

Wildlife Program

Week of September 14 – September 20, 2015

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Wolf Advisory Group (WAG): Supervisor McCanna was unable to attend the last WAG meeting so he reviewed the meeting notes.

Commissioner Contact: Supervisor McCanna contacted Stevens County Commissioner Dashiell to assist with locating contact information for two producers. Contact information was provided and McCanna contacted both producers and will have a Conflict Specialist meet with them early next week.

Wolf Conflict Presentations: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett presented two wolf conflict presentations to producers and companion animal owners near Sprague. Wolf biology, Washington management, legal rights, depredation investigations, and wolf depredation compensation were presented for large animal commercial producers. Wolf biology, Washington wolf status, safety, public sightings, and legal rights were discussed with companion animal owners. Great discussions about wolves were had after each presentation and additional contacts were made. While Bennett was in the Sprague area, she also met with a producer on their three research project guard dog puppies to see how they were integrating in with the sheep.

A Karakachan guard dog puppy from a USDA research project being evaluated for effectiveness in wolf country



Bi-Monthly Legislative Wolf

Conference Call: Wildlife Conflict Specialists Bennett and Shepherd participated in the conference call where current communication efforts with local producers were discussed and future communications with new producers was scheduled.

Canid Sightings in District 2: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett received two reports of large canid sightings in Spokane and Whitman counties this week. A hiker reported seeing a large canid near Riverside State Park and a Rosalia man reported seeing two large canids near his residence.

Tucannon Pack: Biologist Earl received calls from producers with sensitive sharing who wanted to confirm the current locations of the pack. The producers have been out staying with

their cattle and had not had a chance to get to a computer. Earl confirmed that the pack has moved into Garfield County but is still quite a ways from the grazing allotments.

Sightings/Howling: Biologist Earl followed up on several reports of sightings near Field Spring State Park. The reports were of one to three animals running together. Earl was unable to contact anyone who had actually seen the wolves. Everyone he contacted has heard the story. The only form of confirmation was from a rancher who said they “heard howling that was not coyotes” near their home on Montgomery Ridge Road. Earl relayed the information to District Biologist Wik.

One New DPCA_L Contract: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley received a signed DPCA_L contract and one invoice for range riding for the months of July and August. The contract was entered into Novatus.

OR 14 Wolf: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley met with four livestock producers on Eckler Mountain regarding cattle that continue to run through their electric fences during the night. Two bow hunters said they have seen two bucks in the area that appear to be at the tail end of Blue Tongue. After spending two mornings in the area along with the cattlemen we all agreed that OR 14 is most likely feeding on the dead deer from blue tongue, and while the lone wolf is looking for some new dead deer he is also causing the livestock to spook and run through their electric fences. Assistant District Biologist Vekasy and Rasley were also able to confirm OR 14’s location in the same area as the complaints came in.

Wolf capture: Wildlife Biologist Annemarie Prince and a tribal biologist assisted wolf biologist Trent Roussin with collaring an adult female wolf captured in southern Stevens County. The wolf was ear-tagged and outfitted with a GPS radio collar.

Biologist Annemarie Prince draws blood from a captured wolf



Region 2 Wolf Activities

Okanogan Wolves: Specialist Heilhecker scheduled an appointment for next week with a man who is interested in becoming a range rider next season. She is going to show him the area, look for wolf sign, and discuss wolf behavior. Specialist Heilhecker worked with the Olympia office to finalize the DPCA livestock agreement and get the invoice paid for this year’s range riding work.

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas/Water Access Sites

Chief Joseph WA – Scotch Thistle Weed

Control: Biologist Woodall and Tech Steveson continued with fall spraying before the rain came down on Thursday. They applied 675 gallons of herbicide product to large fields of scotch thistle. They wrapped up the large weedy sites at Joseph Creek and will move next week to Asotin Creek and Lick Fork.



Tech Steveson spraying young thistle rosettes amongst this year's dead skeletons

Private Lands/Wildlife Conflict

CRP SAFE: Lewis continued to work on CRP-SAFE (State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement) job sheets and restoration plans for contracts and projects that will equal 2,500 acres of CRP SAFE. Lewis continued working on 11 CRP-SAFE contracts that will result in 2,500 acres of native grasslands, 210 acres of newly established native forbs strips, and 80 acres of newly established native shrub plantings.

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

Private Lands/Wildlife Conflict

Washington State University (WSU) Lab: Supervisor McCanna taught the first of two wildlife trap and transfer labs at WSU. This is the eighteenth year McCanna has taught this lab at WSU. McCanna also taught non-lethal tools available to deal with deer/elk damage and livestock/wolf conflicts.

Sportsmen Calls: Biologist Earl and Natural Resource Technician Wade continued responding to an increase in sportsmen inquiries for the Blue Mountain foothills area, due to archery deer, general bear, cougar, dove, and grouse seasons opening September 1 and the archery elk season opening Saturday, September 12.

Archery buck harvested in Garfield County

REGION 2

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

Wildlife Management

**Post-Fire Documentation and
Monitoring:**

Biologists Heinlen and Fitkin, Research Scientist Schroeder, Assistant Manager Dupont, and Conservation District Biologist Carlson toured the Tunk Valley to discuss the Tunk Block Fires' effect on sharp-tailed grouse habitat. Most all of the occupied upland habitat burned with only a small unburned island of shrub-steppe habitat left at the eastern end of the valley. Much of the north half of the valley burned completely, leaving one of the bleakest landscapes observed in the wake of this summer's fires. Even so, life goes on, as evidenced by the discovery of a healthy pygmy short-horned lizard in the middle of the moonscape. Riparian habitats fared better with significant areas of unburned water birch remaining for winter forage.

***Lunar landscape in the
Tunk Valley*** – Photo by Scott
Fitkin



Pygmy short-horned lizard defying the desolation – Photo by Scott Fitkin

Biologist Fitkin toured some of last year's burn area in Pipestone Canyon on the Methow Wildlife Area to view year-old post fire conditions and found amazingly robust recovery across grass, forb, and shrub communities, particularly given the extremely hot dry summer. One notable exception was the limited bitterbrush growth, with anecdotal observations suggesting less than 10% of plants re-sprouting.



Pipestone one year after the Carlton Complex Fire – Photo by Scott Fitkin

Pygmy Rabbit Recovery:

Biologist Gallie assisted the pygmy recovery team with captures and release at both Large and Beezely breeding enclosures. Captured rabbits were either released on the Beezley Hills Recovery area, or retained for genetic exchange between the breeding enclosures. Captures were assisted by student groups from Westside High School and Wenatchee Valley Tech Center. JoAnn and both technicians spent most of Monday working with the collected fecal samples we obtained from our rabbits in the large enclosure nursery. The rabbits were put on a week-long drug regimen of Amprolium to treat for Coccidia. We took the collected samples to a veterinary office in Moses Lake so we could use their compound microscope. Only one possible Oocyte was observed from all six tested samples. On Tuesday, the technicians did the rounds of feeding at all the enclosures and prepped/patched the corral walls at the large enclosure for trapping on Thursday. We trapped at Beezly on Wednesday with the tech class from Wenatchee. We captured a total of 20 Rabbits. Eight were adults, three of which went back into the enclosure and five of which were released to the wild, and 12 were kits that were all released to the wild. We trapped at the large enclosure on Thursday with the Wenatchee High School student group. We captured a total of 16 rabbits, 11 kits and five adults. All the kits and one adult were brought to the Beezly nursery where we are awaiting genetic results. Two adults were released to the wild and two were kept in the enclosure. On Friday, we will feed those in the enclosures and remove all the rabbits from the large enclosure nursery and release them to the wild.





