

Wildlife Program

Week of September 21 – September 27, 2015

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Livestock Compensation: Biologist Shepherd discussed livestock compensation issues with a local livestock producer who experienced losses this season.

Dirty Shirt Pack Area and Range Rider Direction: Biologist Shepherd, Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, and contract range riders discussed strategies in an area with wolf depredations on the Colville National Forest. Range riders are present, and Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, Technician Bendixen, and Biologist Shepherd worked multiple days and nights in the Dirty Shirt pack area. Natural Resource Worker Weatherman located cattle in the south fork of the Chewelah Creek USFS Grazing Allotment.

Livestock Producer Contacts: Biologist Shepherd prepared a list of livestock producer contacts for Pend Oreille County and met with a Pend Oreille County commissioner and her GIS staff.

Cattle Depredation Complaints: Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, along with Captain Harbolt from the Stevens County Sheriff's department, responded to a report of a dead cow along the Deep Lake/Boundary Road in northeast Stevens County. A three year old Herford cow was discovered dead in a pasture along the county road. After a complete investigation of the deceased cow, it was determined the cow did not die from any predator related conflict/attack. It appeared the cow got stuck on her side in a small drainage ditch and suffocated. The deceased cow was removed and taken to the Sherman Creek Composting Facility.

Producer Contacts: Natural Resource Worker Weatherman contacted the producer in the north fork Chewelah Creek USFS allotment. The producer advised that he has moved the majority of his cattle off of the grazing allotment. Natural Resource Worker Weatherman made contact with another producer regarding their cattle along the Aladdin Road in north Stevens County. They will have their cattle off private ground at the end of September. Weatherman contacted the producer in the Clark Creek area and advised him of several head of cattle he has been looking for. The cattle were located along the upper Ruby Creek Road.

Range Rider Contacts: Range riders are present in the north fork Chewelah Creek Allotment. Natural Resource Worker Weatherman contacted range riders in the north fork Chewelah Creek allotment keeping them updated on wolf activity and locations.

Huckleberry Contacts: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett attempted to contact two more producers in the Huckleberry wolf territory. One of the producers, a goat farmer, was given a Sensitive Data Sharing Agreement form for collar data. The goat farmer had recently lost a guard dog, but was convinced it was due to cougar activity in the area. The second contact was unable to be reached by Bennett.

Canid Sightings in Spokane County: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett and Wolf Biologist Roussin met with a landowner in Whitman County about recent reports of large canids. Pictures were examined, the area was scouted for sign, and several interviews were conducted. However, no definitive evidence was available to determine the species of canid reported. Additional follow-ups will continue as reported.

1 New DPCA_L & DPCA Contract: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley entered the two contracts into Novatus.

OR 14 Wolf: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley continues to work with three livestock producers on Eckler Mountain just south of Dayton. OR 14 continues to spook their cattle while looking for dead blue tongue deer.

Region 2 Wolf Activities

Lookout Pack: Specialist Heilhecker, along with Officer Day and a livestock owner, investigated calf bones found by a WSU graduate student. Bones were scattered in a flat area, amongst steep slopes and close to water. Given only bones remained, a cause of death could not be determined.

Region 3 Wolf Activities

Wolf Reports: Moore continued to check for wolf reports. One very general report came in through WDFW's online site, but other than that it has remained mostly quiet.

WILDLIFE DIVERSITY DIVISION

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Periodic Status Reviews: Draft periodic status reviews for the greater sage-grouse and western gray squirrel were released for a 90-day public comment period.

South Puget Sound Prairies: Biologist David Hays coordinated with multiple agencies to facilitate the implementation of prescribed fires in south Puget Sound, including two WDFW wildlife areas, Scatter Creek Wildlife Area and West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area. WDFW wildlife area staff implemented prescribed fires on approximately 60 acres in 2015 with fire subcontractors. Prescribed fire is a critical component of integrated restoration and habitat improvement for Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Willamette Valley Upland and Wet Prairie Ecological Systems. Next steps include herbicide application, direct seeding, and plug transplanting. Funding is provided through numerous grants, including Recreation and Conservation Office Grants, Army Compatible Use Buffer Program Grants, and State Wildlife Competitive Grants.

Priority Habitat and Species List Annual Update: Wildlife Biologist Azerrad coordinated an annual update to the Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) List. The update included revising the

listing status given for each priority species in the PHS List to reflect recent changes in status. It also included making updates to the priority species and priority habitat distribution maps that are found in the PHS List. A number of other updates were made. Changes to the PHS List are now out for review.

Publications: The following paper was accepted for publication in the *Journal of Wildlife Management*: A Spatially Explicit Meta-population Model to Predict Occurrence and Recovery of Wolves. This paper was written by Ben Maletzke (Science Division, Wildlife Program, WDFW), Rob Wielgus (Washington State University), John Pierce (Science Division, Wildlife Program, WDFW), Donny Martorello (Wildlife Program, WDFW), and Derek Stinson (Wildlife Biologist, WDFW).

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

Citizen Science Project Development: Citizen Science Coordinator Wendy Connally traveled to Spokane to meet with representatives from Inland Northwest Land Trust, Washington Lepidopterist Society, Spokane Audubon, a few other volunteers, and Regional Wildlife Program teams to discuss citizen science project development and needs. As follow-up to that meeting, Connally made recommendations for the Moose Reporting App on the WDFW website and app operation instructions to potentially improve public participation and data reporting quality.

REGION 1

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

Private Lands

Blue Creek Bear: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley met with a happy bear hunter after he harvested a very large black bear on one of our Feel Free to Hunt properties in the Blue Creek Unit.

Large bear harvested

Big Horn Sheep Plugging: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley assisted a successful sheep tag holder with getting his sheep plugged before the deadline. While working in the Pomeroy/Clarkston area, Rasley was able to meet up with District Biologist Wik and get the sheep plugged and all the other info documented. The sheep hunter was very pleased with our assistance.

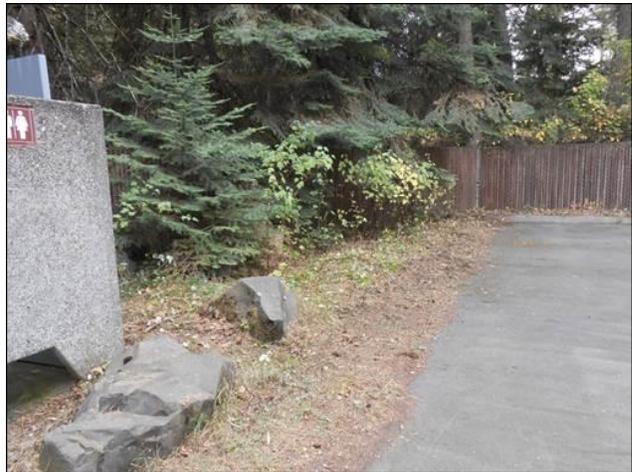


The happy sheep hunter

Wildlife Areas/Water Access Sites

Fan Lake: Dziekan spent some time at the Fan Lake access site addressing concerns that the site was in poor shape. The bathroom was cleaned, a new toilet paper holder was installed, the toilet seat was glued to the ground, and a new door lock that had been missing was installed. In the parking lot, Dziekan cut up some shrubs around the perimeter that had been encroaching onto the black top, and also blew the parking lot and removed a large amount of sticks that had been accumulating. In the driveway, Dziekan cleaned up problem limbs that had been hanging over and scratching trucks and blew the driveway.





