turned the camera down toward the ground. There were only pictures of deer legs and feet after the bear's mischievous stunt. There were no new peels detected.



## **REGION 6**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

#### **Wildlife Management**

**Western Snowy Plovers:** Biologists Hahn and Doorly continued monitoring snowy plovers (SNPL) and active nests at Leadbetter. Three new nests and one brood were discovered this week. One nest, found on Monday, was in the incubation period with three eggs. The other two nests were found on Wednesday in the initiation stage with one nest containing one egg upon discovery, and one nest containing two eggs upon discovery. On Wednesday an unbanded male SNPL was observed brooding and tending to two young chicks. This brood has only been observed once this week. This nest was never discovered, and it is hypothesized that the chicks hatched early this week. This week, the greatest number of SNPL were observed on Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup> with 11 individuals (6 females, 4 males, 1 unk) and the lowest number of SNPL were observed on Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup> with 0 individuals. Due to poor weather conditions, it was not possible to conduct surveys on Thursday. Of the 2 nests reported last week, all are still active.

Biologists Michaelis and Sundstrom spent time monitoring SNPLs at Midway Beach, but have been seeing very few adults and have yet to find any nests.

Biologist Hoenes spent time working on a proposal that requests funds to conduct monitoring work during the 2015 nesting season.

The proposal will be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Section 6 (Endangered Species) Program.



**Left: Active snowy plover nest. Right: An adult male that was brooding two chicks.**

**Table 1. Summary of total SNPL nests and broods at Leadbetter.**

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
5	5	0	1	2	2	N/A					

**Red Knots:** Biologist Michaelis spent time this week assisting Research Scientist Buchannon with surveying for banded Red Knots in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor. He also spent time this week preparing to assist Research Scientist Buchannon with the capture and banding of Red Knots in Grays Harbor next week. Red Knots are a shorebird that nest in Alaska during summer and migrate south in winter in areas as far south as Chile. Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor are important resting and foraging areas for these birds as they migrate south. Birds are being banded as part of a larger research effort to identify areas that are important during their migration.

**Fishers:** Biologist Michaelis met with City of Hoquiam staff and gained access into the watershed for selecting camera stations. One station was located in a mature second-growth stand.

**Scientific Collection Permit:** Biologist Hoenes spent time this week reviewing a Scientific Collection Permit application that had been submitted by one of the State’s Natural Resources Museums. These museums contain large collections of specimens that represent all taxa found in Washington State and serve as a valuable research and educational resource.

**Black-tailed Deer Study – Pysht Deer Monitoring:** Six does, one fawn and one yearling from 2012 continue to be monitored in the Pysht cluster. No mortalities this past week.

District 11 staff worked with researcher C. Rice to remotely download telemetry data from 4 radio collars deployed on black-tailed deer in the Vail Tree Farm.

**Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly:**

**West of Port Angeles Sites**

**Northern Extant Site:**

Date	Time	District Staff	Accomplished	Deliverable
May 6 Tuesday	11:00 – 13:50	McMillan	Set up more transect route flagging. TCs observed along path to flagging task. Weather suitable for butterfly surveys 11:00 to 12:45 then weather deteriorated (clouds).	GPS records
May 7 Wednesday	11:45 – 14:45	Gary Bell & McMillan	Conducted Survey of Most all transect segments. Weather conditions suitable. McMillan's count was ~130; Bell's count was ~25	GPS records & Field Notes: Data Form not yet completed

**May 6th 11am to 2pm**

Biologist McMillan surveyed the western portion of the site as she flagged in more of the transect route. TCs were observed but weather deteriorated around 12:45. Transect flagging was postponed after 13:50 when weather conditions worsened.



*TC butterflies were observed May 6<sup>th</sup> before weather conditions deteriorated.*



*Brush cutting zone for habitat improvements.*

**May 7<sup>th</sup> 11:45 – 14:45**

Biologist McMillan & Biologist Gary Bell completed a Taylor’s Checkerspot butterfly survey of the site, covering most all of the flagged & mapped transect segments. The weather remained suitable for the entire survey. Biologist McMillan collected one tick specimen and Biologist Gary Bell collected two tick specimens, which will be provided to DOH for their statewide study. Data forms have not been completed yet, estimated counts were about 130 for McMillan and about 25 for Bell.

**Southern Extant Site**

Date	Time	District Staff	Accomplished	Deliverable
May 9 Friday	11:00 – 17:00	McMillan & Ament; Guest Assistant DNR Biologist Scott Horton	Transect segments flagged in on entire ridge road and south along the ridge. Weather conditions not suitable for butterfly surveys;	GPS records

**May 9, 2014**

Biologist McMillan & Biologist Ament continued with efforts to mark surveys transects that could be repeatable. DNR Biologist Scott Horton was recruited to assist. They spent time at one site where some work had been done previously to mark a route along the slope south of an

existing road. They marked 25 meter segments along the existing road for a survey route. They also modified the previously flagged route to have 25 meter segments. This route includes survey sections in pockets of habitat that have had improvements completed in recent years. DB McMillan and Biologist Ament took a GPS tracks, waypoints, and field notes during the day at the site. There was cloudy cover with moderate rain during the day. No TCB's were observed.