Biologist Gallie working with a student to processing a pygmy rabbit before release



Volunteers transporting pygmy rabbits to release sites

Technician Gibbs collects a genetic sample from a pygmy rabbit with help from a student volunteer

Wildlife Areas

Dozer Lines on the Big Buck: Fire crews worked to rehab fire lines dug during the Twisp River Fire by leveling out the upheaved soil and placing rock and vegetation over the bare soil. Water bars were established in places and large holes and ruts were made to prevent vehicles from accessing these lines



*Dozer line rehab on the Big Buck Unit –
Photo by Anna Sample, 9/15*





Dozer line rehab on the east side of the burned zone on the Big Buck Unit of Methow Wildlife Area – Photo by Anna Sample, 9/15



Dozer line rehab on the Big Buck Unit of Methow Wildlife Area – Photo by Anna Sample, 9/15



Dozer line rehab on the Big Buck Unit of Methow Wildlife Area – Photo by Anna Sample, 9/15

Re-growth of Vegetation: Parts of the burned zone on the Big Buck Unit of the Methow Wildlife Area are beginning to show signs of vegetation regrowth following the Twisp River wildfire, which began August 19. Most of the small sprouts are not yet identified but there is concern that weed species may out-compete natives and establish in new areas.



Vegetation starting to re-establish in burned areas of the Big Buck Unit on the Methow Wildlife Area. This grass is not identified but invasive species establishment is a concern – Photo taken 9/15 Anna Sample



Re-growth of alfalfa plants growing in the burned zone of the Big Buck Unit on the Methow Wildlife Area – Photo taken 9/15 Anna Sample

Okanogan Complex Fire Assessment:

Manager Haug re-captured a number of images associated with photo monitoring points on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area within the Okanogan Complex perimeter. There was a range of severity throughout the burn area. Locations that have been prescribe-burned in recent years had far less severe burning. Areas that were harvested last year and not prescribed burned had varying severity – if the fire was a backing fire the results were favorable. If the fire was a head fire, the results were significantly worse.

Manager Haug also worked on documentation for CAMP in preparation for a disaster declaration from FEMA.

An area untreated with either harvest or prescribed burning. These areas were impacted the worst.

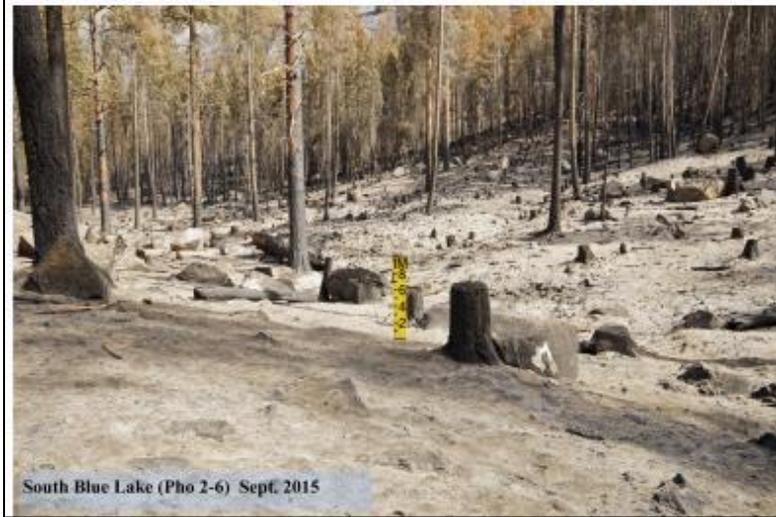




South Blue Lake (Pho 2-6) Nov. 2014

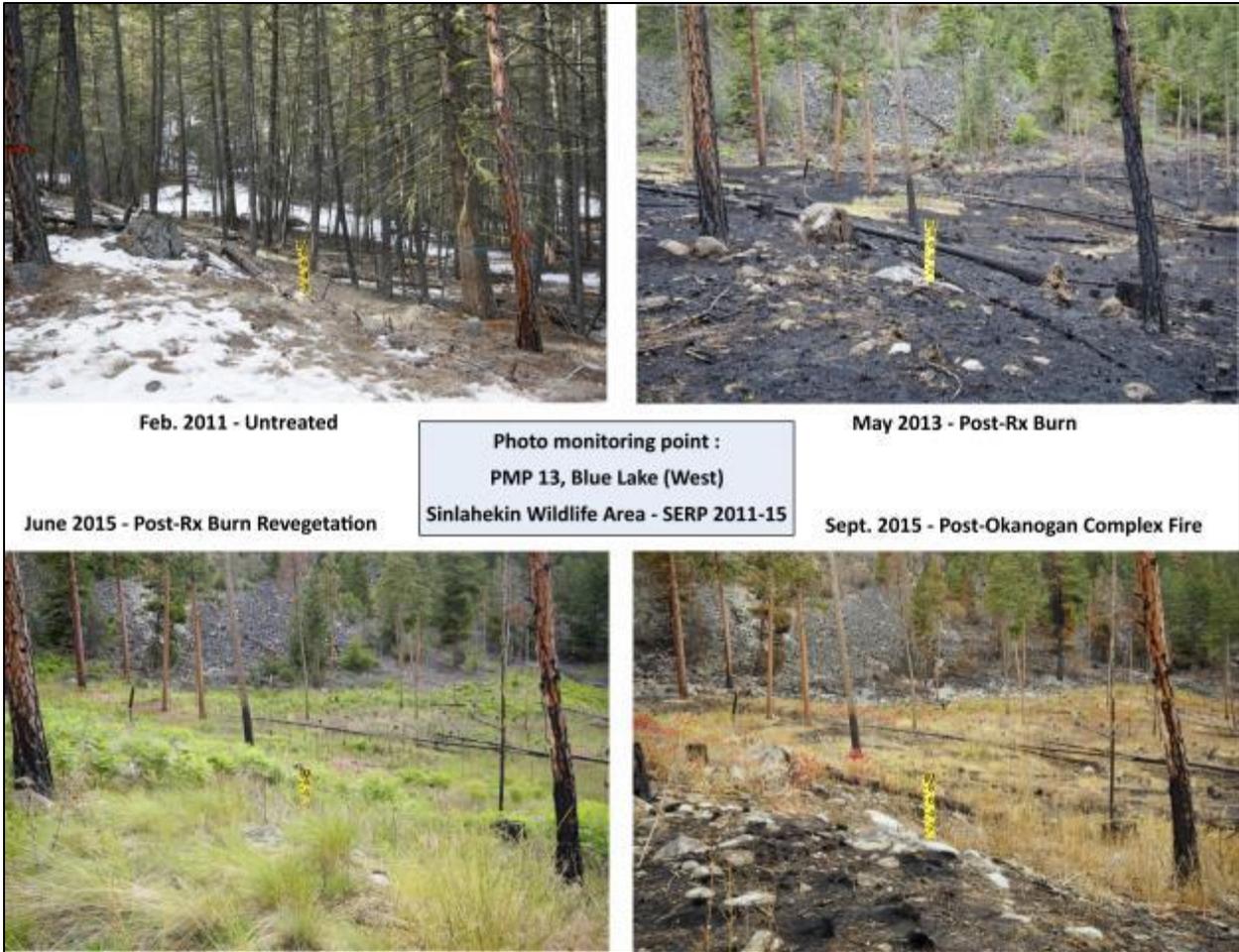


South Blue Lake (Pho 2-6) June 2015



South Blue Lake (Pho 2-6) Sept. 2015

A sequence of images taken SE of Blue Lake. This area was harvested last winter and slash left on the ground. This was a head fire cause significant scotching and tree mortality.



A series of photos showing the after effect of the Okanogan Complex fire in an area that was harvest and prescribed burned in the spring of 2013. The fire crept through these areas burning larger fuels that remained on the ground after the prescribed burn.