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

Private Lands/Wildlife Conflict

National Wild Pheasant National Technical Meeting: Supervisor McCanna was contacted by the Wisconsin lead for the pheasant technical meeting next week. McCanna was asked to run the meeting due to their lack of knowledge with the National Wild Pheasant Conservation Plan (main contact took another position). McCanna worked out the final details with Wisconsin staff and agreed to lead the four day meeting.

Hunter Education: Supervisor McCanna became trained as a hunter education instructor in Spokane. McCanna now needs to attend one field course to be an official instructor.

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Rare Carnivore Monitoring: Biologists Fitkin and Heinlen, along with USFS staff, retrieved hair-snag/camera sites deployed in the Central Pasayten Wilderness the last two months to detect and potentially collect DNA from rare carnivores, including lynx, wolverine, wolves, and grizzly bears. Detections help further our understanding of distribution and status of these listed species. In terms of rare carnivores, the sites only captured photos of lynx. However, we also gathered data on many other species, including more common carnivores such as black bears and cougars. Although the trip was quite strenuous, it's hard to beat the back country in September, and during our trek we also encountered several individuals enjoying the high hunt and the spectacular fall scenery.



Checking and removing a hair-snag site



Lynx scent marking a camera site – Photo by remote camera, USFS





Cougar, black bear, and badger (at 7100 feet) – Photos by remote cameras, USFS

Triploid Checkered Whiptail: Diversity Technicians Annanie and Gaston monitored a location in Lind Coulee that is known to harbor a population of the exotic triploid checkered whiptail. These lizards, which are endemic to southeastern Colorado, first appeared in Washington in 2010. Surveys were conducted at that time to map their distribution. Annanie and Gaston monitored the population to determine whether it has spread outside of the known boundary. Although several whiptails were observed, none were located outside of the boundary delineated in 2010. Population boundary monitoring will continue next summer.



Triploid Checkered Whiptail eating a moth at Lind Coulee – Photo by A. Annanie

Pygmy Rabbits: Diversity Technicians Annanie and Gaston assisted the pygmy rabbit crew with preparing release sites for upcoming trapping and release efforts. This consisted of burying artificial burrows that will later be used as release sites. Rabbits that have been captured from the breeding pens are placed in the tubes for a predetermined amount of

time so as to allow them to acclimate to their new surroundings prior to being set free. The technicians also participated in a capture and release session. The pygmy rabbits are captured in one of two ways, either by corralling them into a large pen or by setting out individual spring loaded traps that are placed at the openings of their burrows. Upon being captured, the rabbits are weighed, sexed, checked for bot flies, sampled for a small piece of ear tissue, and given a flea treatment before finally being transferred to one of several designated release sites and set free.

Shown here is a pygmy rabbit that has been captured in a spring loaded trap. Typically 100-140 traps are set throughout an enclosure as to ensure an adequate number of captures. The number of rabbits captured in a given day can vary from 20 up to 80 or more
– Photo by A. Annanie



In this picture, Technician Annanie places a rabbit in an artificial burrow at one of the release sites. Both ends of the burrow are plugged with burlap and the rabbit is allowed to rest and acclimate. A small amount of food is placed next to the burrow and after a short amount of time the burlap is removed and the rabbit is free to go.



Capture/Release Activities: There were two trapping events this week. On Wednesday the team trapped at Sagebrush Flat. Despite only having six people, we decided to try the funnel trap/drive method, as the six people, Biologists Gallie and Wisniewski, and Technicians Gibbs, Satterwhite, Annanie, and Gaston, were all highly skilled department employees. We were able to capture 16 rabbits, including 13 kits (12 new and one recap) and three recap adults. One recap kit and one recap adult were retained in the enclosure for breeding, and the remaining 14 rabbits were released to the wild in the Beezley Hills Recovery Emphasis Area (BHREA). On Thursday the same team minus Biologist Gallie trapped at the Beezley Hills enclosure using traditional box traps. We captured 32 rabbits, including 23 new kits, two recap kits, and seven recap adults. Twenty-seven rabbits (22 kits and five adults) were released to the wild in the BHREA. The remaining two adults and one recap kit were retained in the enclosure for breeding. One new kit escaped back into the breeding enclosure, and one of the recap kits had climbed over the nursery fence and into the main breeding enclosure. It was returned to the nursery and will hopefully stay there until the genetic results come back.

Invertebrate Sampling: Diversity Technician Gaston finished and deployed an invertebrate trap at Mansfield Pond. The purpose of these surface activity traps is to acquire baseline information for invertebrate abundance and diversity in wetlands throughout the Columbia Basin. The box was allowed to sit for about 72 hours before being collected. Approximately two and a half liters of water was collected from the trap and filtered through a fine mesh screen to capture the invertebrates. Specimens were placed in ethanol filled jars for preservation and currently await identification. The invertebrates will eventually be segregated by family.



Shown here are the completed invertebrate traps. The top is hinged so as to allow the contents to be poured out upon collection. The front of the trap has two recessed panels that restrict the opening to just ½ inch over which a mesh screen is placed to keep fish and other non-target organisms out. When an invertebrate enters the trap, the narrow opening makes it difficult for it to escape –
Photo by A. Annanie



Shown here is a picture of the invertebrate trap as it was placed in the field for sampling. The traps are strategically placed to sample just the upper most layer of the water column – Photo by A. Annanie



Shown here are a few of the invertebrates that were captured in the invertebrate traps, they have yet to be identified – Photo by A. Annanie

Gambusia Sampling: Diversity Technicians Annanie and Gaston sampled sections of the northwestern portion of the Potholes Wildlife Area for invasive fish species, specifically *Gambusia affinis*, which is an invasive mosquito fish. Although often introduced as a form of mosquito control, these fish can quickly become a nuisance and wreak havoc on native ecosystems by consuming insect larvae, zooplankton, and aquatic plants that other native species depend on. The purpose of the sampling was to determine to what extent the fish have expanded in the area. The area was hiked by the technicians and every body of water that was encountered

was sampled for the presence of fish. Sampling was conducted using dip nets as well as drag nets. In addition to *Gambusia*, the area also contained largemouth bass and carp. During this time of the year, the water levels were significantly lower than usual. This made sampling easier as it limited the area in which the fish could inhabit. Only the larger bodies of water had ceased to dry up, although their water levels had dropped significantly. Sampling is still ongoing. However, so far fish have been confirmed to be present in at least six bodies of water to the west of Road C NE, (i.e. the west arm of Potholes Reservoir, north of the intact cross dike).



