

Wildlife Program

Week of August 24 – August 30, 2015

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

North Huckleberry & Dirty Shirt Next Steps: Supervisor McCanna completed a recommendation to Region 1 Wildlife Program Manager Robinette for the next steps in the North Huckleberry and Dirty Shirt wolf territories upon additional depredations.

Dirty Shirt Pack Area: Biologist Shepherd and Natural Resource Worker Weatherman discussed strategies to protect cattle with an allotment permit holder and contract range riders. Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, and to a lesser extent Biologist Shepherd, worked multiple days and nights in the Dirty Shirt pack area.

Range Rider Direction: Biologist Shepherd, Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, and contract range riders discussed strategies in an area with wolf depredations on the Colville National Forest.

Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements for Livestock (DPCA-Ls): Biologist Shepherd processed invoices for DPCA-Ls.

Livestock Producer Contacts: Biologist Shepherd talked with several grazing permit holders in the Kettle Mountains, North Chewelah Creeks, and other areas on the Colville National Forest.

Wolf Activity: Natural Resource Worker Weatherman spent time in a federal grazing allotment looking for wolf sign. Sign was detected but no cattle were observed in the area.

Pend Oreille County: Natural Resource Worker Weatherman made contact with the producer near the Pend Oreille Lakes and advised him again of the location of his cattle along Little Ruby Creek Road.

Dead Calf: Biologist Shepherd and Natural Resource Worker Weatherman responded to a report of a dead adult cow just north of Deep Lake. The area was inspected and no adult cow was discovered. The producer was notified of the report.

Huckleberry Chronology Update: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett updated the Huckleberry Chronology. All communications with producers in the area have been compiled in a spreadsheet for Olympia and others. Due to the Carpenter Road Fire, little activity was added.

Grouse Flats Wolf Complaint: Biologist Earl, Natural Resource Technician Wade, and Officer King responded to a report of a possible wolf attack on several dogs in the Grouse Flats area. It was determined that the attack took place across the state line and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will be taking care of the investigation.

Pasture Location: Biologist Earl, Natural Resource Technician Wade, and Officer King also checked on the location of a pasture that had a report of a black wolf running through cattle. The pasture was located just inside the Oregon border.

Region 3 Wolf Activities

Teanaway Timeline: District 8 Conflict Specialist Wetzel logged entries into the timeline. An investigation of 2 more dead sheep was conducted this week. Due to the condition of the carcasses, no determination of cause of death could be determined.

Livestock Producer Contacts: Conflict Specialist Wetzel talked with the Teanaway sheep producer this week, who indicated that the largest sheep band had been moved out of the wolf territory Tuesday. A small band of sheep is still located near Cle Elum.

Wolf Activity: Conflict Specialist Wetzel and ranger rider Johnson monitored wolf activity near cattle this week. The VHF-only male was also located near one of the GPS wolves.

Wolf Monitoring: A videographer contacted Conflict Specialist Wetzel to inquire about how GPS collars and other technologies are used to monitor wildlife. She spent a day in the Teanaway with Range Rider Johnson and Conflict Specialist Wetzel looking at ways technology is used in monitoring cattle and wolves.

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

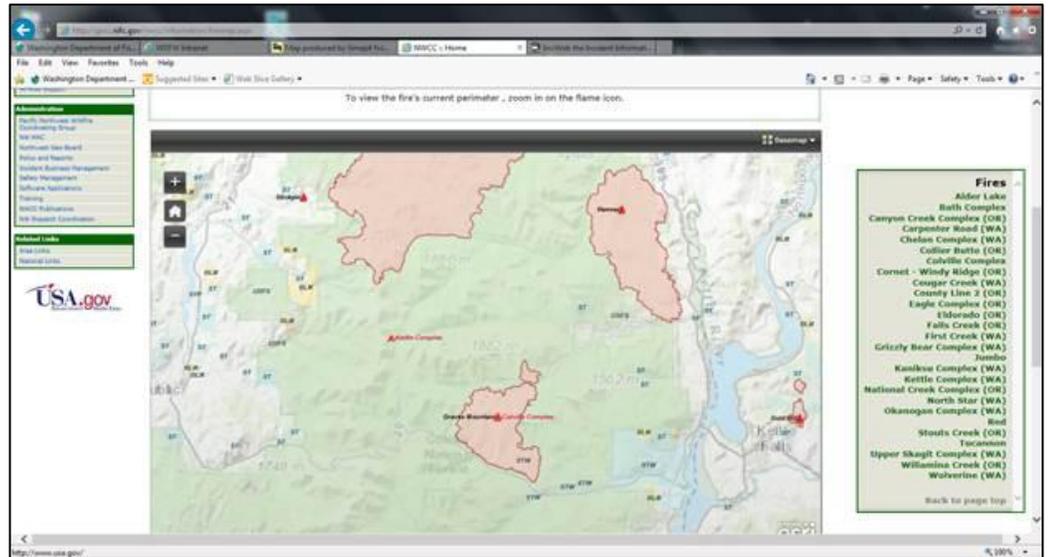
Spokane District Pre-Season Deer Surveys: Biologists Atamian and Lowe conducted road-based deer surveys in GMUs 124, 130, 139, and 142 to classify white-tailed and mule deer does, fawns, and bucks pre-hunt.

Bachelor group in Almota Unit

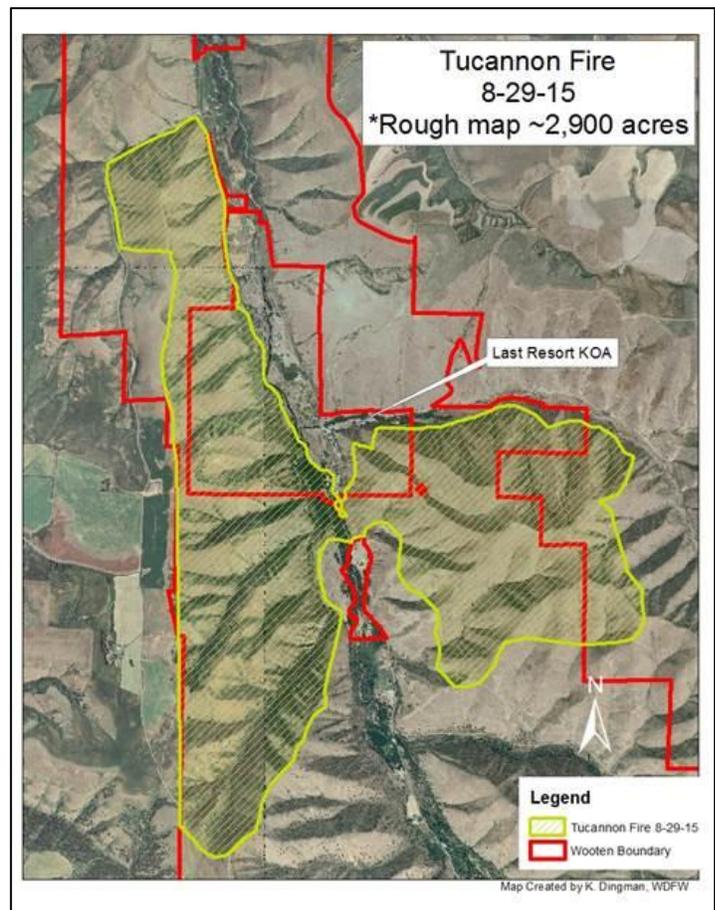


Wildlife Areas/Water Access Sites

Graves Mountain Fire: The Graves Mountain Fire is the nearest fire to the Sherman Creek Wildlife Area, and has burnt over the westernmost satellite parcel (60 acres) of the wildlife area. Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Palmer attended evening planning meetings and morning briefings this week to keep apprised of the situation and discuss contingency lines and resource availability on Sherman Creek Wildlife Area with fire managers. Increased fire activity was anticipated on Saturday, August 29, but all established fire lines held during the wind event. The fire continues to be very active on the northern perimeter, which means it continues to move away from Sherman Creek Wildlife Area, but closer to residences in the Deadman Creek area. The fire size is now 7,877 acres and is estimated to be 21% contained.



