

Wildlife Program

Week of June 20 – June 26, 2016

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Discussions with Ranchers: Biologist Shepherd and Natural Resource Worker Weatherman had phone discussions with ranchers concerning data sharing, range riding, wolf issues, and preventative deterrence methods.

Contracts and Invoices: Biologist Shepherd and Natural Resource Worker Weatherman assisted several ranchers with contracts and payment invoices.

Stranger Pack: Natural Resource Worker Weatherman spent time in the Stranger Pack home range monitoring wolf activity near residences. Weatherman installed fox lights at a residence that had wolves come in again near their dogs.

2016 Huckleberry/Stranger Deterrence Plan Edits: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett worked with Wolf Biologists Becker and Roussin to make corrections to the 2016 Huckleberry/Stranger Deterrence Plan. Additional edits by Wildlife Conflict Specialist Shepherd will be made before the final copy is available.

Huckleberry Collared Animal Disperser: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett worked with Wolf Biologist Becker to monitor the dispersal of a Huckleberry GPS collared animal. Producers in the area were notified. The animal traveled almost 40 miles within two days and at the last check was more than 60 miles away from the natal pack territory.

Reported Depredation in Whitman County:

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett and Assistant District Biologist Lowe met with a producer near Rosalia concerned about a calf carcass he thought had been killed by wolves. The skull and spinal cord were all that remained of the 250-pound calf. The scene was scoured for tracks, scat, and other evidence. Only coyote scat was discovered. Bennett and Lowe had a great conversation with the owner of the calf and a nearby producer about wolves, cougar, and coyotes. The determination will be filed as Unknown Cause of Death due to the lack of evidence and a lack of a carcass to necropsy.

A skull from a 250-pound calf found near Rosalia



Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for Livestock (DPCA_L): Natural Resource Technician Wade worked on entering DPCA-L contracts into the Novatus contract system. Biologist Earl continued to work on A-19s and a checklist this week. Earl also met with Asotin County producers to discuss new agreements.

Wolf Sighting: Biologist Earl received a call about two (2) wolves sighted in a field west of Anatone. Earl also received a call informing him of a log truck driver who reported seeing wolves south of Cloverland.

Region 2 Wolf Activities

Okanogan Wolves: Specialist Heilhecker updated the Lookout pack deterrence plan. She also wrote a deterrence plan for the Loup Loup pack. Specialist Heilhecker met with the WDFW contracted range rider to discuss activities within the Beaver Creek territory. They also discussed plans for the following month, how to submit invoices, and wolf location data access.

REGION 1

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

Canada Goose Capture & Banding: District Wildlife Biologist Dana Base teamed with Agency Waterfowl Specialist Matt Wilson in a capture and leg-banding of Canada geese on the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge. Refuge staff members and volunteers also participated. At least four goose brood groups were captured, and in total 24 adult geese and 37 goslings were banded.



Canada geese inside the capture corral at Bayley Lake on the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge, June 21, 2016



Passing the goose, in this instance a gosling, amongst Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crew members at the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge



Refuge Manager Jerry Cline (on right) and WDFW Waterfowl Specialist Matt Wilson (left) classifying age & sex of after hatch year Canada geese

Landowner Hunt Permit Hunting

Opportunities Matrix: Natural Resource Technician Wade completed the Landowner Hunt Permit hunting opportunity matrix for the 2016-2017 hunting season.

Voluntary Public Access Contracts: Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley met with Private Lands Biologists Earl and Lewis, as well as Supervisor McCanna, to review Voluntary Public Access contracts ranking and the dispersal of available funding.

Routine Site Maintenance: Manager Dziekan performed routine duties at his access sites, cleaned bathrooms, and picked up litter. The users at his access sites have continued to be relatively clean. The restrooms haven't been torn up and the litter at sites continues to be minimal. Dziekan has taken advantage of this. Not needing to spend as much time picking up after people has allowed him to spend more time improving sites. He continues to spray noxious weeds when the weather allows and has been able to focus on cutting limbs and grass. Dziekan noticed the grassy field behind the restrooms at Newman Lake is largely noxious weeds. He cut the field, and when the weeds pop back up they will be treated.





Newman Lake (above) and Cedar Lake (below)

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

Bluetongue Virus Meeting Preparation and In Person Meeting: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett worked with several staff members and interested producers on coordination for a bluetongue virus meeting. The meeting was attended by participants from Washington Department of Agriculture, Washington State University (WSU), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Washington State Representatives, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and area producers. Current research, transmission, and prevention were some of the topics discussed.

Outreach and Education: Baarstad and Natural Resource Technician Bendixen represented WDFW at the Forest and Range Owners Field Day on Saturday, June 25. The event, hosted by Washington State University Cooperative Extension, covered several topics including forest and range health, protecting land and homes from wildfire, and forest stewardship.

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

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

Palouse Prairie Meeting: Private Lands Biologist Lewis attended a Palouse prairie restoration meeting held in Moscow, Idaho. The meeting was directed at landowners who are interested in restoring Palouse prairie habitat on their lands. The meeting was hosted by the Latah County Soil and Water Conservation District and sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

The meeting was focused on restoration techniques such as site prep, planting methods, and weed management. Most of the information was not new, but it was nice to hear that the problems with habitat restoration in the Palouse are common to the entire area and to hear landowners talk about their experiences with restoring prairie on their lands.

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Sprague Lake Colonial Nesting Waterbirds: District Wildlife Biologist Finger and Wetlands Biologist McPherson finished redeploying marker buoys around Harper Island on Sprague Lake to advertise fishing restrictions in place around the island. All five marker buoys are now placed properly, and each has a maintained anchor line. Finger and McPherson conducted a shoreline waterbird survey, resulting in one small western grebe colony on the south end of the lake (nine nests) and 25 duck broods (19 of them redhead). Based on egg numbers in nests (0-3), it appears that this colony is still mostly in the egg-laying stages.



Redhead hen and brood at Sprague Lake

– Photo by Rich Finger

Monarch Butterflies: Technician Quayle used revised data collection sheets to conduct two types of milkweed surveys. The first was a major road survey along the I-90 corridor and the second was a township survey of the Potholes Reservoir area. Eighty-six new milkweed patches were recorded and Monarch butterflies were documented at one patch near the Potholes Reservoir.



Male Monarch butterfly and milkweed near Potholes Reservoir

Photo by K. Quayle

Okanogan Mountain Goat Surveys:

Biologist Fitkin and Section Manager Harris conducted aerial surveys of the Methow Goat Unit. In the northern half of the unit we classified 37 mountain goats, which was generally in line with expectations. Conversely, in the

south half of the unit, which historically supported the most animals, we did not locate any goats. This is in keeping with low counts in this area in recent years. However, this is the first time we have come up empty during aerial surveys of the southern portion of the unit.

