

Wildlife Program

Week of May 16 – May 22, 2016

WOLF ACTIVITIES

Region 1 Wolf Activities

Northeast Washington Commissioner/Legislator Conference Call: Supervisor McCanna and Wildlife Conflict Specialists Shepherd and Bennett provided updates to county commissioners from Stevens and Pend Oreille counties regarding gray wolves in Washington. Information was provided on the Lethal Removal Protocol and producer meetings, and general questions were answered.

Lethal Protocol Conference Call: Biologist Shepherd participated in an agency staff conference call that discussed the lethal removal protocol recently devised by the Wolf Advisory Group.

Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for Livestock: Biologist Shepherd visited with the owner of a ranch in Stevens County. The owner has signed a Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for Livestock.

Pend Oreille County Wolf Sighting: Biologist Shepherd followed up on a sighting of a wolf walking through cattle in Pend Oreille County.

Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements for Livestock: Biologist Shepherd entered Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for Livestock contracts into the contract system.

Lethal Removal and Compensation Conference Calls: Supervisor McCanna and Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett participated in two separate conference calls about the newly developed WDFW Gray Wolf Lethal Removal Protocol and compensation for two producers due to wolves. Next steps and new drafts for the protocol were set and should be complete by the end of May. Compensation talks will continue.

Wolf Observations: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley received three reports of one black and two grey wolves chasing deer north of Prescott this week. Rasley received another report from one of our range riders of a wolf howling near the mouth of the Tucannon. Also, two wolves were reported four miles south of Starbuck amongst a producer's cattle along the Kellogg drainage.

Producer Wolf Sighting: Supervisor McCanna received a phone call from a producer in Columbia County who saw three black wolves. One of them was collared and was close to his cattle. McCanna passed the information on to the wolf biologists.

Cattlemen's Meeting: Biologist Earl and Natural Resource Technician Wade attended a cattlemen's meeting in Clarkston to discuss wolf items.

Trail Cameras: Natural Resource Technician Wade collected the memory cards from trail cameras in Asotin County. Biologist Earl gathered cameras from the Montgomery Ridge area. Over 10,000 images have been collected, with none of them being wolf-related.

DPCA-L Agreements: Biologist Earl processed invoices for agreements.

Producer Contacts: Biologist Earl continued to make contacts with producers in known wolf areas.

Wolves on Camera: Supervisor McCanna received two videos from an Asotin County producer showing two different wolves. McCanna forwarded videos to WDFW and USDA wolf biologists. Biologist Earl followed up with the producer and wolf biologists.

Clarkston Producer Meeting: Supervisor McCanna worked with Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Holzmilller to prepare for the Clarkston producer meeting. The meeting was held the evening of May 18 in Clarkston with a turnout of 45 producers. This was a good informational meeting for producers with several good questions and follow-up phone calls the next day. Presenters and staff members stayed after the meeting to answer producer questions in person until 10:00 p.m.

Region 2 Wolf Activities

Okanogan Wolf Management: WDFW staff members successfully captured and radio-collared three members of the Loup Loup Pack over the past week including a yearling female, the breeding female, and an old male presumed to be the other half of the breeding pair. The collars will help delineate the pack territory, help us proactively avoid wolf-livestock conflicts, and assist in the eventual determination of breeding pair status for this pack. Much thanks to Trent Roussin and others who assisted with the captures for the amazing accomplishment of collaring



three wolves in three days!

***Loup Loup pack
yearling female wolf –
Photo by Trent Roussin***

Wolf Reports: Biologist Fitkin received three more reports of a pair of wolves in the Upper Methow Valley and

deployed another remote camera in response. He also opportunistically tried for a howling response while in the same area following up on a spotted owl report. No wolf response or photos have been obtained to date, but monitoring will continue. Specialist Heilhecker went in the field with Wolf Biologist Roussin. She made several phone calls to permittees regarding the trapping, capturing, and collaring of wolves. Specialist Heilhecker placed a materials order for fencing off a calving area within a known wolf territory.

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Habitat Project: Biologist Lewis and Natural Resource Worker 2 Weitze worked at a habitat project in the Ewan area. The project is a habitat restoration site that is also in the Register to Hunt access program. There are some areas that have been invaded by invasive broadleaf weeds (primarily China lettuce). Lewis and Weitze identified the areas with the infestation of weeds and mowed the areas to prep for weed control. Lewis also trained Weitze to use the tractor and mower. Much of the site is looking very good and the habitat is establishing and functioning.

Habitat project site with dark weedy areas in the background

Injured Osprey: Biologist Lewis rescued an injured osprey in the Badger/Williams Lake area. The injured bird was reported to Lewis. Natural Resource Worker 2 Weitze delivered the bird to the WSU Veterinary Hospital.

Injured osprey in the Badger/Williams Lake area

Pheasants Forever: Biologist Thorne Hadley worked with a Pheasant Forever volunteer in preparing individual seed bags consisting of red clover and black oil sunflower seeds for a habitat project at the WDFW Stovall Access site on Saturday.

Biologist Thorne Hadley will work with volunteers to broadcast seed on open bare spots within the stand of basin wild rye and add a broadleaf component to the existing grass stand.

Sherman Creek Wildlife Area Rx Burning Prep: Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Palmer worked with the prescribed burn team to install over a mile of hose in preparation for prescribed burning of the Rail Unit at the Sherman Creek Wildlife Area. The hose was laid along fire lines and roads at the burn unit boundary to provide readily available water for containment of the



controlled burn. A dozer will also be onsite the first of next week to freshen up unit boundaries by exposing bare soil. Unfortunately, forecasted precipitation looks like it will prevent implementing any controlled burning next week.

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

W.T. Wooten Wildlife Area – School Fire Photo Points: Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Dingman was able to visit half of the photo points this week. Hopefully the weather will cooperate and the other half will be visited next week.



*School fire photo point above
Camp Wooten May 24, 2006*



*School fire photo point above
Camp Wooten May 20, 2016*

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

Moose Struck by Vehicle: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley received a call from Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding an injured moose along Highway 125 eighteen miles north of Walla Walla. After meeting the DOT, it was clear the injuries were too severe and the moose had to be euthanized. DOT staff members assisted Rasley with field dressing the moose and loading it. Rasley transported the moose to the Tri-Cities after Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand was able to round up the salvage team from the Richland Rod & Gun Club. The team was able to quarter and bone out the moose and all the meat was taken to the local mission.



