

Wildlife Program

Week of June 13 – June 19, 2016

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Discussions with Ranchers and Collaborators: Biologist Shepherd had in-person and phone discussions with ranchers, Conservation Northwest, and Washington State University personnel concerning data sharing, range riding, wolf issues, and preventative methods.

Data Sharing: Biologist Shepherd assisted several ranchers with issues concerning data sharing of wolf locations.

Contracts and Invoices: Biologist Shepherd assisted several ranchers with contracts and payment invoices.

Sherman Creek Wildlife Area Compost Facility: Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, along with Sherman Creek Wildlife Area personnel, cleared and prepared a compost facility for delivery of several yards of necessary gravel to firm up surrounding ground. The gravel will be spread at a later date by wildlife area personnel.

Huckleberry and Stranger Packs: Natural Resource Worker Weatherman spent time in the Stranger pack home range monitoring wolf activity near residences. Biologist Shepherd spent time near the area with the original Huckleberry radio-collared male southwest of Chewelah.

Ferry County Range Tour: Biologist Shepherd attended the Ferry County Extension Service range tour in the snowy Kettle Mountains with ranchers, Washington State University Extension, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) personnel.

Data Sharing Agreement Descriptions for Participating Producers: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett contacted livestock producers participating in the collar data sharing program. Information on the future collaring of gray wolves and limitations was provided.

Damage Prevention Cooperative agreement for Livestock (DPCA_L): Natural Resource Technician Wade worked several days this week to enter the new 2016-2017 livestock damage contracts. Biologist Earl met with several Asotin County livestock producers to discuss DPCA_L agreements.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Compensation Program: Biologist Earl met with the local FSA office to discuss the Livestock Compensation Program. The FSA office is reviewing the Asotin County producers claim from the wolf depredation earlier this year. The review is due to multiple missing calves recorded after rounding up the cattle to get a count before moving them to another pasture.

Cattlemen Calls: Biologist Earl responded to multiple livestock producer calls regarding sensitive sharing agreement and damage contracts eligibility.

Data Sharing: Biologist Earl spoke with Biologist Becker about sensitive sharing agreements and upcoming wolf collaring efforts.

Livestock Producer Contacts: Biologist Earl was in contact with several producers who were turning out livestock on USFS grazing allotments.

Fox Lights: Biologist Earl retrieved Fox Lights loaned to livestock producers in Asotin County.

Region 2 Wolf Activities

Wolf Management: Biologist Heinlen checked a remote camera placed in the Beaver Creek wolf territory to gather more information on this new pack, and captured an image of one wolf. This is the first confirmation of wolf activity in the area since winter.

Multi-Carnivore Surveys: As access opens up, Biologist Fitkin continues to retrieve remote cameras deployed this winter to test methodologies for surveying multiple carnivore species, particularly wolverine and lynx. In addition to the target species, we are documenting many other critters as well, including some nice photos of a wolf in the traditional Lookout pack territory.

Lookout Pack wolf – Photo by WDFW remote camera



REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Spokane Area Goose Captures: Biologists Lowe, Waterfowl Specialist Wilson, Technician Kujala and several WDFW staff members captured and banded 275 Canada geese at Sprague Lake, Clear Lake, Silver Lake, and Gonzaga University. Fourteen birds were recaptures from previous years and all of the others were new. Teamwork from NRCS staff members, students, staff members from Gonzaga, and several experienced volunteers contributed to the success of the annual two day capture effort.



Successful Canada goose capture and banding in the Spokane area

Ferruginous Hawk Survey: Assistant District Biologist Vekasy continued checking ferruginous hawk territories for productivity and success. One site had a single nestling at least five weeks old and a dead one nearby on the ground. The cause of death was undetermined. A second site had three nestlings, but they were still too young for a productivity count.



Three ferruginous hawk nestlings, about a week too young for productivity count

Golden Eagle Territories: Assistant District Biologist Vekasy assisted District Biologist Wik and Scientist Watson with tagging a golden eagle nestling above the Grande Ronde River. Wik visited with the neighboring landowner of the eagle nest for a few hours one day to ensure access was available if the fledgling jumped prematurely out of the nest.

Annual Spokane County Goose Banding: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett, WDFW staff members, and volunteers participated in banding more than 150 geese at three lakes. Bennet coordinated with Spokane County Parks, lake residents, and Assistant District Biologist Lowe for access.

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett sexing a Canada goose prior to banding and releasing the bird at Clear Lake

Ferruginous Hawk State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE): Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley received two letters of support from landowners for the ferruginous hawk



SAFE program. Thorne Hadley forwarded the letters on to Farm Bill Coordinator Kuttel.

Sherman Creek Wildlife Area Rx Burning: Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Daro Palmer and Natural Resource Technician Jerry “Chris” Christensen dealt with a flare up on the portion of the Bridge Unit that was treated with prescribed fire last week. The fire remained well contained. Fire Fuel Manager Tom Leuschen mobilized the WDFW prescribed burn crew to Sherman Creek Wildlife Area for a 100 percent mop up of the treated unit portion so wildlife area staff members wouldn’t need to keep monitoring it. With a favorable weather forecast for next week, Leuschen plans to return with the crew to continue with prescribed burn treatments in the Bridge and Hatch units at Sherman Creek Wildlife Area throughout the week.

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

Hall Mountain Bighorn Sheep: Wildlife Biologist Annemarie Prince participated in a helicopter flight funded by the Pend Oreille County Sportsman club to survey Hall Mountain and locate radio-collared sheep. All but one radio-collared sheep were located. The missing sheep was in the flight-restricted wilderness area. One radio-collared yearling ram was located with a group of rams and the six radio-collared ewes were located together.



Group of radio-collared yearling ewes on Hall Mountain – Photo by T. Petrie



Group of rams on Hall Mountain – Photo by T. Petrie

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

Two Moose in Vineyard: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley was called out to a local vineyard regarding two moose that refused to leave. After some help from the vineyard workers we were able to haze the moose out of the vineyard and into the Mill Creek river bottom. They said they will keep their gates closed in the future.

Peola Elk: Natural Resource Technician (NRT) Wade patrolled the Peola area several days this week checking for elk and deer in crops and made several contacts with people in the area. NRT Wade spent several late nights hazing a large group of stubborn bull elk (20-30) who have been causing crop and fence damage in the Peola area.



Some of the Peola Bulls in an alfalfa field

New Access Contract: Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley was contacted by a landowner interested in signing up for the Feel Free to Hunt program and the Voluntary Public Access incentive program. The landowner is also interested in the ferruginous hawk SAFE program, as he has two active nests on his property.

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDIFE

Wildlife Management

Multi-Carnivore Surveys: As access opens up, Biologist Fitkin continues to retrieve remote cameras deployed this winter to test methodologies for surveying multiple carnivore species, particularly wolverine and lynx. Summer deployments have begun as well.





Bobcat, black bear, and moose on the loose – Photos by WDFW Remote Cameras

Pronghorn Antelope: Private Lands Biologist Braaten received a call from a landowner who had been observing antelope in his fields. He sent pictures of two different fawns to Private Lands Biologist Braaten.