WT Wooten Wildlife Area – Wildfire: A fire broke out on the Wooten Wildlife Area Saturday morning after high winds snapped a power pole on the Tucannon valley hillside west of the Last Resort KOA campground. The fire quickly spread to WDFW land and also threatened several structures on private land in the river bottom. The fire eventually spotted to the east side of the road and burned much of Goat Mountain. Kari Dingman reported the fire did reach the elk fence, but we do not have any estimates on damage at this time. Wildlife Area Manager Bob Dice and Kari spent much of Saturday discing fire lines at the Wooten HQ, moving equipment away from flammable grasses, and assisting/advising fire fighters throughout the day and into the evening. The fire went to State Mobilization at 3:45 pm on



Saturday, which allowed more resources from outside the immediate local area to aid in fighting the fire. Some personnel and equipment from the Grizzly Bear Complex Fire also assisted. Approximately 2,700 acres burned. See map below. Numerous aircraft, dozers, and fire fighters assisted in suppression. As of Sunday afternoon, the fire was essentially out due to arriving rain. We were initially concerned about the Wooten buildings, as we have not been able to irrigate our fields this summer due to a Department of Ecology stop irrigating order and problems with our irrigation equipment.



Looking down the valley from the HQ house



Above the shooting range



Hartsock Grade area as seen from the east on Oliphant Road



Flames as seen from the guard rail corner on blind grade road looking towards Goat Mountain on Saturday night

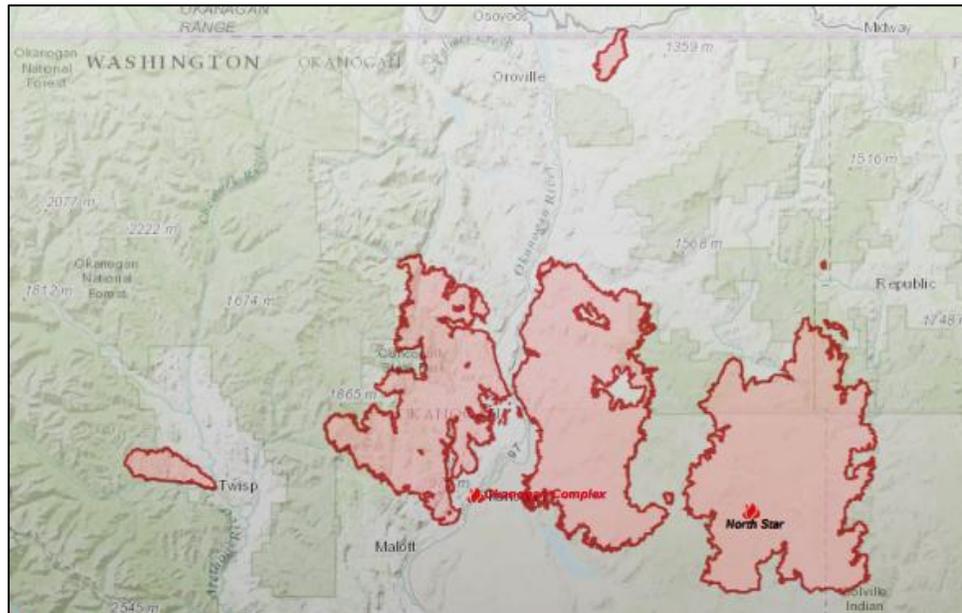
REGION 2

FIRE:

Unit Burned or Burning	Acres Burned	Source
Chelan Butte – NE corner burned	1043	Fox - 8/31/15
BeeBe Springs – North of Highway	93	Fox - 8/31/15
Big Buck Unit of Methow – likely all	4403	Furnari - 8/31/15
Buzzard Lake of Sinlahekin – 100%	836	Haug - 8/31/15
Sinlahekin Unit – 51 %	7050	Haug - 8/31/15
Mcloughlin Falls – 73%	124	Haug - 8/31/15
Pogue Mountain – 76%	1032	Haug - 8/31/15
Scotch Creek Unit – 87%	8977	Haug - 8/31/15
Tunk Valley – 100%	1770	Haug - 8/31/15
TOTAL	25,328	

Okanogan Complex and North Star Fires: As of Sunday, August 30, 2015, the Okanogan Complex fire was over 300,000 acres and 25% contained while the North Star fire was over 200,000 acres and 22% contained. Both fires have significantly affected Okanogan County, displacing many people and burning many structures. Biologist Heinlen moved agency equipment to keep it out of harm’s way and out of the way of fire suppression activities. Biologist Heinlen also toured burned areas to start assessing the fire’s impacts to wildlife, paying particular attention to effects on habitat for deer, sharp-tailed grouse, and western gray squirrel (the latter two are state-threatened species). Biologist Heinlen discussed these impacts with WDFW species specialists and began developing ideas for future management actions.

Okanogan Complex and North Star fire boundary map as of August 30, 2015



Recreational Opportunities Weekender: Several hunting seasons, including general archery deer, open Tuesday, September 1, 2015, in Okanogan County. With the Okanogan Complex and North Star fires continuing to burn, many areas have road and access closures in place. Hunters need to be aware of road and area closures before hunting. Road closure information can be found at <http://www.wsdot.com/traffic/trafficalerts/>

USFS closures can be found at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/alerts-notices/?cid=stelprdb5308168>

Chelan Complex Fire - Chelan Butte Unit: Most of Chelan Butte was spared during the initial days of the Chelan Complex fire, as winds pushed the fire late Friday to the northeast. Of the 9,000 acres on the Chelan Butte Unit 1,043 were directly impacted by the fire. Wildlife Area Manager Fox completed a preliminary damage assessment that includes:

- Two miles of dozer line
- Three and a half miles of boundary 4-strand barb wire fence
- 0.9 miles of interior 4-strand barb wire fence
- Wildlife Area entry sign and 30-35 signs and posts
- High intensity burn area in Daybreak Canyon



