

Wildlife Program

Week of May 23 – May 29, 2016

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Pend Oreille County Wolf Sighting: Biologist Shepherd discussed a sighting of a wolf walking through cattle in Pend Oreille County with a livestock producer.

Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements for Livestock: Biologist Shepherd met with three ranchers who signed Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for Livestock contracts. They were entered into the contract system.

Range Riders: Biologist Shepherd spoke at length with a contract range rider concerning contract amendments, current work, equipment issues, and the upcoming season.

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

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

How reported	Location	Sightings	Camera Work	Depredations
GPS collar	Stranger collar locations: Predominantly this collared animal has been spending most of the time just south of Kettle Falls and north of Addy-Cedonia Road. Some activity along the Huckleberry Mtn. ridge. Huckleberry collar locations: For the most part, this collar has stayed near Springdale-Hunters Road down into the Spokane Indian Reservation. Some activity east of Springdale.	No reports in this area for this period.	No reports in this area for this period.	<u>One reported:</u> 1. 05/16/2016 – Hunters, calf Confirmed Non-Wolf Depredation (Cougar)
WDFW Public Sightings webpage		<u>Two reported:</u> 1. 05/06/2016 – Rice, three sets of tracks	No reports in this area for this period.	

		2. 05/09/2016 – Hunters-Springdale, one black animal seen	
WDFW Staff	A revised Gray Wolf Lethal Removal Protocol will be released in the coming weeks.		No photos for this period.

Table 2: WDFW District 2 county reports of wolf sightings, camera work, and depredations

County	Sightings (webpage and contact)	Camera, WCS Bennett and District	Depredations
Lincoln	No sightings reported to WDFW for this period.	No cameras out during this period.	<u>Two reported:</u> 1. 05/18/2016 – Davenport, chickens Confirmed Non-Wolf Depredation (Cougar) 2. 05/18/2016 – Davenport, sheep Confirmed Non-Wolf Depredation (Cougar)
Spokane	<u>Three reported:</u> 1. 05/17/2016 – Mt. Spokane, one gray animal seen 2. 05/17/2016 – Newman Lake, one light and one dark animal seen 3. 05/18/2016 – Newman Lake, one animal seen	No cameras out during this period.	<u>Four reported:</u> 1. 05/05/2016 – Chattaroy, domestic dog Unknown (no carcass) 2. 05/19/2016 – Geiger Hts., goats Confirmed Non-Wolf Depredation (Coyote) 3. 05/25/2016 – Chattaroy, lamb Confirmed Non-Wolf Depredation (Cougar) 4. 05/26/2016 – Rockford, ducks and geese Confirmed Non-Wolf Depredation (Coyote)
Whitman	No sightings reported to WDFW for this period.	No cameras out during this period.	<u>One reported:</u> 1. 05/24/2016 – Pullman, lamb Confirmed Non-Wolf Depredation (Coyote)

Reported Depredation in Spokane County: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett assisted WDFW Officer Snyder in a necropsy of a reported lamb killed by a wolf in north Spokane County. The owner had reported shooting at a “cinnamon colored animal” as it jumped over a more than five foot tall fence. A necropsy was performed at the Region 1 office lab and it was determined the lamb was killed by a cougar. Information was provided to the owners about next steps.

Indirect Loss Board Conference Call: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett participated in a conference call with WDFW staff members and the Livestock Review Board regarding two wolf damage claims. Information on the claims, operation, and depredation investigations associated with those claims was discussed.

Producer Contacts: Biologist Earl continued to make contacts with producers in known wolf areas to discuss the benefits of delayed turnout. Earl also spoke with the producers about increased range riding and human presence.

Umatilla National Forest Contact: Biologist Earl talked with Umatilla National Forest managers about the use of lime to deter scavenging of livestock carcasses in remote areas where carcass removal was not feasible.

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Habitat: Biologist Thorne Hadley worked with eight Pheasant Forever volunteers on two different habitat projects in broadcasting seed consisting of red clover and black oil sunflower seeds. The first location was at the WDFW Stovall Access site and the second was at a Feel Free to Hunt site off of Sudbury Road, both targeting open bare spots within the existing grass stands and adding a broadleaf component to the mix.

Blue Mountain Pheasants Forever volunteers and Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley at the WDFW Stovall Access site working on increasing habitat diversity and having some fun too



USFS Cooperation: Palmer and Anderson met with four Colville National Forest staff members on Monday in Colville. The group discussed activities that could be included in a good neighbor agreement between the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and WFDW. USFS has these types of agreements with several states, by which USFS provides funding to the state to perform habitat and wildlife management activities. Colville National Forest managers are hoping to put together the first such agreement with Washington. A core group of biologists from WFDW District 1 will be brought into a working team with Colville National Forest staff members to develop an agreement before review and approval by higher-level management at USFS and WDFW. Potential treatments were listed in a meeting summary by Dr. Kathleen Ward, Colville National Forest Natural Resources Staff Officer:

- Provide a crew to assist with prescribed burning
- Complete culvert design
- Train crews to mark and layout timber and use them in the shoulder seasons
- Pre-commercial thinning work
- Potential timber sale later on
- NEPA IDT work
- Terrestrial and aquatic invasive species treatments
- Stream and fish surveys
- Stream improvements

Access Program Manager Daniel Dziekan could help with upgrades of fishing piers, boat ramps, etc. We could also partner with Daniel on state and federal grant opportunities.