Fawn pronghorn antelope in Douglas County

Wildlife Areas

Wetland Projects: District Wildlife Biologist Finger coordinated with Ducks Unlimited Biologist Blewett and Engineer Heck to plan out environmental compliance steps with regards to the Frenchmen Ponds Regulated Access Area expansion and enhancement and the North Winchester Reserve wetland reclamation (excavation) project. Finger submitted a contract request in NOVATUS to contract with Anderson Environmental for the wetland assessment work. Finger coordinated internally and with BOR and BPA to get acceptance for Ducks Unlimited to subcontract a cultural resources survey with a local contractor. Biologist Finger submitted edits for chapters 1, 2, and 4 of the Artesian and Black Lake Environmental Assessment document, which is necessary to satisfy NEPA requirements for this project to move forward.

Nest drag locations at Frenchman Hills regulated access – Image by R. Finger



Frenchman Regulated Access Area:

Technician Eddy used the land tamer to harrow and plant waterfowl forage at the Frenchman Hills Regulated Access Area. Japanese millet and Sudan grass were strategically seeded for effective forage at specific water depths.

Land Tamer on location

Grazing Monitoring & Oversight:

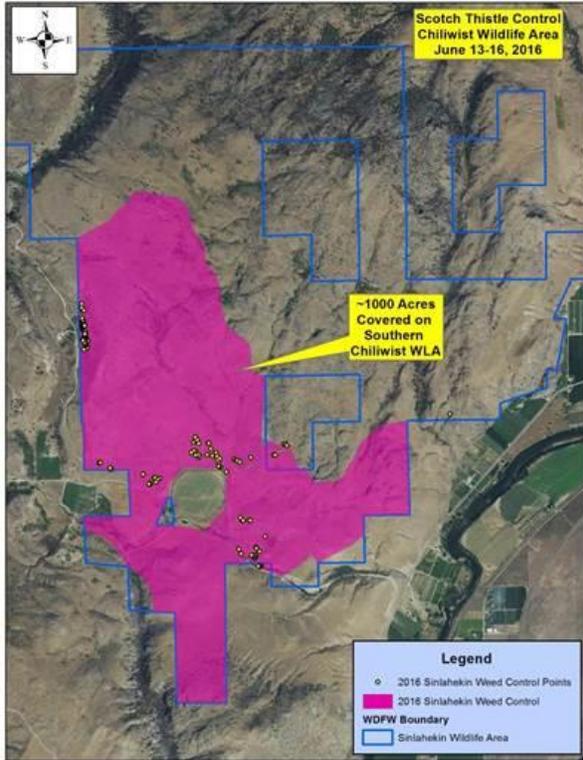
Assistant Manager Troyer collected grazing data at Riser Lake, N. Lehman, and Lloyd Ranch this week. Troyer also accompanied Range Ecologist Burnham to collect long term vegetation trend assessment data at three different locations near Fuzzy Canyon. Troyer also corresponded with several lessees.

Range Ecologist Burnham on trend assessments in Fuzzy Canyon

Sinlahekin Wildlife Area Complex

Noxious Weed Control: The Sinlahekin crew continued their efforts controlling scotch thistle plants on the Chiliwist Wildlife Area. The plants are too mature for herbicide applications and have been dug or pulled up. With the help of the prescribed burn crew, Assistant Manager Wehmeyer and Maintenance Mechanic Boulger covered approximately 1000 acres on the wildlife area. An additional survey is needed in the weeks to come to look for any missed plants. Other weeds controlled in the Chiliwist were baby's breath and rush skeletonweed.



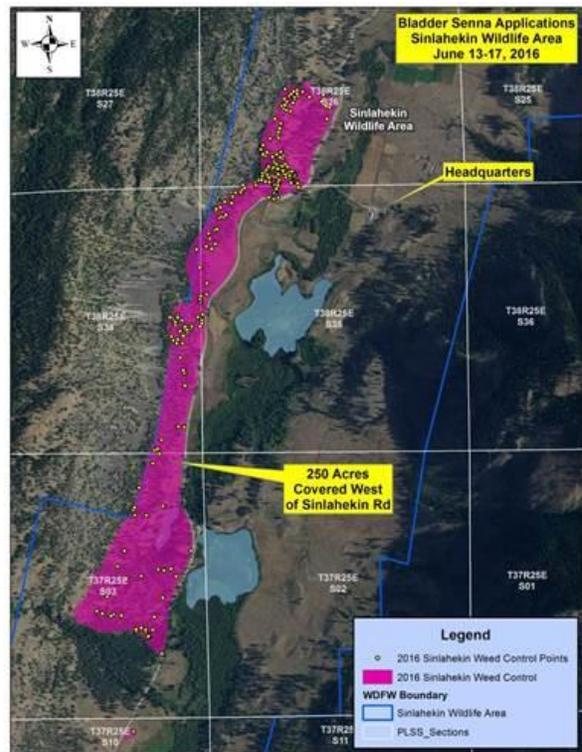


Map of area covered during scotch thistle control efforts

The North Puget Sound Spartina control crew traveled to the Sinlahekin to treat the Bladder Senna (*Colutea arborescens*). The shrub, which is native to the Mediterranean region, was planted by the former Game Department in the 1960s as potential forage for mule deer. The plant has since spread over a significant portion of the wildlife area. The four person crew sprayed an area covering approximately 250 acres, treating the heaviest infested area on the wildlife area. The crew had to cease spraying the first couple days due to thunderstorms, but managed to treat a significant portion of the infestation. The Sinlahekin hopes to have the crew back in the years to come to continue efforts to eradicate this shrub.

Private Lands/Access

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE): Biologist Comstock met with a producer to review and sign his plans for fields being redone. Biologist Comstock and District Biologist Finger conducted surveys for Washington ground squirrels on a new SAFE field south of Black Rock Coulee. The surveys did find potentially active burrow systems within the SAFE field boundaries. Staff members also found a new burrowing owl burrow on private land, just north of the SAFE field.



Burrowing owl burrow – Photo by Richard Finger

Biologist Comstock and Supervisor Cotton conducted reconnaissance for 472 acres of new SAFE ground enrolled in Douglas County. While most of the fields will have to be replanted, we did find a robust stand of great basin wild-rye, which we will save.



Stand of great basin wild rye – Photo by Devon Comstock

Biologist Comstock met with her NRCS mentor for the first time. The mentor will help her complete a conservation plan as part of the requirement for NRCS certifications as a conservation planner. Biologist Comstock arranged a meeting with her mentor and the producer for whom she will be writing a plan. Biologist Comstock met with the FSA to get updates on the status of shrub steppe SAFE. All acres for this SAFE program have now been allocated. Private Lands Biologist Braaten spent most of his time this week visiting fields signed up for SAFE. This information is used to write the correct plan and observe any weed issues that might need to be addressed. Braaten also met with a Douglas County Landowner and his operators to review this summer's work load and to keep them on track for next year. Braaten provided guidance sheets to the landowner and operators to simplify key work tasks. They appreciated the assistance. Private Lands

Biologist Braaten also began writing SAFE plans for five contracts. Braaten made recommendations to a seed dealer for a SAFE grass seed order.