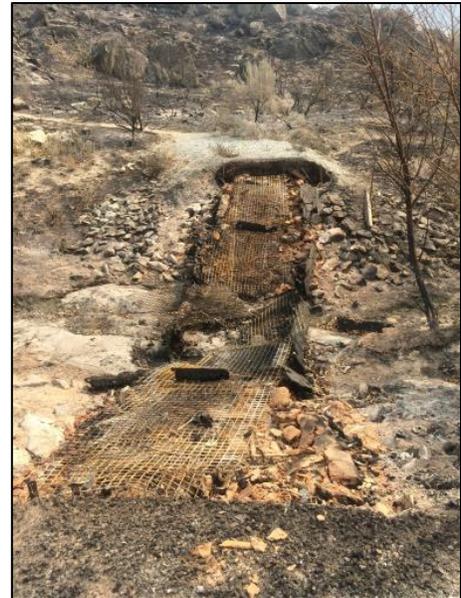
Burned boundary fence on Chelan Butte – Photo by R. Fox

Chelan Complex Fire – Beebe Springs Unit: The portion of the Beebe Springs Unit east of Highway 97 with the greatest amount of infrastructure development was untouched by the Chelan Complex fire on August 14. However, some damage occurred on the unit west of Highway 97 where 93 acres were burned. The preliminary damage assessment completed by Wildlife Area Manager Fox includes:

- 24' pedestrian bridge
- 10' x 10' storage shed with tools, ATV sprayer, sprayer boom, and other supplies
- Trail sign and other miscellaneous signs and posts
- 30' of wood rail fence
- High intensity burn areas in Toad Creek and Beebe Springs behind Chelan Hatchery

Remains of the pedestrian bridge over Toad Creek at Beebe Springs – Photo by R. Fox

Okanogan Complex-Twisp River Fire: Methow Wildlife Area staff is beginning to assess the fire damage that occurred on the Big Buck Unit of the Methow Wildlife Area during the Twisp River fire that began last week. Assistant Manager Sample and Maintenance Mechanic Wottlin toured the area and documented damage to culverts, a watering point, solar panels, gates, and fences. Additionally wildlife area staff began to assess and document the condition of boundary and interior fences of grazing pastures. Less than 10% has been completed in the southeast corner of the unit. Staff members are also documenting the bulldozer lines that were dug by contractors during the fire.



Big Buck Unit of the Methow Wildlife Area after the Twisp River Fire – Photo by Anna Sample, August 26



Peters Puddles canyon in the Big Buck Unit. Fire crews working to dig out hotspots – Photo by Anna Sample, August 25

Okanogan Complex Fires: Manager Haug, Assistant Manager Wehmeyer, and Scotch Creek Assistant Manager Dupont have been representing their wildlife areas as resource advisors and helping in the suppression efforts on the Okanogan Complex Fire (see pictures below). The fire has now consumed most of the Scotch Creek Wildlife Area and roughly half of the Sinlahekin, as well as: Buzzard Lake (100%), McLoughlin Falls (80%), Tunk Valley (100%), and Pogue Mountain (100%). WDFW

staff has provided various equipment and staff hours towards the massive effort to get the fire contained. Recent efforts by the incident team on the Sinlahekin have all but stopped the advance of the fire north at Blue Lake. Staff will continue to assist the management team as needed until the fire is completely extinguished.

Sinlahekin Unit: Kevin Vallance, Brad Zabreznik, Jim Olson, Sherry Furnari, Dale Swedberg, and Rob Wottlin assisted with fire suppression and structure protection efforts on the Sinlahekin Unit. Wildlife area staff appreciate all the offers of assistance from around the region.



Back burn and bucket drops near fire crews – Photos by Justin Haug

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

North Cascades Wolverine Research: Biologist Fitkin assisted the crew with another mid-season of a wolverine remote camera monitoring station. No wolverines or rare carnivores at this front country site this round, but critters are visiting nonetheless. This effort is part of a broader three year effort to develop a reliable summertime wolverine monitoring strategy using known occupied home ranges headed up by Dr. Robert Long from the Woodland Park Zoo.



Snowshoe hare – Photo by USFS remote camera



Coyote – Photo by USFS remote camera

Burrowing Owls: Diversity Technicians Annanie and Gaston, along with Biologist O. Duvuvuei, conducted a field tour with Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Biologist Munzing to discuss the placement of artificial burrows on DNR land in Grant County. Munzing is very excited about the project and is drafting an agreement between DNR and WDFW. While on the tour, biologists checked a newly reported burrow for activity. A female was sitting atop the rock pile at the reported location. Whitewash and cough pellets were observed around the rocks, indicating that a family group is likely using the burrow. After the field tour, Annanie and Gaston monitored two burrows near Ephrata that were active this spring. One burrow did not

have signs of recent use. However, a family group of at least five owls were observed at the second burrow.



Female burrowing owl at newly reported burrow in Grant County – Photo by A. Annanie



A successful burrowing owl family group at a burrow near Ephrata – Photo by A. Annanie

Western Grebes: Diversity Technicians Annanie and Gaston monitored the newly identified Western grebe nesting colony on Banks Lake. It appears the grebes are done incubating as none were observed on nests. Grebes were scattered in small groups throughout the lake and some juveniles were observed with the adults indicating that breeding attempts were successful. Although it is late in the year, Annanie and Gaston observed two grebes “dancing” as part of their mating ritual.



Incubating Western grebes at Banks Lake on July 28, 2015 – Photo by A. Annanie



Incubating Clark's grebe amongst Western grebe colony at Bank's Lake on July 28, 2015 – Photo by A. Annanie

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

Wildlife Management

Migratory Bird Banding: Biologists E. Duvuvuei, O. Duvuvuei, and Finger continued waterfowl trapping at swim-in traps this week and had several successful captures in the Ephrata and Quincy areas. Efforts will shift from the Spud Field to Alkali Lake, as a new trapping location is being attempted and several hundred mallards have been feeding on or near the site over the past week.



Mallard Capture at Flat Lake with just under 100 birds in the trap – Photo by E. Duvuvuei

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

Wildlife Areas

Cultural Resource Survey: Over the last two weeks Noel has invested a considerable amount of time at the Big Bend Wildlife Area documenting potential cultural resource issues associated with interior fencing on the area. So far, he has hiked 10.6 miles of fence line and documented 89 sites where, decades ago, prior owners employed the imaginative use of anything metal to build or repair the fence. The most popular items of the time seem to be pieces and parts of discarded vehicles. Bumpers, doors, running boards, grills, and axles are all well represented. Other items include bed frames, headboards and mattresses, a swing set, teeter-totter, and what appears to be a pogo stick. Noel completed and submitted archeological survey forms for all to Kat Kelly.



Necessity is mother is invention, Big Bend Wildlife Area – Photo by Noel Winegeart



Steel bed, rock and goodness knows what else as a fence post – Photo by Noel Winegeart

Methow Forest Rehabilitation Project:

Okanogan Lands Forester Jamie Bass worked on getting consultation documents drafted for all the operational units for the Methow Forest Rehabilitation Project.