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

Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Interagency Grizzly Bear Subcommittee Meeting:

Biologist Shepherd attended the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Interagency Grizzly Bear Subcommittee meeting in Sandpoint, Idaho with Biologist Base. Biologist Shepherd discussed human-bear problems with Idaho Fish and Game and Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks biologists, as well as with non-governmental organization employees. Biologist Shepherd also attended the planning meeting for the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee meeting in Bonners Ferry, Idaho.

Depredation Investigation in Whitman County: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett and WDFW Officer Sabo investigated a lamb that was found dead near Pullman. A survey of the scene and necropsy of the lamb confirmed a coyote depredation. Fencing options and use of guard dogs were discussed.



The owner of a lamb killed by coyotes near Pullman pointing out areas where blood was found

CRP-Palouse SAFE: Lewis worked with the local Natural Resource Conservation Service office to develop a schedule for site visits to complete forb and shrub plot layout on SAFE projects in Whitman County. The forb and shrub plots will be planted with native plants to enhance the native grassland habitat on the properties.

Lewis also spent time evaluating possible new SAFE projects. Many of the properties are established with native grassland and several have native wildflower species returning naturally.

Spalding's milk vetch at a SAFE site in Whitman County



Department of Corrections Field

Tour: Supervisor McCanna was contacted by the Monroe Correctional Facilities supervisor who works with McCanna on the annual hunting access sign order. McCanna gave him a field tour in Whitman County to show how the signs are used and discussed possible variations of the signs in high wind areas.

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

Statewide Hunting Access Order: Supervisor McCanna prepared the final hunting access order spreadsheet and will work with headquarters and the Monroe Correctional facility to complete the order.

REGION 2

No report submitted this week.

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Buser and Natural Resource Technician 2 Kaelber assisted Waterfowl Specialist Wilson with efforts to capture Harlequin ducks on the lower Tieton River.

Food Plots: Natural Resource Technician 2 Kaelber planted sunflower food plots near circles 3 and 4 at Windmill Ranch.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Berry and Natural Resource Worker 2 Farias continued noxious weed control efforts in the Cowiche Unit. Plentiful scotch thistle seedlings were hunted down, along with Russian thistle, Canadian thistle, and various other undesirable broadleaf weeds. Few large scotch thistles are being located this year.

Mowing: Natural Resource Worker 2 Farias mowed the Junction feed site for weed control and began mowing the Headquarters feed site.

Thinning Locations: Forester Mackey met with Habitat Biologist Bartrand to show him non-commercial thinning locations for this year. Mackey conducted layout work of units in preparation for the contract to be released for bid.

Wildlife Management

Wood Duck Boxes: District Biologist Fidorra met with a Richland Rod and Gun Club volunteer to check wood duck boxes for occupancy and productivity and band late nesting hens. Several nesting screech-owls were encountered and banded, including three nestlings. The public was able to watch these three owls grow via a live camera feed at <http://www.rrgcwoodducks.org/in-box-cameras> until they fledged over the weekend. The project has received a lot of positive press this week following recognition by project lead Dale Schielke as WDFW's Volunteer of the Year. Several newspapers have printed articles on Dale and the wood duck project.

Three western screech-owl nestlings which were banded and returned to their nest in a wood duck nest box

High School Volunteer: District Biologist Fidorra spent one day this week being shadowed by a Legacy High School senior who has an interest in the wildlife field. The student assisted with checking wood



duck nest boxes, inventorying burrowing owl artificial burrows, and reviewing and discussing many office tasks and skills required in the profession. The student enjoyed her day and will present a presentation in front of her school about the experience.

Legacy High School senior with screech-owl banded in wood duck box

Acoustic Bat Detectors: District Biologist Fidorra placed acoustic bat detectors at sites in District 4 and 5 and coordinated with Biologist Rowan to relocate detectors near the Ephrata office. Fidorra placed detectors at eight sites in May and will repeat recording protocols at each site monthly through August.

Burrowing Owls: District Biologist Fidorra began occupancy and productivity checks for burrowing owls at artificial burrow sites and coordinated with the Global Owl project on upcoming trapping and banding efforts.



Pamphlet Review: District Biologist Fidorra reviewed and provided comments on the Migratory Waterfowl and Upland Game Seasons pamphlet.

SAFE: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman met with two landowners and visited their expiring CRP fields to talk about SAFE. Stutzman continues to get calls from landowners about the SAFE program.

Private Lands Habitat Projects: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman met with Mule Deer Foundation president Rachel Voss to discuss partnering on habitat projects on private lands. The Mule Deer Foundation is excited to help out on some projects and Stutzman has begun a proposal for a shrub-planting/post-fire restoration project in Yakima County.