Locating the correct SAFE-CRP field in Douglas County – Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW

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

Wildlife Management

Peregrine Falcon: Biologist Volsen banded a peregrine falcon collected by a 2016 permit holder. The bird, as seen in the image, is 45 plus days old.



Private Lands/Access

Access Site Management: Access Manager Graves mowed and weeded various access sites and boat ramps around the basin. Graves and Harmon inspected the final work, which Graves hired a private contractor to complete. Over 45 cotton wood trees were cut down at the Dryden access site to avoid any potential public hazards. Numerous trees were leaning heavily over the public roadway and the upper canopy of the trees was continually breaking off in winds.



Dryden project before – Photo by Access Manager Graves



Dryden project after – Photo by Access Manager Graves

Other



Elateridae (click beetle) – Photo by Chattan McPherson



Veliidae (ripple bug) – Photo by Chattan McPherson



Tiffany Mountain – Photo by Scott Fitkin



Thunderstorms this week caused a few interesting moments for field work, but once it blew over the view from Forde Lake was excellent – Photo by Jamie Bass



Snowshoe hare – Photo by Scott Fitkin



*Methow Unit, two years post-fire in
Lupin, Yarrow, and Buckwheat* –
Photo by Troyer





A sparrow on barbed wire fence on the Chesaw Wildlife Area, a merlin perched above Blue Lake on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, a bitterroot plant in bloom on the Chesaw, a mule deer doe and fawn in Chesaw flowers, a landscape image of the Chesaw Wildlife Area, and a stormy sunset looking north from the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area – Photos by Justin Haug

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Acting Manager Hunt visited Section 7 in T18N, R15E with Lands Program Manager Hendrix and a contract appraiser to update market values on the section. It is to come to WDFW from The Nature Conservancy once all steps are complete. They also visited Sections 15 and 17 to gather comparable value data based on the WDFW purchase from Plum Creek.



The Nature Conservancy Section 7 in T18N, R15E



Doe sneaking away from Leah's camera

Wildlife Management

Bat Surveys: District Biologist Fidorra continued the WDFW bat survey, placing acoustic bat detectors at sites in Districts 4 and 5 and coordinating with Biologist Rowan to relocate detectors near the Ephrata office. Fidorra is placing detectors at eight sites and will repeat recording protocols at each site monthly through August.

Burrowing Owls: District Biologist Fidorra continued occupancy and productivity checks for burrowing owls at artificial burrow sites and spent an evening trapping with assistance from the Global Owl project staff. Of interest, one adult female captured is the bird that carried a GPS transmitter for two years from 2013-2015 to California and back on migration. A scar remained on her wing where the harness had been rubbing, but she was doing fine and raising three nestlings.

Ferruginous Hawks: District Biologist Fidorra conducted productivity surveys at occupied ferruginous hawk territories on private lands. Fidorra arranged for volunteers to accompany him on checks, especially those volunteers that conducted surveys at inactive sites.

Dead Pelican: District Biologist Fidorra retrieved a dead pelican that had collided with a powerline from a landowner near the Yakima River in Prosser. The animal is in good condition and Fidorra will see if anyone is interested in the specimen.

Elk: District Biologist Fidorra assisted Enforcement with an elk that was stuck in a canal in Kennewick. The animal was exhausted and its hooves were worn down to bone. It had to be euthanized. Fidorra assisted Richland Rod and Gun Club members with salvaging the meat for donation to the Union Gospel Mission.

Canada Goose Banding: District Biologist Fidorra coordinated staff members and volunteers during the annual Canada Goose Banding in Kennewick and Pasco. Waterfowl Specialist Wilson, volunteers from the Richland Rod and Gun Club, Audubon, Master Hunters, and several District 4 staff members assisted, making the process run smoothly. They processed 303 birds, including 144 recaptures, during the morning at two urban park sites.



Geese and volunteers patiently waiting for banding operations to begin in Wade Park, Pasco



Volunteer youth with a gosling ready for release after banding

SAFE Applications: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman met with Franklin County FSA and NRCS to go over five new SAFE applications. Stutzman received the applications and did a site visit to three of the fields. Stutzman will begin working on the plans this week.

Franklin Conservation District Meeting: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman met with the Franklin Conservation District about a habitat project they are doing near Kennewick. District staff members were just looking for advice for the project and had some questions about the PHS database.

Pheasant Banding: Biologist Bernatowicz worked with Natural Resource Technician Medina and Natural Resource Worker Becker to sex and band rooster pheasant chicks at the Sunnyside

Wildlife Area. The local Pheasants Forever chapter has been raising pheasant chicks at the wildlife area in a surrogate for a number of years. Research from other states and local observations suggest very low survival of the chicks. The new registration program at the Sunnyside Wildlife Area provides an opportunity to measure harvest returns.

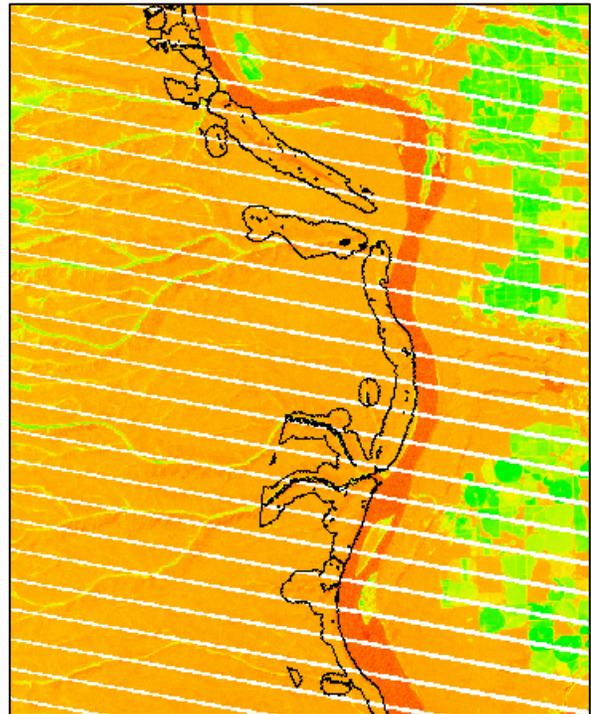
Natural Resource Technician Medina and Natural Resource Worker Becker with 4-week old pheasant



Lamb Depredation: Biologist Bernatowicz reviewed pictures of a depredation event in the Wenas. The evidence pointed toward a canid depredation and not cougar.

Bighorn Sheep Home Range Analysis: Biologist Moore reviewed Normalized Difference Vegetative Index (NDVI) data produced by IT Specialist Simper. Simper downloaded and processed data from Landsat 7 for 2012 and Landsat 5 for 2011. Landsat 7 has a malfunctioning sensor creating data gaps. Therefore, Moore selected to use Landsat 5 data from 2011. New imagery, from Landsat 8, is not being used for this evaluation because the Colockum Tarps Fire confounds vegetation data for a large portion of the Quilomene bighorn sheep herd's home range.