Wildlife Areas

Big Bend Fencing: Noel and Ed made additional repairs to stock fence around the 150-acre Bissell Flat restoration site. They built one drop gate, replaced old wood posts with steel T-posts, and tightened the wire on a one-third mile section of fence located on the west side of the site. Noel also put up new boundary signs at entry points to the Phase 2 acquisition.

Douglas County Weed Control: Noel traveled the Big Bend Wildlife Area and treated infestations of Scotch thistle. Derek cut and pulled weeds within shrub enclosures located on the Bridgeport Unit. He also made repairs to the deer fencing and drip irrigation systems at the same sites. Virgilio spot sprayed goatheads on the Bridgeport Bar Unit. Fidel hauled the tractor and disc to Indian Dan Canyon and disced the old spring wheat fields. These amount to only about 14 acres and never really resulted in wheat that was worth the effort. We plan to summer fallow this acreage for a year and plant native grass and forbs in the fall of 2017. Fidel sprayed the corn rows on the Bridgeport Bar and Washburn Island units to treat annual weeds.

Private Lands/Access

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE): Biologist Comstock met with a two producers who are enrolling into shrubsteppe SAFE in Grant County. Biologist Comstock began compiling and completing the conservation plan documents for the conservation planner certification process. Biologist Comstock consulted with NRCS to determine acceptable mitigation practices for Washington ground squirrel burrows within a new SAFE field. Due to the species only being a candidate for listing, the process is less onerous than previously feared. Biologist Comstock conducted site prep visits to 472 acres of new SAFE fields. This site provides an opportunity to connect existing shrub steppe rangeland habitat on the ridges above Rock Island Creek.



Chem fallowed wheat field to be converted to SAFE this fall – Photo by Devon Comstock



2016 appears to be a bumper year for yarrow. NRCS pollinator plot, Douglas County – Photo by Devon Comstock

SAFE: Private Lands Biologist Braaten completed five SAFE plans and submitted them to NRCS so they can finalize plans for signatures. Private Lands Biologist Braaten also discussed weed spraying with an operator on his SAFE fields. Private Lands Biologist Braaten also updated the SAFE spreadsheet.

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

Wildlife Management

Breeding Enclosure and Release Update: Our semi-wild breeding enclosures continue to produce new litters of kits and we are averaging 8-12 kits captured per day. One of the main components of the recovery program is catching the young kits and, after collecting biological data and a DNA sample for future comparison, releasing them into the wild when they would naturally be dispersing onto the landscape and establishing their own burrow system. Kit captures and releases will continue through the month of July. Next week, we will attempt evening/night captures to determine their effectiveness.

Technicians Shank and Quayle working up rabbit kits with two young volunteers (who have a striking resemblance to Biologist Gallie) from this week's capture (which just happened to occur on Bring Your Children to Work Day)



Okanogan Wildlife Forester

When fire scorches a tree, it not only can create a fire scar, but causes pitch to boil and harden in the wood. Long after a tree is dead this one part of the tree (a Ponderosa pine in this case) remains when the rest of it has rotted clean away, leaving fire scar “shards” in the wood that look three feet across from one side, but are only six inches thick – Photos Courtesy of Jamie Bass

Columbia Basin Fires: While out checking conditions in the Flood Flat area, Assistant Manager Bechtold decided to swing by Willow Lake. At Willow Lake, he came across the scene



of a recent one acre wildfire. Considering the location, it is suspected to have been a human-caused fire and was relatively low intensity. Tire tracks in the burn area suggest that Grant County 5 responded to the fire and fully extinguished it. No infrastructure was lost.

A one car, non-injury rollover on SR 17 N about two miles south of Soap Lake started a fire that burned approximately 200 acres around the north end of Ephrata Lake. A nearly identical situation a few years ago burned some of the same hillside and shoreline. Access Manager Harmon came upon the accident shortly after it occurred and provided assistance to early suppression efforts that prevented the fire from moving south. However, shifting winds pushed it around the north end of the lake. Approximately 38 acres of wildlife area lands were involved in the 200 acre fire. A number of local FPDs extinguished the fire before it reached nearby neighborhoods, and also prevented it from reaching an important cultural resource site on the wildlife area. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Washington State Patrol, and Grant County Sheriff closed SR 17 for about three hours during the suppression efforts. Due to power and rail line proximity, Grant PUD was forced to de-energize a supply line, and BNSF had to temporarily suspend rail service during this period.



Ephrata Lake fire ignition site – Photo by Cole



Ephrata Lake fire – Photo by Cole



Ruddy duck (Oxyura jamaicensis) – Photo by J. Heinlen



Yellow-headed blackbird (Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus) – Photo by J. Heinlen



Badger (Taxidea taxus) – Photo by J. Heinlen





Porcupine, lynx country, sparrow nest, Pacific tree (chorus) frog, western racer – Photos by Scott Fitkin



Close Call: Technician Eddy found a baby killdeer hiding in a not-so-opportune place.

New wheel chocks – Photo by Technician Eddy



Prescribed burn team completes final ignition pass on a burn block on Sherman Creek Wildlife Area. Sun setting on unit at end of day! – Photo by Tom Leuschen



Campbell Lake Buck and Rail Fence Constructed by the WCC Crew – Photo by Troyer



Coyote pup at Big Bend Wildlife Area – Photo by Noel Winegeart



A rattlesnake and a bull moose near Sinlahekin Creek below the residence – Photos by Parker Haug

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Acting Manager Hunt joined Foresters Pfeifle and Mackey, Regional Program Manager McCorquodale, District Biologists Bernatowicz and Moore, Habitat Biologist Downes, Mark Teske, and Richard Tveten to tour portions of the L.T. Murray forest units slated for thinning and habitat improvement this year.



Forestry tour participants on L.T. Murray



Forestry tour participants on L.T. Murray

Taneum Work Site: While delivering equipment to the Taneum work site, Natural Resource Technician Leuck spotted a white swallow in amongst a flock that is nesting on the bridge that crosses Taneum road.



Albino swallow, others, and nest

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Buser and Natural Resource Technician Kaelber found a road-killed badger while checking wetlands progress around the wildlife area. A badger ear was clipped and mailed off for DNA testing and inclusion in the ongoing northwest badger study.

Colockum Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Hagan received more *Larinus minutus*, a diffuse knapweed seedhead weevil from WSU Cooperative Extension. Hagan released these insects in the Tarpiscan Creek and Cape Horn areas.



An example photo of *larinus minutus*, knapweed seedhead weevil

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman and Forester Mackey, along with Wildlife and Habitat Program staff members, attended a site visit of past forest management activities in Oak Creek and looked at potential work on

the wildlife area in the windy point area. The focus of the meeting was to see what work is being done to maintain and improve wildlife habitat (mistletoe trees and snags) and improve forest health. The meeting was very productive. A researcher from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) also attended part of the meeting to share information on woodpecker research in the area.



