

Wildlife Program

Week of July 25 – July 31, 2016

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Conference Calls: Supervisor McCanna participated on multiple conference calls this week regarding current wolf activity in the Profanity Peak.

Wolf Coordination: Supervisor McCanna spent a considerable amount of time coordinating with Region 1, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and Ferry County Sheriff staff members.

Profanity Pack: Supervisor McCanna, Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, Conflict Specialist Shepherd, and an area range rider spent time in a USFS grazing allotment in Ferry County attempting to locate cattle depredations. None were detected. Supervisor McCanna, Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, and Conflict Specialist Shepherd met with the USFS Range Program to discuss a potential road closure plan for management. Weatherman and a range rider placed fladry around a confirmed wolf depredation. The calf was in an area not feasible for removal. Shepherd and Weatherman contacted ranchers and range riders in several Profanity Peak allotments.

Smackout Pack: Biologist Shepherd talked with an allotment holder and private grazer concerning issues of wolves near cattle and on private pastures on the Aladdin Valley floor.

Dirty Shirt Pack: Biologist Shepherd discussed the Dirty Shirt pack activity with area ranchers.

Stranger Pack: Biologist Shepherd talked with an area resident. Natural Resource Worker Weatherman conducted a follow-up contact with a property owner. The property owner who had members of the Stranger pack near domestic dogs appreciates the fox lights placed around her residence.

Wolf Concerns in Huckleberry: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett met with a producer in the Huckleberry area to place a trail camera near cattle. The camera will be monitored until fall.

Monthly Wolf Updates: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett compiled sightings and reported depredations for southcentral Stevens County and WDFW District 2 (Lincoln, Spokane, and Whitman counties). Information was provided to interested parties in both areas.

Table 1: Central Stevens County reported wolf sightings, collared wolf information, camera work, and depredations

How reported	Location	Sightings	Camera Work	Depredations
GPS collar	<u>Two collars in the area</u> One WDFW GPS collar, VHF function only working at this time. One Spokane Tribe GPS collar.	No reports for this period to WDFW.	No reports for this period to WDFW.	No reports for this period to WDFW.
WDFW Public Sightings webpage		One reported: 1. Deer Creek, one animal heard howling.	No reports for this period to WDFW.	
WDFW Staff			No photos for this period.	

Table 2: WDFW District Two county reported wolf sightings, camera work, and depredations

County	Sightings (webpage and contact)	Camera, WCS Bennett and District	Depredations
Lincoln	<u>One reported:</u> 1. 07/21/2016 – Davenport, one gray animal	No cameras out during this period.	No reports for this period.
Spokane	<u>Three reported:</u> 1. 07/13/2016 – Spokane Valley, one gray animal 2. 07/13/2016 – Newman Lake, one animal 3. 07/20/2016 – Mt. Spokane, one gray wolf	No cameras out during this period.	No reports for this period.
Whitman	No reports to WDFW for this period.	No cameras out during this period.	No reports for this period.

OR-38 Wolf Sighting: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley coordinated with several livestock producers on Robinette Mountain south of Dayton regarding OR-38 and his activities in and around their livestock operations. Most of the cattlemen deployed several trail cameras near salt licks and pond sites. After a couple of days, they were able to get a couple good pictures of OR-38. So far we think he is travelling by himself.



OR-38 on Robinette Mountain



OR-38 on another salt site same cattle ranch

Wolf Sighting: Natural Resource Technician Wade received a report of a lone black wolf sighted close to cattle in the Government Springs area of the Umatilla National Forest. Wade is currently working on making contact with the reporting party for more details about the sighting. Wade forwarded the information on to other Conflict staff members and the District Biologist.

Cattleman Meting: Biologist Earl met with an Asotin County cattleman to get a state payee form completed and submitted.

Damage Prevention Contracts for Livestock (DPCA_L): Natural Resource Technician Wade entered several more DPCA_Ls into Novatus for Asotin County Producers.

Region 2 Wolf Activities

Loup Loup Wolves: Specialist Heilhecker, Sergeant Christensen, and Officer Trautman investigated a reported depredation. They found a skeleton and part of a hide with no tracks, scat, or signs of struggle. Cause of death was unknown. Cattle have been moved out of the pasture where wolves established a rendezvous site. Specialist Bridges conducted a depredation investigation on one cow. Results were unknown cause of death, due to the carcass being less than two months old.

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Fall Sagebrush Planting: Gretchen Graber of the Institute for Applied Ecology, Dorothy Trainor of the state's Coyote Ridge Corrections Center, and Jason Lowe of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), met with Wildlife Area Manager Anderson and Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Mike Finch on Monday. The group inspected proposed sagebrush planting sites at the Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area and adjacent BLM land. They also discussed the best way to conduct operations and addressed safety and security issues for all involved. Twenty thousand sagebrush plugs will be planted this fall, using

direct hand planting and mechanized planter methods, depending on site characteristics. The plants have been grown at Coyote Ridge for BLM. Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area will receive its 5,000 plugs for free in return for assisting with planting BLM's 15,000 plugs. More preparation on the ground will be completed before planting commences in late October.

Left to Right: Jason Lowe (BLM), Dorothy Trainor (DOC), Gretchen Graber (IAE), and Mike Finch (DFW)



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

Asotin Creek WA –Access Area Development: Biologist Woodall assisted building fence around the new Harlow Ridge Access Site. We are building fence around a small area on the southeast corner of the Asotin Wildlife Area. The wildlife area will soon have a graveled parking area, a non-motorized access gate, signage, etc. This project was in the works for about four years.



Wildlife Area staff and UI Interns constructing new fence in hot working conditions at Harlow Ridge on the Asotin Creek Wildlife Area



Building fence stretch points



Building rock jacks



Stringing wire

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

Cattle Necropsy: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley, Technician Wade, Sergeant Mossman, and Fish and Wildlife Officer Delp responded to a report of two cow carcasses found on a grazing allotment in the Umatilla National Forest in Asotin County. After completing a necropsy on both cattle, it was determined that they had died from an unknown cause / non-predator.



Eight year old cow



First cow after necropsy near completion



Second cow



Second cow after necropsy near completion

Wildlife Control Operator: Natural Resource Technician Wade worked with a Garfield County trapper who is interested in becoming a wildlife control operator for Garfield and Asotin counties. The prospective wildlife control operator is going to meet with Wade next week for assistance in signing up for the August 26 wildlife control operator class in Spokane. Wade also spoke with Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett about the class and its requirements.

Peola Elk: Natural Resource Technician Wade spent several late nights in the Peola area hazing and looking for elk in agricultural fields. So far it seems that the increased hazing effort is paying off and the elk are starting to stay out of the crops.



Group of mule deer bucks observed while patrolling the Peola area for elk

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

National Pheasant Coordinator Conservation Reserve Program Tour: Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley took part in a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) field tour of several fields just outside of Heppner, Oregon, as well as fields outside of Touchet, Washington. Tour participants included the Upland Game Bird Coordinator from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), as well as the Small Game Section Manager for WDFW and the newly hired Coordinator of the National Wild Pheasant Conservation Plan for the Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA), located in South Dakota.

