

# Wildlife Program – Bi-weekly Report

October 1 to October 15, 2020

## **DIVERSITY DIVISION**

Nothing for this installment.

## **SCIENCE DIVISION**

### *HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:*

#### 1) Managing Wildlife Populations

**WDFW's South Puget Sound Butterfly 2019 Project Data:** Biologist Jenkerson processed 2019 Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) long-distance sampling Taylor's checkerspot butterfly data (~2000 reported detections). The monitoring of and incorporation into (web search and data management (WSDM) of these butterflies, has greatly increased the knowledge of abundance and distribution of Taylor's checkerspot data on JBLM lands and contributes to the federal recovery plan evaluation that is occurring at this time.

**High Accuracy GPS Acquisition:** App Developer Simper researched, tested, and evaluated high accuracy GPS receivers for use in various survey projects (Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, rapid habitat assessment, Mazama gopher monitoring). Two vendors were consulted, and two candidate receivers were obtained and field-tested for accuracy, ease-of-use, ruggedness, suitability, and cost/value. Special details, software, and settings involved in the use of such devices were also researched. Simper offered the results to the buyer (Mary Linders) along with price information. Simper then assisted Linders and her assistant Lisa Randolph in filling out necessary agency paperwork and ultimately with the purchase of the selected items (EOS Arrow 100 receivers and iPad Air tablets and accessories).

**Gopher Monitoring Survey:** App Developer Simper worked with species lead Gail Olson to develop a data layer and web map that could be used with the Collector mobile app for use during the annual Mazama Pocket Gopher Monitoring Survey. The survey requires high-accuracy GPS capability and Olson's existing GPS receivers (and software) were beginning to fail due to age and obsolescence. Simper initially explored a solution that involved creating a special Survey123 form that would interact with the collector application, but this was later abandoned in favor of a collector-only solution. The web map/data layer created for use with collector was created with high-accuracy needs in mind, and associated settings were documented and shared with users along with specially prepared hardware packages with proper mounting hardware, spare rechargeable batteries, and accessories.

**IRHIS Database and Interface Development:** App Developer Whelan developed a centralized, "IRHIS" (Integrated Regulations and Harvest Information System) database for storing both wildlife harvest estimates (1997 to current year) and hunting regulations data (2017 to current year). When completed, this data can be accessed from a variety of applications: the Hunt Planner Webmap; the WDFW harvest estimates webpage; the WDFW open data portal; and a staff member-only, browser-based "IRHIS Portal". With this portal, personnel can review, filter, and export both regulations and harvest estimates.

In addition, they can review harvest estimates both publicly available and internal-only (e.g., confidence intervals), review harvest over time in curated trend plots, and view the spatial distribution of harvest. The intent is for this staff member-only web application to be the one-stop-shop for harvest and regulation information.

**Hunt Planner Webmap Re-Development:** The purpose of the Hunt Planner Webmap is to provide hunters with a browser-based means to query hunting regulations and help them plan their hunting activities throughout the hunting season. The current version is in its third year of use. App Developer Whelan developed a new application with improvements over the existing version. These improvements focused on web map performance from user-driven data requests, mobile experience, print widget, design, and tool functionality. User acceptance testing and feedback will help further improve the design and function over the coming months and this application is expected to become available to the public at the same time as the big game pamphlets are published which is sometime in April 2021.

**Assessment of Third-Party Camera Trap Platform:** WDFW's Wildlife Science and Diversity Divisions are assessing the use of Conservation International's cloud-based, wildlife insights platform for future WDFW survey projects that use camera traps. In collaboration with external partners, biologist Blatz will be evaluating whether this platform meets the Wildlife Program's business needs for camera trap data management. The needs would be largely focused on storage capabilities, ease of uploading/downloading, manual and AI image-interpretation, cross-agency collaboration, and data sharing opportunities with the public.

## 2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Nothing for this installment.

## 3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Nothing for this installment.

## 4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Nothing for this installment.

## 5) Providing Education and Outreach

**Roadkill-Salvage Permits Redevelopment:** IT Manager Christopher redeveloped the salvage permit system using Survey123 forms and the ArcGIS Online (AGOL) platform. Salvage permits allow the public to collect and consume deer or elk that were killed by vehicles. Previously, the form and data were part of the WDFW website and were only downloaded and provided to the public and WSDOT staff members, in twice-yearly batches. By using the AGOL, the public can see all new records, within 24 hours of the permit being issued, on the [GIS Open Data site](#), and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) staff members can view or edit the data via an AGOL "dashboard" at any time without needing to request this data. Enforcement staff members can also view these permits via a secured, WDFW-only web map. These improvements to the availability and frequency of the data come at reduced WDFW staff member efforts at needing to monitor or extract data from the system for individual requests.