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

Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman reviewed measurements from the Royal Columns climbing area monument measurements. Starting in 2014, a monument was installed to measure movement in a leaning rock column. This year it appears there was about a quarter inch of movement over the winter. However a new rock climber was doing the measurement and the tape measure was held at a slightly different angle. Huffman asked the rock climber to re-measure and provided details on how the measurement should be completed.

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

Wildlife Areas

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Natural Resource Technician Medina and Natural Resource Worker Becker, along with Manager Buser, conducted a field trip with 40 4th graders from Harriet Thompson Elementary. The kids enjoyed seeing the pheasant chicks and learned about upland and wetland habitats.



A group of 4th graders from Harriet Thompson Elementary during their field trip to the Sunnyside Wildlife Area



Another group of 4th graders from Harriet Thompson Elementary during their field trip to the Sunnyside Wildlife Area

Wildlife Management

DPCA: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand completed processing and delivering Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements and associated damage permits for two additional landowners in Elk Area 3721 (Corral Canyon).

Trail Camera: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand monitored a deployed trail camera near Hanford's southern border. Daily images of elk, mostly bull elk, leaving ALE to forage on winter wheat were recovered. Additional hazing activities will be implemented.

Hanford bull elk were captured on a trail camera in a planted wheat field

Wildlife Hazing: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand conducted late night and early morning



hazing patrols near winter wheat fields on Rattlesnake Mountain and at several tree fruit operations near Prosser. Numerous deer and elk were successfully removed from the crops.

Public Outreach: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman did some public outreach this week to help get some kids interested in wildlife and what we do at WDFW. First, Stutzman visited Mesa Elementary School to talk about what we do at WDFW and share some skulls and pelts. Stutzman also helped out with a salmon release in Pasco by running a bird watching station and talking about predator-prey interactions.

Future conservationists checking out a great blue heron at Sacajawea State Park in Pasco

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



Wildlife Areas

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman checked on the Windy Point cabin and picked up all the keys. The tenant who had been occupying the residence for the past seven years has moved out. Huffman contacted a deputy with the Yakima Sheriff's Department who is interested in renting the building until funding for removal can be secured.

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

State Sensitive Common Loon: Biologist Smith surveyed District 12 for loon activity. Adult loons were documented (singly and in pairs) on area lakes. Nesting activity was confirmed at one local lake and is suspected at another, although a nest at that location has yet to be documented. Continued monitoring will be required to document nesting success/failure.



Common loon adult incubating on a nest the pair has located on a vegetated island at one of our local lakes



An adult common loon swimming on one of our local lakes

East/West Bear Project: Over the coming months, staff members will be 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 first west side session. A total of five bears were collared during this session. Trapping will commence in the Lake Wenatchee area in the coming days.

An adult male bear fitted with a GPS collar during the east/west bear project



Westside Cougar Project: Biologist Smith assisted Wildlife Research Scientist Kertson and others with capturing and marking two (on separate occasions) young male cougars.

Dr. Kertson measures tooth length of a young male during Westside Cougar Project work



Prohibited Wildlife Management – Invasive Species: District 12 and 13 continued efforts for invasive species monitoring while pulling in help from Region 4 Fish and other biologists. African clawed frogs have tentatively been confirmed breeding now – further investigations will finalize those field observations and samples will be taken. District 12 is gaining landowner permission, with trapping to start here in June. District 12 is in touch with AIS regarding communication and needs.

State prohibited species – African clawed frog – unfortunately located at a site. Please do not purchase exotic pets without researching legalities and do report exotics to WDFW via our exotic invasive species web reporting site.



Protected Wildlife Management –

White-Nose Syndrome: District 12 is engaging in outreach to formal entities and local NGOs. District 12 participated in ongoing internal conferencing and correspondence to devise short and long-term efforts and planning in order to manage white-nose syndrome and increase bat knowledge from a management standpoint, research wise, and within the general public. District 12 has worked with other WDFW staff members to provide review and comment on a manuscript regarding western bat efforts. District 12 worked with Dr. Haman, DVM, and Contracts/Fiscal staff members to provide for input and assistance in the submittal of an emergency federal grant for work in Washington regarding bats and white-nose syndrome. District 12, along with Dr. Haman and other staff members, are in conversation with national partners, such as Bat Conservation International, regarding management efforts, including similarities and differences from east to west. District 12 is working to keep field recorders up and running, replacing batteries and memory cards and depositing data. District 12 is working to organize past data from emphasis areas for baseline reference and access by all. District 12 is engaging with volunteers to increase their efforts in the lower Snoqualmie Valley to provide repeated measures acoustic encounter data from areas surveyed before white-nose syndrome detection. District 12 has started to coordinate the removal of guano traps with Dr. Haman. District 12 extended an invite to local grotto groups regarding an upcoming USFS environmental sample training effort. Dr. Haman is also networking this opportunity to other staff members and partners.

WDFW and collaborators are asking the public to report dead or dying/sick bats via our hotline found at the link below. Decontamination, outlined in below links, is essential to assist in management of this pathogen, particularly in the research, management, and recreationist communities, including caving, climbing, and canyoneering.

Report dead and 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 a number of calls regarding bald eagle management, including documentation, disturbance concerns, etc. District 12 passed parties off to web references and USFWS as appropriate for those situations.