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Monarch Butterflies: Technician Quayle began to characterize previously documented milkweed sites according to the finalized survey protocol. Of the 45 previous sites in the Quincy area, six have been completely destroyed since the last surveys were completed. Monarch surveys were conducted at 25 sites and adults were found at four. No larvae or eggs were found at any site, possibly due to survey timing. Surveys done in the next two weeks should have a higher chance of locating immatures.

Loon Surveys: Biologist Heinlen surveyed Lost and Bonaparte lakes for loon chicks nearing fledging since both had active nests this spring. No loon chicks were found on Lost Lake, but

Bonapart Lake harbored two adult loon pairs with two chicks each. This is the first time this lake has had two successful broods in the same year.

Pygmy Rabbit Post Release Monitoring: Looking for ways to improve upon post release survival and reduce vulnerability to predation, we began releasing kits into inactive pygmy rabbit burrow systems this spring and summer. To monitor short term response to this new method, we have placed remote cameras on these burrows after each release. So far, results are encouraging, with numerous kits residing on the release burrow one to three weeks post release (when cameras are moved to new spots). Fresh digging was also observed in burrows when the cameras were collected, indicating the rabbit likely was making its new home.



Badger visiting the burrow



A couple minutes later pygmy comes out



POP...goes the weasel



This rabbit remained on site during the entire monitoring (19 days) and avoided two badger and three weasel predations attempts. Must be a rough section of the brush.

Wildlife Areas

Carlton Complex Fences: Maintenance Mechanic Wottlin, like many recent weeks, spent considerable time corresponding with and assisting a handful of FEMA fencing contractors. Wottlin also worked on organizing paperwork related to FEMA purchases, filling out OPFs, and mailing invoices. Wottlin has been instrumental in clarifying and answering questions for many of the fence builders.

Assistant Manager Troyer also had a busy week dealing with FEMA related issues. For example, Troyer had several back and forth phone calls and emails with CAMP's Scott Allen in regards to one of the fencing sub-contractors. This specific contractor has been trespassing and illegally staging equipment on private property adjacent to the Upper Beaver Creek part of the wildlife area. This contractor tried to smooth things over with angry private property owners by telling them that WDFW's Methow Wildlife Area told them they could use the private property and access the wildlife area by driving through private property. Naturally, this was a blatant lie and the attempt did not fool the landowners. Any and all phone calls and correspondence about the situation has been documented and forwarded to CAMP. It sounds like this specific contractor is dangerously close to having their contract pulled. In fact, this contractor is already being charged roughly \$500/day for being far, far behind on their completion timeline. Fortunately for the Methow Wildlife Area, many of the other fencing companies have been playing by the rules and are building some very well constructed fences.

Columbia Basin Habitat and Vegetation Management: Assistant Manager Cole began planning for the late season aerial Phragmites work. While surveying the Mansfield Pond area with District Biologist Finger, the problematic spread of invasive Phragmites was illustrated by these nearly twenty foot long runners rooted in the pond and growing across the rocky surface of the dike.



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

Wildlife Areas

Road Washouts Associated with Methow Storms: There was a low of 61 and a high of 98, with a mix of sunny, stormy, and overcast days. Heavy rain, high winds, and lightning passed through the valley on several occasions this week. Several isolated storm cells sat over portions of the wildlife area and caused considerable erosion. Most of the erosion took place on Lester Road (unnamed creek) and on Ramsey Creek Road where Pearrygin Creek blew out. The aftermath is something to behold.



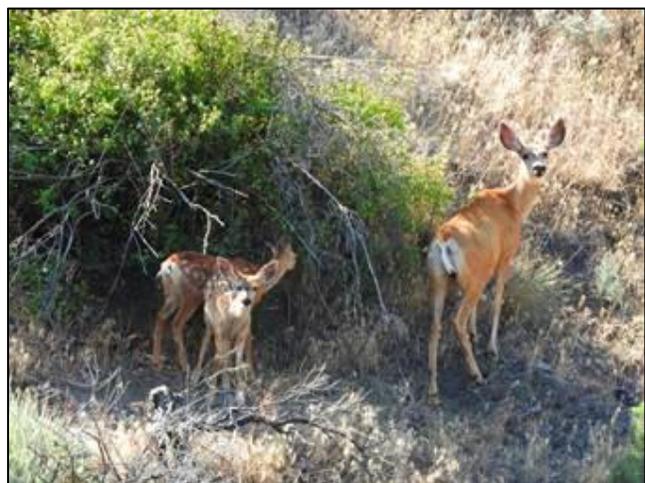
Isolated storm cell heading towards Campbell Lake area – Photo by Troyer



This is the aftermath of the Lester Road blowout. Campbell Lake is at the bottom – Photo by Troyer



Ramsey Creek Road blown out by Pearrygin Creek – Photo by Troyer



Mule Deer Doe with Fawns on the Big Bend Wildlife Area – Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW



White-tailed deer – Photo by Scott Fitkin



This photo was taken right outside the Manager's office window –
Photo by Troyer





An adult cougar surprised a visiting family member near the Sinlahekin headquarters (a second cougar was nearby but not seen until after leaving the site), Fish Lake with heavy rain about to roll through the wildlife area, lightning strike above Schalow pond early in the morning and lightning over the Tonasket and Crumbacher area early that same morning – Photos taken by Justin Haug



White-tailed deer bucks near Connors – Photo by Justin Haug

Tree that fell at Spectacle Lake – Photo by M. DeHart



The Methow River with lots of sediment in it after some big thunderstorms

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Acting Manager Hunt joined Lands Program Manager Hendrix, Habitat Biologists Nelson, Downes, and Meyer, and an appraiser for an evaluation tour of some potential acquisition property in Manastash. They were guided by members of the Funk family, who have had ownership adjacent to the L.T. Murray and Wenas for generations. It was a quite informative trip full of history.

Grazing Monitoring: Natural Resource Technician Leuck started on end of growing season grazing monitoring in the three pastures on the Quilomene/Whiskey Dick Wildlife area. While out in the Green Gate area, he saw 60 elk camped out at a spring on the east side near the wind farm. They were reluctant to leave when approached, but eventually walked off a couple hundred yards.

Surveying and Spraying Weeds: Natural Resource Technician Hill spent his week surveying and spraying weeds. He found large Russian thistle patches at Hell's Kitchen and Cayuse Spring, as well as a good bunch of Kochia along Whiskey Dick Creek by Whiskey Dick Bay. Hill spent the mornings of the hot days spraying at Hell's Kitchen and Cayuse Spring.