Injured moose



Salvage team quartering the yearling moose

Washington State Envirothon: Lewis completed prepping the Washington State level wildlife Envirothon test and collected all the props to be used for the test questions. Lewis also participated with the State Envirothon testing held at Field Springs State Park in Asotin County by conducting the wildlife testing station.

State Envirothon students preparing to take the wildlife station test



Depredation Investigations: Supervisor McCanna’s staff members responded and completed three depredation investigations this week. Final determinations were cougar (District 1), coyote (District 2), and coyote (District 3).

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDIFE

Wildlife Management

Washington Ground Squirrel “Infestation”: Our semi-wild breeding enclosures are not just productive for pygmy rabbits, but also apparently Washington ground squirrels. To deal with this “infestation”, Biologist Gibbs and Technicians Shank and Quayle established baited trap sites within the enclosure. Surprisingly, we captured 23 squirrels from the six acre site, comprised of both male and female adults and many juveniles born this spring. All animals were translocated to the Columbia Wildlife Refuge in Othello, to augment existing populations. The

original plan was to euthanize five squirrels to look for the presence of plague, which was thought to be a possible contributor to low numbers of rabbits in this enclosure. However, after discussions with Veterinarian Haman, we decided not to proceed with this due to the low probability of detecting this pathogen and the presence of substitute samples (fleas and rodent samples collected on site) to sample for plague presence.



Just couldn't resist that yummy carrot...



Technician Shank ear-tagging a juvenile ground squirrel

Translocated Washington ground squirrel in the USFWS Columbia National Wildlife Refuge temporary enclosure – Trailcam photo by USFWS Kelsey Lotz



Monarch Butterflies and Milkweed: Technician Quayle located, mapped, and characterized large milkweed patches needed by monarch butterflies on public land in southern Grant County.

Milkweed patch at Martha Lake – Photo by Kim Quayle



Pygmy Rabbit Breeding Enclosure Weed Infestations: Past husbandry practices (supplemental feed, irrigation) and soil disturbance (artificial burrow placement) have left portions of the two breeding enclosures on Sagebrush flats Wildlife Area severely infested with weeds. A wet spring has pushed the infestations to the point of inhibiting normal

staff activities, likely to the detriment of future occupancy of the enclosure. Staff members will begin manual removal of weeds next week and, in consultation with wildlife area staff members, alter or eliminate husbandry activities contributing to these infestations.



Weed infestations within the pygmy rabbit breeding enclosures

Wildlife Areas

Swakane Canyon: Natural Resource Technician Vallance applied broadleaf herbicide to target annual weeds in riparian plantings completed over the last two years. Native grasses planted between the shrub rows are establishing nicely and should stabilize the site after a couple of growing seasons. Wildlife Area Manager Fox looked over Swakane Canyon agricultural fields that were seeded to native grasses, forbs, and bitterbrush in 2012. Overall the fields are coming along nicely, but cereal rye and Dalmatian toadflax will still need control work. Natural Resource Technicians Vallance and Zabreznik started mowing Swakane fields to prevent seed production by cereal rye. Rye has diminished greatly in the last two years with repeated



herbicide applications and mowing. It will probably take four full days to complete mowing this year.

Swakane Canyon agricultural field seed in fall 2012 – Photo by R. Fox

Chelan Butte: Natural Resource Technician Zabreznik continued maintaining fallow conditions on 200 acres of old agriculture fields slated for seeding this fall. The fields were sprayed by helicopter in March to get ahead of the early emerging annual weeds, especially cereal rye and cheatgrass. A little over 100 acres were disked and things were going along smoothly until several bearings on the disk broke. Hopefully the repairs can be made early next week. Aerial application of broadleaf herbicide completed a couple of weeks ago on 250 acres of fields seeded last fall has been effective in showing good control of weeds that compete with emerging native grass.



Grass seeded in Field N on Chelan Butte – Photo by R. Fox

Columbia Basin Weed Management: Assistant Manager Bechtold sprayed a total of eight acres of perennial pepperweed at Wheatgrass Flats of the Banks Lake Unit. Assistant Manager Eidson and Technician Eddy spent time this week treating yellow flag iris infestations from a boat on the Winchester Wasteway. Diligent control efforts over the last ten years have kept this noxious weed from taking over, but with an expansive seed bank, yearly treatments are necessary to ensure it stays in check. It is also a good opportunity for staff members to get a firsthand look at a portion of the wildlife area that is not easily accessible any other way. Included in this effort was a brief exercise in futility in that they tried to drag the boat through 100 yards of shallow water before realizing it was impassable and had to drag it back. To be fair, there was yellow flag iris at the end of the 100 yard section and yes, they killed it. It may seem that the boat is floating in the picture below, but it definitely is not.



Assistant Manager Eidson going the extra mile (100 yards actually) – Photo by Cameron Eddy

Weed Management: Assistant Manager Cole and Natural Resource Technician 2 Eddy toured the Lind Coulee area of the Seep Lakes Unit to identify Perennial Pepperweed, Russian Knapweed, and Hoary Cress

infestations. Areas were prioritized and Natural Resource Technician 2 Eddy will begin treatment as weather permits. Assistant Manager Eidson spent time this week surveying noxious weeds in the Winchester Lake portion of the wildlife area as well as the Lower Crab Creek area in preparation for the spring aerial. Access Manager Harmon spent time this week making repairs to an ATV spray tank and trailer.

Private Lands/Access

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE): Biologist Comstock met with a landowner to review his site plan and sign an updated plan that included measures to address thistle control in his field prior to seeding. Biologist Comstock met with another landowner whose fields failed to meet grass requirements and need to have the plans rewritten. Biologist Comstock visited a SAFE farm in Douglas County with Supervisor Cotton to conduct pre-treatment site assessments and determine how to write their SAFE plans. We visited another site to check on thistle growth

and discuss options for control. Biologist Comstock visited a SAFE field in Grant County where the operator has had consistent issues with meeting the prescription specifications. These issues persist.