The photo shows the fire advanced downhill until met with the Spike #2 prescribed burn and handline implemented early last year (and in 2005). Notice the reduced severity with the harvested and prescribed burn treated area to the right compared to the scorching to the upper left of the photo.



Private Lands/Access

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE): Manager Cotton and Private Lands Biologist Braaten spent the week writing SAFE plans for landowners in Douglas County. Douglas County received an additional 10,000 acre allotment for the SAFE program. As of Tuesday, 9,279 acres had been signed up. We are currently writing plans for the landowners that signed up early and had been summer fallowing the enrolled fields so that they will be able to seed their fields this fall. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) should be able to sign-up the remaining and receive an additional 10,000 acres next year.

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

Wildlife Areas

North Potholes Regulated Access Area: Biologist R. Finger worked with Access Manager Graves to sign the trails and hunt site locations at NPRAA.



Post indicating hunt site number two. Hunters will be required to hunt within 50' of designated sites to ensure adequate spacing between parties – Photo by R. Finger



Site 5, the smallest pond in the NPRAA, but also the closest to the reserve boundary – Photo by R. Finger

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

Wildlife Management

Highlights – Chelan Ridge: Biologist Fitkin assisted the raptor banding crew at Chelan Ridge, a research and monitoring station operated by Hawk Watch International and sponsored by the USFS. The site has now been in operation for 19 years, cataloging and banding migrating birds. It also occasionally contributes study animals and/or biological samples to raptor research

projects, supports an annual raptor festival, and is a first class watchable wildlife site. Unfortunately, access restrictions due to this year's fires are currently preventing the public from accessing the site. Hopefully the restrictions will be removed before the field season ends.



Prairie Falcon – Photo by Scott Fitkin



Red-tailed hawk – Photo by Scott Fitkin



Pika – Photo by Scott Fitkin



One of the two California bighorn ram harvested from Chelan Butte during the opening week



The California bighorn harvested from the Swakane Unit opening day



Two juvenile bald eagles battle it out on the Similkameen River near Driscoll Island – Photo by Justin Haug



A group of Mule Deer gather below some unburnt farmland below the edge of the Okanogan Complex Fire near the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area – Photo by Justin Haug

This is Spectacle Lake #2 site. A comparative photo showing the difference between management, with WDFW managed land on the right.

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas



LT Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Winegeart and Assistant Manager Hunt joined WDFW Forester Pfeifle and Scott Nicolai (Yakama Tribal Biologist) on a forest health tour of portions of the L. T. Murray. The group visited several potential project sites needing thinning and habitat improvements. Two areas were selected for proposed forest health projects beginning next spring. It was a productive trip, and should help us move toward getting a project on the ground. Funding is available and there is a critical need to address the risk of a catastrophic wildfire on the Murray.

Potential LT Murray thinning opportunity, with ~30 year old replanted clear cut (background)



Wildlife Management

Pheasant Release: District Biologist Fidorra and Natural Resource Technician Kaelber received and released pheasants on Friday prior to the youth and senior hunts. The birds were provided by a new supplier this year and were in great condition. Pheasants were released on the Hope Valley Unit and USACE's Big Flat and Lost Island Habitat Management Units in Franklin County.



Natural Resource Technician Kaelber releases pheasants at the Big Flat HMU

Duck Banding: Due to changes in the Yakama Nation duck season dates, a small research project is being coordinated to band waterfowl after the youth hunt weekend to assess survival and movement in the area during this period. District Biologist Fidorra coordinated with staff to continue duck banding on the Bailie Memorial Youth Ranch between Sept 25 and Oct 7.

Black-tailed Jackrabbits: District Biologist Fidorra spent time working on the Diversity Species Status Assessments for black-tailed jackrabbits.

Wildlife Monitoring Strategy and Updates Meeting: District Biologist Fidorra participated in the WDFW & Yakama Nation meeting to discuss wildlife monitoring strategy and updates. The meeting was well attended and it was suggested parties meet on a biannual basis.

Avian Influenza Testing: District Biologist Fidorra prepared and shipped four duck carcasses to the National Wildlife Health Center found during the previous week of duck trapping. Fidorra also shipped Avian Influenza swab samples collected from live ducks the previous week.

Richland Rod and Gun Club Presentation: District Biologist Fidorra worked on a presentation for the Richland Rod and Gun Club. Fidorra will appear as a guest speaker at their October 6 chapter meeting and present game trend data and hunting prospects to the club.

Measuring and Tagging Bighorn Specimens: After receiving tags and materials from Section Manager Harris, District Biologist Fidorra reviewed procedures for measuring and tagging bighorn specimens should any local hunters contact Fidorra after a successful hunt.

SAFE Field Evaluation: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman did a field evaluation for a 160 acre SAFE application in Franklin County. The existing CRP did not meet density or diversity requirements and will have to be reseeded. Stutzman met with the landowner to discuss the project and began writing the plan for that and another SAFE application. Stutzman will deliver the finished plans to the NRCS early this week.

WDFW and Yakama Nation Meeting: Stutzman attended a joint meeting with Region 3 WDFW wildlife staff and the Yakama Nation Wildlife Program staff. It was a productive meeting as staff from both programs discussed shared issues and priorities including sage grouse, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn.

Bighorn Sheep: Biologist Bernatowicz participated in the annual fall surveys in the Yakima River Canyon to document lamb recruitment. The survey documented 243 sheep, with 17 lambs per 100 ewes. Recruitment was better than the previous two years (eight lambs/100 ewes), but sick and dying lambs were observed this year. One lamb died during the survey and was sent to WSU. The initial necropsy found gross evidence of chronic pneumonia. While hiking into the dead lamb, a second lamb was observed weak and falling over. In two ewe/lamb sub-groups, no lambs were observed. Since pneumonia showed up late in some groups, it is possible lamb recruitment to March might be slightly higher than the previous two years.



Sick lamb shortly before dying from pneumonia – Photo by Dr. Cassier, Idaho Fish and Game

Bighorn Ram Pinning: Bernatowicz pinned bighorn rams for three hunters and collected samples from two rams harvested in the Yakima River Canyon. Horns from a few old skulls at the office were measured and pinned so groups could potentially auction in the future.

Youth Season: Biologist Bernatowicz release 50 pheasant at Cottonwoods for the YouthWeekend. A fair number of the birds were not fully colored.



A recently released pheasant

Bighorn Sheep Lamb Counts: Biologist Moore worked with other WDFW and Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) Biologists, as well as volunteers to survey lamb production in the Yakima River Canyon. Moore worked the northern portion of the canyon. No lambs were observed with ewes on the Umtanum side, but numerous were seen on the Selah Butte side. Biologist Bernatowicz should have the complete survey results in his weekly.

Colockum Bull Study: Moore has continued to check for mortalities on our collared elk. One more collar appears to be failing to download and has missed reports for the last week.

Western Gray Squirrel: Moore has completed the final check on one more of his five transects during the week. Hair was not collected along this transect. One more transect remains in the field and it will be checked and pulled next week.

Yakama Nation Meeting: Biologist Moore attended a meeting between Yakama Nation and WDFW staff. The meeting focused on gaining an understanding of the management issues we face and how to collaborate more.

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

Wenas Wildlife Area: Access Manager Garcia and Natural Resource Worker 2 Barbosa found that the Hyde access area had been vandalized. There was graffiti on the ground, rocks, and the portable toilet. We were able to remove most of the graffiti off the rocks and the ground. We noticed that the neighbors' shop and truck had also been spray painted.

Volunteer Clean Up: Access Manager Garcia and NRW2 Barbosa had 10 volunteers from the Court's Juvenile Corrections Program pick up trash over the weekend from lower valley access sites.