An illustration of white band gaps from Landsat 7 data that was calculated for NDVI. The central portion of the Quilomene Herds home range is outlined in black.



Biologist Moore discussed the development of an appropriated sampling frame for this project with Range Ecologist Burnham. Burnham suggested using Generalized Random Tesselation Sampling (GRTS). The use of GRTS will assist in creating a spatially balanced sample design. Moore downloaded the R package “spsurvey” and began reviewing code and literature for this technique.

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe (MIT) Deer Survey: Biologist Moore completed the population estimate using MIT survey data. The population estimate for PMU 33 was 2272 (+/- 352). This is down from previous years, but it will be noted that the survey window was later than normal and female GIS collar data, from the MIT survival study, indicated some migration had already begun, potentially affecting the survey results.

Teanaway State Forest Spotted Owl Survey: Biologist Moore performed the second survey at the Indian Creek territory. The survey was nearly identical to the first survey with no spotted owl responses and just one pygmy owl response.

Colockum Bull Study: Biologist Moore downloaded and prepared bull elk GPS data files for a graduate student called Lewis Meyer. These data will be used to validate his male resource selection probability function model.

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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area:

Assistant Manager Hagan and Natural Resource Worker Adams replaced maps on the Colockum reader boards.

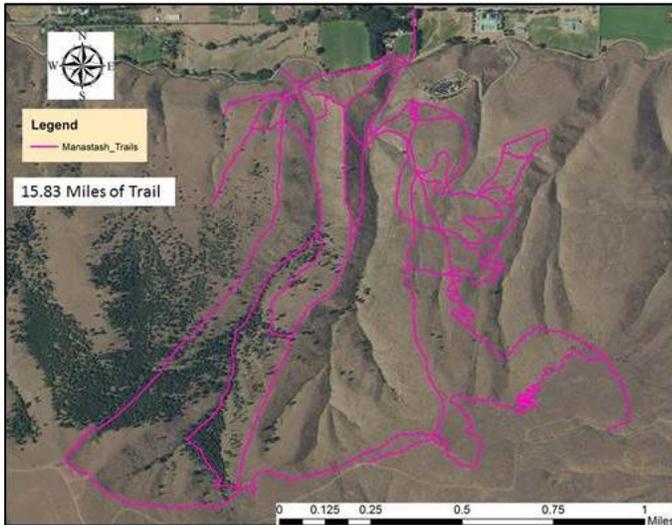
Assistant Manager Hagan installing new green dot map on reader board in the Colockum Wildlife Area

Wenas Wildlife Area: Biologist Longoria met with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and conducted a site visit for the Manastash Ridge Trails Project. GPS data was gathered and an overall direction for the project was discussed. Based on some of the GPS data gathered, Longoria was able to construct several maps helping to highlight essential information, such as total miles of trail and a generalized gradient measurement for various sections of hiking trail. There are several miles of new trails that have been created since the grant was submitted in 2014.





Two sections of the Manastash Ridge trails



Map showing all the current “user-built” hiking and biking trails on Manastash

Green Dot Road Management: Biologist Longoria completed working on a synthesis of Green Dot Road Management, including a short version to tie to the online maps and a more detailed version, with background documents, that would be provided as a link. He plans to collaborate with other efforts on the subject and hopefully tie everything together into a user friendly package that can be posted on the WDFW website.

Access

Mellis Road Boat Ramp: Access Manager Garcia removed years of silt from the boat ramp at Mellis Road, and also cleaned the crossing to the ramp.



Mellis Road boat ramp (before)



Mellis Road boat ramp (after)

Site Maintenance: Natural Resource Worker Barbosa mowed at Mattoon, Fio Rito, and Ringold Springs. He also brushed the road at Mattoon and Fio Rito.



Mattoon (brushing along the road)



Ringold Spring (overflow parking)

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman reviewed a letter received from the Pacific Northwest 4-Wheel Drive Association about their upcoming jamboree that would be occurring in the area on Forest Service Motorized Trails. The project description sounded like trails on the Rock Creek Unit would be used, so Huffman passed the information on to Lands Agent Hendrix. After maps were received from the Association that showed the jamboree routes did not go onto state land, the Association was informed a permit was not needed from WDFW.

Travel Management: Manager Huffman reviewed the draft Travel Management BA put together by USFS. The maps provided have numerous errors affecting state lands on the Oak Creek and Wenas wildlife areas, as well as adjacent DNR lands.

Tim's Pond Development Project: Manager Huffman attended a scoping meeting with CAMP Engineer Hagen looking at the Tim's Pond development project. Work is still set for 2018, but hopefully will move along quicker and be completed in 2017.

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

Wildlife Management

Elk Monitoring: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand continued to monitor elk distribution and movements in Elk Areas 3721 & 3722. Increasing numbers of elk continue to cross Hanford's southern boundary to graze in winter wheat fields. Harvest of bull elk on private lands continues to be effective in hazing elk back to Hanford.

Trail Cameras: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand checked and replaced the camera card in the deployed trail camera along Hanford’s southern boundary. Over 400 images were recovered, mostly of nocturnal elk movements.

Spotlight Patrol: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand conducted a late night spotlight patrol for elk presence near high value irrigated crops and winter wheat fields north of Prosser.

Injured Bull Elk: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand assisted Enforcement with dealing with a bull elk that had become injured in an irrigation canal near Kennewick. Because of the severity of the injuries, it was decided that the elk be euthanized and the carcass donated to the Union Gospel Mission.



Injured bull elk in Kennewick

Sick Deer: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received a call concerning a sick deer at Howard Amon Park in Richland. A homeowner near the park reported that the deer appeared thin and was not afraid of people. A site visit of the area was conducted and the deer was not located.

Elk Hazing: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand coordinated with landowners and hunt managers on elk locations to pressure them away from valuable crops.

Elk Conflict: Conflict Specialist Wetzel found elk in new areas this week in agriculture areas west of Ellensburg. Most had mobile calves. Hazing these elk is less effective due to the presence of new calves, but it was still conducted.

Alfalfa: Conflict Specialist Wetzel hauled approximately one ton of alfalfa hay to stock an emergency enclosure storage site. It will be used as needed to bait and lure elk out of the area.



Private land hay storage site in west Ellensburg

Dead Goat: Conflict Specialist Wetzel and Officer Scherzinger investigated a dead goat in west Ellensburg. Based on the wounds found on the goat, it appears a bobcat killed it. During the investigation, other neighbors called to report ducks, chickens, lambs, and kid goats had been killed in the area during the past few weeks.

Elk: Two landowners in the Badger Pocket area called to report elk in irrigated hay fields. A check of the area indicated some elk had been crossing from the Yakima Training Center onto the private lands. The situation will be monitored as conditions dry out on the Yakima Training Center.