*Shown here is a picture of a juvenile *Gambusia* caught by the technicians in the Potholes Wildlife Area – Photo by A. Annanie*



*Above is a picture of a juvenile largemouth bass, and below is an adult. Both were found in the same area as the *Gambusia* – Photo by A. Annanie*

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

Wildlife Areas

Americans with Disabilities: Biologist Finger worked with volunteers B. and R. Green to install ramps for the two ADA blinds on the Frenchmen Regulated Access Area. Green produced a materials order for a third blind to be installed at the Flood Flat of the Gloyd Seeps Unit. Finger

and O. and E. Duvuvuei worked with volunteers from Delta Waterfowl and the Washington Waterfowl Association to construct the blind.

Photo of one of the recently installed ADA blinds prior to being concealed by vegetation – Photo by R. Finger



Rocky Ford Creek: Manager Fitzgerald received a report that a fisherman’s favorite Rocky Ford fishing spot was flooded, and to access the channel he would have to wade, not allowed in Rocky Ford Creek. With Supplemental Feed Route water supplementing normal flows through the “Adrian Sink”, springs feeding Rocky Ford are experiencing very high output, resulting in flooding and increased bank scour. The aluminum foot bridge was checked, and it looked to Fitzgerald like the bridge abutments were in danger of failing, dropping the one-piece bridge into the creek. Environmental Engineer Kristen



Kuykendall had inspected the bridge about a month ago and advised the bridge was adequately supported by the abutment pilings.

Rocky Ford aluminum foot bridge
9/23/15 – Photo by Greg Fitzgerald

Private Lands/Access

Deer Baiting: Private Lands Biologist Braaten was notified from a concerned Douglas County landowner that a hunter had been dumping apples on public land near his residence and had set up a

camera and blind. Private Lands Biologist Braaten notified landowner that it is legal to use bait to hunt deer and elk. Private Lands Biologist Braaten contacted a local WDFW enforcement officer to let him know where bait pile was located.

Bait pile – Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW

From Region 2 Enforcement Weekly: Officer Oswald is working on a case in Douglas County involving a two point buck with an arrow stuck in its face. He also checked into a complaint that deer hunting over bait is occurring near Chelan. The huge pile of dumped apples has



attracted hundreds of deer from around the area. The result has been multiple complaints the man is trespassing and employing illegal hunting practices. Officer Oswald found him to be completely legal. In the following photograph there are over 60 deer with the apple bin in the middle the man is using as a blind.



Thousands of dumped apples. There are over 60 deer in this photo feeding on the fruit.



Back country splendor featuring sub-alpine larch



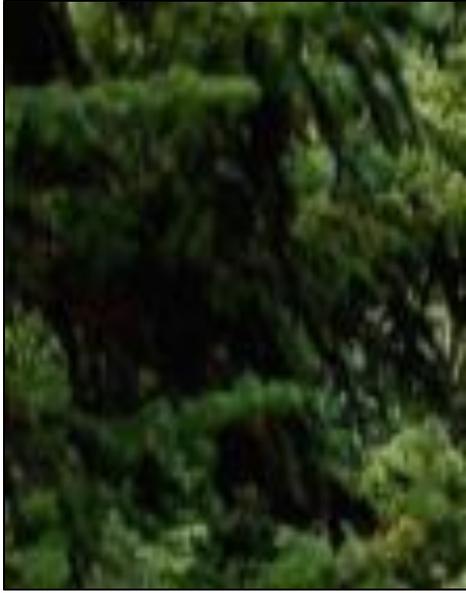
Wilderness mule deer



High mountain meadow



Biologist Fitkin in his element



Biologist Heinlen wondering “did we really just hike that far?!” – All photos except remote camera photos by Scott Fitkin



Young ruffed grouse foraging on snow berries in a riparian draw in Chelan County – Photo by J. Gallie



From top to bottom – A blue jay paid us a visit near the Sinlahekin Headquarters – a bird that has been slowly expanding its range westward. My son Riley hunting on the final day of the high hunt near Sunny Pass in the Pasayten Wilderness –
Photos by Justin Haug



REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman floated the Tieton River with Yakama Nation Fisheries staff and engineering consultants. The purpose of the guided raft trip was to look at opportunities for creating edge habitat and reconnecting old side channels to improve fish habitat along the lower reach of the Tieton River. The guide company was great and worked really hard to get the rafts to shore despite the very fast flows and lack of takeout locations. The contractors identified several locations where habitat could be improved and will work on a proposal that Yakama Nation will use to try and secure BPA Funding.



Planning with the crew and guides before putting in at Windy Point



Rafts and crew at a takeout location along a flooded side channel. This channel only flows during high water events like the flip flop in the fall.

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Buser spent much of the week using the Marsh Master to improve wetland habitat and hunting conditions on the wildlife area. At the Mesa Lake Unit mowing was completed on the following; 13 acres at the 7-Acre Pond, 2 acres of the Serpent Wetland, and 2 acres of the Pigeon Pond Complex. At the Windmill Ranch Unit mowing, mulching and spraying was completed on the following; 4 acres of Worth Lake, 5 acres of the Northeast Wetland, 5 acres of Phase 1 Wetland, 4 acres of the Circle 3 Wetlands, 2 acres downstream of Windmill Lake, 4 acres of the Phase 3 Wetlands, and 4 acres of the Circle 8 Wetlands. At the Bailie Memorial Youth Ranch Unit mowing and spraying was completed on the following; 4 acres of the Warm Water Wetland, 4 acres of the Stick Wetland, and 2 acres of the Blind 8 Wetland.



Assistant Manager Buser heads out into the seven acre pond with the Marsh Master

Wildlife Management

Duck Traps: District Biologist Fidorra, Private Lands Biologist Stutzman, and Technician Kaelber took turns checking and baiting the duck traps on Bailie Memorial Youth Ranch this week. 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. So far, no ducks have returned to the site after the Youth Hunt.

Species Status Assessments: District Biologist Fidorra spent time working on the Diversity Species Status Assessments for black-tailed jackrabbits. Fidorra spoke with District Biologist Atamian about past WDFW jackrabbit projects and data.

Richland Rod and Gun Club: 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.

Habitat Inquiry: District Biologist Fidorra responded to a Washington Department of Transportation inquiry regarding wildlife habitat adjacent to a planned construction project.

American White Pelican Status Review: District Biologist Fidorra reviewed and provided edits to the American White Pelican Status Review.

Road Kill Badger: District Biologist Fidorra responded to a report of a road kill badger and retrieved and shipped a DNA sample from the animal for the statewide research project.