SAFE: Biologist Comstock continues to work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to ensure she is submitting all plan documents and maps to the NRCS standard. She continues to work on completing plans for six operators in Grant County. Biologist Comstock was finally assigned a mentor for her conservation planner certification. Private Lands Biologist Braaten was contacted by a Douglas County SAFE cooperator who had an acre of his SAFE field sprayed and killed by a neighbor. Braaten visited the site and determined that the area sprayed was on the edge of the SAFE field and not actually in it. The farmer has seeded it, but according to SAFE contract GIS maps, the area sprayed was out of the boundary. Private Lands Biologist Braaten told the landowner the grass he had seeded should be fine, as it was lightly burned but not dead.



SAFE field chemical overspray – Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW

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

Wildlife Management

Methow Volunteers: Assistant Manager Troyer met with members from the *Backcountry Horsemen*, *Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance*, and *Methow Cycles* to walk and inspect several sections of damaged trails in Pipestone Canyon. One problem area had a hole roughly six feet deep that had washed out during the spring. Recreationists have already repaired the route, but that stretch of trail is a concern due to it being surrounded by small drainages that will likely continue to cause future erosion issues. The group also hiked a section of trail in the southern portion of Pipestone Canyon. Again, a trail was constructed in the bottom of a drainage and has long stretches of heavy erosion. The three parties previously mentioned want to devise a trail rehabilitation plan and submit it to the MWA. Their goal is to rehab the problem areas with volunteer labor and possibly acquire some grant funded money. Late in the week, Troyer spoke with another potential volunteer group who would like to make repairs to the buck and rail fence at Upper Bobcat campground along the Chewuch River. The group has been camping at Upper

Bobcat for nearly 30 years. Troyer will work on putting together a materials list and coordinating a volunteer work party.



Pipestone Canyon site visit with interested parties – Photo by Brandon Troyer



Slight erosion issue on the Pipestone Trail – Photo by Brandon Troyer

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

Wildlife Management

Sixth Grade Environmental Camp Education: Biologist Heinlen presented the biology, history, and management of bighorn sheep to the Oroville, Omak, and Okanogan sixth grade school environmental camps. A total of 112 students learned there are bighorn sheep in Okanogan County, how they are managed, and tried to determine age from ram horns.

Private Lands/Access

Biocontrol of Dalmation Toadflax: Private Lands Biologist Braaten checked some dalmation toadflax that was being eaten by insects and found the presence of *Gymnetron antirrhini* - a toadflax seed eating weevil.

<http://invasives.wsu.edu/biological/gymnetronantirrhini.ht>



Toadflax seed eating weevil – Photo by Eric Braaten, WDFW



Great-horned owl fledgling back home in the wild – Photo by Shea Gibbs



Ceratopogonidae (biting midge) pupa – Photo by Chattan McPherson



Northern harrier nest



Chesaw prescribed burn being utilized by elk – Photo by Tom Leuschen



The entrance of Big Green Lake – Photo by M. DeHart

REGION 3

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Areas

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Manager Winegeart and Assistant Manager Hunt toured the upcoming Manastash-Robinson timber thin/large wood placement project, along with WDFW Forester Pfeifle and Yakama Nation Biologists Nicolai and Clayton. Several thinning units mapped back in 2007 were examined, in addition to potential new sites nearby. A revamped version of the 2007 project was submitted to RCO in 2014, but only recently received funding. Work will likely not begin until 2017, after the 2016 Taneum/Hutchins projects are completed. Winegeart also worked with RCO Project Manager Kim Sellers and Forester Pfeifle on filling out a required ‘milestones’ document for the updated project.

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: Manager Buser met with the Yakima Valley chapter of the Washington Waterfowlers Association to talk about wetland management strategies and direction of the wildlife area.

Water Control Structures: Manager Buser began working on the bid process needed to order water control structures for the wildlife area. Several sites on Windmill Ranch and Mesa Lake have been identified for new structures, while additional sites on Windmill Ranch and the Headquarters Unit have been identified for replacement of old structures.

Pheasant: Natural Resource Worker Becker and Natural Resource Technician Medina got the pheasant surrogate ready for the delivery of pheasant chicks. They received 90 pheasant chicks and got them in the surrogate.

Colockum Wildlife Area: Manager Lopushinsky attended a tour with the Stemilt Partnership Forest Management Steering Committee this week to look at forest management issues on the

new Chelan County and WDFW lands in the Stemilt Basin. Chelan County has just completed planting conifer seedlings on ground harvested by previous owner Longview Fibre, and is making plans to burn the large slash piles left after harvest. There are also slash piles on the section WDFW acquired from Longview that will need to be burned this fall or winter.

Members of the Stemilt Partnership Forest Management Steering Committee tour recently acquired lands in the Stemilt Basin



Wildlife Management

Ferruginous Hawk: District Biologist Fidorra met with a volunteer to scout access to a privately owned site in order to conduct productivity surveys at the active ferruginous hawk nest there. Several prairie falcon pairs were also observed and 2 falcon nests with young were located.

A female ferruginous hawk on a massive nest, which has been in use for decades



Avian Power Line Interaction Conference: District Biologist Fidorra attended the Avian Power Line Interaction Conference held in Blaine, WA. The two day conference was attended primarily by consultants and utility companies in the power industry from around the continent, with a few USFWS representatives. Methods to prevent avian electrocution and collision with powerlines were discussed, as well as a review of some research on the impacts of transmission lines on sage-grouse, which ended in a heated discussion.

Black Bear Trapping: District Biologist Fidorra reviewed procedures and readied supplies to respond to black bear trapping efforts near Prosser. Enforcement ran a culvert trap last week, but was unable to capture the bear. Fidorra will remain on call to immobilize the bear for tagging and relocation if captured.

2016 Bat Study: District Biologist Fidorra continued to review sites and contact landowners for the 2016 Bat Study in Districts 4 and 5. Fidorra placed acoustic bat detectors at sites and coordinated with Biologist Rowan to relocate a detector near the Ephrata office. Fidorra plans to place detectors at eight sites each month this summer.

CRP Evaluations: Private Lands Biologist Stutzman did two CRP stand evaluations and then met with the landowner to give them an idea of what their conservation plan will entail. The results were mixed. One landowner will have to start over and reseed and the other only needs to plant forbs to meet the requirements.

Western Gray Squirrel Survey: Biologist Bernatowicz prepared hair snare tubes and deployed five transects this week. There was no sign of squirrels or nests along the routes. Tubes will be checked monthly through August for hair.