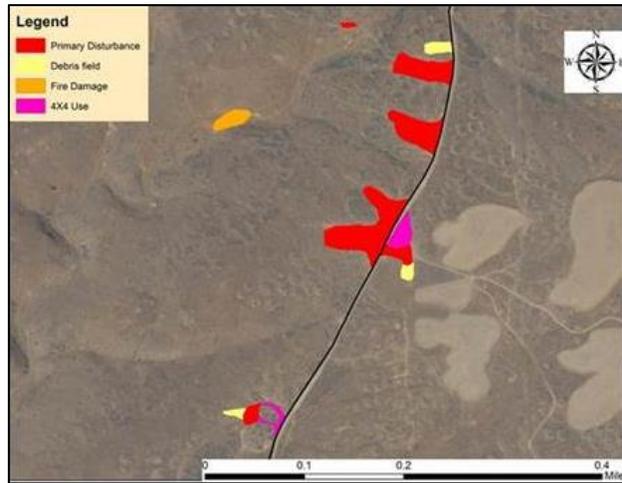
Russian thistle at Hell's Kitchen Spring on the Whiskey Dick Unit of Wenas Wildlife Area: Biologist Longoria visited dispersed shooting locations on the Wenas Wildlife Area and mapped the overall footprint of each. This data will hopefully be useful in the environmental assessment when calculating the area of disturbance and quantifying the potential restoration acreage.

North Durr Road dispersed shooting site



Map of North Durr Road dispersed shooting sites

Access Program: Natural Resource Worker Barbosa picked up a substantial amount of garbage at Lavender Lake that came from an abandoned vehicle. Items found with personal information were passed onto Enforcement.



Abandoned vehicle and garbage found at Lavendar Lake

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman received a phone call from the permittee in the North Fork Cowiche Creek area that the locked gate in the elk fence had been damaged again. The gate was open and cows from the neighboring property got onto the wildlife area. Assistant Manager Berry and Natural Resource Worker Farias responded to the area, finding the chain had been shot open. The kiosk and gate also had bullet holes in them. The rancher got most of his cows gathered up, but at last word was missing a couple pairs. Berry purchased a new hardened chain and will re-lock the gate on Monday. Huffman contacted Eyes in the Woods, who were working to put up cameras in the area. Hopefully that will occur soon, as the gate gets vandalized every couple of weeks.



Shot up gate and chain on the French's Canyon Road of the Oak Creek Wildlife Area

Rock Creek Unit RMAP Work:

Forester Mackey met on site with the Yakima Construction Shop to discuss details of the ongoing RMAP work on the Rock Creek Unit. One project location was completed with the removal of three fish barrier culverts,

road abandonment, and a gate installation. Forester Mackey discussed areas for fill to be deposited for the removal of two additional fish barrier culverts at a separate project location. The construction shop was in the process of cleaning up an elaborate dispersed hunting camp site that will be inaccessible after removal of one of the culverts.



Hunting camp being cleaned up on the Rock Creek Unit

Wildlife Management

Ferruginous Hawk Surveys: District Biologist Fidorra spent considerable time finalizing data from the ferruginous hawk surveys. 140 historic territories were surveyed in Benton and Franklin counties this spring. Hawks were observed at 19 locations, of which 12 were believed to be nesting pairs, with at least seven reproducing successfully. Many volunteers, staff members, and partners were helpful in pulling off this 2016 survey and their support and assistance was greatly appreciated.

Fire: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand monitored a wildfire on Hanford's Arid Lands Ecology Reserve and surrounding private lands. The fire, which had started on the Army's Yakima Training Center on Saturday, moved south and east across private ownerships in the Blackrock and Silver Dollar areas, eventually burning into Hanford. Established firebreaks along Hanford's southern border were successful in keeping the fire from spreading into standing fields of wheat.



Wildfire at Hanford Arid Lands Ecology Reserve

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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: Staff members from the Habitat and Wildlife programs visited Naneum Lake this week to determine why the lake is drying up. Apparently the inlet to the lake has been diverted, causing the lake level to drop significantly. We will be working with Habitat to plan a solution and permit the work needed.

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Buser reviewed the latest materials from Ducks Unlimited regarding the WB-10 Wasteway Enhancement Project.

Wildlife Management

Region 3 Private Lands Biologist: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman and Natural Resource Technician Kaelber traveled to the Wild Horse Wind Farm to finish reposting the boundary with Hunt by Reservation signs. Stutzman and Kaelber were able to finish up before the hottest part of the day.

New Hunt by Reservation sign along an ORV trail that enters the Wild Horse Wind Farm



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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: Manager Lopushinsky received a report of two bighorn sheep that had apparently crossed the river near Trinidad and had taken up residence in a nearby vineyard. Lopushinsky coordinated with Regions 2 and 3 on appropriate action to be taken.

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Acting Manager Hunt visited the Johnson Drain and the site of the spring beaver dam problem with one of the farmers impacted by it (Wes Johnson). Wes has been monitoring the site and has seen no problems with returning beavers. It seems the issue is still solved for the time being.

Wenas Wildlife Area: Manager Confer Morris and Environmental Planner Posner continued to meet with stakeholder groups, Audubon, non-motorized recreation, NRA, bull pasture neighbors, and hunters during the week of July 17 to get their thoughts and ideas on the Wenas Target Shooting Project.

Assessment: Wenas staff members worked with a Central Washington University contractor to complete the field portion of the sound assessment for the proposed range locations at Bull Pasture and Sheep Company.



Conducting noise assessment from Bull Pasture and Sheep Company sites

Access Program

Blue Green Algae: Department of Health found unhealthy levels of blue green algae at Fio Rito Pond and posted notices at the access site. When they tested again, the levels had gone up substantially. Natural Resource Worker Barbosa was instructed by John Easterbrooks to close the gate into Fio Rito and post the site as closed to public access. This was done first thing on the morning of July 27. The site will remain closed until the toxic algae levels go down to safe levels.



Signs posted by Department of Health at Fio Rito access site

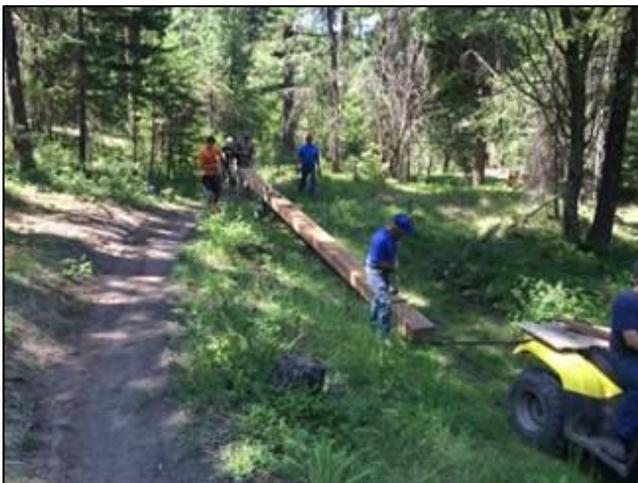


Gate into Fio Rito access site closed and posted

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman spent extensive time organizing and completing the Milk Creek Motorcycle Trail Bridge Replacement Project in coordination with USFS. Huffman met on site with staff members from USFS to scope out final details of the project on Wednesday. On Thursday Assistant Manager Berry and Natural Resource Worker Farias delivered timbers for the project to the trailhead. Forest Service crews helped unload and began cutting materials and preparing the bridge installation site. On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Huffman worked with USFS personnel and volunteers from the Tacoma Motorcycle Club to install a bridge on the Milk Creek Trail. The old bridge had washed out in 2011, effectively closing the trail. The bridge was the first stage in repairing the trail, which crosses onto the Rock Creek Unit. A RCO NOVA Motorized Trails Development grant is paying for the work. Additional work is planned for next year. The Forest Service Trails Crew will return this coming week to finish up the final work needed on the new bridge.