Ferruginous Hawk Monitoring: District Biologist Fidorra met with the ferruginous hawk volunteer monitor to collect data and season summaries. Of the two hawk nests monitored, one

was successful and one failed with large nestlings. Fidorra entered data and contacted the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarding 2010-2015 survey data. Fidorra plans to track down missing data from prior years to update the WDFW raptor database before the 2016 statewide monitoring effort.

SAFE Plans: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman finished the job sheets for two SAFE plans totaling ~500 acres in Franklin County. Stutzman met with the two producers to go over the specifics of the plans before delivering them to the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Bighorn Sheep: Biologist Bernatowicz responded to a call regarding a sick lamb near Highway 821 with Biologist Moore. The lamb was obviously very sick (likely pneumonia) and could not stand. The lamb was euthanized, and samples were collected and shipped to Washington State University.

Bighorn Sheep Sampling Review: Biologist Bernatowicz reviewed results of previous sampling of bighorn sheep in the Yakima River Canyon and drafted possible management actions. Section Manager Harris will be participating in a multistate meeting to discuss options for managing herds impacted by pneumonia next month.

Pneumonia in Sheep: A few calls were received from the public regarding bighorns and pneumonia. A member of SCI who frequently volunteers on bighorn projects was traveling through the Yakima River Canyon and noticed a new domestic goat herd. The goats are very close to bighorns. A phone number for the landowners could not be found, so Biologist Bernatowicz will attempt to contact them in person this week.

Colockum Elk Sampling: Biologist Bernatowicz worked with Biologist Moore to clean and set up barrels for organ collection. Field sampling plans were tentatively set for the muzzleloader season that starts October 3.

Bighorn Sheep Lamb Sampling: Biologists Moore and Bernatowicz responded to a Department of Transportation report of a sick lamb observed on Highway 821. The lamb was found near the 19 mile marker off to the side of the road. It was unable to walk but was able to lift up its head. The lamb was euthanized and samples were collected. Samples were shipped to WSU for movi testing.

Colockum Bull Study: Moore has continued to check for mortalities on our collared elk. There were no mortalities during the week.

Western Gray Squirrel: Moore has completed the final check on the last of his five transects during the week. Hair was not collected along this transect. The western gray squirrel data file was updated and will need to be shipped to Olympia along with all the site photos.

Colockum Elk Body Condition Sampling: Biologists Moore and Bernatowicz prepared four of the six drop barrels needed for the upcoming antlerless muzzleloader season. Moore ordered WDFW decals and a few other items still need to be added prior to putting the barrels out next week.

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe (MIT) Deer Mortality: Biologist Moore investigated a radio-collared deer mortality in GMU 336. A bear had been on the site and consumed the majority of the carcass. The area was searched extensively and cougar tracks were observed within 150 meters of the site. The mortality was listed as an unknown possible predation.

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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: A recreationist was seriously injured in the North Fork Tarpiscan this weekend when he attempted to move a downed tree from across the North Fork Road. He was transported by ambulance to Wenatchee and eventually Harborview Medical Center.

LT Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Winegeart spoke with Wild Horse wind facility staff regarding a proposed foot race planned for this spring. Roughly 2.5 miles of the race route is located in the Green Gate Unit of the Quilomene Wildlife Area.

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

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman provided information to a citizen visiting his son in Washington from the east coast who wanted to see sites and landmarks from when the “Hanging Tree” western was filmed at Oak Creek. Huffman provided directions to the two remaining landmarks from the set and emailed a section of the green dot map showing the locations. The person was very appreciative of the assistance and was excited to try and locate background scenery from the classic movie. He was also excited to learn that “To Hell and Back” was filmed at Oak Creek as well.

Wildlife Management

Deer Damage Complaint: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received and responded to a deer damage complaint from a landowner in the Paterson area along the Columbia River. Heavy browsing was observed on the leaves and grape crop within the vineyard. Active hazing and general season archery pressure has not been very effective in reducing deer activity. A Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement was established and two damage prevention permits were issued. General season hunting will continue in the area, and specifically youth, senior, and disabled special permit holders will be welcomed to exercise their permit on this property.

Chicken Depredation: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand responded to a complaint of an animal depredating on young chickens in the Finley area. Advice was given on possible culprits and reference was given to our “Living with Wildlife” self-help document as well as contact information for Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators in the area.

Thornton Unit: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand assisted a master hunter with recovery of an antlerless elk harvested on the Thornton Unit. While in the area, contact was made with three other hunters who were hunting elk without the proper permits and who had trespassed on two different private properties and had driven down a closed road on the Wildlife Area. Information was gathered and presented to local Enforcement staff.

Elk Hazing: Conflict Specialist Wetzel was contacted by a landowner in west Ellensburg about over 100 elk that have been in his alfalfa field and the surrounding area. The elk are nocturnal but can be found during the day on private land that does not allow hunting. Master hunters were asked to volunteer for night hazing and a schedule was developed with the landowner. Conflict Specialist Wetzel received 46 calls from different master hunters regarding this hazing operation.

Fencing Materials: Conflict Specialist Wetzel was contacted by a landowner in Thorp about fencing materials for a small commercial farming area. They will be delivered this week.

Hazing Materials: A landowner in Park Creek reported 60 elk in his irrigated alfalfa during the night. More hazing materials were provided at his request.

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

Wildlife Areas

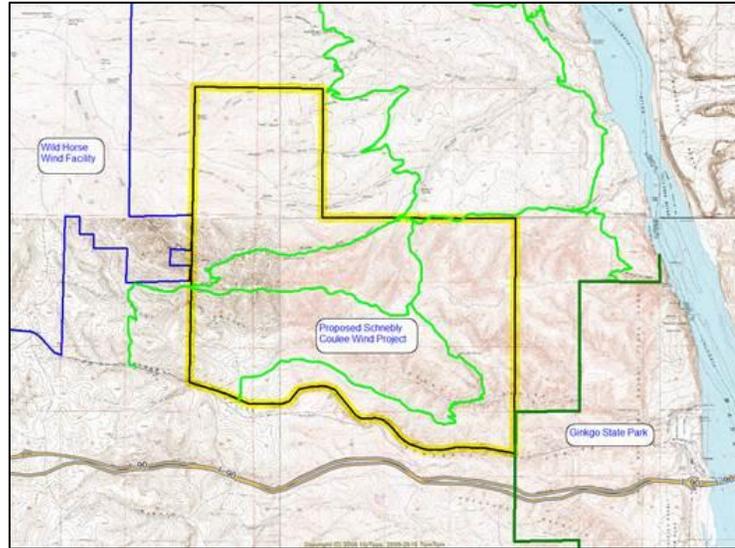
Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman continued to work on replacing the old furnace in the residence. Huffman received clearance from CAMP Assistant Director Burns to proceed with the project, but Burns recommended receiving additional bids. Huffman contacted two additional vendors and set up site visits. Huffman and Assistant Manager Berry removed the old diesel lines in the residence and underground to the tank. The tank was too heavy to move with equipment on site so Huffman contacted the Yakima Construction Shop who used a boom truck to load and haul off the tank for surplus. Propane is scheduled to be installed on October 1 and Huffman is still waiting on the final bid for the furnace replacement before selecting a vendor.