Teanaway Spotted Owl Surveys: Biologist Moore completed a survey that Habitat Biologist Parks began the previous week. A blow down tree was across the road and Parks was unable to access the last two stations. Moore removed the tree and finished the remaining survey stations. One owl responded to the male spotted owl call and Moore believes it was either a pygmy or saw-whet owl.



A nice view, prior to sunset, from the first owl station in the Teanaway

MIT Deer Mortality: Biologist Moore was called Sunday morning by Muckleshoot Tribal Biologist David Vales about a collared deer mortality on Interstate 90 near Elk Heights. Moore located the deer, which was involved in an automobile collision, in the median between the west and east bound lanes. Samples were collected and the deer appeared to be in good condition prior to its death.



The photos above illustrate a comparison of bone marrow fat concentrations between a doe in May on the left and a doe which died of malnutrition in March on the right. Bone marrow fat is one of the last reserves to be used and the red jelly like marrow on the right indicates the poor condition of this deer prior to its death.

Bighorn Sheep Home Range Analysis: Biologist Moore is working on creating a sampling frame to collect Normalized Difference Vegetative Index (NDVI) data for a comparison of relative habitat quality between different bighorn sheep populations in District 8. Since it was difficult to find soil classes that were present across all District 8 populations, Moore began looking at Ecological Site data within each soil series. One Ecological Site classification was found present in each of the four bighorn sheep home ranges and hopefully NDVI samples can be collected from these areas. Moore also spent time looking through literature on the use of different Vegetative Indices.

Wolf Observations: Moore looked through all of the online resources for new wolf reports in District 8 and no new reports were found. Some reports are coming in through word of mouth and they will be checked, if time allows, next week.

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

Wildlife Areas

Colockum Wildlife Area: Manager Lopushinsky also attended a meeting of the Stemilt Partnership Recreation Steering Committee. This is an initial meeting to identify potential committee members and begin the process of developing a recreation management plan for the Stemilt Basin. Attendees included representatives from most of the recreation user groups in the area, as well as WDFW, WDNR, Mission Ridge Ski Area, and Washington State Parks.

Wenas Wildlife Area: Access Manager Garcia and Natural Resource Worker 2 Barbosa installed two reader boards at the new Highway 10 Access Site.



Mile Post 8: Natural Resource Worker 2 Barbosa cleaned up the trail at Mile Post 8.



Mile Post 8 trail before and after clean up

Fio Rito: Natural Resource Worker 2 Barbosa began mowing at Fio Rito and will finish up in the coming week.



Fio Rito before and after mowing

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

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Hunt followed up on an adjacent landowner’s complaint about another old WDFW Upland Restoration parcel in Kittitas County. The complaint was passed on to the Hunt by the County Noxious Weed Board. This is in regards to

the 10 acre Fairview parcel, which is heavily infested with Canada thistle and a few other weeds. We don't have staff members or time to address it, and are awaiting direction from up the chain. Time is of the essence if we are to help the landowner out prior to the thistle blooming and infesting his freshly seeded field.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Assistant Manager Berry, Natural Resource Worker 2 Farias, and Forester Mackey worked with RMEF volunteers on a Tee Pee Creek quaking aspen enclosure project on Friday. They got all 30 posts installed, along with some of the wire. Archaeologist Kelly was also on site while post holes were being dug to monitor for cultural resources. Volunteers also removed small diameter conifers from around some of the aspens to promote health and vigor. Manager Huffman and Mackey worked with the volunteers on Saturday as well, finishing the fence installation and removing additional conifers from around aspen and several large larch and Ponderosa pine.



Aspen site Friday morning before work began



Volunteers and Assistant Manager Berry install the first post while Archaeologist Kelly and Natural Resource Worker 2 Farias sift through materials to monitor the site for cultural resources



Volunteer leveling a post



Group picture upon completion of work

Wildlife Management

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

Elk Monitoring: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand deployed one trail camera along Hanford's southern border to monitor elk activity in adjacent winter wheat fields.

Canada Goose: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received and responded to a Canada goose damage complaint in an alfalfa hay crop from the Grandview area. Multiple nonlethal hazing strategies were discussed and will be implemented along with contact with USFWS for additional options.

Cow Moose: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand coordinated with Richland Rod & Gun Club's meat salvage team to process a cow moose that Wildlife Conflict Rasley euthanized in Walla Walla County. The carcass was processed by the salvage team at the District 4 office and the fresh boned out meat was delivered to the Union Gospel Mission.



Deer and Elk Fence: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Wetzel delivered materials for a cost share deer and elk fence in the Thorp area. Several deer were hazed out of the area during delivery.

Thorp commercial truck garden cost share deer fence materials

Elk Hazing: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Wetzel checked western Kittitas Valley several days and found a small group of elk that is still

reluctant to leave the area. Heavy nonlethal hazing moved them toward the Taneum area.

Deer Damage: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Wetzel met with a commercial truck garden grower in Cle Elum about deer damage. A cost share fence contract was discussed and materials will be provided this week. Deer were observed at the location during the meeting.

Commercial vegetable garden with deer damage in Cle Elum



Elk Damage: Conflict Specialist Wetzel discussed elk damage with a hay grower in Yakima near 74th Avenue. A group of eight elk live in the very brushy areas near Ahtanum Creek. These elk come into an alfalfa field at night and go back across the creek during the day. Hazing advice and a crop DPCA was provided for the hay grower.



Alfalfa field on 74th Avenue with elk use

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

Wildlife Areas

Sunnyside Wildlife Area: The new seasonal Natural Resource Worker 2, Max Becker, started on Monday. Manager Buser and Assistant Manager Sak helped him complete new employee paperwork and go over new employee orientation, and Assistant Manager Sak took him on a tour of the wildlife area and showed him most of the units.

Safety Visits: Manager Buser attended the Pasco District Office safety visit and procedures meeting with Department Safety Program Manager Waldrop. Manager Buser had a second meeting with Safety Program Manager Waldrop on Wednesday for a site visit of the Windmill Ranch facilities.

Oak Creek Wildlife Area: Manager Huffman participated in a conference call with Regional Program Manager McCorquodale, Planner Posner, Lands Division Manager Sprague, and Deputy Assistant Director Gardner to discuss options for Disco Pass sales at Oak Creek during the winter. A temporary plan to use “iron rangers” to sell day passes seems like the best option. This will allow people to park before purchasing a pass, removing the long lines backing up onto the highway during peak visitation. Washington State Parks is going to provide an iron ranger to install.