Protected Wildlife Management – Assistance to Habitat Regarding Priority Habitats and Species Non-jurisdictional Management Consultation in District 12: Anderson assisted area habitat biologists, when requested, to provide for our 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/>

Protected Wildlife Management – District 12 Management Efforts for Osprey and Peregrine Falcon: District 12 touched base with a number of entities wanting to remove osprey nests and/or work around nests. District 12 has been working with WSDOT regarding active peregrine falcon nesting efforts on a local bridge. Local researchers and members of the Falcon Research Group have been monitoring the birds and this week banded four individuals on the bridge. Future efforts will likely involve exclusion from the bridge to encourage the pair (new female) to move back to the long-used scrape box that was provided to this territory years before.



Four peregrine eyasses located on a Seattle bridge- pre banding – note smallest male very “big in the britches” – he was the feisty one according to researchers that banded the birds – Photo by Martin Muller



Four peregrine eyasses located on a Seattle bridge- post banding...“What just happened”...alien invasion – Photo by Martin Muller

Species of Greatest Conservation Need Surveys: District 13 and 14 staff members joined forces and conducted surveys in the San Juan Islands. Various islands were visited and checked for the presence of the Shaw Island vole to determine which islands to return to for possible trapping expeditions.

Searching the grassy areas looking for tell-tale runways that signal the presence of voles

Staff members also conducted Oregon vesper sparrow surveys on San Juan Island but did not find them. Follow-up surveys will occur later in June. Five known peregrine falcon eyries were checked and four sites had birds present. Several black oystercatcher nests were observed.



Two sharp-tailed snakes were found at a new site on San Juan Island. The snakes were measured and photographed. We now have three locations on San Juan Island where the snakes have been documented. These snakes are elusive and rarely come out into the open, preferring to remain beneath rocks, moss, soil or other substrates, which makes them very difficult to find.

The black and white banding on the dorsal side of the snake, combined with the sharply pointed tail are characteristics of the elusive sharp-tailed snake



Wildlife Areas

Lake Terrell Unit Barley Planting: Fifty-two acres of barley was planted this year on the Lake Terrell Unit. Natural Resource Technician Deyo disked the barley seed into the ground, after Wilbur Ellis spread the seed and fertilizer. He also planted black oil sunflower seeds into areas of the barley fields for passerines and waterfowl to feed on. The sunflower seeds were supplied to WDFW by Ducks Unlimited.



Lake Terrell barley planting

Tennant Lake Wetland Enhancement

Mowing: Manager Kessler continued mowing reed canary grass in the Phase 2 area of the Port of Bellingham's wetland enhancement project. This enhancement project on the south end of Tennant Lake is mitigation for construction activities at the Bellingham Airport. Ten acres of grass were mowed to prevent it from going to seed. Phase 2 is scheduled to be constructed in 2019.

Intalco Unit Trail Mowing: Manager Kessler mowed walking paths at the Intalco Unit for dog walkers, hikers, and runners.

Slater Road Agriculture Field Planting: The 120-acre agriculture field planting by the lessee was started this week. Silage corn is being planted, and 10 percent will be left standing after the harvest to feed waterfowl in the winter.



Slater Road corn planting

Grant Pre-Proposal Development: Projects Coordinator Brokaw drafted a pre-proposal to submit to the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) learning project category. The proposal asks for resources to answer questions related to long-term stewardship of restoration sites.

Leque Island Estuary Restoration Project Presentation: Projects Coordinator Brokaw presented a summary of the project to the

Stillaguamish Watershed Council and answered questions about a Salmon Recovery Funding Board application that is under review.

Leque Island Road Right of Way Vacation Request: Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Lands Agent Iris provided information requested by Snohomish County that is required to process WDFW’s vacation request of Eide Road.

Leque Island Design Development: Projects Coordinator Brokaw requested and received information from the Capital Asset Management Program (CAMP) regarding remnant utilities on the site from demolished houses. This information will be added to the plan set for the estuary restoration project, as all utilities will need to be removed as part of the project.

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



Wildlife Management

Purple Martins: District 12 provided thoughts to the US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) on erecting martin gourds on some of their mitigation sites. The number one comment from District 12 was, “Do not put them up if you can’t maintain them annually and maintain the management of non-target species within the season.” District 12 has not heard back from USACE, but is willing to help if those two essential items are outlined as easily handled. Otherwise, District 12 does not wish to engage with inappropriate gourd establishment that would be a detriment rather than a boost to local population. District 12 hopes that something appropriate comes to fruition.

Wildlife Areas

Elementary School Young Scientist Day: Manager Kessler accepted an invitation to give a presentation to classes at the Central Elementary School in Ferndale for Young Scientist Day. Kessler displayed skins and skulls of animal species native to Washington, and talked about career opportunities as a wildlife biologist. The program went over very well with the students.