While much of this had been previously drafted, due to many changes in roadwork, seasonal hauling issues, and a delayed Cultural Resources Survey, the documents needed to be reworked. The delay caused by the fires in Okanogan County and

restrictions enforced by DNR Forest Practices is pushing the operating season back, and may delay work that was planned for this fall until next summer/winter. Due to unsafe working conditions, the cultural resource survey team from Central Washington University has rescheduled field surveys. Bass and Shane Scott (CWU) discussed these issues, rescheduled deadlines of the original work notice, and set priority survey areas for work to be done this winter. Forester Bass also worked with CAMP Engineer Kristen Kuykendall to get a road plan drafted so it could be worked into the consultation documents and be approved by DNR.





From top to bottom: American white pelicans in the North Potholes Reserve on July 28; lesser yellowlegs with a successful hunting attempt; male spruce grouse in the back country in Okanogan County; female spruce grouse in the back country in Okanogan County – Photos by Diversity Technician A. Annanie



This melted culvert will certainly cause draining issues – Photo by Sherry Furnari, August 23



Not a green spot left in this riparian drainage area along Frost Road. The above melted culvert leads into this drainage, which flows south towards Twisp River Road – Photo by Sherry Furnari, August 23





From top to bottom – An hour after the fire raced up Blue Goat Mountain near Blue Lake, 10pm on Blue Lake looking towards Blue Goat Mountain, a helicopter bucket drop near hot shot crews on the east wall of the Sinlahekin Valley near Blue Lake, the Carson Hot Shot crew performing a burn-out operation east of Blue Lake, a retardant drop near other air resources near Blue Lake, various helicopter support (five total at one-time) dipping out of Blue Lake, and the La Grande Hot Shot crew looking on at the burn-out operation and a failed bucket drop east of Blue Lake – Photos by Justin Haug



Merlin above Forde Lake amidst the smoke of the Okanogan Complex Fire – Photo by Justin Haug

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

LT Murray Wildlife Area: A concerned citizen noticed an exotic snake on the shoulder of the Yakima River Canyon Road, and brought it to the office. The snake is thought to be a Burmese python, likely an abandoned pet. Assistant Manager Hunt was able to reach staff from CWU's herpetology department who said the university would take the snake, but not until Monday. Manager Winegeart provided a foster home over the weekend.



Abandoned python brought to the office

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Buser installed a beaver deceiver for the Stick Wetland on the Bailie Memorial Youth Ranch Unit.



Newly installed beaver deceiver at the Stick Wetland

Wildlife Management

Duck Trap: District Biologist Fidorra completed the installation of a new duck trap on the Sunnyside-Snake River Wildlife Area.

Private Lands Biologist Stutzman and Technician Kaelber were successful in trapping and banding at this new location during the week. Trapping and baiting will continue to early September.

Bat Detectors: District Biologist Fidorra retrieved bat detectors at two sites in Grant County and installed a bat detector near Ritzville for the final survey of 2015.

Pheasant Release Program: District Biologist Fidorra reviewed and edited Pheasant Release Program documents and release site information for releases this fall.

Rattlesnake Hills Master Hunter Elk Hunt: District Biologist Fidorra coordinated with the Hunt Coordinator and Master Hunters regarding hunting opportunities associated with the Rattlesnake Hills Master Hunter Elk Hunt.

Dead Crows: District Biologist Fidorra received results from the disease tests conducted on three dead crows collected in Benton County during July and August. All three tested positive for West Nile Virus and negative for avian influenza.

Bull Moose Capture: District Biologist Fidorra assisted Spokane Enforcement officers with the immobilization and live capture of a bull moose for relocation. The moose had been causing ongoing conflict in a residential area.

Private Lands Biologist Stutzman and Access Technician Kaelber trapped ducks at the Windmill Ranch and Baillie Youth Ranch on Thursday. With the help of a volunteer, Stutzman and Kaelber banded 82 mallards, four pintails, and one green wing teal spread across four traps.



Newly built and installed trap full of mallards and a pied-billed Grebe showing off its enormous feet

Farm Bill Biologist Discussion: Stutzman and Regional Program Manager McCorquodale met with new Farm Bill Biologist Kuttel in Yakima to discuss current projects, policy updates, and regional priorities.

SAFE Program Details: Stutzman followed up with two other landowners who were looking for further details about the SAFE program. One is shopping around for seed, as he plans to enroll ~640 acres near Eltopia this fall. The other is located in the Horse Heaven Hills near Benton City and is considering 260 acres.



Deer Study: Biologist Bernatowicz hiked into a radio collared deer mortality location on Cleman Mountain. The deer was obviously killed by a cougar. This was the third deer killed in the same canyon since June, probably by the same cat.

Carcass of radio-collared deer killed by a cougar

Western Gray Squirrel: Biologist Bernatowicz checked tubes on the last two transects west of Yakima for the year. No western gray squirrel hair was found this year on any transect in the region. Cameras were set on a few tubes. There were plenty of pictures of various animals, but minimal interest shown in the walnuts by small mammals.

A black bear investigating the sampling tube



Waterfowl Banding: Biologist Bernatowicz worked with Sunnyside, Wash. staff, Waterfowl Specialist Wilson, and Washington Waterfowl Association (WWA) volunteers to band ducks and test for Avian Influenza at the Sunnyside a few days this week. Capture rates were fairly low. Only about 25 new ducks were banded and tested this week.

Western Gray Squirrels: Biologist Moore caught up on data entry for the western gray squirrel project. Photos still need to be sent to Olympia.

Colockum Antlerless Body Condition Sampling: Biologist Moore began making all necessary arrangements to collect samples from successful hunters during the muzzleloader and modern firearm antlerless permit seasons.

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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: Colockum staff used the boat to check beaches along the Wanapum Reservoir and pick up garbage left by recreationists. All beaches were checked from Colockum Creek to Quilomene Bay.

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

Wildlife Areas

Wenas Wildlife Area: Natural Resource Worker Barbosa delivered 160 cases of donated water to the Tonasket Distribution Center to help fire fighters on the Okanogan Complex fires. He collected donations on his own time from previous employers around the valley. The businesses were so generous it became too much for him to handle on his own, so he contacted CFD for help with delivering the water, which they were happy to do. The Tonasket staff was very happy to see the water and said that it would be all gone within a day. On Saturday, Natural Resource

Worker Barbosa made a second trip, this time on his own, and delivered an additional 85 cases to the collection center in Okanogan. Way to go Joe!



Pick-up and delivery to Tonasket Distribution Center



Natural Resource Worker Barbosa's personal delivery to Okanogan Distribution Center

Colockum Wildlife Area, Colockum

Police Blotter: Chelan County Sheriff's deputies arrested a kidnapping suspect in the Colockum this weekend. The 46-year-old man allegedly kidnapped a 17-year-old boy from Bellingham and drove him over Highway 2, through Wenatchee, and several miles into the Colockum Wildlife Area. The victim was able to escape from the car near Colockum Pass and make a call for help with his cell phone. When the suspect attempted to chase him with the vehicle it got high centered and stuck. Deputies found and arrested the suspect and reported he was "really, really tired when we found him hiking through the woods up there."