Injured Golden Eagle: A motorist called Conflict Specialist Wetzel to report an injured golden eagle on I-90 near Milepost 80. Conflict Specialist Wetzel called the motorist to confirm the difference between an eagle and other things like hawks and vultures. The motorist stated they knew what a golden eagle looked like. Traffic in the area was very heavy, but a check of the location in each direction located no injured golden eagle. However, at the exact location described by the motorist, Conflict Specialist Wetzel located a road-killed deer with a turkey vulture feeding on it and one American crow observing the vulture.

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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area:

Colockum staff members did maintenance work on portions of the south boundary fence.

Assistant Manager Hagan and Natural Resource Worker Adams repaired boundary fence on the Colockum Wildlife Area



Sunnyside Wildlife Area:

Manager Buser worked on evaluating applicants for the Biologist 2 – Assistant Manager Position. Interviews will be in early July.

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Acting Manager Hunt spent most of two days refreshing staking and preparing for the Heart K project. Hunt will be meeting with WCC Crew Leader Leo Arias and USFWS Biologist Pat Monk on Monday when the WCC crew will begin work. This is a cooperative project that includes WDFW, USBOR, USFWS, and DOT.

View across Heart K/Taneum meadow

Grazing Utilization Monitoring: Natural Resource Technician Leuck completed mid-season grazing utilization monitoring on the Whiskey Jim pasture. He also checked the boundary for cattle and found two pair out on the south and five more head out on the north. Leuck notified the permittee, who said he would send out a rider to round them up. Leuck also observed a few cow elk in the pasture.



Oak Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman coordinated with State Surplus and staff members at Fort Lewis and Camp Murray to pick up the two surplus military trucks. A date for pick-up was scheduled in July.

REGION 4

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

Don Kraege and Paul DeBruyn during a field day in Whatcom County

Wildlife Management

North Cascades Elk: Biologist Yarborough attended the North Cascades technical group meeting to discuss damage issues, fencing projects, and proposed harvest recommendations for the upcoming damage season.

North Cascades Grizzly Bear: Biologist Yarborough began reviewing the North Cascades Grizzly Bear Environmental Impact Statement.



Protected Wildlife Management – White-Nose Syndrome: District 12 participated in interviews for the Project White-nose Syndrome Coordinator. The district also followed up on reports of bats within the district boundaries. Staff members spoke with other federal and state agencies in a bi-weekly Pacific Northwest White-nose Syndrome coordination call updating all involved on WDFW efforts. District 12 also participated in a weekly internal White-nose Syndrome call. District 12 and Bats Northwest followed up on a maternity colony report in Lake

Forest Park. The group used the opportunity to dry run a “citizen maternity solstice count” that WDFW and partners are drafting for next season and the future. The colony surveyed is a little brown bat colony with about one hundred females. Weather was not so conducive to survey, but bats were out, identification was determined from multiple units, and counting/trial use of draft protocol moved forward. Review was provided on a draft citizen maternity colony emergence protocol. District 12 worked with volunteers and Volunteer Coordinator Redmond to manage project leads. District 12 also worked with the project lead to flesh out survey scheduling. The district launched summer pup season Lower Snoqualmie Valley acoustic encounter bat surveys, with volunteers leading the effort.

The range map for White-nose Syndrome can be found online at

<https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/resources/map>

WDFW and collaborators are asking the public to report dead or dying/sick bats via our hotline found at the link below. District 12 is working with local volunteers to review and pilot a roost emergence count.



Decontamination, outlined in the below links, is essential to assist in the management of this pathogen, particularly in the research, management, and recreationist communities, including caving, climbing, and canyoneering.

Report dead or dying/sick bats at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/wns/>

More information can be found at <https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/>

Protected Wildlife Management – Bald Eagles: District 12 received calls regarding bald eagle management documentation. District 12 provided location and known status, and passed parties off to web references and USFWS as appropriate for the situation. This happens weekly.

Protected Wildlife Management – Assistance to Habitat Regarding Priority Habitats and Species Non-jurisdictional Management Consultation in District 12: Anderson assisted the area habitat biologist, when requested, to provide for project and local jurisdictional requests for wildlife management consideration centered around the WDFW Priority Habitats and Species Wildlife Management Program. More information can be found at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/phs/>

Wildlife Areas

Agricultural Leases: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that corn rows were planted at the Crescent Lake Unit this past week. Corn rows will be retained for wildlife forage and cover.

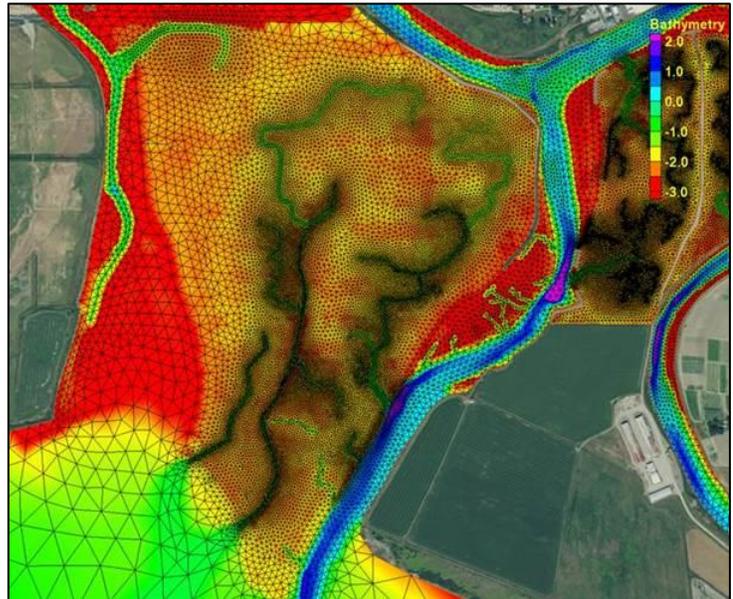
Stillwater Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm mowed access roads within the Stillwater Wildlife Unit. Manager Boehm reports that Sound Salmon Solutions field staff members were on site conducting maintenance mowing at the Harris Creek Restoration Project.

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm cleaned up three small illegal dumps at the Ebey Island parking areas this past week.

Leque Island Modeling Update:

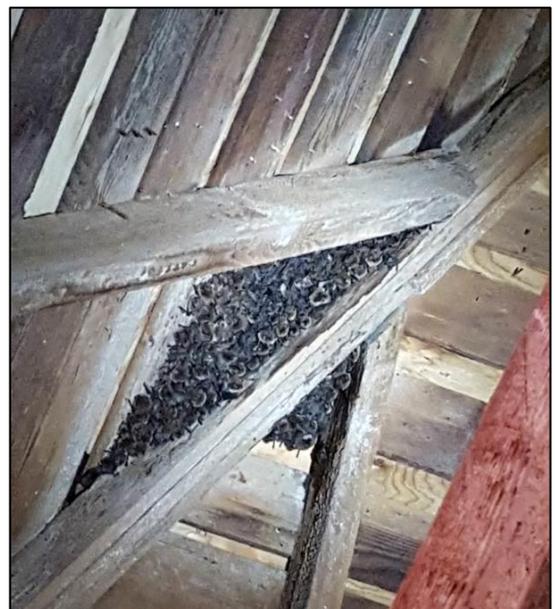
Projects Coordinator Brokaw reviewed updated modeling information for the Leque Island project. Brokaw then sent out a poll to project partners and neighbors to set a date for a presentation from the modeling company to talk through the results.