On a site visit to the Oak Creek Forest Restoration Project, the group discussed how to create more snags during forest treatments to provide habitat for white headed and black backed woodpeckers



This is a stand of snags on USFS land that is heavily used by woodpeckers. The area was thinned by logging and then prescribed burned.



Deer resting in the shade in Sanford pasture on Cleman Mountain

Wildlife Management

Bat Survey: District Biologist Fidorra continued the WDFW bat survey and placed acoustic bat detectors at sites in Districts 4 and 5. Fidorra coordinated 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.

Reimbursements: District Biologist Fidorra continued working with volunteers to submit reimbursement requests in time for the close of the fiscal year. Volunteers on the ferruginous hawk project were eligible for reimbursement for a portion of their mileage.

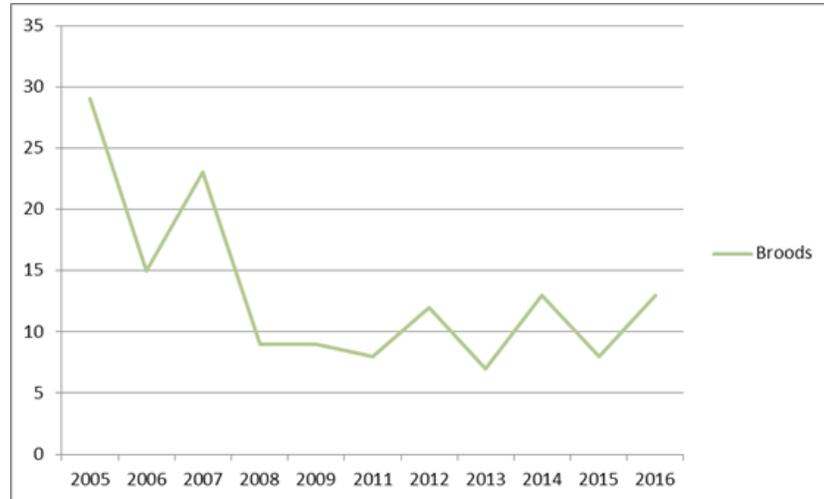
State Wildlife Action Plan Advisory Group: District Biologist Fidorra participated in the first State Wildlife Action Plan District Data Tool Advisory Group Meeting via Webex. The team is familiarizing themselves with the

SWAP tools and determining how to best provide information and access to state and potential external users.

District Biologist Fidorra conducted the annual waterfowl brood count in Adams and Franklin counties. Brood numbers (13) and overall duck diversity were higher than last year and slightly above the 10 year average of 12.

Waterfowl brood count data 2005-2016 from Potholes Canal survey

Ringold Site: District Biologist Fidorra placed dove traps and bait at the Ringold site. Fidorra is very pleased and thankful to have Hatchery Manager Erickson and Technician Roberts on board again this year to assist in baiting of traps and use of the site.



SAFE Fields: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman looked at five more SAFE fields that have either been enrolled or are under consideration for enrollment. As expected, all will need to be reseeded. Stutzman also wrote one conservation plan for SAFE.

Western Gray Squirrel Survey: Biologist Bernatowicz checked tubes deployed last month. No signs of western gray squirrels were detected.

WDFW Forestry: Biologist Bernatowicz participated in a tour of WDFW forestry projects ranging from possible future projects to previously harvested areas. The goal was to try to incorporate wildlife needs into projects designed to reduce fire risk.

Mourning Dove Banding: Biologist Bernatowicz acquired bait and pre-baited one site. Bait, traps, and banding supplies were brought to one volunteer.

Deer Study: Biologist Bernatowicz hiked to a radio collared deer mortality on Cleman Mountain. The deer had obviously been killed by a cougar. Two collared deer were taken by cougar in the same canyon last June.

Radio collared deer buried by a cougar



Bighorn Sheep Home Range Analysis:

An initial sampling frame to collect Normalized Difference Vegetative Index (NDVI) values from District 8 bighorn sheep home ranges was completed. The R package, “spsurvey,” was used to apply a stratified, equal probability, generalized random tessellation sample survey design to two ecological site classifications. Points generated from this method will be used to extract NDVI values from nine scenes of Landsat 7 imagery collected

Mountain bikers starting the GranDuro race at the Mission Ridge Ski Area parking lot

Maintenance: Colockum staff members did more maintenance work on the Colockum reader boards, replacing green dot maps and Discover Pass signs.

USFS Open House: Manager Lopushinsky and Natural Resource Specialist Hagan attended a USFS open house in Cashmere to learn more about the Draft Environmental Assessment for Motorized Travel Management on the Wenatchee National Forest. WDFW will need to be involved and coordinate with the Cle Elum Ranger District to ensure that the USFS plan is compatible with the new Nanuem Ridge to Columbia River Recreation Plan.

Monitoring: Manager Lopushinsky drove the Liberty-Beehive Road and looked at roads connecting the USFS motorized travel planning area and the Colockum Wildlife Area in the Naneum and Mission Ridge areas.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Berry and Natural Resource Worker Farias sprayed yellow star thistle at locations along Cowiche Mill Road. Berry and Farias also sprayed thistle and puncture at the west valley hay barn and on the Worrell Ranch on the Cowiche Unit. While at the Cowiche parking lot, Berry observed that the kiosk and map had been shot up over the weekend. Besides destroying property, shooters are damaging habitat along the creek, shooting oak trees.

Kiosk map on at the Cowiche parking lot received some damage over the weekend

Wenas Wildlife Area: Manager Confer Morris attended the Kittitas County Land Use Advisory Committee meeting, along with Regional Program Manager McCorquodale and Regional Director Livingston, and gave a presentation on the current status of the Wenas Target Shooting Proposal. The committee provided lots of feedback, including concerns about restricting the dispersed target shooting on the wildlife area, and encouraged the agency to focus on educating the target shooters instead. Confer Morris asked for their participation on the expanded stakeholder group, which they responded to positively.



Legislative Field Tour: Manager Confer Morris met with Regional Program Manager McCorquodale and Regional Director Livingston to discuss preparations for the upcoming Wenas target shooting legislative field tour.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need: Biologist Longoria reviewed the State’s Species of Greatest Conservation Need documents and refined a list to reflect the species that could be impacted by construction of target shooting ranges proposed in the draft EA. A formal list has been constructed and general life histories, existing conditions, and potential effects have been outlined.

Manastash Ridge Trails Project: Biologist Longoria has begun the ground-truthing process for the Manastash Ridge Trails project. A map was constructed in GIS. The map has some odd features on it, and each one of these oddities was flagged in GIS and will be visited on foot. This should help to refine the current quantity of trails and help zero in on an exact number.

Access Maintenance: Natural Resource Worker Barbosa mowed at Pond 6 and mowed the trail around Pond 4.



Pond 4 trail before mowing



Pond 4 trail after mowing



Natural Resource Worker Barbosa pulling weeds while mowing at Pond 6

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. Steady numbers of elk continue to leave Hanford and cause damage to winter wheat fields along Rattlesnake Mountain.