Wildlife Management

Pronghorn Antelope Damage Complaint: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received a damage complaint from a wine grape operation near Mabton from pronghorn antelope. Several nonlethal hazing strategies and fencing options were discussed to dissuade the animals from their crop.

Elk Damage: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand monitored elk damage at two different apple orchards near Prosser. Continued hazing efforts have benefitted in only minor new damage being observed.

Cougar Sighting: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received a report of a cougar sighting and tracks near the irrigated lands on the southern slope of Rattlesnake Mountain. No depredations were reported and advice was given on livestock and pet protections.

DPCA Agreements: Conflict Specialist Wetzel renewed several DPCAs and issued more landowner permits to several hay growers in Kittitas County this week.

Deer Hazing: Two master hunters hazed deer from a Thorp commercial vegetable garden. SeaDust and motion sensors have also been applied at this location. One antlerless deer was harvested at the site. Legal bucks outnumber does at the location and two master hunters with archery tags have arranged to hunt there during the normal archery season. Hazing and potential removal of another antlerless deer will continue.

Taneum Fence Creek: Conflict Specialist Wetzel performed maintenance on the temporary fence across Taneum Creek. The fence will be removed next week since the cattle will be leaving the area.

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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: Colockum staff spent a day removing fence wire from private property left by the CAMP fence contractors. Manager Lopushinsky talked with CAMP engineers to resolve the issues needing attention with the new boundary fence, including 10 miles of old wire and posts left on the ground, sections of new fence with new wire missing, missing galvanized metal fittings and caps, and numerous partial rolls of new wire left along the fence line.

LT Murray Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Hunt worked with concerned neighboring landowner Frank Ragland (Taneum) and Jeff Graham of US Bureau of Reclamation (USBOR) to make contractors mowing on the Heart K (USBOR ownership) aware of the fire danger in the dry meadows. As a result, they pulled off the job shortly after. Hunt also fielded several calls regarding hunting access, target shooting, and potential hunting season closures.

Hay Delivery: Assistant Manager Hunt and Technician Leuck coordinated with Harold Buehl Trucking to take a delivery of hay from Addy, WA this week. We should have six loads in after Saturday, and will finish with two more on Tuesday. Hunt arranged to have what was in by Friday covered with tarps by Tarp-it in order to protect it as much as we can with rain forecast thru the weekend. While out at Joe Watt on Friday, Hunt talked with several horseback, quad, and other enthusiasts using the Wildlife Area. We're not seeing as much camping as usual, but still a fair amount of regular day use during a bad fire danger season.

Tarp-It staff covering the newly arrived hay at the Watt stack yard



Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman spent a large part of the week addressing issues with trespass horses on the Cowiche Unit. This has been a reoccurring problem for over two years, and currently there are six horses, including a young foal. Huffman coordinated with WDFW Enforcement and the Yakima County Sheriff's Office on contacting the owner of the horses. On Thursday, a Yakima County Sheriff's Office deputy cited the owner for livestock at large and animal neglect and gave him until August 31 before his animals would be impounded. During the week, Assistant Manager Berry began fixing up the old corral at the Cowiche hay barn to hold the horses, including setting up t-posts and hog panels and repairing the corral gate. Huffman coordinated with Wenas Assistant Manager Taylor to assist in catching and hauling the horses to the Toppenish Sale Yards. If the horses are still out then, wildlife area staff will attempt to catch

them and coordinate with the Yakima County Sheriff's Office and a WDA Brand Inspector to impound them.

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Waterfowl Banding/Avian Influenza Sampling: Biologist DeBruyn and private lands staff continued trapping, banding, and sampling waterfowl for a high-path avian influenza surveillance program being done in association with the USDA. Sampling and banding goals for August were met and exceeded. On one exceptional day, all traps in Whatcom County caught ducks. Diversity increased the last week, with four species of ducks sampled.



Northern pintail being released after banding



Green-winged teal and mallard in trap

Judson Lake Restoration and lead Abatement Project: Biologists DeBruyn and Smith installed a depth gauge at Judson Lake as part of a project to mitigate the effects of old lead shot in the lake. Low lake levels have facilitated working in the lake bed. DeBruyn is pursuing a Hydraulics Project Approval for further work in the lake.

Installing a Depth Gauge at Judson Lake



Bald Eagle, Heron Colony, Osprey nest and other Species of Concern and Protected Wildlife Management: Biologist Anderson provided state consultation for endangered, threatened, sensitive, and protected species, including various Priority or Species of Concern needs – most often nest take authorization and/or habitat consideration recommendations. Most inquiries revolved around bald eagle management or osprey nest removal management and permit requests.

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

WDFW-Woodland Park Zoo Citizen Amphibian Monitoring Season Close Event: Biologist Anderson and staff from Woodland Park Zoo hosted the annual year end close out event for amphibian monitoring volunteers. Hard copy data was turned over to WDFW as backup for electronic data entered by volunteers. The group took a tour of the federally listed Oregon spotted frog breeding facility. Dr. Jennifer Pramuk, amphibian and reptile curator, Jenny Mears, Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, and Biologist Anderson all provided season-end presentations involving amphibian conservation and current management needs, participation in the effort and field notes, as well as a preliminary data summary and why binary occurrence data and related trend examination is useful to WDFW at the landscape level.

Once again, a successful season came to an end. Seventeen sites were covered. At least (not all data is entered) 148 field observations were made, 24 of which included null data (no amphibians recorded) of six species. This effort starts up again in January 2016.



Federally Threatened and State Endangered Oregon Spotted Frogs and breeding facility

State Listed Common Loon: Biologists Anderson and Smith conducted a joint survey effort of the Cedar River Watershed for any loon occupancy or juveniles. Two adults were seen at the Rex River end of Chester Morse Lake. No other adults or young were observed. Local staff relayed, anecdotally, that not much activity had been noted while out and about in other activities. The two adults were associating with each other. Behavior indicated a likely pairing that appeared defensive to that area in response to raptors and human presence. Increased

monitoring in that watershed is needed to provide for confidence in annual resident use and outcome. More on loon management efforts in WA can be found at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/loons/>



The masonry pool within the Cedar Watershed. This is normally a site that has territorial loons annually and tends to be the more successful territory in the watershed.

Marine Waterfowl Molting Surveys: District 13 staff completed surveying summer molting scoter transects in northern Puget Sound. Surveys of potential habitat throughout the Sound, Strait of Georgia, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and the outer coast are being conducted to identify molting areas for the three scoter species in Washington. High density areas will be revisited to obtain more precise information on species/sex distribution and potential prey species, and for locating potential sites for use in molting captures and banding in the coming years.



Flock of molting scoters near Oak Harbor



Double-crested cormorant nests on Minor Island. Cormorants have begun nesting in this area with the demise of the only ground nest of bald eagles in Washington.

Species of Greatest Conservation Needs: Biologist Milner surveyed Decatur Island for potential habitat for several species including western toads, sharp-tailed snakes, and Shaw Island voles. Decatur Island is privately owned and Milner was graciously hosted by a local resident who provided transportation around the island. Decatur Northwest granted access to

their 600 acres and allowed vehicle access to their roads. Road access within the development is generally restricted to golf carts. Officers Downes and Rosenberger provided transportation in yet another great cross-program assistance day. The island may have suitable habitat for sharp-tailed snakes and western toads, but does not support the vole.