Before and after photos of the Milk Creek Motorcycle Trail Bridge Installation



Volunteers bringing in one of three long stringers to the work site from the trail head. All materials had to be hauled in about a half mile along a single track trail. Sills and stringers were then hauled via cable yarding system across the creek.



Volunteers from the Tacoma Motorcycle Club working on the bridge getting instruction from Jeff Leisy, the USFS Trails supervisor

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Buser responded to several phone calls about handicap access to the Thornton Unit, deer and elk hunting prospects on the wildlife area, and other general hunting opportunities on the wildlife area.

Wildlife Management

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

Wildlife Areas

Wenas Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Taylor attended the RT-210 INVF refresher course (Wildland fire investigation).

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Mountain Goat Surveys: District 13 worked with the special species manager to complete reconnaissance in anticipation of a translocation project in the next few years. Locations were scouted to be used for road-based staging areas and nearby helicopter accessible release sites. District 13 completed mountain goat population aerial surveys in cascades between Highway 530 and Highway 2. Raw data will be processed through a sightability model to determine population estimates. Appreciation goes to quality flight operations from HiLine and Northwest Helicopters, as well as agency staff members for providing flight following.



District 13 surveying mountain goat habitat in the central cascades



A view from the helicopter of mountains in the Cascade Range



Nannies with kids at heel hold their winter coat for a long time



A group of mountain goats near Mt. Baker

Invasive Species Surveys: Districts 12 and 13 visited potential access points for upcoming survey/trapping efforts for prohibited invasive species in south Snohomish and north King County waters.

Oregon Spotted Frog: Biologist DeBruyn attended a meeting of the Oregon Spotted Frog Recovery Team in Surrey, B.C. Subjects discussed included survey results, capture mark recapture efforts, drone usage for surveys, research on bacteria, and captive propagation efforts.

Band-tailed Pigeon Survey: District 13 staff completed a band-tailed pigeon survey at Warm Beach. This survey counts pigeons obtaining minerals from the beach during low tide. A high number of birds were seen at the site this year.

*Pictured here is a feather from a band-tailed pigeon (*patagioenas fasciata*). Note the strong bands across the center and tip of the feather.*



State Sensitive Common Loon: Biologist Smith surveyed District 12 for loon activity. One chick was noted at an area lake, while a pair is still incubating at a second lake (non-viable eggs or late nest attempt). Further observation will be required to document any further hatchings and chick survival.

An adult common loon and chick observed on a lake in King County last week



Wildlife Areas

Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP): Projects Coordinator Brokaw met with PSNERP staff members to outline next steps

needed to advance the Spencer Island Estuary Restoration Project into the next design phase. Next steps include meeting with WDFW to discuss the project concept and initiating a communications and outreach plan with local stakeholders.

Leque Island Permitting: Projects Coordinator Brokaw assisted Ducks Unlimited with permitting applications that need to be submitted to prepare the site for restoration work. WDFW submitted a permit application to initiate the federal review process.

North Leque Island Design: Projects Coordinator Brokaw, Lands Agent Iris, and Skagit Wildlife Area Manager Rotton compiled survey, easement, and utility information for the project area.

Estuary Restoration Sociology Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw participated in an interview with a University of Washington sociology professor who is conducting research on social issues related to estuary restoration in Puget Sound. The professor is interested in the Leque Island project and the Sustainable Lands Strategy, and is planning to write research papers based on interview footage.

Cherry Valley Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm mowed reed canary grass fields at the unit in preparation for the hunting season.

Corson Natural Area: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with the CAMP construction crew at the Corson Unit. The initial phase of the fish passage project is under way to replace fish passage barriers on the unit. A pedestrian bridge will be placed later in August to finish the project.



Construction at Corson – new culvert on the fish passage project

Stillwater Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm worked with King County Noxious Weed staff members to plan a weed treatment for the Stillwater and Cherry Valley units. King County is providing a field crew, supporting equipment, and personnel to remove invasive purple loosestrife. This is the third year in a row that King County has worked with WDFW on this effort.

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with Drainage District 1 to plan knotweed control efforts on the dike within the unit. Manager Boehm reports that the City of Everett mowed a portion of the dike, so efforts need to be made to apply herbicide in August. A collaborative effort with the city, drainage district, and WDFW weed crew over the next three years will hopefully bring this invasive weed under control before it spreads to other portions of the unit.

Nooksack River Bridge Wood Debris Removal: The Whatcom County Transportation division worked on removing wood log debris from the Nooksack River bridge supports at Marietta. The many logs that were stuck on the support were removed and most will be taken off site. The county used our access site to stage the wood removal. Native grasses will be planted on site when the work is completed.

Private Lands/Access Management



Pictured here is a fried egg jellyfish (phacellophora camtschatica). If a person's lucky, they can see these very large jellyfish from seaside overlooks.



Pictured here is a male western tanager (piranga ludoviciana). Due to their bright colors, these long distance migrators can easily be observed.

Pictured here is an adult cedar waxwing (bombycilla cedrorum) perched. These birds provide a beautiful sight for people out enjoying nature.



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

Private Lands/Access Management

Westside Pheasant Release Program:

Private Lands Biologist Wingard used online maps and toured areas that may fit the requirements for a new westside pheasant release site. Biologist Wingard continued to follow up with the landowner of one site that has good potential.

Spring Bear Hunt: Private Lands Biologist Wingard continued collecting data and preparing the post-hunt report. All data collection will be complete shortly. Biologist Wingard toured DNR and private industrial timberland in Whatcom County for bear damage to timber. Biologist Wingard identified a few small areas of bear damage to trees. Biologist Wingard prepared a new area map for an upcoming meeting between DNR, Sierra Pacific Industries, and WDFW.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Units Barley Planting: Natural Resource Technician Otto checked the growth of migratory bird forage enhancement plots in Whatcom and Skagit counties. The plantings looked positive, and there is plenty of growth in the barley, with excellent coverage in a variety of fields on or surrounding current quality hunt fields.

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Unit Contracts: Private Lands Biologist Wingard prepared contracts for waterfowl quality hunt units in the region.

418 Elk Hunt: Natural Resource Technician Otto organized hunter packets for the 418 special elk permit holders. The hunter packet material consists of land access agreement rules, maps, and biological sample gathering instructions.



The hunter meeting is scheduled for August 13 at the La Conner field office. Biologist Wingard prepared map materials and toured partner landowner properties for elk and elk sign.

Elk in GMU 418

Whidbey Island Deer Hunting: Private Lands Biologist Wingard organized ownership data for renewing the Trillium Woods deer hunting partnership with a

local landowner and the Whidbey Camano Land Trust. The Trillium Woods deer hunt provides hunters one of the very few large public access locations for deer hunting on Whidbey Island.