## 6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Nothing for this installment.

7) **Other**

Nothing for this installment.

**HUNTER EDUCATION**

Nothing for this installment.

**LANDS DIVISION**

*HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:*

1) **Managing Wildlife Populations**

Nothing for this installment.

2) **Providing Recreation Opportunities**

Nothing for this installment.

3) **Providing Conflict Prevention and Education**

Nothing for this installment.

4) **Conserving Natural Landscapes**

Nothing for this installment.

5) **Providing Education and Outreach**

Nothing for this installment.

6) **Conducting Business Operations and Policy**

Nothing for this installment.

7) **Other**

**2020 SHIFT Summit:** Program Specialist Trendera, along with other agency staff members, attended the 2020 SHIFT Summit, which was conducted virtually this year and focused on the mental health benefits of time outside, specifically highlighting health equity and access to nature.

**GAME DIVISION**

Nothing for this installment.

## **REGION 1**

### ***HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:***

#### **1) Managing Wildlife Populations**

**Depredation Investigation:** Wildlife Conflict Specialists O'Connor, Cook, and Bennett along with a Pend Oreille County game warden and county sheriff's officer performed a depredation investigation on a dead cow reported in Spring Valley. The carcass was found that morning and immediately reported by the ranch hand. The investigation was concluded as a non-depredation as the cow was most likely struck by a vehicle. Two dislocated hips, broken pin bone, lost teeth, and hemorrhaging throughout the spine, ribs, and legs were apparent during the investigation. Non-wolf scavenging was observed on the rumen, hips, and nose of the cow with observations of coyote and bear sign through the investigation area.

**4-O Ranch Wildlife Area Tribal Hunting:** Tribal hunting activity has been high on the 4-O Ranch Wildlife Area (WLA) this fall. Concerns and complaints from adjacent private property owners have been ongoing to wildlife area staff members. Several adult bull elk have been harvested in the wildlife area. Issues and other problems with tribal members have been minimal and hunters encountering tribal hunters have noted they are very polite and friendly to talk to.

**Turnbull Elk:** Biologists Atamian and Lowe conducted the annual aerial survey of the elk herd in and around Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge. A total of 357 elk were observed (186 cows, 111 calves, 59 bulls, and 1 unclassified). Of these, 141 of them were seen in Hole-in-the-Ground, an area in the Rock Creek drainage in northern Whitman County that was added to the survey this year. Thirteen moose were also located.



***Elk in clearing on Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge***





*Elk intermixed in ponderosa pines on Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge*



*Cow and calf walking through the trees on Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge*





*Bull moose walking through the trees following the cow calf*

**Bat Condo Maintenance:** Biologists Atamian and Lowe and three volunteers from the Inland Northwest Wildlife Council (INWC) cleaned the bat condo, built by the INWC in 2008, at a private residence on the Little Spokane River. Since the last cleaning in 2017, well over 200 gallons of guano had accumulated in the structure. Summer surveys estimate 5,000–6,000 *Yuma myotis* now using the condo as a maternity roost.



*(Left) Guano piled up below the roosting baffles and flight training area inside the condo (Center) Biologist Atamian dropping the floorboards to empty guano from the bat condo (Right) INWC member Mike Curry power-washing the exterior of the condo*

**Elk Hoof Sampling:** Biologist Lowe collected elk hooves from a successful Turnbull special permit holder. These and other elk hooves collected in specific areas were delivered to Washington State University (WSU) researchers by Biologist Atamian as part of ongoing treponeme-associated hoof disease surveillance.

**Mountain Goat Harvest:** Biologist Lowe inspected a billy harvested by the sole permittee for the Mount Margaret Wilderness unit. 2020 was an especially unique year for this hunter, as he also drew (and filled) a quality elk archery permit and was on his way north to try and fill his moose permit and then a second deer permit.



*Billy brought in for inspection harvested in the Mount Margaret Wilderness*

**Livestock Depredation Investigation:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist O'Connor assisted in the depredation investigation of an injured calf in Stevens County, at a local cattle producer's private residence. The calf displayed injuries consistent with recently confirmed wolf depredations from the same area near Cedar Lake pasture. The calf's injuries were determined to have occurred five to seven days before the investigation. The investigation concluded that this was confirmed wolf depredation within the Leadpoint pack territory. The new hire, O'Connor, wrote the final livestock depredation report for this investigation.