Wildlife Areas

Rainbow Pond and Intalco Ponds Water Control Replacement: The contracts for the replacement of both of the failing water controls at the Intalco pond and Rainbow pond have been issued. Manager Kessler coordinated with the Ducks Unlimited project manager and the construction contractor on logistics for the project. The project will begin in two weeks.

Rainbow Pond failed water control which will be replaced this month

Leque Island Alternatives Analysis and Design Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw set up a meeting that will occur in September with the consultant completing the modeling for the project, the City of Stanwood, Stillaguamish Flood Control District, and adjacent landowners to discuss and identify specific areas of interest to more closely examine in the next round of modeling of the preferred design alternative. Ducks Unlimited has hired a consultant to design the tidal channels that will drain the restoration area. Once that work is complete, the hydrodynamic model company will begin the next round of modeling.



Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that 60 acres of wheat and 130 acres of organic green beans were harvested this past week. The bean fields will be planted with winter wheat for wildlife forage and the leftover chaff will be retained for wildlife cover. Manager Boehm also reported cows feeding on the west lobe fields. Manager Boehm reported the incident to WDFW Enforcement and Snohomish County Sheriff and Animal Control. After ownership was confirmed, Manager Boehm asked the owner to remove the animals promptly. The cows were removed the following day.

Stillwater Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm completed seasonal mowing at the unit this past week. While mowing an area not frequented by users, Manager Boehm observed a large bull elk, a black tail doe and fawn, and a coyote and pup foraging for food among the newly mowed vegetation.



Bull elk on the Stillwater Unit of the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area



Repairs to the dike breach on the Cherry Valley Unit of the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area began this week

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

Wildlife Areas

Skagit Headquarters: Technician Cosgrove assisted volunteers from the Washington Waterfowl Association who built and installed a wildlife viewing blind at the Headquarters Unit. Cosgrove graded and removed dirt from the blind location. Additional work such as access ramps and vegetation work will be completed in the next few weeks.

Skagit HQ Wiley Slough wildlife viewing blind was installed by Washington Waterfowl Association volunteers. This project funding was provided by ALEA program.



Island Unit: Cosgrove disked low areas in Lorenzen and Seattle Pond fields on the Island Unit. Areas were previously farmed but are now dominated by reed canary grass and cattail. Cosgrove and Meis placed a new footbridge near a popular hunting blind on the Island Unit. The footbridge will improve hunter and administrative access.

Western Washington Pheasant Release: Cosgrove and Meis purchased pheasant feed from two local vendors for the early pheasants housed at the Headquarters Unit. Meis continued to feed and monitor conditions of the birds. Manager Boehm scheduled and picked up feed for the

Snoqualmie, Wash. pheasant late last week. Meis and Cosgrove placed boards in the pheasant catching house to prevent birds from escaping into the pens. Manager Kessler monitored the 315 pheasants in the pens at Lake Terrell. He fed and watered the birds and made sure there were no problems in the pens. A few fatalities were found in the pens.



Natural Resource Specialist Greg Meis and Restoration Projects Coordinator Loren Brokaw observe contractor preparing footing for a new water control structure installation on the Samish Wetland Enhancement Project



Newly installed water control structure for the Samish Unit Wetland Enhancement Project

Samish River Unit Wetland Restoration Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Skagit Wildlife Area Managers Rotton and Meis held a pre-construction meeting with the WDFW Lacey Shop construction crew, staff from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Skagit County to review construction details prior to commencing with work on the project. Following the meeting, the construction crew began setting up erosion control materials, NRCS installed stakes, and flagging to coincide with the plans and guide the construction crew. A subcontractor mowed the site in preparation for excavation. A budget amendment in the contract was fully executed between WDFW and NRCS that increases the construction amount to match the bid on the project.

Samish Unit Enhancement Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Skagit Wildlife Area Managers Rotton and Meis toured the project area to review construction progress. Several of the ditches have been cleaned and water control structures installed. The engineer from Ducks Unlimited is overseeing the contractor to ensure all construction is consistent with the plan set.

Updating Wildlife Area Unit Reader Boards: Manager Kessler created new and updated aerial maps for the reader boards on the wildlife area units. He installed the new maps and new hunting season information on all the reader boards on all huntable units of the wildlife area.



Updated Whatcom Wildlife Area maps and hunting season information on the British Petroleum and Tennant Lake units reader boards

Wind Storm Damage Cleanup: Manager Kessler monitored the damage from the weekend storm with high winds that knocked out power for much of Whatcom County. He cleared downed branches from the entrance road in to the Lake Terrell Unit, and checked the parking areas at Tennant Lake, the Nooksack and Intalco units. Power at the Wildlife Area headquarters was out for most of Saturday and Sunday.

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with a private landowner to prepare the Middle Parking Lot for the coming season. Per our lease agreement, hunters will be able to use the private land for parking and access to the East Lobe of the unit.

Private Lands/Access Management

418 Elk Hunt: Natural Resource Technician Otto and Private Lands Biologist Wingard installed hunt unit signage on private timber lands within the 418 Unit. While in the unit they observed recent elk activity and removed a downed tree blocking a road.

While touring GMU 418 Private Land Access staff came across this fresh elk antler rub





Newly installed parking lot sign at the first ever Hunt by Reservation elk location in GMU 407



Wood chip staging for Waterfowl Quality Hunt sites in Region 4

Staging Material: Natural Resource Technician Deyo and Private Lands Biologist Wingard delivered 40 bales of straw and blind materials to La Conner and Lake Terrell in preparation for the upcoming waterfowl season.

Private Land Access Enrollment Coordination: Supervisory Biologist Caldwell met with three landowners to discuss their potential enrollment in the Waterfowl Quality Hunt, Watchable Wildlife, and/or Migratory Bird Habitat Enhancement programs. Several of these landowners expressed interest in expanding their current enrollment in 2015-2016. Biologist Caldwell will follow up with these landowners next week to finalize negotiations and go over land ownership information.

Water Access Program



John Evans and Derek Hacker opened up a channel from our boat launch on Langlois Lake in King County

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

Wildlife Management

Urban Wildlife: Biologist Smith met with a landowner to assess suspected heron nests at the location, in response to a request to remove trees on the property. A number of nests are located on the property and may have been used by herons in recent years based on landowner comments. A single sub-adult Great Blue Heron was roosting in a tree on the property at the time of the visit. The landowner will be in contact with agency habitat program staff for further information/direction.

Public Safety and Research Coordination: District Biologist Yarborough, Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell, Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman, and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal attempted to deploy a Department of Transportation collar on an elk herd that has been crossing State Route 20 on a frequent basis. The nighttime operation was unsuccessful and will be attempted again in the near future.