The model grid used to simulate conditions on Leque Island after restoration, which includes removing the perimeter dike around the island and excavating tidal channels. Colors show the topography/bathymetry.

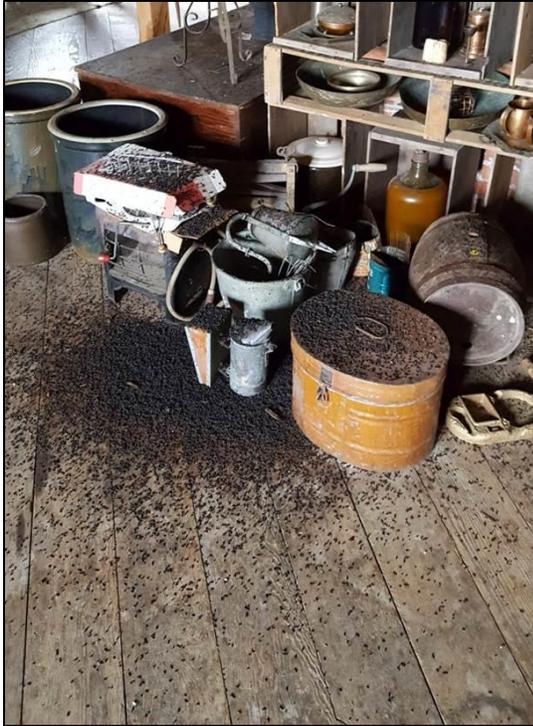


Leque Island Grant Applications: Projects Coordinator Brokaw finished and submitted a grant application to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board that, if successful, would fund a portion of constructing the project. The funds could be available as soon as August 2016, and the first tasks would be to move forward with the Snohomish County vacation of Eide Road and secure permits to move forward with channel excavation on the interior of the island.

Lake Terrell Honey Bee Swarm: A surprise huge swarm of honey bees showed up at Lake Terrell and took up residence in the upper floor of the barn. Natural Resource Technician Deyo, who happens to be a bee keeper, was successful in getting them moved into a box hive outside of the barn, where they are currently residing. It was a complete swarm with a queen, so they should do fine in their new home, pollinating plants on the wildlife area.



Bats roosting in attic at Hovander House in Whatcom County



Hovander House bat guano

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

Wildlife Management

Keeping Common Species Common – Citizen Amphibian Monitoring: District 12 continues to provide assistance and identification for ongoing citizen amphibian egg mass monitoring across urbanized King County in collaboration with the Woodland Park Zoo.



Red-legged frog picture from 2016 Lewis Creek Park survey effort in Bellevue. Note this species is not found in Seattle and the eastern suburb area is, anecdotally, the edge of its range before moving into more urbanized suburbs.

Promoting Habitat Stewardship – Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary: District 12 worked with customer service staff members to provide for requests of “data dumps” of registered Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary properties in a given area. This information is for reference in communities working towards National Wildlife Federation Community Wildlife Habitat Certification. District 12 provided file structure and met regarding future action item needs, next steps, and general check-in with Olympia staff members regarding transitioning the Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary administrative needs to Olympia (both east and west side programs).

Wildlife Areas

Leque Island Recreation and Access Plan: Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Skagit Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Meis met with a member of the Leque Island Recreation and Access Committee on the site to discuss features that could be built into the restoration project that would benefit waterfowl hunters. The committee member is also a member of Washington Waterfowl Association (WWA), and he had developed a list of suggestions with input from other WWA members of their local chapter. The list of suggestions will be discussed at the upcoming Leque Island Recreation and Access Committee meeting on July 21.

Lake Terrell Wildlife Area: Kessler attended the monthly meeting of the Friends of Tennant Lake & Hovander Park.

Intalco Unit Youth 3D Archery Tournament: Bill Stinson and the Custer Sportsmen's Club coordinated a 3D Archery Tournament for youth at the Intalco Unit on Father's Day weekend. The tournament was held to benefit youth archery activities in Whatcom County. Even with heavy rain on Saturday, there was a good turnout.

Intalco Unit Archery Course

Mowing: Natural Resource Technician Deyo mowed the archery course at the Intalco Unit in preparation for the weekend youth archery tournament.



Broadlin field on the Island Unit: corn, fava beans, and barley fields for waterfowl forage

Island Unit: Natural Resources Technician Cosgrove assisted with updating the planting plan map for the Island Unit. Cosgrove monitored crops, moist-soil vegetation, field conditions, and water levels on the Island Unit.

Samish Unit: Natural Resource Scientist Meis finished up mowing at the Samish Unit for noxious weeds until later in the summer and early fall. Cosgrove checked for beneficial wetland forage plants for waterfowl in non-crop areas and ponds, and monitored planted crops at the Samish Unit.

Samish River Unit: Natural Resource Technician Cosgrove transported the spin spreader to the Island Unit and set it up on a tractor for millet and rye plantings in the near future.

Private Lands/Access Management

Spring Bear Hunts: The North Skagit and Monroe Spring Bear Hunts are now closed. Natural Resource Technician Otto removed combo locks and reinstalled DNR locks on the North Skagit spring bear hunt gates. Biologists will be contacting all hunters to identify hunter success and record any issues that may have occurred during this year's spring season.

Migratory Bird Forage Enhancement Project: Natural Resource Technicians Otto and Deyo worked up ground and planted barley on multiple Waterfowl Quality Hunt sites in Whatcom and Skagit counties. Most of the ground planted has been undesirable ground for traditional farming practices due to wet and low conditions, which has resulted in a mono-culture of reed canary grass. Deyo and Otto were able to get six acres of this ground planted on three different sites.



Planting at Waterfowl Quality Hunt sites

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

Wildlife Management

Elk Conflict Management: Natural Resource Technician Cogdal responded to the Skagit Valley for some early morning elk hazing on a new grass planting. Cogdal was able to intercept several bulls leaving the field prior to first light. Elk were hazed with cracker shells as they exited the field. Cogdal and Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman began working on the elk exclusionary fencing project at the Hamilton Cemetery. Several “H” braces were completed and the installation of hardware is taking place. Witman fielded calls from several elk special permit draw winners. The hunters were provided general information and asked to be patient, as all successful permit holders for GMU 418 and Elk Area 4941 will be contacted with information about the hunting opportunities available. Witman met with a dairy producer in the Acme Valley of Whatcom County and discussed fencing strategies for materials that were recently purchased. The landowner is beginning discussions with several neighboring properties and will begin clearing property lines in preparation for the installation.