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

Possible Cougar Sighting: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand responded to a cattle operation in the Silver Dollar area concerning a possible cougar sighting. While harvesting alfalfa hay during the late evening hours, one of the operators witnessed an animal with glowing yellow eyes and long tail. A site visit provided no evidence of cougar and no loss of livestock has been reported. The landowner will attempt to deploy a couple of trail cameras to monitor the area.

Barn Owl: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received a call concerning an injured barn owl in the Richland area. Advice on proper handling and contact information for Blue Mountain Rehab was provided.

Deer Damage: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand provided follow-up on a deer damage complaint in northern Franklin County. The use of LP gas cannons and active hazing provided success in alleviating deer damage to a new planting of cherry trees. Since the landowner purchased his own LP gas cannon, the loaned unit was removed.

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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: Hazard tree removal continued along Colockum green dot roads. There are still trees killed by the 2013 Colockum-Tarps Fire being removed by a contractor along the North Fork Tarpiscan, South Fork Tarpiscan, and Brewton Roads.

Landslide Inspection: Manager Lopushinsky accompanied CAMP Engineer Kristen Kuykendal and Contract Geotechnical Engineer Steve Helvey to Mission Ridge Ski Area to inspect the landslide that occurred there this spring.

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Buser attended the District 4 Team Meeting at the Pasco office. The Bateman Island causeway, Ringold Hatchery fishing access upgrades, drought and fire preparedness, and parking issues at Windmill Ranch were the primary topics of discussion.

Oak Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman attended the evening open house event for the USFS Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest Travel Management Plan. Huffman discussed map issues with forest and planning staff members. A meeting will occur later to go over all map issues surrounding Oak Creek.

Manager Huffman finished up preparations for the Oak Creek Antler Auction. On the morning of the auction, Assistant Manager Berry, Natural Resource Worker Farias, and Wildlife Education Corp volunteers set out pallets along the elk viewing area and distributed antlers by lot onto each pallet. Huffman coordinated with Fiscal Office staff members who traveled from Olympia to assist. Turnout for the auction was lower than expected, with only 17 bidders registering, but prices for each lot were fairly high and the auction brought in \$8700. One bidder purchased over half the lots. Thanks to the fiscal office for all their help!



Trailer of antlers loaded from the Oak Creek shop and being hauled down to the auction area



Antlers set up for the Oak Creek antler auction, with Wildlife Education Corp volunteers and bidders checking out the lots before the auction began

Truck loaded with antlers purchased by one local antler buyer

REGION 4

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

Wildlife Management

Species of Greatest conservation Need Surveys: District 13 completed a second visit to San Juan Islands National Historic Park and the San Juan Island gravel pit surveying for Oregon vesper sparrows. Two singing males were located.





The sweet, tinkling song of the Oregon vesper sparrow can often be heard long after most other birds have ended the day, hence the name vesper

Swallow Die-off: Biologist DeBruyn collected 12 dead tree swallow nestlings from a landowner on Fir Island. The reporting party maintains 40 nest boxes, and all the nestlings in the boxes (70+) had died following agricultural spraying in an adjacent potato field. The swallows were sent to the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison for

necropsy. DeBruyn made a follow-up call to the potato farmer to find out what chemicals had been sprayed and forwarded the information to Madison.

Double Crested Cormorant Survey: Biologists Yarborough and DeBruyn did the annual survey of a colony of cormorants on the jetty in Blaine Harbor. A modest increase in the number of young and adults was noted, as well as a large increase in the number of nests containing unhatched eggs. The failure of a large colony at the mouth of the Columbia River may have contributed individuals who nested later than the usual cohort at Blaine.



GoPro shot of cormorant chicks and eggs in nests



Double-crested cormorant colony at Blaine Harbor

Judson Lake Field Day: Biologists DeBruyn and Mike Smith organized a field day for the Swan Working Group at Judson Lake in north Whatcom County. Representatives from USFWS, University of Washington, Whatcom Humane Society, Northwest Swan Conservation Society, Canadian Wildlife Service, Puget Sound Energy, and WDFW were present. After a tour of the lake in airboats graciously provided by the crew from Montesano, participants met at a nearby church to discuss the future of the Judson Lake Project.



Biologist Smith presents to the Swan Working Group at the Judson Field Day

Grizzly Bear Reintroduction: Biologist Yarborough reviewed the Environmental Impact Statement from the National Park Service regarding the proposed reintroduction of grizzly bears in the North Cascades.

State Sensitive Common Loon: Biologist Smith surveyed District 12 for loon activity. Adult loons were documented (singly, in pairs, and more) on area

lakes. Nesting loons were monitored at two local lakes, while a single adult was located at a third (further investigation is required to determine if a pair may be nesting there). Both pairs of nesting birds continue to tend two eggs, including one on a log (successfully used last year) and the other on one of the nesting platforms deployed earlier in the year. While visiting one of the lakes, four adults were observed to be engaged in a prolonged territorial dispute. Time of arrival of the additional pair is unknown, but the territorial pair had persuaded them to locate elsewhere an hour after observers arrival. One of the territorial adults then returned to tend the nest while the other kept watch at the lake center. Smith also transported an injured loon (collected by Cedar River Watershed) to PAWS Wildlife Center for examination and treatment. The adult male was found to have only minor injuries and was released two days later at an area lake (to return to his territory, assuming he had staked a claim). The cause of his injuries is unknown.



Biologist Smith getting ready to release a state listed common loon that had some minor injuries after being found on a road adjacent to a known nesting site in King County – Photo by Rich Beausoleil



Four adult loons “discuss” ownership rights at a lake in King County – Photo by M. Smith

An adult loon submarines toward the lake center after being released (following treatment at PAWS Wildlife Center) – Photo by Rich Beausoleil



East/West Bear Project: During recent weeks, staff members have been systematically trapping bears in the Snoqualmie and Lake Wenatchee areas in alternating sessions (two sessions in each area). Biologist Smith assisted Bear and Cougar Specialist Beausoleil and Biologist Maletzke with bear captures and collaring during the second west side session. A total of five bears have been collared so far.

Protected Wildlife Management – White-Nose Syndrome: District 12 followed up on reports of bats in the district, changed out batteries and cards in stationary acoustic monitoring units, and picked up dead bats for testing. District 12 also reviewed and worked with Biologist Falxa to provide a “final draft” solstice emergence count to federal, state, and Canadian counterparts for input and informal review.

District 12 and Bats Northwest conducted night acoustic surveys of maternity season bats on all Lower Snoqualmie Valley Wildlife Management Units for June. Districts 12 and 13 attended an environmental sampling and decontamination workshop at St. Helens National Monument. The event was held by USFS and representatives from the USFS Center for Forest Mycology Research Program and Northern Research Station in Madison, WI.