Trash picked up with Volunteers over the weekend



Ringold Springs day use area

Sunnyside Wildlife Area:

Manager Bjornstrom coordinated with two hunters that have a tag for Hunt 2614. Manager Bjornstrom provided the hunters with information about the hunt and a map of the area they will have access to. Bjornstrom also informed them of fire concerns in the area.



Youth Field Day: Pheasants Forever and WDFW hosted the First Annual Youth Field Day on the Sunnyside Headquarters Unit. Thirty-five youths participated in skeet shooting, hunter safety, and a pheasant hunt. Following up with the day's activities WDFW and Pheasants Forever held a barbeque in the afternoon for all of the participants.



Participants at the Youth Pheasant Hunt on the Sunnyside Headquarters Unit

Wildlife Management

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand spent considerable time this week scouting and coordinating hunts for special permit holders with LHP hunt managers. One bull elk was harvested by a youth hunter in the Silver Dollar area.

A very happy youth hunter with her first elk



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

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: At the request of a resident in the Nile area, Manager Huffman used the truck and a tow strap to remove a road-killed elk from near their driveway on Clover Springs Road to an area up the road past all the residences. The very ripe elk was causing a bad aroma in the area and concerns with coyotes coming near the house.

Wildlife Management

Hazing Patrol: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand conducted one hazing patrol in a tree fruit and row crop operation near Rattlesnake Mountain for deer and elk damage issues. Although a few deer were observed in a harvested block of apple trees, little to no damage was seen. A few elk tracks were also noted, most likely from nocturnal movements in the area.

Damage Prevention Permits: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand delivered Damage Prevention Permits to a landowner in the Corral Canyon elk area who had exhausted all of their previous issued permits.

Minimizing Deer Damage: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand monitored fall winter wheat planting schedules and locations in the Kahlotus area and discussed public hunting and non-lethal hazing strategies with landowners to minimize deer damage. While in the area, a large stack of 2015-16 hunting regulation pamphlets were delivered to a small store that had requested them.

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

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman worked on the furnace replacement project for Oak Creek. Huffman received word from Wildlife Area Section Manager Dahmer that CAMP would allow us to purchase and install the furnace through the wildlife program. Huffman began scheduling work for propane installation. Huffman sent an email to Purchasing Manager Hugdahl to confirm that it was ok to proceed with direct buy since the project was less than \$10,000. Hugdahl contacted CAMP Assistant Director Burns, who reversed the earlier decision from Engineer Gerth and turned the project back over to CAMP to manage.

REGION 4

Deception Pass Bridge – Photo by Kim Chandler

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Marine Waterfowl Molting Surveys:

District 13 staff finalized data transcription, review, and dissemination of molting scoter transects in northern Puget

Sound. Surveys of potential habitat throughout the Sound, Strait of Georgia, Straits of Juan de Fuca, and the outer coast are being surveyed to identify molting areas for the three scoter species

in Washington. High density areas will be revisited to obtain more precise information on species/sex distribution and potential prey species, and for locating potential sites for use in molting captures and banding in the coming years.

A late summer flock of molting surf scoters

Low Elevation Pika Surveys:

District 13 staff finalized the field component of the low elevation pika surveys in the Stillaguamish Valley with a vegetation survey at known sites. Overhead photos were also obtained to document vegetation cover and to possibly detect changes over time.

Moss covers a talus slope at a known low-elevation pika location

Sharp-Tailed Snake Surveys: District 13 staff revisited areas on Orcas Island where snake cover boards have been placed over the last three years. Covers are placed in areas with known snake occurrence, as well as in areas of suspected habitat. Covers were checked after the



weather cooled and some rainfall occurred, as sharp-tailed snakes are a largely subterranean species, and are used to prevent the repeated disturbance of native material. Despite becoming a well-integrated part of the environment, no snakes were observed under any covers.

An artificial snake cover board for sharp-tailed snakes on Orcas Island



Avian Influenza/ Waterfowl

Banding Project: Biologists DeBruyn and Wingard took down duck traps that were public hunting areas. Two traps remain

in reserves in case further samples are needed. DeBruyn ran a wood duck trap on private property and banded 26 wood ducks and one mallard. So far this year the Puget Sound team has banded 321 ducks, 192 since the beginning of August. DeBruyn collected HPAI samples from waterfowl harvested during the annual youth hunt on September 19 and 20.

Protected Wildlife Management: Biologist Anderson provided state consultation for Endangered, Threatened, Sensitive and Protected species, including various Priority or Species of Concern needs – most often nest take authorization and/or habitat consideration recommendations. Anderson continues to work with Habitat, local governments, and landowners to provide for documentation and management where appropriate. Current items from this past week include species-specific management plans, code language updates and review, nest take authorization, and documentation of new occurrences or validation through department staff or working with appropriate outside entities, such as private consulting biologists. Anderson phone conferenced with the city of Shoreline, Seattle, Sammamish, various project applicants, project attorneys, and project consulting environmental staff or related project proponents in order to provide for a consultation request and the next steps. These were all in regards to various separate wildlife management needs within the district.

- Documenting wildlife via reporting at our Wildlife Observation Website:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/viewing/observations/>

- Management recommendations for Priority Habitats and Species here:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/phs/>

USFWS Urban Bird Treaty Program – Seattle Initiative: Biologist Anderson phone conferenced with USFWS staff regarding a desire to examine Seattle as a prospect for the USFWS Urban Bird Treaty program. More information can be found at

<http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/partnerships/urbantreaty/urbantreaty.html>

Citizen Science – Amphibians: Biologist Anderson phone conferenced with Science Staff Christopher to examine what compilation and GIS analytical processes are available given the current iteration of the Public Observation Site. Anderson also phone conferenced with

Woodland Park Zoo and reached out to an area PhD candidate examining using citizens for monitoring emerging salamander specific chytrid disease in area surveys.

Wildlife Conflict Management

Black Bear Conservation and Management: Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell reviewed and provided comments on recent resolutions of a Black Bear Sub-Committee meeting. Supervisor Caldwell also contacted several private entities in Canada, California, and Washington regarding rules and regulations revolving around bear processing and transport.

Wildlife Areas

Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP): Projects Coordinator Brokaw drafted a letter to request funds for feasibility and design work from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Spencer Island. A project that involves expanding the dike breaches to increase tidal flow at Spencer Island was prioritized by PSNERP and will be further developed with input from stakeholders if the funding request is successful. More information about the conceptual design is available at:

<http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/factsheets/SpencerIsland.pdf>.

Leque Island Alternatives Analysis and Design Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw held a meeting with Ducks Unlimited, Pacific NW National Laboratories, and adjacent landowners including the City of Stanwood, the Stillaguamish Flood Control District, and Stillaguamish Tribe. The purpose of the meeting was to identify areas of concern related to drainage and flooding in the project area to investigate more closely in the next round of modeling for the project. The groups also discussed collaboration on a monitoring and adaptive management plan for the area.

Zis a ba Project Steering Meeting: Projects Coordinator Brokaw participated in a steering committee meeting for an estuary restoration project that the Stillaguamish Tribe is leading adjacent to Leque Island. He provided information on the Leque Island project process and continues to work with the Tribe to coordinate project efforts.

Fir Island Farm Estuary Restoration Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Habitat Planner Friebel gave a tour of the construction site to Ducks Unlimited staff who are working on the Leque Island project.