The old furnace oil storage tank loaded on the boom truck and ready for surplus. The 500 gallon tank weighs about 9000 pounds.



LT Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Winegeart received information regarding a proposal from Invenergy LLC requesting a northern expansion of their Vantage Highway wind facility onto the Whiskey Dick Wildlife Area. The new project area is a checker board ownership encompassing 7,000+ acres of WDFW land and 4,500+ acres of DNR land. WDFW currently leases several of the DNR parcels. The proposal was forwarded to management.

Proposed wind project location



REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Priority Species and Habitats:

Biologists DeBruyn and Yarborough responded to a call from a landowner on the Lummi Peninsula who was concerned about potential development of a tract containing an occupied great-blue heron colony. They documented over 100 recent nests, eggshells, and some dead fledglings. The colony is visible from outer space on Google Earth.

Great blue heron nests in Lummi Peninsula colony (from the ground)



Exotic Species Assessment: Staff from Districts 12 and 13 set traps to determine the presence of a deleterious species at an urban wetland. A local fisherman suggested there may be an exotic species present in the system so trapping is now underway to assess the situation.



Staff deploying minnow traps to see what species might exist in a local wetland

Mountain Goat Data Analysis:

Biologist Milner spent several days cleaning up, entering, and analyzing data provided by the Sauk Suiattle Tribal biologist. This year, several tribes worked together to fund and fly mountain goat surveys in the Mt. Baker and Darrington Ranger Districts on the Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest.

Judson Lake Lead Abatement

Project: Biologist DeBruyn worked with habitat personnel to finish and submit the HPA application. A conference call with the principals was held after a visit to the lake to ascertain water levels. The project involves the use of a tracked vehicle (a marsh master) to settle suspended lead shot out of aquatic vegetation and would require the lake to be virtually dry. Given this year's dry summer it may be possible to test the methodology if we don't get any heavy rain during the next two weeks.



Judson Lake, a hot spot for lead shot, showing dry conditions

Protected Wildlife Management: Biologist Anderson continues to provide 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, nest removal requests, documentation, and providing information to property owner attorneys as requested for their client's needs.

One can assist WDFW with documenting wildlife via reporting at our Wildlife Observation Website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/viewing/observations/>

One can find department management recommendations for Priority Habitats and Species here: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/phs/>

Wildlife Areas

Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP): Projects Coordinator Brokaw had a conference call with PSNERP staff to discuss next steps and tasks for the project. More information on the PSNERP project is available at www.pugetsoundnearshore.org.

Island County Beachwatchers Presentation: Projects Coordinator Brokaw presented information on the Leque Island Estuary Restoration Project to the Island County Beachwatchers. Several of the 30 Beachwatchers who attended the presentation expressed interest in assisting with monitoring the project area and signed up for the project email distribution list. To be added to the email list, please contact Loren Brokaw at Loren.Brokaw@dfw.wa.gov.

Leque Island Estuary Restoration Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw compiled and distributed notes from the meeting with adjacent landowners held the previous week. He also reviewed and provided comments on a report compiled by a sub-contractor that recommends the layout and length of tidal channels that should be incorporated in the project design. The layout of tidal channels will be included in the next round of hydrodynamic modeling that will be done for the preferred design alternative.

Fir Island Farm Estuary Restoration Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw, Habitat Planner Friebel, Habitat Engineer Barnard, and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) staff installed an rSET device in the portion of the project area that will be restored to estuary. The rSET device will measure sediment that will deposit in the estuary over the course of the next six years. Three rSET devices will be installed in the project area as prescribed in the project monitoring and adaptive management plan.



Projects Coordinator Brokaw and NOAA staff backfilling an rSET device



Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Habitat Engineer Barnard driving the rSET rod 60' into the ground

Rainbow Pond Water Control Replacement: This week construction began on the replacement water control structure for Rainbow Pond on the Lake Terrell Unit. The old structure had collapsed in on itself and has not been functional for 1.5 years. This project is funded with Duck Stamp funds, and is being managed by Ducks Unlimited.



Rainbow Pond Old Water Control Removal

Corn Harvest on The Nooksack Unit: The local farmer who has the agricultural lease on the Nooksack Unit harvested the silage corn this week. The corn field is approximately 100 acres, and the farmer leaves 10% standing for winter waterfowl feeding. The corn is left standing in patterns that help spread out the birds, and help facilitate safe hunting.



Rainbow Pond New Water Control Install

Cherry Valley Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with Frohning Dairy to implement 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 met with Frohning Dairy to implement the harvest plan for the unit. Approximately 60 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.

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm worked with Werkhoven Dairy to discuss the final grass harvest for the season. Approximately six acres of corn and 24 acres of tall grass was retained for wildlife forage and cover.

Corn harvest



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

Wildlife Management

2015 Hunting Seasons: Staff members continue to provide guidance and information to hunters and land managers calling to inquire regarding specific hunt information, guidance, and how to hunt the district. Calls are concerning how to take animals, cougar and bear hunt methods given other seasons, where to bring bear specimens, scheduling pelt seal needs, GMU boundaries, landowner reference information, and other general questions. The current pamphlet can be found here:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/regulations/>

CITES Bobcat and River Otter Management: Biologist Anderson fielded calls about needs for sealing. 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/>

Urban Wildlife Conflict Management: Biologist Anderson received a number of calls voicing concerns over recent increases in coyote sightings in some local areas. Coyote pups from this year are now becoming old enough to develop a bit of independence from a family unit. They will go out on their own forays at this time and may leave the family unit altogether. Further, if older individuals from the past year were incorporated into the family unit through this current season, now that there are pups this year, these “tweeners” are generally moving out on their own to establish a territory and find a mate – or are plain being evicted in a social sense due to increase in family unit size. In short, this is a good time of year to have increases in coyote sightings due to changes in social dynamics, seasonal shifts in territory use due to resources, and having young and inexperienced individuals out and learning the ropes. It is critical that the public keep their property in a state that does not directly or indirectly promote habituation in wildlife (including coyotes). Once animals lose some fear of humans – it is a practice in removing attractants, promoting hazing and other aversive conditioning when one sees these habituated individual(s), and getting the entire community on board. These species are very common in our landscape and we will always have them. Getting rid of one will not rid the community or the property owner of future potential for an individual wild animal displaying habituation.