Colockum Wildlife Area: Colockum staff members Lopushinsky, Hagan, and Adams continued working on fence maintenance along the northern wildlife area boundary, completing fence work left unfinished by fence contractors last summer. Problems include areas where some fence wires were not installed, places where wires were left loose with little tension, shallow soil areas where steel posts were not driven into the ground, and places where brace clamps were not installed on metal corners or braces.

Wenas Wildlife Area: Manager Confer Morris, L.T. Murray Assistant Manager Hunt, and Environmental Planner Posner conducted interviews for the temporary Biologist 2 position. Candidate Nathan Longoria was offered the position, which he accepted. He will start on June 1.

Fiscal Year 2016: Manager Confer Morris met with BPA COTR L'Heureux to discuss current issues and review the draft Fiscal Year 2016 SOW and budget. After meeting with wildlife area staff members, Confer Morris submitted a final draft budget for the Fiscal Year 2016 contract to L'Heureux.

Lands: Manager Confer Morris met with Lands Division Manager Sprague, Regional Program Manager McCorquodale, and Wildlife Area Manager Huffman to discuss the Wenas and Oak Creek field trips associated with the fall Lands Division workshop.

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Species of Greatest Conservation Need Surveys: District 13 staff members attempted to collect specimens of the Shaw Island vole on Shaw and Lopez islands. The vole population on Shaw Island appears to be in a down cycle as relatively few runways were found. At our most promising trap site, raccoons devoured our bait and tampered with our traps so no voles were caught. Rain, deer, and raccoons thwarted trapping elsewhere, too. On Lopez Island, the population appears to be higher, with lots of runways with fresh vegetative clippings located. We were able to set traps out at two fenced areas and had less trouble with deer and raccoons, but a night time rain increased slug activity and they set off many of the traps. We returned to the lab with only one vole.



A snap trap that was moved far from where it was set



The trap removing culprit: raccoon tracks

Invasive Species Surveys: Staff members from Districts 12 and 13 continued with survey/trapping efforts started last fall for prohibited invasive species in south Snohomish County waters.

Common Loon Surveys: District 13 staff members followed up on previous sightings of a common loon pair on a Snohomish County lake. No loons were observed on this visit.

Low Elevation Pika Survey: District 13 staff members retrieved trail cameras from a low elevation site in the Stillaguamish Valley. Cameras had been deployed throughout the winter to monitor pika activity in a low elevation site with no accumulation of seasonal snow. Images will be reviewed to determine activity and weather conditions.

North Cascades Grizzly Bear: Biologist Yarborough participated in a conference call related to the North Cascades Grizzly Bear Environmental Impact Statement with other members of WDFW.

Wolf Cameras: Biologist DeBruyn checked cameras in an area that had a report of a group of wolves. The cameras were functioning properly and had recorded images of coyotes, deer, snowshoe hare, a bat, and one person.

Golden Eagles: Biologist DeBruyn checked on one of two known occupied golden eagle pairs in District 14 and found them to be engaged in a breeding attempt.

Peregrine Falcons: Biologist DeBruyn assisted the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in assessing the status of a pair of peregrines near a proposed timber sale. We have an active management plan with DNR concerning the site. The site was occupied and a breeding attempt is underway.

Wildlife Areas

Spencer Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that another Eagle Scout trail maintenance and planting project was completed this past week. Approximately 50 native trees and shrubs were planted in areas along the dike trail. Additionally, blackberry and other weedy vegetation was cleared along the left side of the trail making way for a future planting project.

Lake Terrell Unit Agricultural Field Prep: Natural Resource Technician Deyo continued working on prepping the agricultural fields at Lake Terrell for this year's winter waterfowl feeding barley plantings. Fifty-two acres of barley are scheduled to be planted Wednesday this week.

Tennant Lake Wetland Enhancement Mowing: Manager Kessler started 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. Fifteen acres of grass need to be mowed to prevent it from going to seed. Phase 2 is scheduled to be constructed in 2019.

Leque Island Topography Survey: Vegetation removal crews cleared viewing corridors on Leque Island so Ducks Unlimited staff members could survey the topography of the site, which is needed to advance to the next phase of design for the estuary restoration project. Topography data will allow engineers to calculate filling and grading volumes, which is needed for permitting the project and developing a more accurate cost estimate.

Survey equipment used by Ducks Unlimited to collect topography data at Leque Island

Region 4 Restoration Project Timeline: Projects Coordinator Brokaw drafted a timeline of past, current, and future restoration projects on WDFW lands. The timeline will be used to help with planning capacity needs.



Grant Pre-Proposal Development: Projects Coordinator Brokaw began drafting 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.

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

Wildlife Areas

Island Unit Tidegate Replacement Project: Projects Coordinator Brokaw, Skagit Wildlife Area Manager Rotton, Habitat Planner Friebel, and other WDFW staff members met with Swinomish Tribe and NOAA Fisheries representatives to discuss permitting for the tidegate replacement project, including compensatory mitigation. Following the meeting, WDFW staff members who attended the meeting briefed policy level staff members on what was discussed.

Waterfowl Replacement Lands Meeting: Projects Coordinator Brokaw and Skagit Wildlife Area Manager Rotton met with a real estate agent and a PCC Land Trust representative to tour a property that could potentially serve as a future WDFW waterfowl hunting and forage site. The group discussed potential funding opportunities, management of the property, and real estate details.

A property near Leque Island that has potential to be a future WDFW waterfowl hunting and forage site



Waterfowl Replacement Lands

Briefing Sheet: Projects

Coordinator Brokaw prepared a briefing sheet with information about the Leque Island and Fir Island Farms restoration projects for use by WDFW policy staff members when discussing the need to secure waterfowl hunting and forage lands with funding agencies.

Nooksack River Bridge Log Jam Removal Project: Manager Kessler coordinated with WDFW Habitat Biologist Joel Ingraham on an upcoming project to remove a log jam that is caught on one of the Nooksack River bridge supports. This work will be staged from our Marietta parking area and access site on the south end of the Nooksack Unit.