Private Lands/Access Management

Spring Bear Hunt: Private Lands Access Biologist Wingard and Natural Resource Technician Otto completed gate checks on the Monroe and North Skagit spring bear units. Otto found minimal issues with gates and locks and was able to correct any issues onsite. Otto cleared vegetation at many gate locations, allowing for better access without becoming entangled in blackberry foliage. Private Lands Access Program Supervisory Biologist Caldwell contacted DNR Forester Hurd and Sierra Pacific Industries Forester Sand about establishing a meeting to discuss identified zones of bear damage that occur outside the current spring bear hunt areas. The intent of these meetings will be to identify areas of intense or chronic damage and assist foresters with managing bear damage.

Migratory Bird Forage Enhancement Projects: Private Lands Access Biologist Wingard met with a Skagit County landowner to discuss planting barley on the property. The landowner agreed to plant eight acres of barley on the property. Natural Resource Technician Otto continued herbicide applications on migratory bird forage sites in Skagit and Whatcom county in preparation for barley planting. Otto delivered bulk barley seed to partner landowners in Whatcom County. Private Lands Access Program Supervisory Biologist Caldwell and Biologist Wingard compiled and assessed up-to-date Migratory Bird Forage Enhancement Project funding and budgeting expenses. These staff members track these expenditures closely and work with Olympia staff members on ensuring that budget is quality controlled and assured.

Western Washington Private Land Access Program Information: Private Lands Access Program Supervisory Biologist Caldwell worked with Small Game Section Manager Curtis on providing updated information on the Western Washington Private Land Access Program. Supervisory Biologist Caldwell provided Manager Curtis with up-to-date information on Region 4, private lands access program seasons, huntable species, access types, times and areas for hunt types, and other relevant information.

Water Access Sites: Some typical activity at popular access sites this week.

*Nugents Corner access area –
May 27, 2016*





Fazon Lake access area – May 27, 2016

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

Wildlife Management

Whatcom Wildlife Advisory Council:

Biologist Yarborough provided comments to the Whatcom County Advisory Council related to the wildlife portion of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan.

Snoqualmie Tree Farm: Biologist Smith represented District 12 at a meeting with Bear and Cougar Specialist Beausoleil, Wildlife Research Scientist Kertson, Biologist Maletzke, and Campbell Global staff members. The meeting was an introduction of parties and discussion of the recent purchase of the Snoqualmie Tree Farm (by Campbell Global), including WDFW activities on the farm and future needs and expectations of all parties.

Elk Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman consulted with the North Sound Elk Technical group to discuss an elk fencing option in the Acme area. The consensus of the group was to move forward to provide elk fencing support for a landowner in the Acme area of Whatcom County. Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell coordinated with the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians on elk exclusionary fence project expenditures and reported these data to Olympia staff members for review. Witman, Natural Resource Technician Cogdal, and Supervisor Caldwell worked on elk exclusionary fence projects and installed a gate at the Birdview fencing project to prepare for the upcoming finalization of the project that will take place this week. Witman checked several elk exclusionary fences to note effectiveness and weed control efforts. Witman also met with two landowners in Day Creek to discuss any current elk damage related issues. The landowners both felt elk related damage has been significantly reduced to their crops through a combination of fencing and hazing efforts that have been implemented.

Elk Fencing: Biologist Smith coordinated with volunteers involved in ongoing elk exclusion fence maintenance and improvement work. Smith also responded to multiple calls from the public relating to ungulates in gardens, increases in local rabbit numbers, and garter snakes.

Waterfowl Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell met with community members at Bullard Lake in Whatcom County. The community has had ongoing issues with resident Canada geese causing damage to nearby park areas. The community members have taken preventative measures by installing low level fencing around the perimeter of the lake and have implemented K-9 silhouettes to deter geese from coming on shore. Witman and Supervisor Caldwell agreed to meet with a larger community group on June 21 to discuss available options through the USFWS.

Desert Tortoise Abandonment: District 12 worked to place an abandoned captive desert tortoise into captivity for health assistance and foster work. The animal was placed with the Pacific Northwest Herpetological Society – they take in abandoned and unwanted amphibians and reptiles, foster them, and place them in good homes. Please do not obtain exotic or any other pets that cannot be cared for properly. Please adopt the animal out if it cannot be cared for properly – do not release it into the wild. It is generally illegal at some jurisdictional level, inhumane, and often detrimental to environment. More information on the desert tortoise can be found at https://www.fws.gov/nevada/desert_tortoise/dt/dt_life.html



Desert tortoise (gopherus agassizii)

Wildlife Areas

Big Ditch Access: Cosgrove picked up litter at the Big Ditch Access.

Fir Island Farm: Manager Rotton coordinated field preparations for the 16.2-acre grass and native seed planting area with a local farm. Field preparations were complete. Meis spread native seed mix over Area 2 and pasture grass mix over the entire

16.2 acres. Additional seeding is scheduled for Area 1 in mid-July just prior to the dike breach activities and on the estuarine tidal berm once completed.

Island Unit: Meis toured the Island Unit looking at recent crop planting establishments, a time interval for spraying, and future plantings for the unit.

Ferrying Operations: Cosgrove coordinated with volunteers for ferrying operations next week to barge barley seed and fertilizer to the Island Unit.

Barley and Millet: Natural Resources Technician Cosgrove continued field preparations on the Island Unit for barley and millet.