**Sequim Site:** Biologist Ament conducted two surveys at the site near Sequim last week. On May 6, 2014 she conducted one survey. There was a mix of sunshine and cloudy conditions. There were not prominent shadows for the entire survey. The temperature ranged from 56 to 59 degrees. Unfortunately, there was a very strong cool wind that ranged around 7- 8 mph with some gusts up to 12.6 mph. There were not official protocol weather conditions for the entire survey. A total of 275 TCB's were counted during the survey. Biologist Ament concluded that there would have been more TCB activity and a higher count if the weather conditions were different. There are very few plants in bloom at the site. Only a few dandelions were still in bloom. Biologist Ament conducted another survey at the site on May 7, 2014. Survey conditions were very good. Although it would have been nice to have warmer temperatures, all protocol conditions were met for the survey at this site. A total of 306 TCB's were counted. Private Land Biologist Ivan Stocker was not able to conduct a survey at the site last week. The peak period at the site is likely ended. Surveys will continue with Biologists Ament and Stocker conducting at least one survey each week.

**Taylor's checkerspot reintroduction:** Biologists Linders, Randolph, Walker and Johnson continued distance sampling surveys for adult Taylor's checkerspots in the Puget lowlands after heavy rains last weekend finally cleared. A count completed at R50 returned a count of 160, which was encouraging after the very low count a few days earlier. A count at T7S (new site) the same day produced 44 adults. A survey at R76 (source site) produced 528 adults, with high concentrations at the north and south ends of the sampling grid; many checkerspots are also being observed in the northern half (R74) of the site outside the standard survey area. No checkerspots were observed within the survey area at PCM that day. Searches were also conducted for adults and potential habitat in more remote parts of the Artillery Impact Area this week. Three observations of 1-2 adults were made in Range 81, where there is a patch of high quality prairie; host plants at that site are limited to patches on the fringe of the site where conditions are highly disturbed and where many other invasive species also occur. No checkerspots were observed at MP 13. Checkerspots were observed regularly, albeit in relatively small numbers during a sweep survey from the east end of MP 10 (east edge of R76) south to Range 79, which contains a Seibert-staked area hosting a patch of high quality prairie. The number of checkerspots observed (about 40) was considerable higher than when these surveys were conducted in 2005 and 2006 (3 each year). While numbers at R76 are relatively low this year, the broad distribution of animals is a notable new trend which will require additional resources to map. It may also be necessary to modify the current monitoring area to consider the expanded distribution.

**Taylor's checkerspot captive propagation:** Biologist Linders collected a total of 30 females from R76 on Sunday for distribution to the rearing facilities. Seventeen females were sent to reinitiate the colony at the Oregon Zoo, and 13 were sent to Mission Creek. Mission Creek is also breeding extra adults and increasing their egg production as a part a pilot method for

producing the additional eggs needed for the host plant survival study which will be conducted by Nate Haan at the UW-Seattle in 2015. Excess eggs produced in 2014 will be sent to the Oregon Zoo for rearing.

**North Rainier Elk Herd:** Biologists Tirhi, Smith, Novak along with Manager Cope, Muckleshoot Indian Reservation Biologist Vales, and Hancock Timber Manager McBride met to review elk use of the GMUs composing the North Herd and discuss survey needs and strategy. The group collaboratively decided to continue sharing survey responsibility with National Park Service within Mt Rainier, focus more survey attention in 653 and 654 outside Mt. Rainier National Park boundaries, modify boundaries for the elk conservation area 6013 around Muckleshoot Reservation, and potentially create a new management area that encompasses the elk damage properties of Enumclaw and Buckley where reducing elk damage will take precedence.

**Streaked Horned Lark and Olympic Airshow:** Biologist Tirhi participated in a conference call with Olympia Airport, the Olympic Air Museum (who runs the Olympic Airshow), and USFWS to finalize requirements for reducing the airshow impacts to larks nesting on the Olympia Airport. The group reviewed airport use areas for the airshow, which will be taking place June 14-15. A temporary fence has been erected to prevent airshow participants from access the airfield and nesting grounds. Tirhi has agreed to combine efforts with USFWS staff and potentially others to do limited nest searches within the small spectator area strip as well as airshow corner markers (off pavement) required by FAA. USFWS has offered staff to monitor any located nests throughout the airshow as a means to collecting data on behavioral effects of nesting larks to the airshow. Tirhi was able to provide assistance due to reduced survey demands within the district this season and by confining searches to only the small impacted areas. The airshow has been advised to change future dates for the airshow to outside the nesting window.