British Petroleum Spring Farming Meeting: Manager Kessler met with British Petroleum managers and the local farmers who work on the refinery agricultural lands. Farming activities will be coordinated with WDFW to make sure they do not adversely affect the hunting on these lands. At least 20 acres of barley will be planted and left for feeding of wintering waterfowl. Manager Kessler will also provide sunflower seeds to be added to the barley being planted. Those seeds were acquired from Ducks Unlimited to help feed wildlife.



Reed canary grass mowing on the Tennant Lake Wetland Enhancement Area

Private Lands/Access Management

Spring Bear Hunt: Private Lands 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. While in the field, Otto made contact with multiple DNR staff members, timber company personnel, and a permit bear hunter. Otto also cleared multiple trees blocking roads.

Wildlife Viewing: Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell and Private Lands Biologist Wingard coordinated with staff members from local land trusts to meet and discuss ideas for

providing wildlife viewing on private lands. Biologist Wingard toured several possible wildlife viewing sites in Skagit County.

Migratory Bird Forage Enhancement Projects: Natural Resource Technician Otto continued herbicide application on migratory bird forage sites in Skagit and Whatcom counties in preparation for barley planting. Otto was able to spray an additional three acres. Otto met with one additional landowner who is interested in migratory bird forage and coordinated with a seed supplier to purchase and deliver barley to a Whatcom County grower. Otto delivered one ton of faba beans to a Skagit County grower who will be planting 10 acres this week.

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

Wildlife Management

Avian Powerline Interaction Committee (APLIC): Biologists DeBruyn and Yarborough attended the annual APLIC conference in Blaine. Biologist DeBruyn and members of Puget Sound Energy gave a joint presentation on the collaborative swan and waterfowl research efforts in District 14. APLIC leads the electric utility industry in protecting avian resources while enhancing reliable energy delivery.



Biologist DeBruyn presenting at the annual APLIC conference in Blaine

Wildlife Conflict Monitoring & Management: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal continued working on elk exclusionary fence projects in Skagit

Valley. Witman received a call from a landowner in Acme who has been experiencing elk damage on multiple properties. The landowner has been inquiring about available elk fencing. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman will send out a notification to the North Cascades Elk Technical Committee to solicit input on available elk fencing. Witman also received a phone call from a landowner in the Concrete area who has been experiencing elk related damage to fences and surrounding pastures. Witman responded to the area and observed the landowner has maintained existing fences. Witman will continue to work with the landowner to come up with ideas to mitigate elk damage. Witman and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal coordinated with volunteers to install wire on approximately 1000 feet of elk exclusionary fence in Birdsvie. Six elk later entered the property from an area where the project is not completed. The elk followed the newly constructed fence and found their way out of the area without causing any damage. Witman coordinated two Master Hunter volunteers to work on the Birdsvie elk fencing project

over the weekend. The work was supervised by a student from Skagit Valley College who is completing her internship.

Wildlife Areas

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm continues to coordinate with a local excavating company and volunteers to receive truckloads of donated wood chips. The wood chips are used to build up the road and trail network at the unit. The arrangement saves the excavating company the cost of disposing of the chips and provides the unit with a suitable material for interior access roads at no cost.

Community Outreach: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm attended the Snohomish Sportsman's Club monthly meeting. Manager Boehm provided a brief recap of activities on the Snoqualmie Units and a more thorough discussion on using volunteers for community service projects. The club has been working at the Corson Wildlife Preserve conducting trail maintenance, repairs to wooden structures, and repairs to the net pen that WDFW uses during the pheasant season.

Cherry Valley Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm provided a letter of support for Drainage District 7. The District has teamed up with Ryan Bartelheimer from Environmental Science Associates to submit a grant proposal to King County Flood Control District. Funds will be used to study the dike, locate weak points, and develop a plan to ensure long-term functionality of the aging structure. The dike has breached in the same location each of the past two flood seasons.

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with representatives from Drainage District 1 to discuss a district project to repair one of the tide gates on Deadwater Slough. Additional discussions included invasive vegetation control plans, ditch maintenance, and property acquisition opportunities.

Corson Wildlife Preserve: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with neighboring landowners to provide an update on the construction project scheduled for later this summer. The service road will be brought up to DNR road specifications and address fish passage issues within the unit.

Wildlife Areas

Johnson DeBay Slough: Natural Resource Technician Cosgrove mowed access areas and trails at the Johnson/DeBay's Slough Unit with the riding mower.

Fir Island Farm: Manager Rotton attended a field tour with the Directors of Washington's Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Agriculture. The field tour was scheduled as a follow up meeting to the Washington Agricultural summit held earlier this year in Skagit County. The Directors and their staff members were briefed on the agricultural and salmon recovery issues and how these communities are working in the Skagit to address these issues and

find common ground. The discussion also identified some of the upcoming challenges these groups face as salmon recovery efforts move forward from public to private land.

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

Tide Gate Repair: WDFW staff members participated in a phone call with local co-managers and NOAA representatives regarding the proposal for the barn field tide gate repair. The project and mitigation proposal were discussed and it was determined that additional mitigation beyond what was proposed for North Leque Island would be needed. WDFW and the Tribes will need to consult with policy and program personnel.

Jensen Access: Cosgrove mowed the parking area and road edge at the Jensen Access with the riding mower.

Leque Island Unit: Ducks Unlimited and local surveyors began work this week to survey the dikes and interior fields to develop a more defined project design for the Leque Island Restoration Project.

Bird Monitoring: Bird monitoring work continues and Wildlife Area staff members are monitoring weeds in treatment areas and bare fields that were not able to be planted this season following the breach event in early March.

North Leque Island Restoration Project: Design and permitting continues for the North Leque Island Restoration project. WDFW staff members are fine tuning the material calculations and working out construct ability issues.

Samish Unit: Meis coordinated and completed planting of the Samish Unit with barley (150 acres), fava beans (38 acres), and corn (10 acres). All plantings have been completed for this unit. Local farmers assisted wildlife area staff members with planting the fava beans and corn. Meis continued to mow areas at the Samish Unit with high concentrations of noxious weeds. Cosgrove took photo points and surveyed vegetation, water levels, and bird use on 23 ponds at the Samish Unit as part of a long-term pond rehabilitation project.