Wildlife Areas

Leque Island Recreation and Access Committee (RAC): The projects coordinator distributed a meeting summary and compiled recommendations from the RAC in a spreadsheet the design team will use to develop a draft recreation plan. Brokaw reached out to other entities working the area to explore partnership opportunities on recreation feature funding.

Island Unit: Cosgrove disked and chisel plowed the southwest corner of the Lorenzen field. This low area was formerly farmed, but had grown into cattail and canary grass the last few years. Cosgrove is hoping to establish beneficial moist-soil vegetation.



Island Unit – southwest corner of Lorenzen field disking for control of cattail and reed canary grass

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with volunteers to continue internal access road and trail improvements at this unit. Truckloads of wood chips are being donated and delivered by a local land clearing business. The chips will form a base on the roads to allow vehicle traffic during the fall and winter season.

Natural Resource Technician Deyo used the new grader scrapper implement to refurbish the gravel access roads and parking areas on the Lake Terrell and Intalco units. The grader scrapper made quick work of the many potholes and low spots and greatly improved the roads and parking areas.



Nooksack River Dike Repairs: Manager Kessler met onsite with an engineer with the Whatcom County River & Flood division on the upcoming repairs to the riverfront dike, which was damaged by floods over the last two years. Huge scours have formed in about 1,200 feet of the dike. The repair work will be a joint project between WDFW and Whatcom County, with the cost being shared. Originally planned to be completed this summer, the repair work has now been rescheduled to next spring.

New Lake Terrell Waterfowl Hunting Blind: Natural Resource Technicians Deyo and Otto built a new waterfowl hunting blind at Lake Terrell. This new blind, located on the southwest corner of the lake, will replace an old blind which was broken down and completely overgrown

with vegetation. It was not being used at all. The new blind will be able to be accessed on foot as well as from the water, and should be very productive.

New hunting blind at Lake Terrell Wildlife Area

Trail Life USA Scout Troop Service

Project: Five scouts with Trail Life USA spent Saturday morning cleaning gates and signs, and clearing blackberries from a trail at Lake Terrell. The scouts washed and scrubbed six gates, and repainted one of them. They also cleaned and washed several signs. One trail had been overgrown with blackberries and was pruned and weed-whacked to reopen it to access.



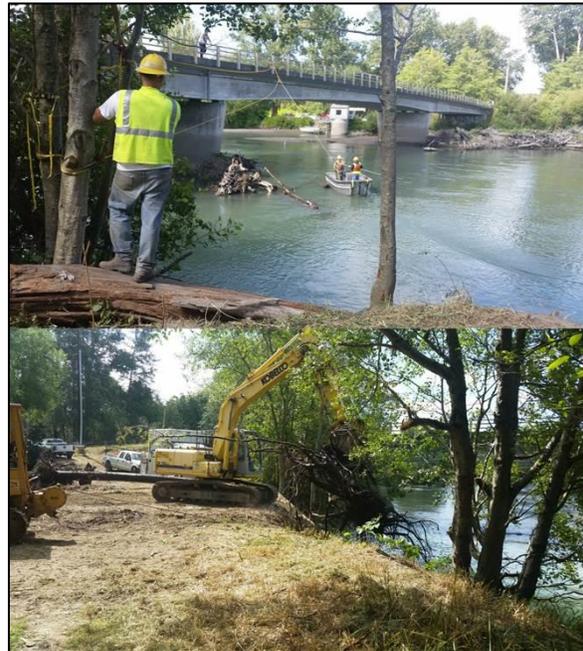
Scout Troop cleaning gates and signs

Nooksack Unit Broken Gate and Abandoned Truck:

Manager Kessler responded to a neighbor's report of someone crashing a car through our access gate at Shady Lane on the Nooksack Unit. When he arrived he found the gate busted through and a pickup truck abandoned further in the unit. After talking with a Whatcom County Sheriff, it was found the truck had been stolen. The owner was contacted and came and picked up the vehicle.



Log removal on the Nooksack Bridge



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

Wildlife Management

Ungulate Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell met with two City of Anacortes residents who are experiencing deer related damage to their gardens and yards. Supervisor Caldwell discussed the issue with them and provided documents to assist the landowner with non-lethal mitigation strategies.

Elk Fence: Natural Resource Technician Cogdal worked on an elk exclusionary fencing project in the Birdsvie area of Skagit County. This project should be completed in the next couple weeks. Cogdal and Supervisor Caldwell responded to a landowner concern about two bull elk that jumped his exclusionary fence and were now in his field eating his hay. Cogdal and Supervisor Caldwell responded by surveying the area and located two bull elk. Upon verification of animal presence and noting damage, and after offering several suggestions on how to prevent elk from entering the property, Supervisor Caldwell proceeded to enter into a Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement with the landowner. The landowner stated that he did not wish to remove any animals via harvest. With luck the elk will have escaped the enclosure by then and no further efforts will be necessary.

Ungulate Conflict: Biologist Smith responded to multiple calls from the public relating to ungulates entering agricultural properties in the Enumclaw (elk) and Green Valley areas (elk), as well as portions of Snohomish County (deer). Hazing strategies, fencing options, and rules relating to damage tags were discussed.

Bats: Biologist Yarborough and Milner met with a concerned landowner to discuss a possible maternity colony in their attic. The landowner has counted upwards of 130 bats leaving the chimney at night. WDFW staff members will make a return visit in the next few weeks to identify species.

North Cascades Elk: Biologist Yarborough met with the raffle winner for the westside elk tag. They discussed the status of the North Cascades elk herd and possible areas for access.

Washington State Department of Agriculture Meeting: Biologist DeBruyn facilitated a meeting of WSDA field biologists at the Tennant Lake Interpretive Center on the Whatcom Wildlife Area. The new director of the agency was present to acquaint himself with issues and personalities. DeBruyn gave a recap of recent cooperative efforts to monitor High-Path Avian Influenza.

Wildlife Areas

Wildlife Area Planning Process: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm participated in Core Team conference calls to discuss and plan next steps for the planning process. Manager Boehm scheduled a Wildlife Area Advisory Committee meeting for August 3.

Fir Island Farm: Manager Rotton completed the native seeding on the Fir Island Farm project site prior to breach scheduled for August 1. Rotton worked with Habitat and Wildlife Program to prepare for the breach event for the Fir Island Farm Restoration project.

Island Unit: Cosgrove weeded the Steamboat Slough boat landing and around footbridges on the Island Unit to improve access.

Skagit Headquarters: Cosgrove painted "Game Reserve" on three large buoys that will be installed in intertidal areas at the Fir Island Farms Unit. Manager Rotton met with Justin Zweifel and Larry Dominguez of Habitat Program to discuss inventory of culverts and status of fish passage barriers on the Wildlife Area. Justin and Larry are updating the inventory based on court case criteria and the most recent round of restoration project activity. In addition, Justin and Larry needed to update the photo library and site locations of the tidegates and certain culverts.

Johnson/DeBay's Slough: Natural Resources Technician Cosgrove mowed the Game Reserve access area at the Johnson/DeBay's Slough Unit and equipment storage and interpretive center areas at the Headquarters Unit with the riding mower.

Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator

Hunter Education Instructor Support: Hunter Education Coordinator Steven Dazey activated five new hunter education classes in Region 4. Coordinator Dazey assisted an instructor who is moving to Montana with transferring his inventory to the instructor taking over the chief instructor duties for the NAS Whidbey team. Dazey assisted another instructor to correct his final report on a class. Dazey advised the Region 4 instructors of the incentive permits available to instructors in 2017, and the requirements based on 2016 teaching activities. Dazey also sent out information to Region 4 instructors about National Hunting and Fishing Day activities sponsored by WDFW so they can invite their students. Dazey forwarded a certificate of insurance to a new venue so that the instructors in Rockport can use the facility for classes.

Master Hunter Support: Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Dazey Assisted Wildlife Area Manager Boehm to recruit master hunters to assist getting the pheasant pens ready for this year's pheasant season. Dazey also assisted a master hunter with mobility challenges to find a service project. Dazey prepared for the October 1 master hunter orientation meeting at the Nile Shrine Center.

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

Forest Health Workshop: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm attended the July 26 WDFW Forest Health Workshop along with approximately 40 WDFW professionals to discuss strategies for forest health on Wildlife Areas. The meeting was in perfect timing for the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Management Plan update process currently under way. There are approximately 1,200 acres of forest land on the Snoqualmie Units, and a Forest Management Plan is a requirement for the update to the Wildlife Area Management Plan.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Monarch Butterfly Survey: Biologist Anderson, Biologist Bergh, and Technician Petrie met with Marty Hudson, coordinator of the Klickitat County Noxious Weed Program, to discuss the current effort to identify and survey for monarch butterflies and their associated habitats in Washington. Marty's extensive knowledge of plant identification and distribution in Klickitat County has been extremely helpful in assisting WDFW get this project underway in District 9.

There is evidence that the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) has significantly declined over the past few years throughout the United States. There are current efforts to conserve both the butterfly and its milkweed (*Asclepias spp.*) habitat in the mid-west. Less is currently known about the western population of this species and monarch conservation in the arid west region will require starting inventories of both the habitat and butterfly. The objectives of this survey are to improve knowledge of milkweed and monarch distribution through coordinated surveys, and to identify threats to that habitat and the butterfly in Washington.



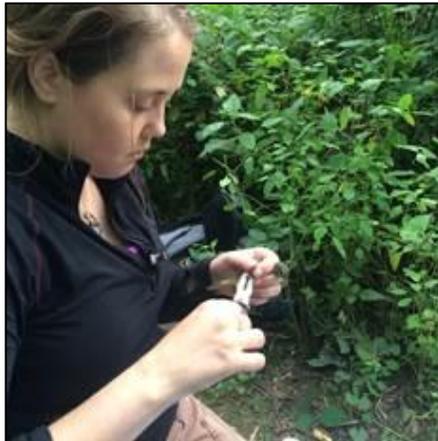
Monarch butterfly on narrowleaf milkweed (Asclepias fascicularis), Klickitat County

Unknown Canids: Biologist Meyer and Conflict Specialist Conklin followed up on a report of two large canids in Skamania County. No tracks or other sign were located near the observation site.

Biologist Meyer crossing a stream



MAPS Bird Banding: Biologist Stephens and Volunteer Doorly assisted retired USFS Biologist Flick with operating a Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) banding station in the Columbia Gorge. Species captured included common yellowthroat, song sparrow, spotted towhee, MacGillivray’s warbler, and Swainson’s thrush. MAPS is a long-term demographic monitoring project that takes place across the U.S. and Canada. More information about the MAPS program can be found at <http://www.birdpop.org/pages/maps.php>



Monitoring avian productivity and survivorship banding station in the Columbia Gorge

Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area

Scotch Broom Control: Mount St. Helens Assistant Manager Sample continues to work to apply herbicide to large patches of scotch broom, as well as individual plants distributed across the Mudflow Unit of Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area. She is focusing on specific areas that were missed by the aerial application that occurred over a year ago, as well as patches that are accessible from the 3100 road.



Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area, Oxbow, Scotch broom control

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Land Acquisition: The purchase of 3,613 acres of land in eastern Klickitat County was finalized this week. This acquisition is the first purchase as part of a multi-phased proposed Simcoe Acquisition. The property will be managed to conserve existing habitat values and to provide public recreation on lands that have been closed to the public for approximately 10 years. The approach to acquiring and managing this property is through a long term partnership between WDFW and both the east and central Klickitat Conservation Districts within a working lands framework of compatible grazing and forestry. WDFW and both Conservation Districts are committed to joint ownership/management of the Simcoes. Each entity is committed to continued watershed, wildlife, and habitat friendly grazing and revenue-producing forestry through timber harvest, while at the same time ensuring long-term protection of important wildlife habitat through the development of a Simcoe management plan.



Moth Search: Eleven volunteers from Duke University of North Carolina and a group leader from Lewis & Clark College of Oregon came to the Soda Springs Unit to conduct a search for the aholibah underwing moth. The volunteers were joined by Dr. Mark Genich, who collects insects for the Slater Museum of Natural History, and Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven. This large moth species is oak-dependent, and especially favors Oregon white oak. The Klickitat Wildlife Area supports extensive stands of oak and mixed pine-oak habitat, which would seem to provide ideal habitat for the aholibah underwing, yet only one specimen has been reported on the Wildlife Area. This search effort was organized for the peak activity period for this species in hopes of gaining a fuller understanding of oak ecology on the Klickitat Wildlife Area. Searchers fanned out and walked a transect through suitable habitat for about two hours. No aholibah underwing moths were found. However, one bat, one rattlesnake, one southern alligator lizard, numerous western fence lizards, a skunk skull, and several cans and bottles were discovered. The apparent absence of the aholibah underwing is consistent with the previous observations (or rather, lack of).

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

Private Lands

Contract Amendments Signed: Biologist Meyer and Conflict Specialist Conklin collected signatures from two landowners in Wahkiakum County to extend their contracts for private land access.

Access

Barbers Access: There are lots of swimmers in the Washougal River at this site, and it's hard to find a parking spot after 11:00 a.m. when the weather gets hot. Access staff members met with our contractor to have the garbage vacuumed out of the vault. Several large rocks, coats, blankets, boxes, milk containers, cans, bottles, magazines, etc. came out. The vacator hose got plugged several times trying to clean out the vault.



Barbers access

Oneida Access: Access staff hauled a tractor to Oneida and finished mowing the lower field. The field is used for overflow parking and the long grass is a fire hazard in the summer months.



Hauling tractor to Oneida

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

Wildlife Conflict

Geese: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a resort experiencing damage from geese. Conklin issued a bird banger to the resort for a two-week period. If it is effective, the resort owners will purchase one on their own.



Elk: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a complaint of elk damaging a commercial crop of corn on a dairy in the Onalaska area. Conklin confirmed the damage and deployed a Master Hunter to the area to hunt/haze the corn fields.

Damage to corn from elk

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN A HIGHLY SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE.