Ducks Unlimited staff and Habitat Planner Friebel standing atop the new setback dike and looking at the area that will be new estuary



The Contractor is finishing up the last stretches of setback dike in the final days of Year 1 construction on the Fir Island Farm Restoration Project



Run For The Chums Fun Run: The Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association and the Whatcom Conservation District hosted the third annual Run For The Chums fun run

on the Point Whitehorn portion of the British Petroleum Unit. Even though it rained all day, there was a good turnout with about 200 participants of all ages for the 5k fun run. Manager Kessler manned a booth displaying wildlife skins and skulls, which was a big hit with the crowd.



3rd Annual Run For The Chums fun run on the British Petroleum Unit of the Whatcom Wildlife Area

Cherry Valley Unit:

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area
Manager Brian Boehm met

with Frohning Dairy to discuss the harvest plan for Cherry Valley. Approximately 55 acres of corn and grain was planted earlier this season. The plan will provide approximately three acres of corn plots, 12 acres of barley, and three acres of mixed grass and grain for wildlife forage and cover.

Stillwater Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm worked with volunteers to improve habitat conditions for wildlife at the unit. A bulldozer was rented to remove blackberry hedges growing densely along trails, roads, ditches, and fields, and remove windfalls and woody vegetation in some of the fallow fields. Four truckloads of gravel were also placed on the worst portions of the interior access roads. This will help during pheasant release and enforcement traffic when the wet and muddy season arrives.

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm worked with volunteers to improve habitat conditions for wildlife at the unit. A bulldozer was rented to remove blackberry hedges growing densely along trails, roads, ditches, and fields, and remove windfalls and woody vegetation that have collected over the past two seasons. Other volunteers maintained parking areas, trails, and tree-debris clearing throughout the unit.

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm completed seasonal mowing at the Ebey Unit in preparation for the pheasant season. Hunter walking lanes, safety

zones, and access roads were mowed and improved to provide access for the pheasant release volunteers and hunters.

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

Wildlife Management

Mountain Goat Survey: Biologist Yarborough entered and analyzed all mountain goat survey data for 2015 in the Mt. Baker units in cooperation with Point Elliott Tribes and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.



Mountain goats on mountainside

CITES Bobcat and River Otter

Management: Biologist Anderson kicked-off the first sealing needs for upholding CITES agreements regarding bobcat and river otter harvested in WA. Both of these species need to be sealed (carcass or hide) within 20 days of the end of the season (so no later than April 20). Hunters and trappers should call the Region 4 Headquarters to schedule sealing with the most appropriate or available biologist (425-775-1311). More information on hunting and trapping these animals, as well as CITES needs, can be found here: http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/smallgame_trapping/index.html <http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/regulations/> <https://www.cites.org/>

Wildlife Areas

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season Preparations: Manager Kessler opened up gates at the Lake Terrell Unit and posted informational signs for the youth waterfowl hunting season. He coordinated with the Whatcom County Parks manager on closing the Tennant Lake boardwalk for the weekend youth hunt.

Mowed Hunting Paths and Parking Areas: Manager Kessler mowed hunting paths and parking areas on the Intalco and Lake Terrell units in preparation for the pheasant season.

Lake Terrell Pheasant Release: Manager Kessler received 390 pheasants from the game farm and released them into the pheasant pens at Lake Terrell. He worked with volunteers to release pheasants for the youth and senior hunts. The turnout for the youth hunt was good, with several parties of hunters using both the Lake Terrell and Intalco release sites. The parking areas were packed with senior hunters for the first day of the senior season.

Nooksack Unit Car Top Boat Launch Repair: Manager Kessler coordinated with the WDFW Habitat Biologist on the Nooksack Unit car top boat launch, which is in need of repairs. Kessler has received an HPA permit for the repairs, which will include placing quarry rock in the launch site to make it easier and safer to launch car top boats into Silver Creek.

Samish River Unit Wetland Restoration Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw worked with Contracts staff, CAMP staff, and Skagit Wildlife Area Manager Rotton to modify and re-post a solicitation for bids to haul excavation spoils from the project area to a local levee for use by the Diking and Drainage District. The solicitation was re-posted and the bid due date extended in order to remove some of the uncertainties that were in the previous solicitation.

Western Washington Pheasant Release: Manager Rotton coordinated with volunteers regarding the pheasant delivery and release for the Skagit and Whidbey Island sites. The youth pheasant hunt began this weekend and the senior hunt starts on Monday.

Skagit Headquarters' Unit: Cosgrove posted Safety Zone buoys in the intertidal area at the Headquarters Unit with the assistance of Meis and Safety Zone signs at the Samish Unit.

Samish Unit: Cosgrove spent most of the week mowing at the Samish Unit with the John Deere 5300 and brush-hog. Mowing was focused on ponds and low areas. Cosgrove has noticed a substantial difference in beneficial waterfowl vegetation (marsh dock, sedges, smartweed, millet, Bidens) in ponds that had been dominated by cattail but repeatedly mowed and flooded throughout the winter. Cosgrove assisted Washington Waterfowl Association member Art Kendall with the installation of two shell receptacles at the Samish Unit.

Island Unit: Volunteers mowed the dike tops to prepare for the upcoming waterfowl season.

Snoqualmie Pheasant Release Sites: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm continued placing informational and educational signage related to the upcoming pheasant season opener this past week. Manager Boehm was on the pheasant units early Saturday morning to meet and greet the young hunters. Everyone stated they enjoyed the hunt, and appreciate all of the great work that is done to prepare the units for the season. Youth pheasant was very popular, but the youth water fowl hunt drew at least six groups of early season hunters.

Private Lands/Access Management

Private Lands Access Hunt in GMU 407: The first ever private land access hunt for elk began in GMU 407 this week. Hunters are allowed to make an online reservation via the GoHunt website two weeks in advance. Elk hunting will occur in three day blocks. The only restriction for this hunt will be during the modern firearm season, in which hunters will not be allowed the use of a rifle to harvest an elk. This restriction was put in place for safety reasons at the request of the landowners. We encourage members of the public to visit the GoHunt website for more details on the hunting opportunity. Biologist Wingard installed additional signage at the hunting unit to ensure hunters do not drive into the landowner's driveway.

Private Land Access Opportunities: Biologist Wingard toured a site in Snohomish County near Monroe to determine recreational access suitability. Biologist Wingard determined the site was not suitable for recreation, as it did not contain attributes which WDFW could use to provide recreational access.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program: Natural Resource Technician Otto prepared several blinds for the upcoming season. Natural Resource Technician Otto was able to open two Waterfowl Quality Hunt sites in Whatcom County for this weekend youth waterfowl season. Natural Resource Technician Otto also staged blind building materials at other sites that are awaiting harvest.

Diversity/Wildlife Viewing Site Management: Biologist Wingard and Otto toured the diversity site on Southern Whidbey Island to clear fallen trees from the recent windstorm. They found the site in relatively good condition with a minimal number of trees down.

Migratory Bird Enhancement

Projects: Natural Resource Technician Otto checked a Whatcom County barley field that was planted with Migratory Bird Enhancement funds.

This 15 acre Migratory Bird Enhancement project site looks very good and will help support many waterfowl during this winter's migration



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

Wildlife Management

Explosives Maintenance: Biologist Yarborough coordinated with the Department of Labor and Industries to have the annual inspection of rocket net charges. All records were examined and all charges were inventoried, checked for proper storage, and recorded into the database.

KBCS Interview: Biologist Anderson provided an interview to staff at KBCS regarding urban wildlife management.

Wildlife Conflict Management

Wildlife Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman fielded several calls on nuisance wildlife complaints this week. In response, he provided individuals with information and resources to reduce conflict. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman also met with several

disabled and veteran elk hunters in the Acme area of Whatcom County. The hunters were very appreciative of the Hunt by Reservation Elk Hunt/Access site. Hunters stated that they enjoyed being able to hunt and access private land that they would otherwise have no access to in GMU 407. Additionally, Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman met with a landowner who is experiencing elk damage to his agricultural land in Skagit County. The landowner stated that he was contacted by two special permit holders from the youth, senior, and disabled hunt that starts on September 21 in Elk Area 4941. The landowner agreed to allow the two hunters access to his property for the hunt.