Samish Unit: rehabilitated wetland pond with mix of open water and emergent plants (no longer solid cattail)



Share Crop Farmer: Manager

Rotton assisted with the share crop farmer on the Samish Unit who is completing paperwork to certify a portion of the area as organic and/or transitioning to organic.

Skagit Headquarters: Cosgrove mowed road edges, pheasant pens, equipment storage areas, and other grassy areas at the Headquarters Unit with the riding mower. Manager Rotton completed administrative tasks, including bill submission, budget tracking, and the developing draft of the Wiley Slough Real Estate agreement.

Private Lands/Access Management

Public Disclosure Request: Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell worked with District 14 Biologist Yarborough and Olympia staff members on answering and providing feedback for questions related to a recent public disclosure request.

Skagit County Wildlife Viewing Site: Natural Resource Technician Otto and Private Lands Biologist Wingard opened up the Swan Road private lands wildlife viewing site in Skagit County. This site offers superb viewing from an established blind and overlooks Nookachamps Creek. The mainly riparian dominated habitat hosts a diversity of species and is the site of a new Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) site. Please be aware of the fragility of this new project, and WDFW asks that people using the site do not deviate from the access trail into the CRP site. Furthermore, please be aware that WDFW has placed multiple nesting boxes (bat and bird boxes) in the viewing area and several of these boxes have been/are being actively used by cavity nesting waterfowl and other species. We ask that people using this site do not disturb these boxes and report any issues to the Region 4 Private Lands Access Program.

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

Wildlife Management

Training: Biologist Yarborough completed WDFW Hazard Communication Training. Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell attended training for Hazard Communication, Endangered Species, and GIS. All courses were completed. Private Lands Biologist Wingard attended two separate GIS trainings in Seattle, including Topics in Advanced Editing and Effective Analysis: A Tour of GIS Tools. Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell also attended Effective Analysis: A Tour of GIS Tools in Seattle. Supervisor Caldwell attended training for Hazard Communication and Endangered Species. All courses were completed.

Staff Publications: Private Lands & Wildlife Conflict Supervisory Biologist Cole J. Caldwell received word that his most recent manuscript has been put to press and will be out this month. The work will be published through the Netherlands Ornithological Union via their journal *Ardea*. The paper is titled Energetics of Great Egrets Foraging in Upland Agricultural Fields, and may be of some interest to folks who enjoy physiology, behavioral ecology, energetics, and waterbirds. Of note, the paper is unique in that it is the first published study ever to compile and compare foraging energetics for great egrets in an upland environment.

Avian Power Line Interactions: Natural Resource Technician Otto attended a seminar hosted by Puget Sound Energy about avian protection plans. This was a very informative course

providing information on how utility companies nationwide are trying to prevent avian collisions with power lines.

GIS Templates for Program Staff Members: Private Lands Supervisory Biologist Caldwell created GIS templates for use by all Region 4 Wildlife Conflict personnel. These templates include county delineations, parcel data, National Wetland Inventory data, Game Management Units, and other pertinent data. These data will be applied for providing landowners and WDFW visual representation of data/field work across project and region zones. All template data will be available for use via the S: Drive.

New 10,000 pound dump trailer purchased for the Region 4 Access Program through a grant from the Department of Ecology for litter cleanups. Ecology paid for ninety percent of the cost and WDFW covered the other ten percent.



REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Western Pond Turtle Trapping: WSU Veterinary Student Iredale and Biologists Bergh and Butler conducted western pond turtle trapping at the Sondino site this week. Sixteen adult turtles (> 7 years) were taken to the VCA Animal Hospital for CT scans. Samples for microbiome and fungal etiology studies were also collected from these turtles. No additional young turtles (< 7 years) were captured for bone density scans. This was the last week of trapping and over the last three weeks, a total of 39 adult turtles ranging from healthy turtles to those having severe Undefined Shell Disease (USD) were CT scanned. All these tests and samples are a part of the effort to learn more about USD, which affects western pond turtles in Washington.

Western pond turtle CT scanned for Undefined Shell Disease



Western Pond Turtle Release: Biologist Bergh coordinated the annual release of western pond turtles head-started at the Oregon Zoo. Fourteen turtles captured last spring and taken to the zoo to grow large enough to escape predation were released with the help of zoo volunteers. Nine adult turtles captured last summer, treated for Undefined Shell Disease at the zoo, and then cared for by Larch Correctional Center inmates over the winter and spring were also released. Bergh gave an educational talk about turtles, including a demonstration of how the turtles are caught in their ponds. A video from the day can be seen at <http://www.oregonzoo.org/news/2016/05/inmates-join-effort-recover-endangered-nw-turtle>



Biologist Bergh providing a demonstration of how the turtles are caught in ponds

Black-tailed Deer Ecology Study: Biologists Holman and Butler collared two fawns in the Washougal study cluster after receiving a notification that the VIT (vaginal implant transmitter) had been expelled on a collared doe. The fawns (one male and one female) will be monitored for survival over the next year. Fawn captures will continue over

approximately the next three months in both the Coweeman (GMU 550) and Washougal (GMU 568) study clusters.



Biologists Butler and Holman in the field with the captured fawns

Elk Hoof Disease Survival Study: Biologists Holman, Stephens, and George followed up on an elk mortality this week in the Margaret GMU. The elk was found minimally cached in a young timber reproduction stand and appeared to have been predated upon by a cougar. The elk was carrying an almost fully developed fetus. A game camera was deployed to detect any feeding activity that may take place at this mortality site. The elk was part of a four year study implemented to estimate the survival of adult female cow elk affected by treponeme-associated hoof disease. The study will also focus on the effects of the disease on elk reproduction and movement patterns. Currently, there are 66 elk of the Mount St. Helens Herd that are monitored

continuously for this study. For more information on treponeme-associated hoof disease in elk, please visit the hoof disease webpage at http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/hoof_disease/



Predated TAHD study elk and fetus

Klickitat Wildlife Area

Grazing Monitoring: Technician Davis checked on a grazing permit on the Fisher Hill Unit to ensure compliance and found everything in order. Both Davis and Manager Van Leuven checked on the grazing activity on the Soda Springs Unit, with special attention given to the water delivery system at a trough. Water sources are very limited, so they must be in working order. A local resident who was camping on the Wildlife Area fixed the water line during the weekend when it failed and no one else was around to take care of it. Many thanks to Mr. Bradley for helping to avoid a bad situation!