North Cascade Elk Management Technical Group Meeting: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell attended, prepared, and presented notes on elk-related damage and the current status of elk exclusionary fencing projects at the North Cascade Elk Management Technical Group meeting.

Deer Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman responded to a deer browsing complaint on a new 30-acre plantation of Hazelnut trees. The landowner has aggressively been applying repellent with moderate success. Two motion alarms were installed and fencing information was provided to the landowner. Additional monitoring of deer presence will be conducted.

Waterfowl Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman was contacted by a golf course manager requesting information on how to best deal with resident Canada geese. The manager was provided resources and contact information for USFWS.

Black Bear Damage Surveys: Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell toured private industrial timber company lands in Whatcom County in search of bear-related timber damage. Access location, routes, tree damage, damage age, and other conditions were recorded for later use. These surveys will later be used to inform timber companies on where high levels of damage occur and where potential recreational access may be needed.



Douglas fir tree with historic (grey colored) and fresh, 2016 (yellow) black bear peels



2016 black bear peel. Black bears tend to “girdle” the base of trees, which can result in tree death over time.



Typical black bear forage site. Black bears enjoy and naturally forage within old logs for insects and larvae, which provide them with vital proteins.



Black bear scat containing evidence of berry foraging. Although black bears are omnivorous, they primarily forage on grasses and berries throughout the year – All photos by Cole J. Caldwell, WDFW

Urban Wildlife Ecology, Conflict Reduction, and Habitat Needs: District 12 provided an interview with Seattle Times regarding urban wildlife and ecology in the greater Seattle Area.

Wildlife Rehabilitation Animal Deposition: District 12 provided direction and suggestions of collaborators to take an osprey chick that came into PAWS Wildlife Rehabilitation Center and have a surrogate nesting pair foster the chick. SeaTac Airport biologists have had good luck with this technique at this time of year and PAWS worked with individuals involved in that effort.



Osprey chick – Photo by PAWS rehabilitation center

Wildlife Mitigation and Management Efforts: District 12 received word regarding ongoing wildlife mitigation and management efforts per State Take Authorization for the SR520 floating

bridge. A pair of osprey that has created conflict in use of light standards for nesting has moved to a voluntarily placed nest platform in the University of Washington Urban Natural Area. The platform was put up by University of Washington, Osprey Solutions LLC, and other collaborators in 2015. Birds were discouraged from light standards this season by USDA Wildlife Services and have now moved to the platform. Many thanks to WSDOT, their contract construction and habitat enhancement crew, Jim Kaiser with Osprey Solutions LLC, University of Washington and many others for voluntarily providing a space for these birds. Thus far, according to reports, they have landed the ship.

Osprey nesting on a voluntarily installed nesting platform at University of Washington Urban Natural Area – Photo courtesy of Jim Kaiser, Osprey Solutions LLC

District 12 continues to talk with entities wishing to move forward with work on and around known active osprey nests. A safety or damage situation triggers permit review during the nesting season to meet state laws. Outside of that, if the nest is active and known, scheduling of regular maintenance/ non-emergency work should cater around any active nest, per state law, and avoid violation(s).



Wildlife Areas

Wildlife Area Planning Team: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with core team members to discuss plans for the next phase of the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Management Plan update process. Outcomes of this meeting will provide the basis for the upcoming planning team meeting.

Volunteer Opportunities: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager reports that members from the Snohomish Sportsman's Club conducted repairs to the Corson bird pens this past week.

Skagit Headquarters: Manager Rotton met with WDFW Surveyor Steve Dabowski to discuss the Wiley Slough survey work of the new pump station and tide gate. Cosgrove mowed road shoulders and lawn areas with the riding mower, and native plant areas and grass fields with the John Deere 5300 and brush-hog at the Headquarters Unit. Meis sprayed weeds around the shop, interpretive center, and office area. Cosgrove sprayed poison hemlock, thistle, blackberry, and other broadleaf weeds at the boat launch parking area at the Headquarters Unit.

Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator

Hunter Education Instructor Support: Hunter Education Coordinator Steven Dazey met with the instructors for the Stilliguamish tribe and assisted the new instructors in laying out a field course for their upcoming hunter education class. The class will be held June 21-24. This class will be offered to tribal members. However, future use of the venue has been offered to open classes. Coordinator Dazey assisted Capital Asset Manager Jason Harlow to verify inventory. Dazey received firearms from Enforcement Officer Valentine that had been checked out to an instructor who is no longer teaching. Dazey sent out one instructor application and activated three hunter education classes. Dazey answered instructor questions on no shows at classes. This has been a challenge with a no show rate from 14-20 percent. No shows tie up seats in the classes, especially as we get to our busy season with wait lists and demand exceeding available spaces. Several suggestions were made, and the department continues to explore strategies available to instructors to cut down on the frustration of the no show issue.

Range Safety Officer (RSO) Training: Hunter Education Coordinator Dazey assisted in presenting a RSO class to hunter education instructors. The hunter education instructor policy manual states that if live fire is part of the class, one certified hunter education instructor shall serve as range officer and assume responsibility for supervision of overall range activities. The RSO class being offered provides the instructors with the tools to fulfil this requirement and also certifies them as NRA Range Safety Officer trained. These classes are being offered by volunteers for hunter education instructors only and are offered at just the cost of materials, as instructor time and venues are being donated.

2015 Terry Hoffer Nominee Recognition: The Terry Hoffer Memorial Firearm Safety Award honors Terry, and recalls his tragic loss in 1984, by annually recognizing one hunter education instructor whose outstanding commitment and/or teaching excellence over the previous 12 months clearly indicate exceptional performance. Out of the 950 instructors statewide, WDFW received nominations for 11 instructors whose peers felt that they rose to the level of excellence

meriting recognition. Coordinator Dazey presented a recognition certificate to instructor Bob Palmer for having been nominated by his peers to be considered for this prestigious award. Bob's peers recognize that he has gone above and beyond the expected in helping to train the next generation of safe and ethical hunters.

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

Immobilization Training: Biologist DeBruyn taught a class on raptor handling at the Region 6 Immobilization Workshop. He also attended the workshop and was recertified.

College Graduation: Natural Resource Technician Rob Cogdal completed and received his diploma for a Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Conservation from Skagit Valley College.

Awards: Staff members attended the Region 4 awards meeting in Mill Creek, where several people received much deserved awards.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Treponeme-associated Hoof Disease Survival Study: Biologist George finished organizing over 5,500 photos from a trail camera this week. The camera was placed near a known collared elk mortality where the cause of death was determined to be a cougar predation. The elk had hoof disease, and is part of an ongoing study to determine the rate of survival and reproduction for adult cow elk affected by the disease.



Black-tailed Deer Research Project: Regional Wildlife Biologists continued with fawn searches and captures for this year's work on the black-tailed deer research project. Currently in

the Coweeman cluster, seven out of 10 adult does captured in 2016 remain alive, while in the Washougal cluster, all four captured adult does remain alive. During the May-June birth period, all adult females associated with each study cluster will be monitored frequently by a combination of satellite, VHF, and Vaginal Implant Transmitter (VIT) technology, and multiple attempts will be made to capture their fawns. To date, a total of 14 fawns have been captured during the 2016 effort and nine remain alive.