Exclusionary Fence Construction: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal completed installing fence posts for an elk exclusionary fence in the Acme area of Whatcom County. The landowner agreed to finish the project with assistance from Master Hunter Volunteers.

Wildlife conflict staff finished the beginning stages of fence construction for a new elk exclusionary fence in the Acme area



Wildlife Areas

DeBay's Slough: Meis monitored harvest of corn on the DeBay's Slough site to ensure that WDFW received our share of the crop.

Skagit Headquarters: Cosgrove posted Safety Zone buoys in the intertidal area at the Headquarters Unit and Safety Zone signs at the Samish Unit. Manager Rotton prepared maps for printing and installation for the Wildlife Area units.

Fir Island Farms: Manager Rotton and North Sound Weed Crew Leader Daniel Zimmerman toured portions of the Fir Island Farms restoration site to examine the cattail treatment area along No Name and Claud O. Davis Sloughs.

Samish River Unit: Manager Rotton hosted a pre-bid field tour of the Samish River Unit Spoils hauling contract. Three vendors attended the tour and discussed the project details. Manager Rotton met with Natural Resources Conservation Service Biologist Kathy Smith to discuss details of the planting plan for the Samish River Unit Wetland Enhancement project.

Samish Unit: Manager Rotton met with Steve Liske of Ducks Unlimited, who was completing the review of the final check list for the Samish Unit wetland enhancement project. Meis purchased and delivered supplies for the foot bridge replacements that were dismantled during the Samish Unit Wetland Enhancement project. Meis also checked project progress and removed debris from the project site.



Pheasant were released for the youth hunt and senior hunt on the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area

Informational Signage: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm installed hunting related informational and educational signage at the four pheasant release sights in preparation for the hunting season.

Collaborative Meeting: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with Snohomish County’s Sustainable Land Strategy representative, Snohomish County’s Ag coordinator, Ecology wetland staff, staff from Duck’s Unlimited, and Sno-Valley Farms to discuss a number of agriculture related issues. What could have been a rather confrontational meeting turned out to be just the opposite. A number of issues including wetland enhancement, crop production, drainage improvements, tide-gate operation, and funding limitations were discussed. Everyone finished the meeting on good terms, with a “to-do” list, and a feeling of cooperation for mutual and multiple benefits. A follow-up meeting to review progress and next steps is planned but unscheduled.

Private Lands/Access Management

418 Elk Hunt: Biologist Wingard met with a quality archery permit holder who had harvested an elk. Biologist Wingard received the Sierra Pacific Industries key from the hunter and took tooth samples from the harvest elk. Natural Resource Technician Otto toured the 418 elk hunt on Sierra Pacific private lands. Natural Resource Technician Otto saw five different logging operations in process on the South Eastern portion of their land. Natural Resource Technician Otto posted signage alerting hunters to the operations.

Hunting Season Preparation: Natural Resource Technician Otto met with multiple landowners to sign hunting access contracts for the 2015/16 season. Biologist Wingard edited and updated details for hunting sites on the GoHunt website. Natural Resource Technician Otto and Biologist Wingard put up signage at the new Zylstra pheasant release site on Whidbey Island and dropped off more signs to the landowner at the Bayview Pheasant site. Biologist Wingard fielded questions about the early youth duck hunting season. Biologist Wingard also fielded questions from a citizen interested in accompanying his grandson forest grouse hunting and was looking

for information on access and the required licenses. The citizen was informed about opportunities and referred to the WDFW website for more information.

Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordination

Hunter Education Instructor Support: Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey activated two new hunter education classes in Region 4. Dazey assisted Chief Instructor Lance Chaar to hold an online field skills evaluation at the Region 4 office. Chief Instructor Chaar will be conducting evaluations at the Region 4 office each Monday during August and September except Labor Day. Coordinator Dazey answered questions from instructors on retesting policy. Instructors are not to retest students who fail the class. The student must retake the entire class and pass another session. Coordinator Dazey assisted Chief Instructor Webber to order two adult size shotguns for their live fire.

Pre Service Training: Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey conducted the first of the two required Pre-Service Training sessions to certify hunter education instructor applicants. The session was held at the Black Diamond Rifle Range and included applicants from the south King County area. The final session of training for these applicants will be held September 25 when the applicants will be given the opportunity to teach an actual class under the supervision of Dazey and with the assistance of certified instructors from the Black Diamond team.

Master Hunter: Volunteer Coordinator Dazey recruited two master hunter volunteers to man an informational booth at Holiday Sports in Burlington on National Hunting and Fishing day. Holiday Sports had requested that WDFW and Hunter Education have an informational presence at their event.

Volunteer Coordination: Coordinator Dazey made a presentation to a group at the Nile Shrine center on volunteering for the Department of Fish and Wildlife.



Volunteer Coordinator Dazey delivered material to Ballard for a volunteer project to construct picnic tables for WDFW. Dazey also referred a Scout to the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area manager who is looking to perform service for WDFW.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Western Pond Turtle Notching: Biologist Bergh went to the Oregon Zoo to put notches in the scutes of 12 western pond turtles that will be released back into the wild next week. The notches provide a unique identifier when the turtles are recaptured. These turtles were caught in the wild as hatchlings this spring and brought to the Oregon Zoo where they have been fed and kept warm. Of the 26 hatchlings that were caught this spring, these 12 are now large enough that they should no longer be as susceptible to predation, and therefore are ready to return to the wild. The 14 remaining hatchlings will continue to grow and will be released in the spring of 2016.



Western Pond Turtle Notching

Treponeme-associated Hoof Disease

Survival Study: Biologists George and Holman followed up on an elk mortality this week. Seventy-eight elk were radio collared as part of an ongoing study on the survival of cow elk affected by treponeme-associated hoof disease in February of 2015. This most-recent mortality was associated with hunting season. In spite of the known cause of death, an extensive necropsy was conducted and samples including the hooves and organ tissues will be sent to Colorado State University for further analysis.

Black-tailed Deer Research Project: Biologists Stephens and Holman followed up on the mortality of an adult doe associated with the black-tailed deer research study. The study animal was captured early in 2012. The mortality investigation featured bite marks at the back of the head/neck, a relatively neat carcass and the presence of cougar tracks and scat.

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Weed Control: Technician Davis applied herbicide to reed canary grass on the Sondino Unit. This unit hosts native wetland plants that can be lost if canary grass is allowed to spread unchecked. September is a good time to treat this species because many non-target plants are dormant and will not absorb herbicide, and the grass is well above the waterline of the ponds, making selective application easier.

Fire: Technician Davis observed a small fire in the Klickitat River Canyon. Many people were fishing along the river, and fire trucks were on the scene. Unfortunately, the fire was on the other side of the river where there is no road access. Drift boats were brought in and fire suppression personnel were ferried across the river. The fire was extinguished before it grew very large, but this shows that fire season is not over yet despite cooler temperatures and some rain.

Shillapoo Wildlife Area

Shillapoo Watchable Wildlife: The winter migration has begun, with thousands of Canada geese and Sandhill cranes arriving daily to the Vancouver Lowlands. The Sandhill cranes began to arrive on September 13, and cackling geese began flying in on September 15, which is the earliest date the Wildlife Area Manager can recall them migrating to the area. The numbers of



geese on the Wildlife Area will increase dramatically as the migration continues. Sandhill cranes can also be seen by the hundreds in the harvested corn fields. Other birds of interest moving through the area are: white-fronted geese, white pelicans, and peregrine falcons.