Milltown Access: Following a report of a dump site and request for improved signage at the access site from Officer Clint Lucci, Natural Resource Technician Cosgrove cleaned litter and wood debris from the Milltown Access and posted two signs, one saying "Closed During Hours of Darkness" and one saying "Be Responsible With Litter: Pack It Out." Manager Rotton will contact local volunteer group to schedule site visits and litter pick up parties.

Samish Unit: Meis continued to mow noxious weed areas at the Samish Unit.

Skagit Headquarters: Wildlife Area staff members participated in a discussion with Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Boehm regarding the recent proposed changes to the agricultural lease policy and procedures. Manager Rotton continued to track the budget and pay

bills during this busy agricultural season. Cosgrove mowed grass fields and dike-top trails and weeded the fence lines at the Headquarters Unit.

Sinclair Island: Manager Rotton met with representatives from the Sinclair Island landowners group to discuss the status of the county project to rebuild the boat landing facility that was previously rebuilt following storm damages in 2012. The landowners would like to develop a plan to create improved public and private access to the site and wish to work with WDFW on this project. Lands Agent Kye Iris has been updated on the meeting and has followed up with the group to discuss potential options.



Sinclair Island

Private Lands/Access Management

Waterfowl Quality Hunt

Program: Private Lands Access

Biologist Wingard and Private Lands Access Program Supervisory Biologist Caldwell worked with Private Land Access Program Supervisory Biologist McCanna on ordering new/updated Hunt by Registration signs for Waterfowl Quality Hunt sites in Region 4. Natural Resource Technician Otto checked multiple waterfowl hunt sites in Whatcom, Skagit, and Snohomish counties to see what crop rotations are being used this season. Otto checked the efficacy of recent herbicide applications to see if another spray is necessary. Otto also walked a potential new hunt unit owned by a partner landowner in Snohomish County.

Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator

Hunter Education Coordination: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman was contacted by a Tulalip Tribe member inquiring about how to obtain hunter education materials for potential classes to be held on the reservation. The tribal member was put in contact with Volunteer/Hunter Education Coordinator Steve Dazey.

Hunter Education Instructor Support: Hunter Education Coordinator Steven Dazey answered questions on becoming a hunter education instructor. Dazey sent out five applicant packets. Dazey assisted a volunteer hunter education instructor applicant from Region 1 to contact the Region 1 coordinator. Dazey met with representatives from American Legion post #127 about using their new building as a hunter education classroom. They are definitely interested and one of their members submitted an application to become a hunter education instructor. Dazey met with representatives from the Tulalip about certifying tribal members and holding hunter education classes for tribal youth at the Tulalip. Coordinator Dazey visited several hunter education teams to observe and offer suggestions. The teams included Granite Falls Sportsman Club, Skagit Shooting Range, and the team that teaches at the Region 4 office. Dazey started the process to assist in inventory verification of items checked out to hunter education instructors.

Dazey sent out another email advising instructors on the availability of Range Safety Officer training. The class is now full. Coordinator Dazey assisted the new instructors for the Stilliguamish with ordering supplies for their first upcoming class.

Hunting Clinic: Coordinator Dazey met with Holiday Sports and discussed using their classroom for upcoming hunting clinics. Dazey also discussed partnering with Holiday Sports for National Hunting and Fishing day in September.

Dropped Instructors: Coordinator Dazey completed sending out dropped instructor notifications for instructors who have not returned the required paperwork. Dazey also conferred with Hunter Education Division Manager Whipple about two instructors who had been cited for wastage and it was decided that they should also be decertified. Hunter education instructors are teaching our next generation of safe ethical hunters and need to be an example of what to do. Dazey asked for assistance from Enforcement on obtaining the return of inventoried equipment from an instructor who has been decertified but has remained difficult to contact about returning inventory.

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

Performance Reviews: Staff members began working on performance reviews.

Training: Many Region 4 staff members completed Leadership for the Future, LEAD with Integrity, and Risk Management training at the Mill Creek Regional Office. Supervisory Biologist Caldwell and Biologist Wingard found the training very useful and are looking forward to implementing the lessons learned with the Region 4 Private Lands team. Supervisory Biologist Caldwell also completed Washington State sexual harassment training for managers and demonstrated P-Card submission and organization training to Biologist Wingard.

Herbicide Application: Natural Resource Technician Otto updated the herbicide spray log.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Western Gray Squirrel Survey: Biologist Bergh and Technician Petrie deployed hair tubes as part of the statewide western gray squirrel survey effort. Transects of five tubes in a row are placed in appropriate squirrel habitat and will be checked once per month for the next three months. If western gray squirrel hair is detected at a hair tube, additional tubes will be placed around that tube to determine the amount of squirrels at the site.

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 seven fawns have been captured during the 2016 effort.