**Streaked Horned Lark Airports and Federal Lands Working Group:** Tirhi finalized the agenda, speakers, and presentations for the first working group meeting to be held this May 16 at Olympia Airport. Staff from all four airfields and federal lands that support nesting larks in the South Puget Sound, WDFW, USFWS, and FAA have been invited.

**Oregon Spotted Frogs:** District 11 staff assisted with telemetry monitoring of endangered Oregon spotted frogs in Thurston County. Six transmitters are currently deployed on adult female OSF with a goal of deploying 12-25 transmitters. All six were located, and habitat use type was recorded for each.

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

**Wildlife Management**

**2015-2021 Game Management Plan (GMP):** Biologist Hoenes spent time this week reviewing and submitting comments associated with a draft version of the 2015-2021 GMP. This review process provided Department staff with the opportunity to provide comments prior to the public review process that will be initiated later this summer.

**Willapa Hills Elk Herd Plan (EHP):** Biologist Hoenes spent time this week creating a Power Point presentation that will be presented at, and used to facilitate, the Willapa Hills EHP public meetings that are scheduled for next week in Montesano and Longview. The public comment period is open until June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Anyone interested in providing comments can find a copy of the plan online (<http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/hunting>). Comments can be submitted online or during the public meetings. The location and time for the two scheduled public meetings are as follows:

<b><u>Montesano</u></b> May 13, 2014 6:00–7:30 pm Region 6 Headquarters 48 Devonshire Road Montesano, WA 98563	<b><u>Longview</u></b> May 15, 2014 6:00–7:30 pm Cowlitz County PUD 961 12 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Longview, WA
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**Mourning Doves:** Biologist Michaelis spent time conducting mourning breeding mourning dove surveys in Grays Harbor. Surveys were conducted as part of an annual nation-wide effort to monitor breeding mourning dove populations throughout the United States.

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

### **Wildlife Management**

**Human-Bear Conflicts:** Biologist Hoenes attended a meeting with other Wildlife Program staff to discuss the bear feeding issue in Illwaco. The primary intent of the meeting was to determine a primary plan of action as this issue progresses through the summer. It was decided that the most effective way to move forward was to increase public outreach efforts in the community. This problem exists because of people intentionally and unintentionally feeding bears. Consequently, a resolution to this problem will only occur if residence of the community quit making anthropogenic food available to the bears.

### **Wildlife Conflicts**

**Bear Damage Permits:** The bear damage permits have started coming in. Biologist Harris has received eight permits and checked three. All three had extensive damage. Greater than 30 damaged trees were located in less than 20 minutes of searching at all three locations. He has contacted other landowners and made arrangements for access. Four of the locations are in Clallam County. Because of the distance a trip to verify damage will be scheduled to coincide with Private lands access efforts and to follow up on some elk conflicts calls. He also contacted a small private forest landowner who is new to dealing with bear damage. The landowner is alarmed at the amount of damage on the land he has purchased. He is contracted with APHIS to address his problems. Biologist Harris will be meeting with him in the near future to further discuss the bear damage issue.

**Willapa Valley:** A master Hunter has been checking on elk use of a couple of alfalfa fields in the Willapa Valley for Biologist Harris. The fields and adjoin DNR timber stands are walked a couple of times a week looking for elk or recent elk activity. So far no recent sign has been found. There is a small group working the area but, they do not stay long. Aggressive hunting and continued pressure appears to have significantly reduced the elk use of the fields. Biologist Harris's last trip he noted that the grasses and alfalfa were hip high. He has never seen the fields this tall. It will be interesting to hear what the farmer reports when he harvests.

**Media Contact:** Biologist Linders met with Phoung Le, an AP reporter who often writes for the Seattle Times, as well as her photographer and staff from JBLM and CNLM to provide background and insight on the plight of Taylor's checkerspot. The team met at R76 where butterflies were easy to observe in abundance with minimal impact to the habitat. From there Linders sent them to T7S to see an example of what our restoration activities are producing. This media effort was part of a campaign to raise awareness of the JBLM ACUB cooperative effort and provide information about our imperiled prairie species following the federal listings.

**Volunteer Coordination:** Biologist Harris met with Eye in the Woods (EITW) president Kyle Winton. Kyle was informed of changes to Coastal Weyerhaeuser's access policies. Kyle will present the changes to EITW board of directors to determine if they will continue to assist them with issues involving public access. They also discussed the annual clean up. It is scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup>. Additionally the Clearwater remote camera deployment was discussed and initial planning for an August deployment has begun.

### **Other**

**Region 6 Safety Committee:** Biologist Hoenes is a member of the Region 6 Safety Committee and attended a safety committee meeting this week. The group is responsible for addressing all safety related concerns or issues associated with the Region 6 Headquarters in Montesano, reviewing all accident reports filed by Region 6 employees, and ensuring the facilities associated with the Region 6 Headquarters meet all Labor and Industry (L&I) safety guidelines.