Please refer to our Living with Wildlife website for how to keep wildlife wild by implementing techniques to separate animals from human attractants and utilize aversive conditioning techniques, as well as ecology of animals and legalities of how to deal with them. <http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/species/>

Coyote at Magnuson Park in Seattle

Wildlife Areas

Western Washington Pheasant

Release: Skagit Wildlife Area Technician Cosgrove monitored pheasant pens, feeders, and waterers, and removed dead birds throughout the week. Cosgrove assisted with pheasant delivery on Friday. Manager Rotton coordinated and enrolled pheasant volunteers, monitored pheasant pens, and purchased feed. Pheasant volunteers released pheasant on the Samish and Leque Island units for the youth and senior hunts.



Manager Kessler received 420 pheasants from the game farm and released them into the pheasant pens at Lake Terrell. He worked with volunteers to release pheasants for the senior hunt and the start of the regular season. Pheasants are now being released on all three sites, Lake Terrell, Intalco, and British Petroleum. Turn out for opening day of the regular season was very good.

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm continued placing informational and educational signage related to the pheasant season opener this past week. Manager Boehm was on the pheasant units early Saturday morning to meet and greet the hunters. Manager Boehm also informed the hunters of the “Wild Future” initiative and asked that they either plan to attend the meeting on October 6 or provide comments via the website link.

Pheasant hunters staging in a parking lot on the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area



Waterfowl Season: Meis and Cosgrove checked Skagit Bay

Estuary Reserve Signs, installed the orange Reserve Boundary buoy at the mouth of Deep Water Slough, and checked various sloughs for downed trees and debris to make sure the public will have access to the Skagit Bay front.

Skagit Headquarters Unit: Manager Rotton started the seasonal closure process for portions of the Headquarters Unit dike top trail. The site will be closed during the work week for the Wiley

Tidegate repair project. Public access will be allowed for most of the site during the weekends. Manager Rotton attended a pre-construction meeting for Wiley Slough Tide gate repair project. IMCO is the company that won the bid for the job and they are scheduled to begin construction as soon as Oct 5. Rotton met with IMCO staff to discuss the specifics of the work area, storage, and material staging locations.

Samish Unit: Meis and Cosgrove installed five footbridges on the Samish Unit to replace old bridges dismantled during the wetland enhancement project work. Cosgrove installed stakes to hold down the five new footbridges he placed across ditches at the Samish Unit.

Island Unit: Cosgrove did a final tally of agricultural/moist-soil acreage on the Island Unit this year. Dry conditions throughout the summer allowed for more acreage to be planted (barley, corn, fava beans) or manipulated to produce seed-bearing plants (wild millet) than normal, bringing the total acreage to about 120. This includes 44 acres of barley, 23 acres of corn, 40 acres of millet, and eight acres of fava beans.

DeBay's Slough: Meis and Cosgrove checked the Game Reserve field at the Johnson/DeBay's Slough Unit to ensure the sharecropper left WDFW's share of standing corn. Sufficient corn was left. While at the unit, Cosgrove posted Safety Zone signs on the hunt area.

Samish River Unit: Manager Rotton hosted a pre-bid meeting for contractors interested in removing the spoils from the swale construction on the Samish River Unit wetland enhancement project. Capital Asset Management Program construction crew have completed wetland swale construction and began pond construction and installation of the perch poles and large wood structures on the Samish River Unit wetland enhancement project.



Nearly complete Wiley Slough Pump Station

Tennant Lake Waterfowl Hunting Coordination: Manager Kessler coordinated with the Whatcom County Parks managers on the waterfowl hunting at Tennant Lake. During the hunting season, the raised wood boardwalk is closed due to its proximity to the hunting blinds. Kessler made sure the gates were closed during the youth hunt and opened them back up afterwards. The boardwalk will remain open until the regular waterfowl season opens on October 17.

Private Lands/Access Management

Project Coordination Efforts: Private Land Access Supervisory Biologist Caldwell contacted engineering representatives from Shell USA to coordinate on future recreation and wetland mitigation projects.

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition Coordination Meeting: Private Land Access Supervisory Biologist Caldwell along with Washington and Pacific Coast Ducks Unlimited representatives attended the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition Coordination Program meeting in Seattle, WA. This meeting provided excellent opportunities to network with other entities who are engaging in Washington wildlife and recreational opportunities.



Natural Resource Technician Otto spotted several Sandhill Cranes and Western Canada Geese utilizing fields in Whatcom County

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

Wildlife Management



Biologist Yarborough accompanied personnel from PAWS to release three orphaned coyotes in Whatcom County

Wildlife Conflict Management

Wildlife Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman assisted Enforcement with disposal of an elk that appeared to have been poached on private property in Skagit County. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman participated in a meeting with District Biologist Yarborough to discuss land use on US Forest Service land near Sedro Woolley that currently has elk utilizing the property. The meeting was also attended by several Point Elliott Tribal biologists. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman responded to the Sedro Woolley area of Skagit County to meet with a landowner that had been out of town for the past two weeks and had received elk damage to a fence and his garden. The landowner has previously used hazing strategies to mitigate damage. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal monitored and assisted youth, senior and disabled hunters participating in the Special Elk Area 4941 hunt. Hunter success was good with several nice elk being taken by hunters in all three groups.



Successful Senior Hunter in the Skagit Valley

Wildlife Areas

Samish Unit: Meis is developing a map of water control structures and a water monitoring and management log for the Samish Unit Wetland Enhancement project. This monitoring log will be used to track water and habitat conditions based on system manipulations throughout the year.

Island Unit: Cosgrove inspected the water control structure that drains the Lorenzen field on the Island Unit and determined what improvements would be needed to hold water more effectively. Cosgrove and Meis assisted with ferrying of equipment off the Island Unit. Volunteers have been mowing dike tops and fields for the final preparation for the hunting season. Cosgrove contacted a local Washington Waterfowl Association representative regarding a field tour of the Island Unit scheduled for October 3.



Successful Youth Hunter in the Skagit Valley

Private Lands/Access Management

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. Biologist Wingard dropped off more signs to the landowner at the Bayview Pheasant site.

Private Landowner Relations: Biologist Wingard spoke and met with several landowners to address concerns and build relationships this week. Including the owner of the Bayview pheasant release site, a landowner in the Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program (WQHP) who was concerned about liability, and a landowner in the WQHP who decided to leave the program for a private lease. The landowners appeared satisfied with the interactions and all conversations ended positively.

Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordination

Hunter Education Instructor Support: Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey activated four 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 assisted instructors to hold two classes at the Upper Skagit Cultural Center. Coordinator Dazey delivered two adult shotguns to Chief Instructor Webber for their live fire. Dazey also assisted Chief Instructor McAuliffe to order supplies. Dazey assisted an instructor who was in the process of relocating to connect with new teaching teams where he was moving.