Research Scientist and Primary Investigator Rice, along with Regional Wildlife Biologists Holman, Stephens, and Butler and several of the 2016 fawns



MAPS Bird Banding: Biologist Stephens assisted WDFW Volunteer Flick with mist-netting and banding songbirds at a MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) station in the Columbia Gorge. A total of 22 birds were captured, representing nine different species. MAPS is a long-term demographic monitoring project that takes place across the U.S. and Canada. This site has been in operation for 20 years. More information about the MAPS program can be found at <http://www.birdpop.org/pages/maps.php>



MAPS bird banding in the Columbia Gorge

Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area

Jenny Creek Mineral Spring: Assistant Manager Sample began work to remove vegetation (cattails and canary grass) from around the mineral spring area of the Jenny Creek Unit of the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area. Removing this dense vegetation will hopefully make this site more appealing to band-tailed pigeon use. Band-tailed pigeons seek out mineral springs during the breeding and nesting season to drink the water and regain minerals such as calcium and sodium. Assistant Manager Sample mowed down the tall vegetation in a 30-foot buffer around the spring and applied an herbicide to prevent regrowth. Band-tailed pigeons need to land on the ground in order to drink, so reducing the vegetative cover for possible predators will hopefully encourage them to do so. Assistant Manager Sample also mowed down tall grass in the parking area at the Jenny Creek Unit.



*Mineral Spring: Jenny Creek Unit –
Before mowing*



After mowing



Jenny Creek Unit parking area

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Memorial Day Weekend: Manager Van Leuven worked in the field during the weekend, contacting visitors to provide information and maps, and reminding people to have Discover Passes or Vehicle Access Passes on display in their vehicles. Most people were camping. However, a few hikers were out enjoying the wildflowers, a few parties were target shooting or hunting California ground squirrels, at least three groups of boaters were at Leidl Park Campground, and a couple turkey hunters were out for the last weekend of the spring season. Numerous campers were without the necessary parking passes, and were directed to purchase them promptly. Also, four campfire pits were cleaned up and returned to a more natural condition, three signs were replaced, one sign was repaired, cattle grazing activity was checked, watering holes outside of the grazing permit area were inspected for signs of stray livestock nearby, and weed infestations were noted for future control action.



Meadow Larkspur on the Klickitat Wildlife Area

Grazing Permits: Manager Van Leuven met with Range Ecologist Burnham to conduct an environmental review of a grazing permit area on the Fisher Hill Unit. Van Leuven drafted a temporary permit for this area and submitted it for review and approval. In addition, Manager Van Leuven visited key areas of the two pastures of the Soda Springs Unit Grazing Permit to evaluate forage utilization, collect equipment, look for missing cattle, and check on water supplies. Four calves were found inside an exclusion area. They were shooed out and the loose fence wires were tightened up and secured to posts. Several other minor fence repairs were made during the week as well. A bull from an adjacent property appeared on the WDFW pasture. No holes in the fence were located, so he may have jumped over the fence.

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

Private Lands

Feel Free to Hunt: Biologist Meyer talked with a landowner in Klickitat County about extending a contract for three more years.

Access

Kress Lake and Sportsman Loop Access Sites: Access staff members Spangler and Rhodes cut and removed several large branches and trees that had fallen in and around the walking trail at Kress Lake. The sinkhole collapsed and grew a little larger over the spring and staff members dug out and fixed the removable posts that had filled with gravel and mud over the winter. Steel fence posts were driven in and danger tape was wrapped around the sinkholes. Staff members talked to a possible volunteer that might be interested in doing trail work this summer. Staff members also cut out and removed willow branches growing out into the water at the end of the boat launch at Sportsman Loop.



Sportsman Loop and Kress Lake access site cleanup

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

District 10 Wildlife Conflict

Bear: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin verified five bear damage reports on industrial timberland. This included a site visit with Conflict Specialist Waddell, Blankenship, and Section Manager Simek, who showed a landowner and his trapper how to properly set snares.



Leg hold snare set in ground to capture bear



Providing instruction on setting leg hold snares

District 9 Wildlife Conflict

Bear: Two requests to lethally remove bears due to tree damage were submitted by Pope Resources for timber land in Clark County. The requests were approved and two permits were issued for each request. Conflict Specialist Peterson was then sent to confirm the damage. Peterson found the damaged tree at both sites and confirmed the damage.

Deer: Conflict Specialist Peterson continued working with a Goldendale area rancher who has a high volume of deer frequenting his alfalfa fields. Peterson deployed a propane cannon and gave the rancher other nonlethal deterrents to use until the cutting next month. The rancher is also planning to work with WDFW to set up some youth hunts on the property for the upcoming hunting season. In addition, Conflict Specialist Peterson has been working with a small startup winery in the Columbia Gorge. The winery has been having deer issues for the last three years. Multiple nonlethal measures have been attempted with good results, but the vines have still had some damage. The landowner has agreed to purchase fencing material for a deer-proof fence and WDFW will assist with facilitating volunteer labor.

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN A HIGHLY SKILLED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE BY SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY

Conservation Planning Workshop: Biologist Meyer attended a Conservation Planning workshop hosted by NRCS and the Conservation Districts in Ellensburg to learn the nine step planning process. Meyer will follow up the training by working with a mentor and landowner in Region 5 to create a conservation plan.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Harlequin Duck Project: Biologist Murphie assisted Waterfowl Biologists Evenson and Wilson, along with researchers from Canada, in an attempt to locate and capture Harlequin ducks for the purpose of deploying satellite transmitters on three adult males from Olympic Peninsula rivers. To better understand the migratory movements of these ducks, additional transmitters have been deployed from eastern Washington to Montana and Wyoming. Stream depth and flow prevented the successful capture of three pairs located on the Duckabush River, while lone females found on the Skokomish and Dosewallips Rivers were not targeted.