Hatchery Unit Fence: Manager Van Leuven and Technician Davis finished the wooden bracing along Hill Road this week. Twelve steel posts were placed in the fence line where needed, and the top fence wire was put up.



Cutting a notch



Curved fence structure

Weed Control: Technician Davis applied herbicide to a patch of sulfur cinquefoil discovered in the headquarters compound. This area was treated for cinquefoil and reed canarygrass the last two years, and wildflowers have returned to this creekside habitat. Rydberg’s penstamon is blooming in profusion and tiger swallowtail butterflies are nectaring at the flowers. More treatments will be needed to suppress invasive weeds there, but native flora is rebounding well.



Rydberg's penstamon



Tiger swallowtail

Refuse Disposal: Three old mangled culverts from the Hatchery Unit, a pile of weathered fence boards, and a large mass of mesh fencing and coiled barbed wire were hauled to the transfer station.



The fence wire was collected on the Soda Springs Unit and the Hatchery Unit. Removing unneeded fencing and other junk is an ongoing activity on the Wildlife Area.

Refuse disposal

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

Access

County Line Access Site: A large dump site consisting of various household items was dumped in the parking spot next to the restroom at County Line. After almost all was loaded, one of the bags broke open spilling out envelopes, medical records, bills, and documents of a person living

in Vancouver. The items were taken to the dump for disposal and Enforcement Program was contacted and began an investigation into the dumping violation.

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



Wildlife Management

Sharing WDFW Resource Management Skills / Efforts with Others: AGForestry

Leadership Presentation: Biologist Holman presented to a group of approximately 25 students enrolled in AGForestry's leadership course. The presentation included information on both hunted and Diversity species, as well as habitat management undertakings and work with both private and public forestland managers. The educational undertaking is designed to build skills among those involved in natural resource management, especially in rural communities. For more information on AGForestry, or to nominate a prospective student for the course, please see their website at <http://agforestry.org/>.

District 10 Wildlife Conflict

Bear: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin provided outreach to a neighborhood in Kalama experiencing bear damage to bee hives, garbage cans, and chicken pens. In addition, Conklin verified bear damage on industrial timberlands in Cowlitz and Lewis counties.

District 9 Wildlife Conflict

Deer: Conflict Specialist Peterson is assisting a new winery with ongoing deer damage. Peterson loaned the winery electric fencing materials and assisted in fence construction. The fence has worked well, but a few deer got through last weekend and caused damage to a number of new vines. Peterson is assisting the winery with additional nonlethal deterrent measures.

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

Leadership for the Future Training: Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Sample attended the one and a half day Leadership for the Future workshop, located in Vancouver and focusing on recognizing and developing leadership skills and positive management strategies. The class was interactive and topics were covered through instructor led discussion and small group sessions. All the material covered was relevant to both supervisors and those that do not supervise other positions.

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Satsop/Mason Deer Project: In 2009, WDFW initiated a study of the effects of forest management practices on black-tailed deer reproduction. Two of eight study sites are represented in District 15: Mason and Satsop. 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 of the fawns and transmit a signal notifying us that fawns have been born. Of these, four does had fawns over the May 14 weekend. Four fawns have been collared from these does and a fifth was located at the birth site, stillborn. 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 has been collared so far.



Volunteers and Habitat Biologist Gordon collaring a fawn



A fawn released after collaring

Capitol Forest Deer: Biologist Michaelis updated data downloads from three adult does in the Capitol Forest study area. Searches for collared does and fawns will begin this week. Biologist Novack checked the status and location of two does. He also posted a volunteer opportunity to assist with fawn captures in Capitol Forest.

Snowy Plover Surveys / Nest Search: Biologist Michaelis, Biologist Sundstrom, Technician Raby, and District Biologist Novack conducted the West Coast breeding window plover survey at Midway beach. Biologist Michaelis also discovered two new nests during the survey.

Plover Surveys: Biologist Sundstrom, Biologist Michaelis, Research Scientist Pearson, and Technician Raby, together with USFWS Biologist Ritchie, conducted the breeding window plover survey on Leadbetter NWR.

Plover Surveys: Biologist Sundstrom, Biologist Michaelis, and Tribal Biologist Pfleeger conducted the breeding window plover survey at Graveyard spit on Shoalwater Tribal lands. Biologist Michaelis discovered two three egg nests during that survey.

Plover Surveys: Biologist Sundstrom conducted the breeding window plover survey for Damon Point, Oyhut, Copalis Spit, and Connor Creek. One plover was discovered in a location where snowy plovers hadn't been seen since 1985! The plover was identified from its leg bands as having been identified during the prior few days at one of the surveys further south, and is probably not nesting at the site.

Budgets: Biologist Novack worked on budgeting for the plover project.

Plover Surveys: Technician Raby assisted USFWS Refuge Biologist Ritchie with a survey of two islands in north Willapa Bay (where one nest was discovered) and a driving survey of Long Beach.

2016 Leadbetter and Island Season Totals				
<i># Nests Discovered</i>	<i># Nests Active</i>	<i># Nests Hatched</i>	<i># Nests Failed</i>	<i># Nests w/ Unknown Fate</i>
19	11	4	2	2

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

Private Lands /Conflict

Grays Harbor Land Ownership: Biologist Novack investigated land ownership in Grays Harbor County and followed up on recent changes to Rayonier ownership with FIA. FIA has purchased a large amount of Rayonier land in the district. They will respect all current leases and Rayonier access permits.

Humptulips Elk: They are back! It has been a little over a year since Biologist Harris, with the help of Master Hunters, got very aggressive with a group of elk that were making themselves unwelcome on a cattle farm in the Humptulips River area. The producer contacted Biologist Harris to report the elk have started frequenting one of his hay fields. He made a site visit and confirmed the elk use. The producer is concerned because he grows mostly native grasses that really do not start growing until the weather warms. Of course with recent warming, the elk targeted the new growth. The producer will continue to monitor and report elk activity. Biologist Harris is considering aggressive action, as the elk have been ignoring the producer's hazing attempts.

Bear Timber Damage: Natural Resource Technician Leite verified bear timber damage in Grays Harbor and Clallam counties. He also visited a small forest landowner's property in Grays Harbor County to look for new damage. None was found.