Cackling geese on Shillapoo Wildlife Area

Derelict Boat Removal: Wildlife Area Manager Hauswald and Assistant Manager Hand removed a boat from the shoreline of Vancouver Lake that had drifted onto the Vancouver Lake Unit. The boat had no registration number or identifying marks that could be traced to the owner. The boat will be taken to the dump at the earliest convenience for disposal.



Derelict boat on the Vancouver Lake Unit

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

D-10 Wildlife Conflict

Bear: Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a residence in West Cowlitz County after the land owner had sighted a bear. The land owner had called WILDCOMM asking that the bear be moved out of the area. Conklin spoke with the land owner, who admitted the bear was just sighted and was not causing any public safety issue. Conklin gave the land owner a Living with Wildlife brochure on bears and provided other advice.

Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a small farm in Cowlitz County that reported a bear had attacked and killed his sheep. When Conklin arrived the land owner explained he has lost several sheep that just disappear. He believed it was a bear that was taking the animals because a neighbor had lost sheep to a bear. He showed Conklin an area of his panel fence that was bent over on the top like something had climbed over the top of it. He said he also saw Turkey Vultures circling in this area and believed the dead sheep was in a deep brush ravine outside of the fenced pasture. Conklin hiked in to find the sheep. She ultimately found old remains of one of the sheep that was missing. The other sheep was found in the fenced pasture and was completely stripped of meat. The sheep was located near a hole in the fence. No bear sign existed but a lot of coyote scat and tracks were present. It was undetermined what may have actually killed the sheep.

Sheep that was found on property inside of fenced pasture

In addition, Conflict Specialist Conklin checked a trail camera that she had placed on a farm in Kelso that has lost several goats. Nothing was detected on the camera and the farmer has not lost any additional goats.



Elk: Conflict Specialist Conklin received a call from a land owner in Onalaska reporting loss to his corn crop due to elk. The land owner has been very cooperative and has worked with WDFW for a long time. Conflict Specialists Conklin and Peterson responded to the farm/dairy. The farmer lost approximately six acres to elk damage. This happens every year from elk, but this year the loss was much greater. The loss was approximately \$9000.00. Conklin is working with the farmer to try and prevent loss for next year. Conklin will deploy master hunters next year on the property to haze elk. She will also issue permits to the farm and use damage pool hunters on the property.

Conflict Specialists Conklin and Peterson attempted to locate an elk that was reported to have a lawn chair stuck on her neck in the Packwood area. The specialists found an elk herd in Packwood and also found an old lawn chair where the elk were resting. They deduced that the lawn chair had probably fallen off the elk. Conklin received another call the next day reporting the elk still had the lawn chair around its neck. What are the chances of finding a lawn chair in the middle of an elk herd and have it be a totally separate incident?

Conflict Specialists Conklin and Peterson delivered patch fencing to a farm in Randle. They also responded to a farm in Packwood who had lost most of their hay crop to elk. Conklin has been working with this land owner for two years and they have a large herd of elk that live on his property full time. The property was littered with elk droppings and had well beaten trails around the fenced orchard where they were trying to get in. One kill permit was issued. Conklin will continue to work with this land owner on elk damage issues and also is talking with the land owner about a possible lure crop planting for next year.

Conflict Specialists Conklin and Peterson visited several very frustrated private land owners in the Randle area who are reporting destruction of their property due to elk and were requesting kill permits. Unfortunately the land owners do not meet the criteria of being classified as a commercial farmer and they will not allow public access for hunting. One of the land owners will be issued some fencing to protect her barn from the elk that come in and eat her hay. She was also issued a bird banger to haze the elk from her property.

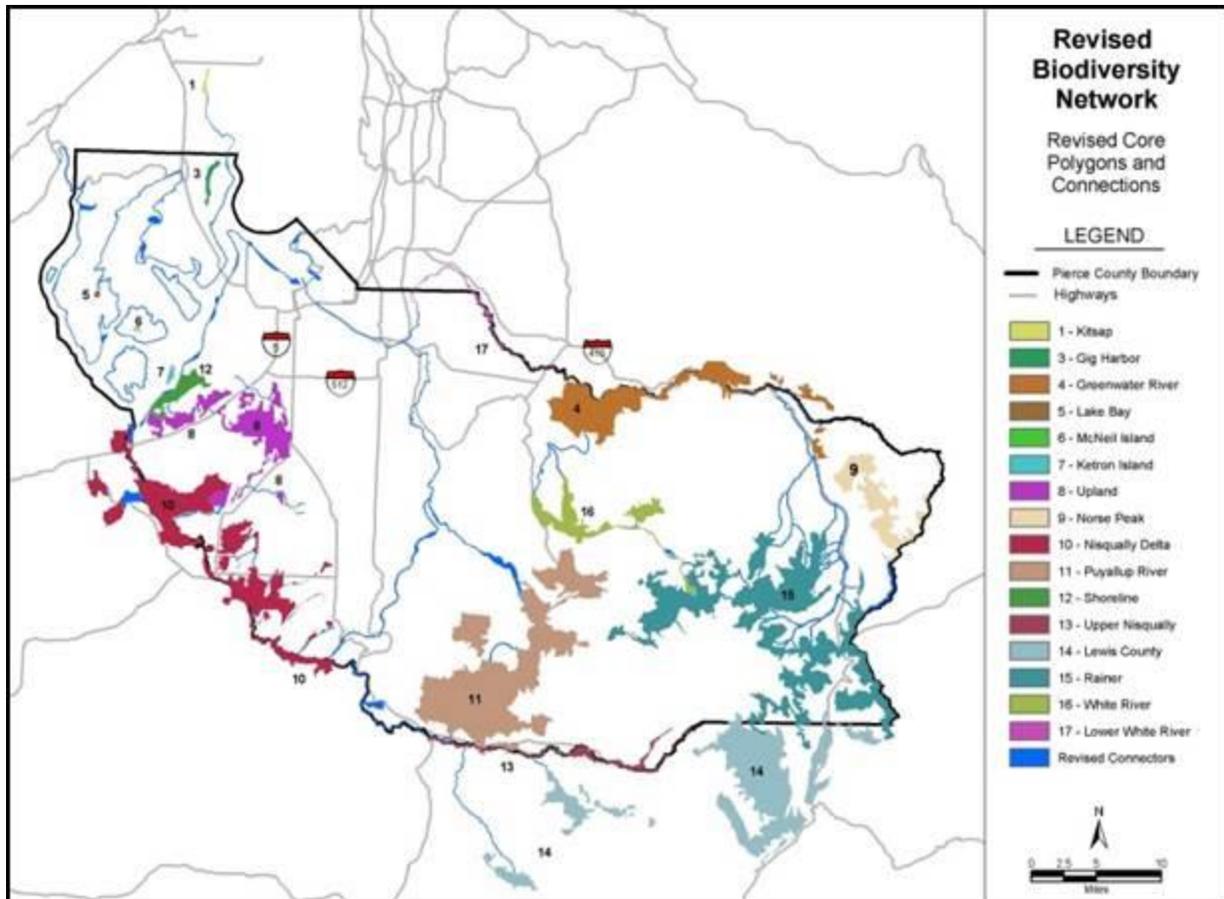
Conflict Specialist Conklin received a call from two land owners in Wahkiakum County reporting elk damage. Both land owners have active Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements with the Wildlife Program. Conklin will follow up with site visits next week on these farms.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management:

Biodiversity—Lower White River, Pierce County: Biologist Tirhi spent time editing the final copy of the Lower White River Biodiversity Stewardship Plan, including each of the four jurisdictional planning sections. Part of the completion of the plan involves the Pierce County Biodiversity Alliance meeting with each jurisdiction, both Pierce and King counties, and the Muckleshoot Tribe of Indians to work with them on crafting the objectives and strategies section of their plan to meet the overarching goal of biodiversity preservation within the Lower White River Biodiversity Management Area.