District 12 participated in a cross fed-state call with representatives from Colorado Natural Heritage Program regarding work in Colorado to engage the climbing community and sample for bats. Information can be found online at <http://www.climbersforbats.colostate.edu/>. District 12 and Dr. Katie Haman of DVM discussed findings, techniques, thoughts on capture, and tracking of bats in the Juneau area with Arkansas Fish and Game Biologist Blejwas, who has conducted this work in a very similar environment to western Washington for the past four years with success after trial and error. The discussion was very informative and WDFW is looking forward to continued dialog and collaboration with Arkansas and Biologist Blejwas.

District 12 attended a workshop/brainstorming/field effort with USFS, BLM, USFWS, University of Washington, and climbing representatives to examine outreach, possible techniques, possible training ideas for investigating cliff use, and collaboration with the climbing community. Cliff sampling and surveying is new and USFWS, the lead on white-nose syndrome surveillance, management, and decontamination procedures, will need to examine how to conduct efforts with collaborators, including states and other federal entities, as well as the climbing community.



Employee with USFS examining methods of environmental sampling in cliff faces and crevices from the ground



Now...how to sample up there for bat use and general environmental samples?!?

Protected Wildlife Management – Assistance to Habitat Regarding Priority Habitats and Species Non-jurisdictional Management Consultation in District 12:

Anderson assisted area habitat biologists with project and local jurisdictional requests for wildlife management consideration centered around the WDFW Priority Habitats and Species Wildlife Management Program. More can be found online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/phs/>

State Prohibited Species: District 12 brought live samples down to Olympia Fish and Habitat program staff members to examine and identify a certain species. It was determined

the species was likely a non-native fish, but samples will be sent out to experts specializing in what WDFW thinks the species may be for further confirmation. District 13 began gathering information on potential survey sites for invasive species in south Snohomish County and north King County waters. Trapping will take place when landowner permissions are obtained and employee time permits.

Breeding Duck Surveys: District 13 transcribed and submitted breeding duck survey data from aerial surveys in Regions 4 and 6.

Mountain Goat Survey: District 13 downloaded and mapped locations for upcoming mountain goat reconnoitering flights. Staff members also reviewed software and protocols in preparation for upcoming population surveys.

Wolf Cameras: Biologists Yarborough and DeBruyn retrieved a trail camera from an area where wolves had been reported. No images of wolves were found on the camera but numerous other species were noted.

Wildlife Areas

Stillwater Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that King County Noxious Weeds staff members partnered with a Puget Sound Corps field crew to conduct a day of herbicide application on a number of King County listed noxious weeds, such as purple loosestrife, tansy ragwort, teasel, and Canada thistle on the wildlife area. Since 2013, Manager Boehm has coordinated this opportunity with King County to provide support for combating targeted noxious weeds.

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm with crew briefing before spraying noxious weeds



Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with WDFW Noxious Weed Coordinator Dave Heimer to assess knotweed infestation on the dike that borders the Ebey Island Wildlife Area. Manager Boehm has been working with Drainage District 1 representatives to address growing concerns that the knotweed could encroach further into the wildlife area.

Leque Island Grant Applications: Projects Coordinator Brokaw submitted Floodplains by Design grant application materials to the Stillaguamish Tribe. The materials are to be included in the lower Stillaguamish proposal package, which consists of a collection of eight projects that will benefit agriculture, habitat, and flooding in the area. Additionally, WDFW received news that a previous grant application submitted to the NOAA Community Based Restoration program was successful and funds for a portion of the project are forthcoming.

Sustainable Lands Strategy (SLS) Meeting: Projects Coordinator Brokaw presented an update on the Leque Island project to the SLS group, which is a coalition of the habitat restoration and agricultural representatives working in Snohomish County. Following the presentation and a discussion, the SLS Executive Committee voted to provide a letter of support for the project.

Wiley Slough Technical Group: Projects Coordinator Brokaw, Skagit Wildlife Area Manager Rotton, and Habitat Planner Friebel met to discuss how to organize a group to make decisions on how to fix storm damage at the Wiley Slough restoration site. They began gathering materials and data in preparation for a future meeting.

Whatcom County Transportation Department Coordination: Manager Kessler met onsite with an engineer from the Whatcom County transportation department on an upcoming project to remove trees and debris from the Nooksack River bridge at Marietta. Due to changes in the river currents, wood debris is now collecting on the left side bridge support. This wood debris needs to be removed to protect the bridge. The crews performing the work, which starts July 11, will be

accessing the river from our Marietta access. Manager Kessler will place trail closure signs and monitor public use during the construction.

Cosgrove, Hood, and others check a 2006 cattail treatment area in marsh off of the Island Unit



Island Unit: Wildlife area staff members Cosgrove, Meis, and Rotton toured cattail control project areas in the intertidal zone adjacent to the Island Unit with WDFW Weed Coordinator Dave Heimer and Greg Hood of Skagit River Systems Cooperative. The group planned for this seasons field work and monitoring efforts. Observations of the 2006 treatment area indicate some encroachment of cattail, but there is still good sedge cover on the site. Other treatment areas are showing some progress, but additional treatment is needed to not lose ground.

Natural Resources Technician Cosgrove made final field preparations on about eight acres of fields on the Island Unit and planted two acres of cereal rye and six acres of millet. Cosgrove monitored crops and field conditions on the unit and will continue to plant more acres of millet in the coming weeks. Cosgrove coordinated with volunteers to schedule upcoming ferry operation for the Island Unit.

Leque Island: Meis mowed approximately 15 acres of poison hemlock areas throughout the Leque Unit.

Samish Unit: Meis scheduled and observed spray treatment of 150 acres of barley on the Samish Unit to control weeds.

Johnson DeBay's Slough: Cosgrove used the John Deere 5300 and brush-hog to mow blackberry, native plant restoration areas, and grass fields at the Johnson/DeBay's Slough Unit. Cosgrove contacted a neighboring farm to gain access and a parking area for mowing the north WWRP planting on the site next week.

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

Wildlife Management

Keeping Common Species Common – Elk Ecology Assistance: Biologist Anderson networked internally and externally to find appropriate information for children regarding elk ecology for internal use. Anderson also discussed appropriate information per request by the Upper Snoqualmie Elk Management Group, which will be promoting elk conservation at an upcoming youth jamboree.

Keeping Common Species Common – Citizen Amphibian Monitoring: District 12 met with Citizen Science Biologist Connally and Science staff members Christopher and Simperts to discuss the transition of this project to a “run of its own” type package in collaboration with Woodland Park Zoo. This will provide for a broader community to participate, with ability for data pulls from appropriate entities, without tying down staff members from both WDFW and Woodland Park Zoo.



Great pictures of amphibians coming in from volunteers along an urban-suburban-wildland gradient – Photo of long-toed salamander larvae by Ed Scullywest

Wildlife Areas

Cherry Valley Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that the Cherry Valley designated dog training area has been mowed this past week. Mowing will continue into next week as weather permits.