Wildlife Conflict Management

Wildlife Conflict Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal responded to the Birdview area of Skagit County where a bull elk had managed to get inside an elk exclusionary fence. After responding to the area, it was discovered that a section of the fence was damaged and the elk was located. The elk was herded from the field and was able to jump the seven foot high fence on his way out. Biologist Smith responded to calls regarding elk and deer damage. Damage occurred to a variety of crops, gardens, and infrastructure (fences). Non-lethal measures to deter elk from entering properties were discussed. Smith also monitored and maintained three electrified fladry fences in an effort to exclude elk from damaging south King County crops. Smith continued to coordinate South Sound Master Hunter elk permit holders with landowners experiencing elk related crop damage in District 12.

Witman and Cogdal worked on completing the post installation on an elk exclusionary fence being constructed in the Day Creek area of Skagit County



Monitoring Efforts: Natural Resource Technician Cogdal monitored crop damage in the Skagit Valley and Acme areas. Cogdal took calls from landowners with damage issues, discussed fencing options, and consulted with 4941 tag holders about hunting access.

Bull elk tangled in a cyclone fence

GMU 418 Special Elk Permit Hunt

Management: Natural Resource Technician Otto made contact with two of the four permit holders that did not attend the hunt meeting. Arrangements were made for access agreement signing and key pick-up.



Hunting Season Preparation: Natural Resource Technician Otto, Natural Resource Technician Deyo, Private Lands Biologist Wingard, and Supervisory Biologist Caldwell met with multiple landowners to have them sign A-19s and hunting access contracts for the 2015/16 season. Biologist Wingard began edited and updated details for hunting sites on the GoHunt website.

Wildlife Areas

Skagit Headquarters: Manager Rotton coordinated with permitting agencies and a local contractor to complete the Skagit Headquarters boat launch clean out. Cosgrove and Meis assisted with silt retention set-ups and excavator access for the dredging of the boat launch at the Headquarters Unit. Manager Rotton monitored the dredging process and adjusted sediment retention curtain and fencing as needed. Cosgrove used the John Deere 5300 and box scraper to clean up the area after dredging. Work was completed on Thursday and Friday during the low tide series.

Meis and Cosgrove grinded, primed, and painted the two new supports on the barge that is used for moving equipment to and from the Island Unit. Natural Resource Scientist Meis also repaired the boat moorage dock. Meis mowed the back field and performed vegetation control near the entrance road to the back field area at HQ. Cosgrove graded the entrance roads at the Headquarters Unit. Cosgrove posted two "Hunt Area" signs at the Headquarters Unit to begin reminding area users of upcoming hunting seasons.



Skagit boat launch maintenance project completed before the rains began this weekend

Samish Unit: Manager Rotton continued coordinating with an Eagle Scout for his community project on the installation of a waterfowl hunting blind to be installed this week.

DeBay’s Slough Unit: Manager

Rotton contacted a lessee to discuss the harvest plan for the corn on the Reserve and to discuss the WDFW share of the crop.

Public Access: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm spruced up two of the three Ebey Island Unit parking areas in preparation for the hunting season. Weeds were cut, garbage picked up, and informational signage installed.

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

Records Management Training: Staff attended Records Management training at the Mill Creek office.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Western Pond Turtles: Biologist Doorly collected two adult turtles from the Oregon Zoo this week and released them back into their home ponds at the Balch and Sondino sites. The turtles



had been trapped in July and sent to the Oregon Zoo to possibly undergo treatment for Ulcerative Shell Disease. Dr. Storms, veterinarian at the Oregon Zoo, determined that two of the turtles were not suffering from USD to an extent that called for treatment. Both turtles, when released, swam steadily into their respective ponds to hide under aquatic vegetation.

Western Pond Turtle

Invasive Species Removal: Biologist Bergh constructed and set-up a fyke net (one four hoop net sewed to two pieces of seine net) to catch invasive bullfrogs at a property adjacent to the Sondino Unit of the Klickitat Wildlife Area. The use of this net will hopefully help to eliminate a source population of bullfrogs, furthering our eradication efforts on the Wildlife Area in order to protect state endangered Western pond turtles. After one day of deployment, five juvenile bullfrogs and 112 tadpoles were caught.



Fyke net set-up

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Grazing Permit Monitoring: Manager Van Leuven visited the Fisher Hill Unit of the Klickitat Wildlife Area to check on grazing activity. Vegetation is very dry and leaves are dropping from many shrubs and forbs. While some presence of cattle was noted, effects of grazing are minimal. A new, large nest was observed in a live pine tree. This may be a new bald eagle nest, which would replace the original one that was in a tree that died.

Western Gray Squirrel Population Distribution Study: Technician Davis and Manager Van Leuven checked Site 38 for evidence of western gray squirrels this week. None of the traps had captured any hair and bait was still inside all the traps. All the traps were collected and brought to the Klickitat Wildlife Area Headquarters.

Soda Springs Unit Ponds: Technician Davis inspected 10 ponds on the Soda Springs unit. Four ponds were dry and the six others were very low for this time of year.

Fish Program Assistance: Technician Davis assisted staff from the Goldendale Trout Hatchery in transporting small fish to a remote, high country lake.

Transporting small fish to a remote, high country lake



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



Access

Massey Bar: Natural Resource Worker Rhodes came upon an illegal campfire left unattended. He was able to use the water supply on the truck to smother the flames before a possible disaster occurred. No leads on who started the campfire.

Illegal campfire left unattended

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Snowy Plover

Midway Beach: Biologist Sundstrom spent two days at Midway this week searching for the last two known broods. Only one chick from the older of the two broods was located, while extensive searching for the youngest brood turned up nothing. One final search will be conducted next week for this brood.

Sundstrom followed up on two reports of a snowy plover observed at Oyhut Spit but none were found. Sundstrom took the opportunity to conduct a post-fledging dispersal coastal driving survey while in the area. Sundstrom surveyed from Moclips to Ocean Shores, and although no snowy plovers were observed, Sundstrom did collect data on murre carcasses along the way. Anecdotally it appeared that few new carcasses were washing ashore based on the last 24-hour high tide lines.

Leadbetter: Technician Raby conducted brood checks and searching, as well as a re-sighting of banded individuals at Leadbetter this week. There are currently no active nests, no new nests were discovered, and no nests were determined to have failed this week. There are currently one to three broods still being attended by adults on the outer beach. The total number of juveniles from Oregon and Leadbetter populations is undetermined at this time, as fully-fledged juveniles and females can appear very similar at this time of year. Raby also assisted WDFW Biologist Sundstrom and Refuge Biologist Ritchie with data analysis this week to start assigning broods to nests, determining the number of undiscovered nests, and determining the fate of known nests.

Bald Eagle Work Time: Biologist Ament spent some time reviewing comments for Program Manager Calkins in response to a request for estimated hours spent on bald eagle related activities. Olympia staff is apparently working with USFWS staff to review and address work

load issues pertaining to bald eagles. Although the USFWS took over eagle management in 2011, regional staff continues to have a component of eagle related work.



Bat Acoustic Study: Biologist McMillan set up and took down the bat detector at the following study sites:

Cell 513 – Hoko site – Set up detector on August 26 in clear cut adjacent to previous placement of recorder.