A pair of Harlequin ducks on the Duckabush River

Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly: On May 25, Biologist McMillan met the spotted owl crew for Olympic National Park and trained them in identifying Taylor's checkerspot butterflies by taking them to a site west of the Elwha. The weather was marginal, but suitable enough to get one Taylor's checkerspot to show and fly for the demonstration.

Satsop/Mason Deer Project: In 2009, WDFW initiated a study of the effects of forest management practices on black-tailed deer reproduction. Two of the eight study sites are represented in District 15: Mason and Satsop. An objective of this study involves radio-collaring fawns associated with radio-collared does. Five does in the Mason Unit were fitted with implant transmitters this spring, which deploy at birth and transmit a signal notifying WDFW that fawns have been born. All five have had their fawns and six fawns have been collared. A seventh was located at the birth site, stillborn. Fawns for one doe have not been located after repeated visits and are now unlikely to be collared. In the Satsop cluster, two does were being monitored for fawning activity and both does had fawns sometime during the week of May 9. A single fawn for

each of these does was collared. Two fawns have died. One died due to non-predation natural causes related to poor condition at birth and the other due to likely bear predation.

Black-tailed Deer Study District 16: On May 16, Biologist McMillan, Biologist Ament, and Assistant Tina Vogel collared the first fawn for the season from the five does they are tracking this season.



Biologist Ament and Assistant Tina Vogel measuring the fawn captured May 16

The twin fawn was captured the next day, May 17, by Biologist Ament and Assistant Tina Vogel.

The next fawn capture occurred on May 23 by Biologist McMillan, Biologist Ament, and Assistant Tina Vogel.



Biologist Ament and Assistant Tina Vogel measuring the incisors of the fawn



Biologist McMillan replacing the fawn back where it was first found

Biologist McMillan has spent five additional days attempting to find fawns, focusing most efforts with the three collared does that have not been found yet.

Biologist McMillan has been working with Researcher Rice to resolve issues with both the PDA and the Handheld Terminal/GPS Plus X systems. The PDA is not operating properly at this time.

Black-tailed Deer Mortality and Habitat Use Study: Biologist Tirhi and Holcomb spent considerable time monitoring radio-collared does at the Vail Tree Farm study site. Seven does were collared in winter 2015 and both the does and their 2015 fawns (now yearlings) have been monitored over the past year for movement and survival. At this time, all seven does are now being monitored to locate and collar their 2016 fawns. Monitoring involves almost daily tracking of a doe to her current location, attempting to examine her from a distance for signs of pregnancy, and/or bushwhacking to her location and searching for fawns. Each fawn is processed for morphometrics and then outfitted with an expandable radio collar. So far, Tirhi has located one dead fawn and radio-collared one live fawn.

*Remains of one fawn at a kill site
indicative of black bear predation*





Fawn radio collared for survival and habitat use study, Vail Tree Farm, Rainier, WA



Western Pond Turtle: Biologist Tirhi, Biologist Holcomb, and three volunteers continue to monitor the western pond turtle nesting season at the Pierce County recovery site. Two nests laid over the past two weeks were excavated and the eggs delivered to the Woodland Park Zoo for captive rearing (head-starting). These were the first of 10 nests that will be delivered to the zoo this season. As of May 30, two additional females were located out of the ponds and attempting to nest. The pond turtle nesting season runs May 16 – July 1. Twenty-six female turtles have been outfitted with transmitters this season and will be monitored for nesting.

Biologist Holcomb excavating western pond turtle eggs for delivery to zoo for captive rearing



Western pond turtle eggs in nest and collected for delivery to zoo for captive rearing



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

Private Lands /Conflict

Bear Timber Damage: Natural Resource Technician Leite checked for fresh bear damage at a location where two bears had already been harvested on a previous permit. The damage tree was a tree that he had located when checking damage point for the first permit. He reported his findings to Biologist Harris. A consecutive permit was not authorized because the tree used could not be considered evidence of continuing damage, as it was located prior to the harvest on the first permit.

Natural Resource Technician Leite checked a Small Forest Landowners property in the Smith Creek area of Pacific County for bear timber damage. None was located. This was done at the request of the owner to help monitor for damage.

Ocean Shores Bear Conflict: The Houdini bear was observed again, once, on the south end of Ocean Shores last week.

Other Bear Conflict: Officers from Detachment #2 responded to reports of a bear cub frequenting a campground north of the Ocean Shores area while Biologist Harris was off work. He will follow up with the reporting party next week. Hopefully this cub just got separated from the sow and is not orphaned.

Long Beach Cranberries: The middle group is being very tenacious. They have ignored repeated hazing by producers. Biologist Harris deployed fuse rope with salutes one night prior to

the three day weekend. It is unknown at this time if it worked or not. While onsite, he was very happy to see electric fencing used to protect bears from the bee hives.



Fuse rope with salutes



Bee hives set near cranberry bogs