Waterfowl Lands Acquisition: Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Lands Agent Iris met with the City of Stanwood, PCC Farmland Trust, and a real estate agent to update each other on progress towards acquiring a piece of property through a partnership that would provide waterfowl forage and hunting opportunity.

Samish River Unit Parking Area: Projects Coordinator Brokaw received comments from the review team on a grant application submitted two months ago to build a parking area at the Samish River Unit. Brokaw began updating the proposal in response to the comments, and Skagit Wildlife Area Manager Rotton requested letters of support from local recreation groups to strengthen the application.

Whatcom County Transportation Department Coordination: Manager Kessler met onsite with an engineer from the Whatcom County transportation department on an upcoming project to remove trees and debris from the Nooksack River Bridge at Marietta. Due to changes in the river currents, wood debris is now collecting on the left side bridge support. This wood debris needs to be removed to protect the bridge. The crews performing the work start on July 11 and will be accessing the river from our Marietta access. Manager Kessler will place trail closure signs and monitor public use during the construction.

Private Lands/Access Management

Spring Bear Hunt: Natural Resource Technician Otto completed access gate lock exchanges for the Monroe Spring Bear hunt unit after the season ended. Otto found minimal issues, and all combination locks were removed and the original Department of Natural Resources locks were installed. Private Lands Biologist Wingard prepared the spring bear season summary for partner

landowners. Biologist Wingard and Natural Resource Technician Otto toured other private timberland areas in Whatcom County to assess bear-related tree damage. Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell contacted partnering private industrial timber company managers to notify them that all of their spring bear access gate locations were now free of WDFW combination locks and that they needed to ensure their gates were secured with their own company locks. Biologist Caldwell also informed these managers that Private Land Access Program staff members are in the process of analyzing spring bear harvest information and they will be contacted with this information in the coming weeks.

Migratory Bird Forage Enhancement Projects: Private Lands Biologist Wingard and Natural Resource Technician Otto met with a Whatcom County landowner to sign hunting access and habitat planting contracts. The forage provided in this contract will be left standing all winter for migratory birds to forage on. Natural Resource Technicians Otto and Deyo continued work on migratory bird food plots in Skagit County. The team was able to plant eight additional acres of barley on two sites.

Newly planted barley at a Skagit County Waterfowl Quality Hunt site

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Unit Contracts: Private Lands Biologist Wingard and Natural Resource Technician Otto met with several landowners in Whatcom County to discuss potential additions to the Waterfowl Quality Hunt program. A high quality site was negotiated and will be enrolled for the upcoming waterfowl hunting season.

Pictured here is a new Waterfowl Quality Hunt unit site in Whatcom County that Private Lands Access Program staff members are working on enrolling for this year's waterfowl hunting season

Western Washington Pheasant Release Program: Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell coordinated with other WDFW staff members to discuss and review aerial photos of potential pheasant release sites on identified properties within Skagit and Snohomish counties. Follow-up field evaluations will be conducted in the coming weeks to assess site suitability.



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: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal continued to work on an elk exclusionary fence project in Hamilton, Washington. The project should be completed near the end of the month. Witman received a report that elk damaged a recently completed elk fencing project in the Birdsvie area of Skagit County. Witman responded and found several metal fence posts had been bent and several plastic insulators were broken. Witman assisted the landowner with repairs and had the fence up and functional in a short time. The perimeter of the fence was walked and it appeared only one



elk found its way inside and was possibly able to exit without causing additional damage. Additional monitoring of elk in the area will continue.

Elk damage on fence

Deer Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman spoke with a landowner on Lummi Island in Whatcom County experiencing deer

damage to dwarf fruit trees. The landowner has implemented some fencing which is being compromised by the deer. Witman made arrangements for a site visit in the near future. Witman and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal responded to Whatcom County to conduct a site visit for damage to a raspberry crop from deer. While walking the field, extensive browsing was observed to several rows of berry plants. The farm manager agreed to enter into a damage prevention cooperative agreement to better address the ongoing damage.

Elk damage on berry farm

Waterfowl Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell attended and presented at a community meeting at Bullard Lake in Whatcom County. The meeting was attended by approximately 30 residents who were mainly interested in what efforts can and can't be done to address conflict with Canada geese. Other questions were fielded on



raccoons, bobcats, and other wildlife observed in the community.

District 12 Conflict: Biologist Smith responded to multiple calls from the public relating to ungulates entering agricultural properties. Hazing strategies, fencing options, and rules relating to damage tags were discussed. Arrangements were made for Smith to view properties in the coming days.

Wildlife Areas

Partnership Opportunities: The Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager met with Drainage District 7 representatives and staff members from King County Flood Control District to review the dike that was damaged this past winter. Drainage District 7 has submitted a grant proposal to the Flood District to assess repairs and possible replacement of the aging structure. Manager Boehm and new staff member Tom Wampler mowed the field along the dike breach area so interested parties could assess the breach, dike condition, and debris flow that resulted from the November breach.

Skagit Headquarters: Manager Rotton and Lands Agent Kye Iris met with Dike and Drainage District 22 representatives to discuss the process to develop the Operation and Maintenance Agreement for the Wiley Slough Restoration site. Manager Rotton met with Restoration Coordinator Loren Brokaw and Habitat Program Environmental Planner Jenna Friebel to gather information and discuss planning effort for the Wiley Slough work group process. Manager Rotton continues to monitor the pump station and tide gate operations at Wiley Slough.

Skagit Access sites: Cosgrove sprayed broadleaf weeds at the Jensen, and Headquarters Unit Natural Resource Specialist Meis treated weeds on the Fir Island Farm Unit. Weeds targeted include blackberry, poison hemlock, and Canada and bull thistle.

Private Lands/Access Management

Region 4 Private Lands Access GIS database: Private Lands Biologist Wingard created a database of all properties enrolled in the Private Lands Access Program. This database will serve as a master list of all the sites previously or currently enrolled in the program. The database will increase the efficiency of contract development and help summarize information about the program.

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

Wildlife Management

Annual Personnel Evaluations: Staff members spent time filling out forms and acknowledgements and determining necessary training for completion of annual reviews.

Equipment Maintenance: District 13 performed maintenance on district watercraft and organized electronic data files from the last 18 years.

Waterfowl Section Manager Retirement: District 13 participated in retirement celebrations for Waterfowl Section Manager Don Kraege. Don was instrumental in providing guidance and funding for many waterfowl habitat acquisitions and enhancements, as well as major long term research and monitoring programs that have benefited many species beyond waterfowl.