Wildlife Management

Motorboat Operator Certification Course: Biologist Butler attended a three day Motorboat Operator Certification Course (MOCC) conducted on Lacamas Lake. This course contained both class work and on-the-water instruction covering the minimum requirements for the safe operation of motorboats. Topics covered included legal requirements, preparations, navigation, operations, emergency procedures, rescue, trailering, and basic seamanship. Students were given the opportunity to operate a variety of motorboats and use a range of safety equipment. The course ended with an on-the-water practical exam during which each student needed to demonstrate certain skills and pass a written exam.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Western Pond Turtle: Biologists Tirhi and Holcomb, along with a Woodland Park Zoo intern, volunteer, and several staff members, processed 47 juvenile pond turtles for the 2016 release event to occur this month at the Pierce County Recovery site. These turtles are part of a 25-year long head-starting and reintroduction program cooperatively run by WDFW, Woodland Park Zoo, and Oregon Zoo. Each year, female turtles are tracked to their nesting location from May-July and



eggs and hatchlings are collected and transported to each of the zoos for head-starting. The young turtles remain at the zoo for 10 to 14 months, during which time the eggs are hatched in incubators. The hatchlings are fed a high protein diet that enables them to grow significantly more than they would in the wild over the course of the year. The following year, each juvenile is weighed and measured, and notches are filed into the marginal scutes of their carapace to mark them with a unique number. Of the three ways in which each turtle is uniquely marked, the notch is the only permanent marking and enables WDFW biologists to track the fate of each turtle into the future. WDFW is very proud of this 25 year collaborative program and most thankful to its partners at the Woodland Park and Oregon Zoo, as well as the countless volunteers that have assisted the program over the years. The turtles thank you all!

Media coverage can be seen at <http://www.king5.com/tech/science/environment/endangered-turtles-prepare-for-release-into-wild/283505749>

Within the post is a link to the 360-degree cam at <https://www.facebook.com/RyanTakeoJournalist/?fref=nf>

A proclamation by Governor Inslee marking the 25th anniversary of this collaborative project (as requested by our partners at Woodland Park Zoo!):

Ulcerative Shell Disease: An emerging disease has been observed (and reported in previous weeklies) in the western pond turtle population, Ulcerative Shell Disease. The Western Pond Turtle Shell Disease Committee, comprised of biologists and veterinarians from WDFW and each of the zoos, are working hard to understand the epistemology of the disease. Biologist Tirhi participated in a conference call with the committee to discuss/plan a research grant proposal submitted by Curator Pramuk of Woodland Park Zoo. The proposal is to study growth differentiation between juvenile turtles fed a normal vs modified diet. The objective is to understand whether slowing down growth thru reduced feeding of juveniles affects the development of shell disease. The intent is to progressively study each of the variables involved in head-starting turtles to understand whether any are related to the emergence of the disease. This study is the first of its kind.

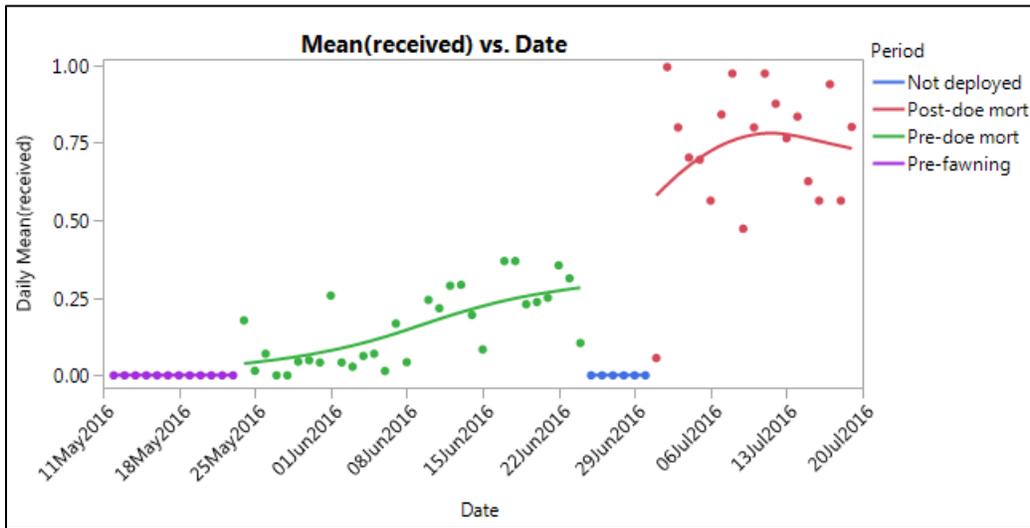


Snowy Plover: Technician Raby conducted nest and brood searching and checks this week at Leadbetter. Raby also entered and proofed data, and assisted with the preliminary analysis. This is Technician Raby’s final week. She has done a terrific job at Leadbetter, both this season and last. We wish her good luck as she heads to Humboldt State University to pursue graduate studies.

2016 Leadbetter and Island Season Totals				
# Nests Discovered	# Nests Active	# Nests Hatched	# Nests Failed	# Nests w/ Unknown Fate
48	1	23	20	4

Fisher Monitoring: Biologist Michaelis and one volunteer checked the cameras along the Wynoochee River. Images were reviewed and no fishers were detected. One of the stations was moved due to vegetation triggering the camera. Areas close to drainages and in fairly dense timber stands are typically the sites chosen.

Black-tailed Deer Study: Biologist Ament conducted a site visit on July 18 to check on a fawn collared in mid-May. The chance of survival for this fawn was believed to be rather low since her mother had been killed by a cougar. To assist with monitoring the fawn, Biologist Ament deployed the collar from the dead doe in a tree close to the proximity of the fawn on July 1. During the field check, she detected a live signal for the fawn and concluded the fawn was in fairly close vicinity, but she did not get a visual. Research Scientist Rice had been monitoring the activity and was not getting any status messages. He was beginning to suspect that the collared fawn may not have actually been from the suspected collared doe. Vectronic apparently sent some programming and now he is getting status messages from Doe 12477 for Fawn 5431. On July 28, the fawn was reported to still have a live signal. It is still uncertain if the fawn is from the collared doe. Rice reports that the reception is much better now that the collar is no longer on the doe.



After checking on the collared 5034 fawn, Biologist Ament spent some time on July 18 checking for live signals and downloading data from collared does. There are presently four collared does remaining in the Pysht Cluster. A total of four fawns were collared this spring. Two of these fawns and one collared fawn from 2015 are still alive.

Bat Acoustic Project: Biologist Ament deployed two sets of equipment for acoustic monitoring of bats on July 19. One set of gear was set-up at a wetland area near the Clearwater River. The other set of gear was set-up along the Hoh River within Olympic National Park. A park research permit had been obtained and the Hoh Ranger was notified. Biologist Ament made the effort to retrieve both sets of equipment on July 23. No vandalism was detected for either set of equipment. Preliminary checks showed that recordings were documented on cards at both sites. However, new batteries had been placed in both units and they were basically all dead after the four nights of recording. District Biologist McMillan is consulting with Project Lead Joe Buchanan before the units are deployed again.