The Pierce County Biodiversity Network showing each of the 16 Biodiversity Management Areas (BMAs) for the county (<http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/index.aspx?nid=922>)

Taylor’s Checkerspot Rearing: A total of 5,440 Taylor’s checkerspot larvae (2,848 at Mission Creek and 2,592 at Oregon Zoo) are currently in outdoor diapause at our captive rearing facilities. Mission Creek constructed four new raise beds to help support 3,500 plantain plants used for feeding and oviposition. Follow this link to a blog post on the Sustainability in Prisons Project website (<http://sustainabilityinprisons.org/blog/2015/08/25/more-food-for-the-very-hunger-caterpillars-at-mcccw/>) to see the MCCCW butterfly team in action! The interior of the diapause shed at Mission Creek was painted to prevent mildew and larvae were moved in one week later on September 11.

Taylor’s Checkerspot Reintroduction: Biologists Linders, Randolph, and Hynson worked very hard over the past six weeks to update the 2015 annual report. This requires compiling methods and results from both rearing facilities, as well as updating all methods and results for 2015 Taylor’s checkerspot field surveys during all life stages. It is very challenging to complete all of this work within two months of the close of the field season, and the assistance from Biologist Hynson has been crucial. Biologist Linders will complete the remainder of the re-writing process, including discussion points, needed research and proposed next steps.

Biologist Linders met with staff from CNLM and JBLM to design restoration and seed treatments at three JBLM sites. Biologists Linders and Hynson also laid out fire exclusion areas in potentially occupied areas at Glacial Heritage Preserve that were wetted prior to burning.

Seeding to Enhance Prairie Habitat Meeting: Biologists Linders, Hynson, Hays, and Potter attended a meeting with restoration researchers and practitioners from throughout South Sound to review research results, ecological theory, and future monitoring needs as they relate to germination rates, prairie species composition, pre-seeding treatments, and plug and seedling survival. Monitoring strategies were proposed that would include gathering more site-based biotic and abiotic data at the time of seeding to improve our ability to learn from our standard seeding trials outside of formalized research.

Fisher Surveys

District 15

In a multi-agency collaborative effort to document fisher presence on the Olympic Peninsula, Biologist Murphie established three camera stations within a survey block located near the town of Matlock, WA. Biologist Murphie conducted his second and final checks of these camera stations recently and reports taking photos of opossum, a turkey vulture, Steller's jay, deer, and a bear.

District 17

Biologist Michaelis, with two volunteers, installed six cameras in two hexes. One hex is between the east and west fork Humptulips River and the other is along the central portion of the Humptulips River. Cameras will be monitored for six weeks in an effort to detect fisher on the southwest portion of the Olympic Peninsula.

District 16

Hex 563: Biologist Ament reviewed the completed forms for set-up and check visits to all stations in Hex 563. The equipment was pulled from this hex on August 13, 2015 and has been prepared to be returned to ONP staff. Hair samples collected were prepared for submission.

Hex 565: Biologist Ament reviewed the completed forms for set-up and check visits to all stations in Hex 565. The equipment was pulled from this hex on September 3, 2015 and has been prepared to be returned to ONP staff. Hair samples were prepared for submission.

Computer files have been established for all photos taken during each two week monitoring period for each hex. Biologist Ament spent more time reviewing each photo closely. She consulted with ONP staff to determine how to record information for photos where no obvious wildlife form was observed. All photos and copies of forms will be provided to ONP staff on a thumb drive. Biologist Ament returned the cameras, all other equipment for stations, and hair samples to park staff. Finalized data forms and photos will be provided to ONP staff this week.

TAHD – Elk Season Hoof Collection: Program Manager Calkins and District Biologist Novack met again with Region 5 and Game Division staff to plan for the collection of hooves during the general elk season. The objective is to explore alternative methods to visual surveys to assess

the prevalence of the disease within the population. The group decided to direct collection efforts at antlerless elk permittees from GMU 673 and several GMUs within Region 5. Logistics should be planned out by Oct 19.

Wildlife Areas

Scatter Creek Controlled Burns:

Controlled burns were conducted at the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area on three consecutive days during a brief spell of favorable weather. With a burn ban exemption from the Commissioner of Public Lands in hand, WDFW and the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) completed seven burn units totaling roughly 35 acres in south Puget Sound prairie habitat. Contractual



arrangements between WDFW and CNLM were coordinated by Biologist Hays with funding support from RCO and the Army Compatible Use Buffer Program. Fireline and equipment preparation, day-of-burn operations, and mop-up were conducted by Biologist Cook, Managers Belson and Gerchak, Assistant Manager Gallegos, and Wildlife Area Assistants R. and D. Vanblaricom. Due to the close proximity of Interstate 5 and residential areas, DNR fire managers were onsite during the burns to assist with smoke monitoring. The burns were operationally successful and met habitat restoration objectives.

Waterfowl Habitat: The Olympic Crew was spread from the top of Western Washington to the bottom last week. Manager Gerchak, along with Natural Resource Technician 2 Robert Van Blaricom, spent the week at Chinook Wildlife Area mowing for moist soil management and smartweed production. The Chinook Wildlife Area is managed for elk forage, pheasant hunting, and quality waterfowl hunting.

As mowing was completed at John's River Wildlife Area, Assistant Manager Gallegos and Natural Resource Worker 2 Denny Van Blaricom began mowing at Chehalis Wildlife Area. The purpose of mowing these areas is to control Reed Canary Grass, provide areas for sheet water, and add green feed for water fowl. These Duck Stamp funded projects provide critical wintering waterfowl habitat, and also provide excellent waterfowl hunting.



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

Wildlife Management

SW Goose Season Monitoring: Region 6 Wildlife Program staff (RPM Calkins, Biologists Novack, Michaelis, and Sundstrom) and Enforcement (Sgt. Leonetti) met with their Region 5 counterparts and Waterfowl Section Manager Kraege to discuss the upcoming goose season. Various changes were made to the Goose Area 2A and 2B seasons, which require new monitoring methods. Among items the group discussed was job assignments, procedures for contacting hunters, and season structures for next year. An emergency revision to the WAC was suggested to address a legal discrepancy involving possession of dusky Canada geese, which are now unlawful to possess.

Access Areas

Snow Creek Pier: Regional staff received a report from agency engineers that assessed the pier at the Snow Creek Resort as unsafe for the public. The largest issue is the infrastructure under the walkway that is rusted through or otherwise damaged in several places. Actions are under way to notify the operators of the resort that we can no longer allow the pier to be used, which will affect their operations and the public's use of the site. The initial cost estimate to remedy the problems makes the prospects for repairs any time soon unlikely.

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

Private Lands /Conflict

Deer and Elk Conflicts: Conflict Specialist Blankenship was contacted by a landowner in Buckley that has received extensive damage to his corn crop. Blankenship met with the

landowner and assessed the damage done by elk to the corn crop. Blankenship and the landowner were able to reach an agreement on how to mitigate the damage in the future.

Elk damage to cattle feed in Forks was reported to Conflict Specialist Blankenship. Blankenship was able to contact the landowner and discuss options of mitigating damage by non-lethal measures while the landowner allowed access to hunters during the general seasons.

Conflict Specialist Blankenship responded to a deer damage complaint from a landowner in Shelton. The deer have been regularly visiting his pumpkin patch and eating the pumpkins that the landowner sells as part of his u-pick operation. Blankenship and the landowner were able to discuss non-lethal measures of mitigating damage and allowing landowner selected hunters to access the property during the general seasons.