Cell 4177 - The Deep Creek site – picked up detector on August 26 and mailed data as well as copied records to S: drive.

Bat detector placement

Assistance to DOT (Trail Cameras): Biologist Ament was requested to assist the Department of Transportation (DOT) with three trail cameras that have been set-up along a creek that flows under Highway 101 near Sequim. DOT will be replacing the concrete culvert on the creek to improve fish passage and is interested to

know what wildlife may use the corridor along the creek. Unfortunately, one of the cameras did not work properly during the past several weeks of monitoring. Wildlife observed during the last monitoring session include a lot of raccoon activity, black tailed deer, coyotes, a bat, several pairs of young hikers, and a few DOT workers.



Black-tailed doe and young buck



Raccoon coming out of DOT structure



Coyotes have been observed both during the day and at night



Raccoon entering structure with a bat flying above (center, upper 1/3)

Fisher Project Hex 563: Biologist Ament spent some time last week reviewing the completed forms for set-up and check visits to all stations in Hex 563. The equipment was pulled from this hex on August 13, 2015 and has been prepared to be returned to ONP staff. Computer files have been established for all

photos taken during each two week monitoring period.

Molting Scoter Survey Project: Biologist Murphie conducted surveys for molting scoters in areas near Port Townsend, Hood Canal, and south Puget Sound. He reports encountering only a few small groups of molting surf scoters.

Biologist Ament participated in a scoter survey on August 26 with Biologists Evenson and Michaelis. They had started the survey effort on August 21 in Ilwaco and covered the entire Washington coast and Strait of Juan de Fuca before arriving in Port Angeles. She joined them on the last leg of their survey that covered the shoreline area from Port Angeles to Port Townsend. The survey team had ideal weather conditions for the survey. During the survey the team counted all scoters, marbled murrelets, and harlequin ducks that were observed. No puffins were seen during the survey. The larger groups of scoters were seen east of Port Angeles and just west of Sequim Bay. Small groups of molting harlequin ducks were seen along several shoreline areas. Other wildlife seen included harbor porpoises, harbor seals, sea lions, river otters, and various species of sea and shore birds. One unusual site had three young bald eagles feeding on the carcass of a dead deer that had apparently taken a fall off the high bluff on the west end of Protection Island.



Harbor seals at Protection Island



Small group of molting Harlequin ducks



Juvenile eagle feeding on dead deer



Captain Evenson capturing photos

Wildlife Areas

Elk and Waterfowl Enhancements: Olympic Wildlife Area staff has completed mowing 350 acres of elk winter forage on the Olympic and Wynoochee Mitigation lands. The crew also completed 50 acres of cultivation and seeding in unit 4A of the Wynoochee mitigation fields. Both of these sites are managed intensively to provide enhanced forage for elk. They have also started waterfowl enhancement at John's River Wildlife area and will soon be moving to Chehalis and Chinook Wildlife areas. Mowing in the waterfowl areas will provide sheet water this winter for dabbling ducks.



Mowing Unit 1



Spreading lime in Unit 4A



Completed seeding unit 4A

Duckabush Unit PSNERP Legislative Site Visit: Manager Belson represented the Wildlife Program at an agency PSNERP site visit to the Duckabush Unit of the South Puget Sound Wildlife Area. The tour included staff from Washington's congressional delegation and representatives from local conservation and government organizations. The purpose was to discuss restoration options for the delta and issues involved.

While at the wildlife area, Manager Belson discovered evidence of recent bigleaf maple burl poaching that caused the destruction of at least three large trees. Photographs and pertinent information were promptly submitted to WDFW Enforcement. Lastly, he removed the Twin

Eagles RV Park entrance sign along US 101, an odd vestige of the former private holding that is now the Duckabush Unit parking area.



Private Lands /Conflict

Fawn Rescue: Conflict Specialist Blankenship was notified about a deer fawn stuck in a fence at a residence in Olympia. Blankenship arrived at the homeowner's property and found the fawn stuck in the fence, alive with very little injury. Blankenship was able to cut the fawn loose from the fence and ensure the fawn was reunited with its mother.

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

Private Lands /Conflict

Access Agreements: Sundstrom made contact with a land owner for a prospective private lands/public hunting opportunity location. Further talks have been tentatively scheduled. Biologist Harris worked on pheasant and waterfowl agreements with landowners in Mason and Jefferson counties.

Access Areas

Wooten Lake Ramp Repair: The Region 6 Access Team repaired the ramp at Wooten Lake. Six broken planks were removed and replaced.

Step one: A cutting torch is used to cut off bolt heads isolating the damaged planks for removal





After the damaged planks have been removed and the base has been leveled, the tractor lowers the replacement planks into place



Completed ramp repair accompanied by improved edge protection

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

Wildlife Areas

Scatter Creek Illegal Dumping: A series of recent illegal dumping events at a Scatter Creek Wildlife Area parking area included two used toilets and an empty box from a new toilet. When Manager Belson began removing the items, fortunately the first thing he picked up was the box, which still sported a Lowe's Special Order Service sticker showing the customer's name and purchase order number (oops!). He left the items in place and contacted Officer Wendt, who was already aware of ongoing problems at the site. When on the following day Enforcement paid a visit to the homeowner identified by the Lowe's tag, the contractor doing the house renovation work happened to also be there. The contractor was ticketed and then came out to the wildlife area to remove his garbage. Our thanks to officer Wendt for his assistance with addressing this issue!



Private Lands /Conflict

Long Beach Town Hall Meeting: Region 6 Enforcement and Wildlife Program Staff led a town hall meeting in Long Beach focused on issues related to conflicts with bears. Twenty citizens

attended, including two representatives from Peninsula Sanitation and a city councilman. Captain Chadwick provided an introduction which was followed by presentations by Private Lands/Conflict Specialist Harris and Officer Jacobson. Both did an outstanding job, with Harris covering bear biology and diet with a comparison to human “provided” food sources, and Jacobson addressing the history of conflicts on the peninsula, state rules and laws, and how WDFW responds to conflicts. The Peninsula Sanitation staff also discussed potential improvements they may soon offer to address bear conflicts and Officer Jacobson demonstrated how to secure garbage in cans currently in use in the area.



Officer Jacobson and Biologist Harris discussing bear conflict issues with Long Beach residents

Skokomish Valley Landowner Meeting: Conflict Specialist Blankenship arranged a meeting with several landowners in the Skokomish Valley where elk damage issues have escalated in recent years. Program Manager Calkins, Private Lands/Wildlife Conflict Biologist Harris, and Officer Jewett also attended. Eight landowners attended and asked a variety of questions. The topics of elk damage, damage claims, and the permit process were all described to the landowners. The meeting went well and the landowners were able to have all of their questions and concerns addressed by WDFW staff. In the days following, Blankenship met with each landowner, assessed damage from elk on their property and negotiated damage agreements with them.

Elk Damage in Graham: Conflict Specialist Blankenship met with a landowner in Graham that has been sustaining elk damage to his hay crop and garden. Blankenship was able to show the landowner different techniques on preventing elk from getting into the garden and working with the department in the future regarding his hay crop and pasture.