Microphone on camo pole at wetland



Slough along Hoh River in Olympic National Park

Pond Turtle Capture: Biologist Ament and Biologist McMillan joined Biologist Murphie and others on July 25 to participate in a pond turtle capture effort in District 15. The goal was to capture at least 12 turtles from the population in a lake located in Mason County. A main goal was to check the condition of the turtles for evidence of shell disease. Biologist Ament served as a snorkeler for the project with three others. The previous week she completed all required WDFW snorkeler trainings and paperwork. Unfortunately, conducting the capture later than usual proved quite difficult for locating turtles. Warmer water temperatures were pleasant, but made for very murky water conditions, and the dense vegetation made it extremely difficult to get visuals of turtles underwater. Turtles were observed basking on logs and resting in lily pad areas, but were successful at eluding capture. Only one turtle (previously marked) was captured during the effort. It showed no sign of shell disease and was returned to the lake. The capture planned for July 26 was cancelled due to the inability for snorkelers to observe and collect turtles.



Turtle capture and processing crew walking into pond site



Conditions with lots of vegetation and Biologist Ament snorkeling to the left

Private Lands /Conflict

Beavers and Public Access: Biologist Harris was contacted by a forest manager for a large timber management organization. This manager manages something over 50,000 acres in

western Washington. The company manages several hundred thousand acres in Washington. All of it is open to passive public recreation for free. The problem was beavers. As with many areas of western Washington, there is no shortage of beavers. He had one area that has always been a problem. In 2014, they replaced a culvert with a bridge, thinking that would resolve the problem. It didn't. The beavers just put a dam upstream of the bridge. Having had to remove the dam numerous times, he was seriously considering trapping. However, he realized that even trapping would not stop them. It is just too good of beaver habitat to expect that removing a few will resolve the problem. Biologist Harris suggested trying to use bear hide. Using a small strip of bear or coyote hide at the ends of culverts is often effective at discouraging beavers. However, he was not aware of anyone using it under a bridge or strung across the water. After consulting with the forester, they decided they had nothing to lose. After obtaining a permit, the forester arranged to have the dam removed. Biologist Harris went to the site after the removal and strung several pieces of hide across the area of the dam and hung a couple underneath the bridge. The dam had been removed multiple times. Generally within a day, reconstruction has begun and is completed with three days unless staff members have time to go and remove it by hand. It's now been five days and there is no new dam. Time will tell if this is an effective way to reduce beaver conflict. It also may help retain public access.



The dam



Hide strips hung



Five days later

Nisqually Land Trust: Biologist Harris and Conflict Specialist Blankenship spent a day looking at three parcels the trust wants to try a hunting access agreement on. Two of the properties are suitable for a Feel Free to Hunt agreement and the third is suitable for a Hunt by Reservation agreement. One is in the middle of a fee access area. However, it is currently closed to hunting and at least some hunters will be able to use it. They are all smaller sites. However, the possibility of harvesting a deer or elk on them is good. A fourth property was visited as a possible waterfowl access site.

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

Wildlife Management

Mourning Dove Banding: Biologist Michaelis continues to capture and band mourning doves at two locations. A total of 97 birds were captured (78 hatch year and 19 adults). Eight birds have been recaptured. The number of adult captures has been increasing in proportion to hatch year birds.

Private Lands /Conflict

Long Beach Cranberries: Biologist Harris visited with several producers. Updating DPCAs and issuing permits. Elk use has dropped in the center area. It sounds like just a few elk are still in the area at this time. Producers have been hazing at night. Still, a few elk can do a lot of damage. A couple of Master Hunters who drew a permit for the August 1 through September 9 season have been busy scouting and unintentionally hazing elk off bogs. Several of the growers are happy with these two and asked if they could give them a Damage Prevention Permit for deer. Deer are a big problem and having hunters that could harvest one while hunting elk is good for the producer. It made sense to Biologist Harris, so additional permits will be sent to the producers soon. He also checked on fence construction on a bog where a cost share fence is being built. The fence is almost complete.

Grayland Cranberries: Elk and deer are still causing lots of problems. Small groups of elk have caused a lot of damage. Sometimes the elk come in from an area where there is currently no remote camera. Still the system is proving to be very useful to the producers in responding quickly to incursions. Biologist Harris is working on adding more cameras to the system.

Biologist Harris received a call early one morning from a producer asking if he was on the elk. It is often first come, first haze or harvest with the cameras. However, Biologist Harris saw the pictures come in and expected the growers to be all over them, if not that night, then surely the next morning, since several have permits. It turns out all the growers who participate in the remote camera operation were not available. They failed to notify Biologist Harris that they would need his help. He stated that knowing these things in advance would help. It would be a two hour round trip for him to go get his work truck and come back.

Very dark picture of elk being hazed off Cranberry bog by producer





Cow elk checking out bog



Time to munch some berries

Willapa Valley Elk: Biologist Harris deployed a Master Hunter to two different properties. The hunter was introduced to the landowner and then shown the properties. Recommendations were given to the hunter on how to hunt the properties. The landowner left the hunter to hunt the evening. The hunter called and reported that he had seen and unintentionally hazed elk. He did just what was advised with the exception he fell asleep only to wake up to two bull elk starting at him from a short distance away. The wind changed and the bulls got out of there. Behind the bulls were several more elk. The hunter continued to hunt several other times over the week reporting seeing several bulls on each day. No cows were seen until this past weekend, when the bulls came out and were followed by a small group of cows and calves. Taking his time, the hunter observed until he was assured of a good shot and that the cow elk he had picked out did not have a calf. It all worked out and the hunter went home with a younger non-lactating cow elk.

Injured Elk: Biologist Harris responded to an elk that had been hit by a motor vehicle. After euthanizing, he asked if any of the three members of the public wanted the elk. All wanted him to take to the needy. After getting the elk loaded in his truck, he drove to public land to remove the edible portions of meat. He was able to salvage two thirds of the elk and deliver them to the Union Gospel Mission. They were very happy to see the meat. They reported that all of their meat for the past few months has been bear meat received from timber damage permits. Many do not realize 90% of the protein for the Union Gospel Mission and the Friendship House in Aberdeen comes from the WDFW and/or the hunters who harvest bears under timber damage permits.

Access Areas

Naselle River Easement: The Access team, working together with Enforcement, addressed concerns from private landowners surrounding the mile long easement. Working together with the landowners and the Naselle Youth Camp, several signs were installed directing the public to the authorized easement trail. The trail was brushed out and re-established by the Naselle Youth Camp. The project took five hours to complete. The popular fishing trail is now in great shape, and all parties involved are happy with the outcome.



Before



After

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

Wildlife Areas

South Puget Sound Wildlife Area: Biologist Cook met with five volunteers from a local chapter of Safari Club International for the second day of fence removal at the South Puget Sound Wildlife Area in Lakewood. Previously, said volunteers and Manager Belson had removed the majority of a 2,000-foot stretch of dilapidated boundary fencing by hand. A tractor was brought in to hoist the remaining fence posts from the ground and the wiring was pulled out, folded, and removed. The posts were then sorted to be reused or thrown away at the wildlife area storage area.