Pre Service Training: Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey conducted the second of the two required Pre-Service Training sessions to certify hunter education instructor applicants. Both sessions were held at the Black Diamond Rifle Range and included applicants from the south King County area. The final session of training for these applicants is where the applicants will be given the opportunity to teach an actual class under the supervision of Dazey with the assistance of certified instructors from the Black Diamond team. Following this last session all four applicants are qualified to be certified as hunter education instructors. Two of the new instructors are from the Muckleshoot tribe and will conduct classes for tribal hunters.

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. The event went very well and many citizen contacts were made and questions answered.

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

Wildlife Area staff completed Small Purchases and Purchasing and Procurement Ethics training.

Biologist DeBruyn completed the hiring package for a Scientific Technician 2 position to be filled November 1. The tech will be responsible for collecting swans and sampling for High-Path Avian Influenza. It is hoped the position will be posted by next week.

District 13 staff attended the annual meeting of the biologist's professional association.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Treponeme-associated Hoof Disease Elk Survival Study: Biologists George and Stephens followed up on a notification that the GPS collar of an elk in the Hoof Disease Survival study had gone into mortality mode. The elk was found to have been harvested by a hunter and the collar, along with some of the carcass, was left out in the field. The hooves and samples of internal organs were collected and will be sent to Colorado State University for further analysis. Examination of the fat on the kidneys, heart, and pericardium indicated that this cow elk was in fair condition when harvested. 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.

Hoof Disease Site Visit: Conflict Specialist Conklin and Hoof Disease Coordinator George responded to the residence of a landowner reporting an elk severely affected by hoof disease. The cow elk was accompanied by a calf and eating apples when we arrived. She was thin and limping but alert, moving, and eating well. The landowner was fine with the two remaining in the yard. The cow will be monitored for changes in her condition and the landowner will notify WDFW if her condition worsens.

Fisher Reintroduction Project: Biologist Anderson, Bergh, Holman, and Stephens, along with Biologist Lewis from Olympia, met with USFS and NPS staff to evaluate potential fisher release sites in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Several high quality habitat areas were evaluated primarily in the Cispus and Lewis River drainages. These areas are generally remote and have large tracts of older age timber stands considered to be prime fisher habitat. Historically, fishers occurred throughout much of the mid to low elevation forested areas of Washington, but they were extirpated from the state by the mid-1900s.

Western Pond Turtle Release: Biologist Bergh and two keepers from the Oregon Zoo released 12 western pond turtles back into the wild. 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 in the wild. The 14 remaining hatchlings will continue to grow and will be released in the spring of 2016.



Western pond turtle release

Shillapoo Wildlife Area

2015 Wetland Plantings Update: Earlier this summer, Assistant Manager Hand planted six moist soil impoundments in various cover crops to include sorghum, white proso millet, buckwheat, poco barley, and wheat. All sites have done well this growing season, even considering the drought conditions that Washington had. The wheat, millet, and buckwheat have matured and the sorghum and barley have set seed and will reach maturity soon. These cover crops will be left standing and inundated for the upcoming hunting season. This will provide an abundance of high energy food and cover for wintering waterfowl. Pheasant hunters should also take notice of these plantings because there is a good chance that many a rooster will be found foraging at these sites.



White proso millet at Vancouver Lake



Sorghum in South McBride at Shillapoo South Unit

Pasture/Wetland Spraying: Wildlife Area Manager Hauswald and Assistant Manager Hand applied an herbicide treatment to pasture and wetland sites that will be worked up and planted in the spring/summer of 2016. The pasture at Vancouver Lake had roughly 15 acres sprayed, targeting blackberries. This site will again be treated in the spring of 2016 for grasses and weeds prior to being worked up. Pencil Lake, Blaker’s Lake, and a portion of the Lakebed on Shillapoo Wildlife Area have been sprayed for reed canary grass. The management plan for these sites is to treat reed canary grass in the fall before it goes dormant, inundate over the winter/spring, and then plant in the summer. This approach has been quite successful in years past at achieving a good kill on canary grass and allowing the existing natives in the seedbed to grow.



Himalayan Blackberry treated at Vancouver Lake



Reed canary grass treated in Pencil Lake

New Gravel at Shillapoo: Assistant Manager Hand coordinated and oversaw 360 tons of gravel being distributed at high priority roads inside Shillapoo Wildlife Area. Over the years certain maintenance roads have been degraded due to high usage and heavy equipment traffic. The six re-rocked areas include the North Dike road, L-shaped field access road, Chapman’s Pasture, Lakebed access road, North McBride road, Tidegate road, and the levee at Southern Lake River pastures. This project now allows safe travel and less degradation during the rainy season.

New gravel at North McBride road



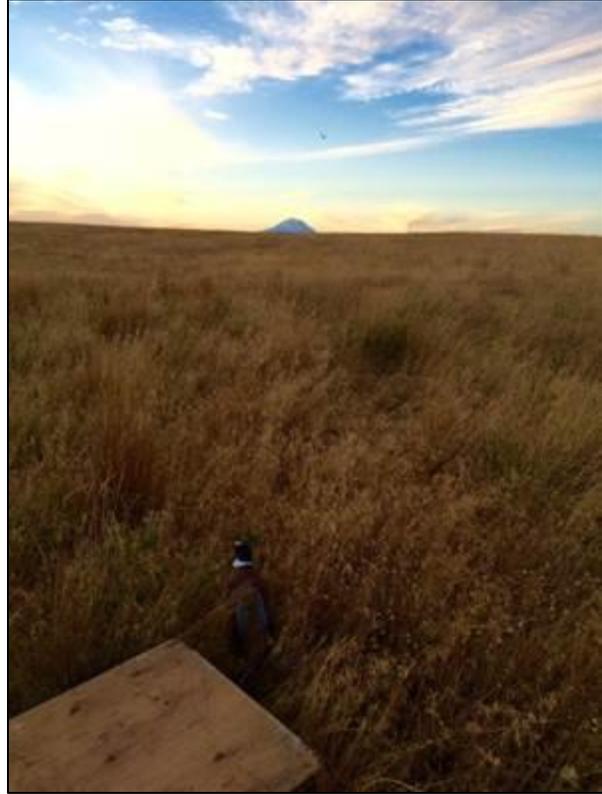
GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Management

Pheasant Release: Conflict Specialist Peterson and Biologist Bergh released pheasants at sites in Klickitat County in preparation for the September 19-20 weekend youth hunt.



Conflict Specialist Peterson releasing pheasants



Full-size render

Access

Vancouver Lake: Access staff Spangler and Rhodes worked with the corrections crew picking up litter and cutting brush. A truck load of junk was taken to the dump, including an old toilet, couch cushions, and building material trash, totaling 180 pounds. In addition, 30+ tires were dumped on the county side of the entrance gate and the Discover Pass sign had to be replaced at the entrance.