Region 4 Access: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm provided orientation and instruction to the new Maintenance Mechanic II seasonal staff member shared by the Access Program and the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area. This welcome and much needed employee will be responsible for much of the seasonal mowing and weed control on the Snoqualmie Units this summer.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

White Nose Syndrome Training: Biologist Bergh attended training on collecting environmental samples for the detection of white nose syndrome. Experts Lindner and Jusino from the USFS Northern Research Lab in Madison Wisconsin conducted the training. They covered basic white nose syndrome biology, different types of sampling methodologies, data collection, labeling, and shipping. The group visited two sites near Carson to practice the sampling and decontamination techniques. White nose syndrome is a devastating disease caused by a fungus that thrives in cold, humid environments. It affects hibernating bats, causing them to act strangely, interrupting their hibernation, and causing them to die. The disease was first found in New York State in 2006 and made a huge jump west this spring when it was detected in Washington. For more information on white nose syndrome, go to whitenosesyndrome.org.



Proper attire needed for sampling white nose syndrome

Sandhill Crane Management: Biologist Anderson met with DNR at the Trout Lake Natural Area Preserve to discuss several ongoing habitat management projects they are working on, including fence repair, weed control, wetland enhancement, and irrigation ditch maintenance. WDFW and DNR have been working cooperatively for over 20 years at this site in the management of sandhill cranes and Oregon spotted frogs. While on site, a pair of sandhill cranes was observed standing off a coyote that

was interested in their colt (juvenile crane). Biologist Anderson also is currently reviewing a forest practice application in the Glenwood Valley associated with two nesting sandhill cranes. Although the timber harvest itself is not an issue regarding cranes, discussions are currently underway with the forester and DNR regarding the need for a disturbance buffer during the nesting season.

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 that were 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. No new fawns were caught this week. Biologists did follow-up on two fawn mortalities within the Coweeman cluster. One fawn appeared to have been predated by an unknown predator and the other fawn had an unknown cause of death. To date, a total of 14 fawns have been captured during the 2016 effort and seven remain alive.

Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area

Eagle Island Wildlife Habitat Restoration: In an effort to restore wildlife habitat on the Eagle Island Unit of the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area, an aerial herbicide application was completed this past week to control scotch broom and other invasive weeds. One hundred acres were treated during the application. This was the first phase of a multi-year project to restore habitat for a multitude of wildlife species. Funding for this project is a partnership between WDFW and PacifiCorp, who provides matching funds for wildlife habitat restoration in the Lewis River watershed as part of the relicensing and mitigation agreement for the operation of the three hydroelectric dams on the river. The next phase of the project will be to mow the scotch broom next summer. The first several years of this project are aimed at controlling invasive weeds in the unit, with the final objective to be the planting of native trees and shrubs to create a forested floodplain on the island.



Eagle Island wildlife habitat restoration

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Klickitat Wildlife Area Draft Management Plan: A good number of thoughtful comments were received from the public on the draft management plan and these were forwarded to the planning team for a response. Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven is working on completing responses to these comments.

Hatchery Unit Fence: Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven worked with a volunteer to put in a few more steel fence posts in the fence line along Hill Road, and put up the second wire in the fence. A jumble of decayed wooden posts and a snarl of old wire were picked up for disposal.

Grazing Permit Monitoring: Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven visited the Fisher Hill Unit to check on a grazing permit and noted very light utilization of the range.

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

Wildlife Management

Lower Columbia River Resident Dark Goose Capture: Biologists Stephens and Holman continued with preparations and logistics related to the upcoming capture of resident dark geese in the lower Columbia River. The resident dark geese confound management of the migratory dusky Canada goose, and being able to draw a distinction between the two varieties of geese is central to waterfowl management in southwest Washington and northwest Oregon. The annual goose capture is scheduled for this week.

Access: Access staff members Spangler and Rhodes cleaned off ADA parking spaces, filled potholes, cut brush, replaced signs, limbed, removed graffiti, and hauled about 140 pounds of trash to the dump from many access sites.

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

District 10 Wildlife Conflict

Deer: Officer Bahrenburg and Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a report of a deer that had fallen into an abandoned underground concrete holding tank the night before. The tank had been covered by heavy vegetation and the deer apparently did not see the tank. Officer Bahrenburg and Conklin devised a plan prior to taking any action. They immobilized the deer and placed a catch pole on its head to hold it out of the water. Officer Bahrenburg climbed down into the sludgy, mucky, extremely smelly hole using a ladder. Once inside he placed tow straps around the deer while Conklin held the deer's head out of the water. The two then hoisted the deer out of the hole. They placed the hypothermic deer in towels and a tarp and dragged her into the dappled sunlight. The deer quickly came to since she was immobilized with a very light dose of drug. In no time at all the deer was up eating and looking for her fawns.



Deer fallen into tank

Abandoned Fawn: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin coordinated with a local rehabber to assist with the care of an abandoned fawn.

Bear: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a call regarding a bear sighting/encounter in the Toutle area. The reporting party, who was not the person who encountered the bear, was insisting the bear be removed from the area due to safety concerns. Conklin called the actual person who

saw the bear. He explained he simply surprised the bear near a log jam in a creek bed. He stated the bear gave him plenty of warning to back off by huffing and growling. The bear was in no way aggressive. The person who encountered the bear stated it acted exactly like a bear should. Conklin took no further action on the request to remove the bear.

Conklin also responded to a report of a bear on a porch in Centralia attempting to get into a bird feeder. Conklin met the property owners, assessed the wooded area they live in, and gave them advice on how to clean up all of the attractants to deter the bear.

Beaver: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin handled a phone report of beaver cutting trees down. The landowner was referred to Wildlife Conflict Specialist Waddell for further assistance.

Cougar: Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a possible cougar sighting in Vancouver. Vancouver Police were already interviewing the juvenile reporting party when Conklin called.

Depredation: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin received a call from WDFW Police, who responded to a sheep that was attacked. They investigated the scene and asked Conklin to follow up due to the uncertainty of the predator that caused the damage. Four days prior, the farmer had a lamb come up missing as well. Conklin responded and found the sheep still alive. Conklin surveyed the entire area and found the blood spot where the sheep was initially attacked. This area is completely fenced in and electrified. Conklin hung a trail camera and assisted the farmer in treating the injured sheep. Conklin conferred with Biologist Rich Beausoleil, who stated the injuries were most likely caused by a canine. Conklin will continue to work with the farmer.



Injuries to hind quarter of a sheep caused by unknown predator

Bobcat: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a call from a very upset landowner in Kalama reporting her goose and chicken were killed by a bobcat. The landowner said she received a call from a neighbor who reported he just saw a bobcat on the road with a goose in its mouth. He said the bobcat dropped the goose but it was already expired. The owner of the goose walked up the road to pick up the goose. He saw the bobcat sitting in the grass. The bobcat watched him take the goose, but did not leave. He went back and got a gun, but the bobcat had moved on. A couple hours later the bobcat returned, crawled into the chicken coop and took a rooster. This incident occurred approximately one mile from the goat depredation that happened last week. Conklin compared the picture of the bobcat below with the pictures she had of the bobcat incident last week and it appears it isn't the same bobcat. Conklin and WDFW Police Officer Martin set the cougar trap and baited it with the goose.