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Klickitat Wildlife Area Draft Management Plan: Manager Van Leuven assisted Planner Vigue in conducting a public meeting to collect comments on the draft management plan for the Klickitat Wildlife Area. This is the second public meeting held by WDFW to address the current revision of the Klickitat Wildlife Area Management Plan. District Wildlife Biologist Anderson, District Fish Biologist Weinheimer, Habitat Program Manager Howe, and Forester Pfeifle were also present to set up the facility and provide more detailed information in response to public inquiries. The meeting was attended by approximately 12 people. Vigue and Van Leuven presented a range of plan highlights, an overview of the habitat management for black-tailed deer, and information on the protection of key habitats for game and diversity species. Pfeifle gave a more in-depth discussion of the forest management plan for the wildlife area, which seemed to stir the most interest. The public was given an opportunity to provide comments on their management issues on the Klickitat Wildlife Area. The meeting went well and several good questions were noted for the public record. The public still has an opportunity to make comments on the draft management plan by reviewing them on the WDFW website.

Canyon Creek Campground Safety Improvement: Several pine trees have died in the Canyon Creek Campground, with some of them creating a hazard by threatening to fall into campsites or across roads. Manager Van Leuven met with DNR Fire Crew Supervisor Tsubota to discuss whether the trees would be suitable for crew training purposes, and five were selected for felling and bucking practice. The trees were dropped and cut up by DNR fire crews, and Van Leuven issued a wood cutting permit to local residents who collected the good wood pieces and piled the limbs for disposal later.

Grazing Permit Monitoring: Most of the cattle were cleared off the Grayback pasture on June 10. The permittee returned on June 14 to gather stragglers. All cattle are to be off the WDFW range by June 15.

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

District 10 Wildlife Conflict

Deer: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a farmer in Wahkiakum County who is having his commercial crop of strawberries and other vegetables damaged and eaten by a Columbia white-tailed deer. Conklin provided him with nonlethal materials to use and also gave him advice on how to more effectively fence off his property. In addition, Conklin responded to a blueberry farm experiencing heavy black-tailed deer damage to the commercial crop. This



farm produces approximately 4,000 pounds of blueberries exclusively sold to gourmet restaurants in the Portland area. Conklin will be working with the farm to better protect the berries as they begin to ripen.

Broken blueberry bush

Cougar: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a report of a cougar in the pasture of a sheep farm in Chehalis. This farmer raises purebred Suffolk sheep and was concerned about the safety of the herd. The sheep had

bent a steel post and chain link fencing after being spooked. Conklin gave advice and information to the sheep owners. She also placed a trail camera in the pasture to monitor if the cougar stays in the area or was just passing through.

Bobcat: Officer Martin and Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a report of two goats that were killed inside an enclosure in the Kalama area. Conklin had been working with this neighborhood already on both bear and bobcat issues. When Conklin and Martin arrived they found one goat in the enclosure and the other on the outside of the fence under heavy blackberry cover. A necropsy was performed on the goats and initially the depredation was thought to be a cougar. The carcasses were left in the area and a camera was set up. The next morning, around 9:30 a.m., a bobcat came in and fed on the carcasses. A neighbor who had his chicken killed by the bobcat came over to haze it away. The bobcat appeared to not be afraid of him and only slowly moved away after he was able to get close to it. Conklin responded to the scene again to meet a very distraught owner who witnessed the cat feeding on her bottle-fed goats. Conklin removed the goats from her property. This particular property is not conducive to setting a live trap due to steep terrain. Hounds cannot be used to track the animal because of its neighborhood setting. Conklin issued a kill permit to harvest the bobcat if it returns. The bobcat will remain property of the state if harvested. This is believed to be the same bobcat that just a month prior killed a chicken in broad daylight in front of the owner and his dog. The owner of the chicken is a neighbor who actually shot at the bobcat once, but it did not move on. The cat finally moved on after it was shot at a second time.



Bobcat

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Snowy Plover at Midway/Graveyard: Biologist Sundstrom continues to monitor plover activity at both Midway Beach and Graveyard Spit. The last adult survey was completed at Graveyard Spit by WDFW, USFWS, and Shoalwater Bay personnel, but surveys at other locations were cancelled due to poor weather and lack of qualified observers. Nearly 40 birds, including adults, chicks, and juveniles, were observed during the final survey at Tokeland.

New nests and nest failures are being discovered each week at all locations, and some nests are hatching while others are expected to hatch soon.

2016 Midway Beach and Graveyard Spit Season Totals				
<i># Nests Discovered</i>	<i># Nests Active</i>	<i># Nests Hatched</i>	<i># Nests Failed</i>	<i># Nests w/ Unknown Fate</i>
53	18	13	20	2

Western Pond Turtle: Biologists Tirhi and Holcomb, along with three volunteers, continued to monitor the western pond turtle nesting season at the South Puget Sound Wildlife Area reintroduction site. Current season statistics for female turtles at the site are as follows:

Number of breeding age (8+) anticipated to nest	52
Number fitted with transmitters in 2016	26
Number with transmitters that have first clutches laid (06/20/16)	13
Number without transmitters that have first clutches laid (06/20/16)	2
Number of second clutches laid (06/15/16)	0
Number of clutches of total delivered to Woodland Park Zoo	10

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

Wildlife Areas

Waterfowl Hunting Blinds: Manager Belson and Biologist Murphie made a site visit to the four WDFW-designated waterfowl hunting blinds in Lynch Cove near Belfair. The two floating/anchored structures and two simple T-post/wire enclosures are located on the Union River Wildlife Area Unit and on adjacent North Mason School District property under a 1993 Easement Agreement. Setting off from the Port of Allyn North Shore Dock, the two made their way to the blinds on an incoming tide and under moderately choppy



conditions. The blinds were photographed and recorded using the new WLA/WAS data collection app designed by IT Specialist Foisy. All structures are in good to fair condition and will be available for public use during the 2016 hunting season.

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

Wildlife Management

Thurston County Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP): Biologist Tirhi participated in a conference call with HQ to discuss WDFW's first review of the draft HCP. This is a coarse-scale review of the plan and associated appendices. WDFW staff members identified several important issues with the plan, which will be delivered to the county. Amy Windrope is the WDFW lead for the HCP review.

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

Region 6 Director's Meeting and Awards Ceremony: Region 6 Wildlife Program staff members attended the annual Region 6 meeting and awards ceremony at Friends Landing near Montesano. In addition to an update on Washington's Wild Future and subsequent program breakout sessions, Wildlife Program staff members were recognized for their years of service and for select accomplishments as listed below:

Jim Gerchak – 45 Years
Jim Gallegos – 30 Years
Anita McMillan – 30 Years
Bryan Murphie – 20 Years
Conservation Initiative – Michelle Tirhi
Manager of the Year – Shane Belson
Science – Mary Linders