Martin: Four-wheel drive trucks have punched in another road around the boulders that were placed there to keep vehicles out. This is a walking easement that isn't intended for vehicle use. Vehicle use causes problems with illegal dumping, illegal camping, and tearing up the river bank. The entire east side of the parking area will need to be lined with boulders or concrete barriers to stop this activity.



Martin access site

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

D-9 Wildlife Conflict

Geese: Conflict Specialist Peterson contacted the Stephenson-Carson school district maintenance supervisor in response to an ongoing presence of geese on the sports fields and school grounds. Peterson has compiled a list of suitable hazing techniques and will be in contact with the maintenance supervisor to suggest implementation.

Deer: Conflict Specialist Peterson met with an Underwood landowner as part of a DPCA. Peterson and the landowner discussed continued methods and efforts to haze deer during the harvest season. The landowner expressed interest in getting more public hunters onto the property.

D-10 Wildlife Conflict

Depredation: Conflict Specialist Conklin checked a trail camera on a farm experiencing predation on his livestock. Nothing noteworthy was detected. The farmer continues to keep his livestock close to the outbuildings, plays a radio for noise, and has installed lighting to hopefully prevent further loss.

Elk: Conflict Specialists Conklin and Blankenship, along with Biologist Holman, responded to a call about a cow elk that had her head stuck in a lawn chair. The elk had been observed often feeding with her herd in downtown Packwood for approximately a week. WDFW staff was able to find the elk and immobilize her. The lawn chair was cut from the neck region. It is unlikely the elk could have removed the lawn chair. The elk did very well during the procedure and quickly joined back up with her herd. Several citizens witnessed various aspects of the task, helped locate the elk, etc. The community was appreciative of the WDFW response to this situation and glad that the elk was captured, aided, and released unharmed. Thanks to WDFW Veterinarian Dr. Mansfield for making the wildlife immobilization drug combination BAM available for use in such settings.



Elk with plastic lawn chair around her neck



Biologist Holman removing dart from the elk



Conflict Specialists Blankenship and Conklin injecting reversal drug



Elk after immobilization; free of lawn chair

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management:

Black-tailed Deer Study, Fawn Mortality: Biologist Ament conducted an investigation for a 2015 collared fawn on September 22 after receiving a Mortality Event text earlier that day from Researcher Rice. The fawn was the remaining fawn of the only set of twins collared in the Pysht Cluster this season. She did confirm the mortality of the remaining fawn for the Deer Park doe. At first encounter, she thought it was going to be yet another “unknown cause of

death”. However, with further investigation, Biologist Ament felt confident the young male fawn died from injuries and stress received from an attack by a bobcat. There were obvious lacerations to the neck and front legs/chest areas. She took measurements for the distance between the claws. One claw on the neck must have penetrated deep. No prominent blood...just a little in the right side of the mouth and at one end of a longer laceration on the right side of the neck. She found no major punctures and there was no predation of the fawn. It is hard to know what actually happened during the encounter. This fawn appeared to be in excellent health condition prior to the attack. Biologist Ament took notes, measurements, and photos.



Dead fawn when first located (no obvious wounds)



Lacerations from a bobcat on the neck of dead fawn

Pacific Birds and Audubon of Washington, Long Beach: Biologist Michaelis attended a two day meeting at the request of former WDFW Regional Program Manager Lora Leschner, who is now the state representative for Pacific Birds. He presented WDFW waterfowl data collected in Willapa Bay since 2012 and informed attendees of various land holdings, specifically the new improvements at the WDFW Nemah property. Around 75 people attended, representing various non-governmental agencies. Other agencies present included USFWS, NBS, and ODFW. The need for the monitoring of birds and their habitats with increased cooperation was at the forefront of discussions.

Biologist Michaelis leading a site visit during the meeting



Wildlife Areas

This is a controlled burn under blue skies at the West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area Unit. An EIM point is visible at the right.



West Rocky Prairie Controlled

Burns: With the lifting of the statewide burn ban in western Washington, controlled burns on the South Sound prairies continued this week at the West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area Unit near

Tenino. WDFW and Center for Natural Lands Management combined resources to complete three burn units totaling roughly 21 acres just north of Beaver Creek. WDFW staff involved in the planning, preparation, and implementation of these burns included Biologists Hays, Cook, and Hynson, Manager Belson, and Wildlife Area Assistant R. Vanblaricom. Due to the close proximity of Old Highway 99 and residential areas, a DNR fire manager was onsite during the burns to assist with smoke monitoring. The burns required an additional day of mop-up and monitoring and generally met habitat restoration objectives. Manager Belson encountered two hunters on the site who at first thought the burn crew were illegal ORV riders and were about to engage in some citizen enforcement of Wildlife Area rules! After a brief chat about wildlife observations, fire management, and other topics relating to the site, the parties were content at having learned something about the other's activities and parted ways with a friendly wave.

Private Lands /Conflict

Elk Rescue: Conflict Specialist Blankenship assisted Region 5 Conflict Specialist Conklin and Biologist Holman with immobilizing an elk in Packwood that had a lawn chair stuck around its neck. Blankenship was able to successfully dart the animal and remove the chair from the neck of the cow elk. The elk made a full recovery and joined the other elk in the herd shortly after.

Fawns in Canal: Conflict Specialist Blankenship received multiple reports of two deer fawns that had been stuck in the canal near Buckley for six hours. The canal itself ran nearly a mile, with walls 10 feet high and constructed of concrete. Once the fawns fell into the canal there wasn't an option for them to climb out. Blankenship and contractors working on the canal entered the canal and attempted to catch the fawns and hoist them out using ropes. The deer fawns, of course, did not cooperate with this initial plan. A mile down, the canal opened up and areas of dry land were available for the deer fawns to climb out. Blankenship and one of the contractors proceeded to herd the deer fawns down the canal towards the dry land. Both fawns were able to climb out onto dry land. Blankenship received word from the contractors later in the evening that both fawns were seen back with their mother and in good condition.

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

Anderson Island Coyotes: Reports of coyote problems on Anderson Island were received by the Director’s Office and forwarded to Region 6 Conflict Specialist Blankenship. Blankenship was able to respond to the residents on Anderson Island and provide insight on how to deal with problem coyotes non-lethally and by contracting Wildlife Control Operators to remove the problem coyotes from the area.

Elk Damage: Conflict Specialist Blankenship was able to successfully negotiate terms of a Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement with a landowner in Shelton. Blankenship looks forward to working with this landowner in the future to help minimize elk damage to commercial crops.

Access Areas

Bogachiel River- Leyendecker Access Site Windstorm Cleanup: The Region 6 access team was fortunate to utilize Mr. Wilcox, the same master hunter volunteer who assisted at the Ward Lake fence repair, for the Bogachiel debris cleanup.



Before cleaning up the last site affected by the August wind storms. This is the main parking area at the Leyendecker access site.



Immediately following the final cleanup, site visitors were again able to use the parking lot