Cougar trap baited with goose that was killed by a bobcat



Bobcat lies along paved road watching the owner pick up the goose he just killed

District 9 Wildlife Conflict

Deer: Conflict Specialist Peterson responded to a call of a deer with barbed wire wrapped around its leg. Once on site, it was determined that the mule deer doe had a section of metal sheep fence wrapped around its abdomen. The fencing was impeding the deer’s ability to walk and looked to be digging into its skin. Peterson was able to tranquilize the doe, and with the help of the landowner and her two small children, safely remove the fencing. The doe recovered quickly from the tranquilizer and appeared to be uninjured.

Landowner Meetings: Region 5 Biologist Tara Meyer and Conflict Specialist Peterson met with Klickitat County cattle producers to discuss ongoing cooperative work. WDFW and a number of Klickitat County cattle producers are working together to promote effective nonlethal preventative measures to deter livestock depredation from wolves. WDFW has been extremely pleased with the results of the pilot program and is committed to its continuation.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Snowy Plover Surveys: Biologist Michaelis assisted Biologists Sundstrom and Ritchie and Technician Rabey with two adult snowy plover surveys. During the Leadbetter survey, he discovered four new nests.

Leadbetter: Technician Raby conducted nest and brood searching, nest checks, and egg floatation this week at Leadbetter. Raby also assisted with two adult breeding window surveys, an island survey in north Willapa Bay, and escorted Washington State Department of Ecology staff members into restricted areas for their dune morphology study.

2016 Leadbetter and Island Season Totals				
<i># Nests Discovered</i>	<i># Nests Active</i>	<i># Nests Hatched</i>	<i># Nests Failed</i>	<i># Nests w/ Unknown Fate</i>
40	14	11	13	2

Midway/Graveyard: The final adult surveys were completed this week at Midway Beach and Leadbetter. Two new nests were found during the surveys at Midway and 10 at Leadbetter. No broods were observed at either location. One previously discovered nest at Midway was in the

process of hatching and only one lone juvenile was found at Leadbetter. The lack of broods is perplexing, as it is known that many nests have successfully hatched.

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>
55	19	14	20	2

Biologist Novack finalized the budget and scope of work for a USFWS recovery grant to cover plover survey and predator control work in 2018.



Cormorant Survey- Grays Harbor: Biologist Michaelis completed a portion of Grays Harbor surveying for nesting double-crested cormorants. Nest counts in the eastern portion of the harbor are down compared to last year. A new peregrine falcon nesting location was documented on a channel marker near the main port. One chick that has not yet fledged was observed.

Chick is just to the right of the stick debris and below the second railing

White-Nosed Syndrome – Training: Biologist Novack attended a training event at the Mount St. Helens Monument office in Amboy. The training was focused on proper procedures for 1) sampling bat hibernacula for white nose syndrome and 2) step by step procedures for preventing white nose syndrome transmission and the decontamination of protective equipment.

Bat Acoustic Project: Biologist Ament and District Biologist McMillan deployed the equipment for acoustic monitoring of bats in a remote area adjacent to the Hoh Rover. The equipment will be removed later this week.

Bat acoustic gear set up

Taylor’s Checkerspot Butterfly – Site Visit and Seed Collection to the Northwestern Extant Known Site, Plus a Site Check of Two Potential Habitat Sites West of Port Angeles:

Biologist Ament, District Biologist McMillan, and Biologist Hays met at two sites west of Port Angeles, the Beach Lake property and the Dry Creek landfill, on June 22, 2016. The field visits provided an opportunity for Biologist Hays to review the habitat at each site and provide ideas for future habitat restoration that could benefit Taylor’s



checkerspot butterflies. After the site visits, the three biologists hiked into one of the known Taylor's checkerspot butterfly sites west of the Elwha River. Biologist Hays assisted District 16 biologists on plant identification and identified several plants for seed sources. Some seed was



collected during the field trip, but the seed for various plant species will not be ready for collection for approximately three weeks. Future dates will be planned for seed collection.

Beach Lake shoreline site near Elwha

Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly – Possible Site up the Elwha, ONP balds: Biologist McMillan joined USFWS Biologists Ted Thomas and Zack Radmer and ONP Biologist Scott Gremel to visit the balds on June 20, where Dave Allen and Biologist Ament photographed Edith's

checkerspots in early May. Biologist Thomas was searching for more evidence of checkerspots, but no adults, eggs, or larvae were observed. Biologist McMillan got an opportunity to discuss the existing and future issues for Taylor's checkerspots, including management and identification.

Satsop/Mason Deer Project: In 2009, WDFW initiated a study of the effects of forest management practices on black-tailed deer reproduction. Two of eight study sites are represented in District 15: Mason and Satsop. The Mason cluster includes 11 GPS collared does, while the Satsop cluster has two. The collars for six of the Mason does are expected to drop off in July, and we did not attempt to collar fawns from these deer this season. Nine fawns associated with seven does were collared or accounted for as stillborn (n=1) from the remaining does. An objective of this study involves determining sources of mortality among all radio-collared deer. The radio-collars in the Mason cluster have remote monitoring capabilities and text messages are sent when certain events occur, although periodic field checks are recommended. The Satsop collars require field monitoring to determine status. So far this year, two fawns were likely killed by bear, one by a coyote, and we attributed one fawn's death to poor condition at birth. Four yearlings collared in 2015 were active until mid-June, but two of these were not found this week and either the collars have failed or the deer have dispersed. Biologist Murphie reports that no mortalities occurred this week.

Fisher Monitoring: In a multi-agency collaborative effort to document fisher presence on the Olympic Peninsula, Biologist Murphie established three camera/bait stations within a survey block located near the town of McCleary. Biologist Murphie conducted his first check of these camera stations this week and reports taking photos of deer, raven, cougar, and rabbit. Camera sets were refreshed and left in place.

Photo taken of a cougar at Camera Station 2

Cameras: Biologist Michaelis collected and reviewed photos from three camera stations. No fishers were detected. Two humans were photographed, and thankfully the cameras were not disturbed.



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

Wildlife Management

Violation Rates: Biologist Novack worked with Biometrician Keren to evaluate data from the 2012 survey of deer and elk hunter violation rates. He also presented the data to the new Private Lands Section Manager Curtis. Both Keren and Curtis provided feedback for the upcoming NOVA grant application that Biologist Novack plans to submit in November.

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

Wildlife Management

SWAP Tools Meeting: Biologist Ament was selected to participate in a small interregional team that will help identify ways to improve the tools developed through the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) process so they can be more readily implemented by the regions. Biologist Azerrad is responsible for leading this effort, and the group held their first online meeting on June 20, 2016. The background of the present tools was discussed and Jeff provided a homework assignment to the group that will need to be completed in three weeks. Due to her lack for high-level Arc GIS skills, Biologist Ament will need to be working closely with Jeff and District Biologist McMillan to complete the assignment.