## 2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

**Hunting:** Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley answered questions from numerous hunters about hunting access in Columbia and Walla Walla counties through calls, texts, and emails. Hadley navigated several hunters through WDFW's Hunt Planner Webmap identifying available access properties.

**Emergency Restrictions end October 1:** Blue Mountains Wildlife Area staff members began removal of the emergency fire restriction signs from access sites and WLAs on October 1. The shooting ranges at Asotin Creek and the Wooten WLAs are now open for public use. Wildlife Area staff members also opened the ATV trail in Green Gulch after installing new signage and checking to make sure the gate was shut and locked near Lime Point. County burn bans still apply, meaning open fires in Asotin County are still on hold.

**Cassidy Hole Sign Install:** Technicians Heimgartner, McGee, and Natural Resource Worker Wight worked together to get a plaque installed on the rock bluff above Cassidy's Hole.

## 3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

**Moose Calf Issues:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Westerman along with supervisor McCanna and Private Lands Biologist Gaston helped harass a young moose that had been hanging around the farmer's house for a month. The farmer's wife had been chasing the moose and trying to scare it off but it would always come back. The calf likely lost its mom to a vehicle fatality. They were able to harass it off the property and will wait to see if it returns or hopefully moves on to better habitat.



**Goose Abatement:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Westerman had a meeting with District 2 biologists Atamian and Lowe and waterfowl specialist Wilson about possible solutions for Spokane City parks dealing with an overabundant goose population. Trapping and relocation were discussed and determined to not be a viable and useful option. Westerman will discuss possible options with the park supervisor.

**Elk Damage:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Kolb surveyed multiple crops and examined elk damage for a producer in Walla Walla County. Buckwheat and sweet corn crops that are still on the ground are being impacted the most. Kolb confirmed the non-lethal abatement measures currently in place and encouraged the producer to direct opening season modern firearm deer hunters to the area to enhance human presence to assist in elk hazing efforts.



*Elk damage in a buckwheat crop*

**Dispersing Wolf:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Wade checked in with producers regarding information shared by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, of a wolf dispersing from Oregon through Asotin County. Due to the speed at which the dispersing wolf is moving, it had likely already passed through the area at the time of the report.

**Bear Education:** Wildlife Biologist Annemarie Prince coordinated with Conflict Specialists O'Connor and Cook on providing free bear spray and instruction on use to modern firearm deer hunters during opening weekend. The bear spray was purchased through monies supplied by the Idaho Panhandle National Forest for grizzly bear outreach and education.

Wildlife Conflict Specialist Samsill fielded and responded to several bear calls throughout the week. Although several were handled with advice, Samsill did respond to two reports in person. The first involved a report in Pend Oreille County where three bears were reportedly depredating several fruit trees in a landowner's yard. Samsill deployed a roll of electric fencing and an energizer around the fruit trees as a non-lethal deterrent. The second involved several bears in Kettle Falls reportedly getting into a landowner's fruit trees and garbage. Upon arrival, Samsill determined that the bear damage was a result of blatant disregard and extreme negligence on the part of the reporting party (RP). The RP had not attempted to remove any attractants and stated that if we would not bring a bear trap then he did not want any help. Although Samsill brought an electric fence to deploy, no non-lethal deterrent would work without an effort from the RP to clean up his property and remove attractants.



**Conflict Prevention:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Samsill responded to a depredation report in Pend Oreille County for a cow belonging to a local producer. Samsill met the producer at a set of corrals adjacent to his residence. The cow and associated calf were just brought in from the LeClerc Creek Allotment in the Goodman Meadows pack territory. After conducting a thorough depredation investigation, Samsill determined that the cow sustained injuries that were not depredation related.

**Moose in Barn:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Westerman responded to a call about a moose that took up residence in a barn near Rosalia. It was also reported that the moose appeared to be sick. When Westerman arrived, it was apparent that the moose had some pulmonary issues going on. The landowner did not want the moose on his property because of pets and kids. Westerman lightly harassed the moose to get it to move on.

#### 4) Conserving Natural Areas

**Whitney Road Fire:** Biologist Atamian assisted Swanson Lake WLA Technician Colvin in collecting photos at historical photo monitoring points to assess fire impacts on the wildlife area.



*Photos from a photo monitoring point on Swanson Lake WLA of an old ag field that has been restored to shrub-steppe. The top photo is from 2015. The bottom photo is from 2020 post-Whitney Rd fire. Though hard to see in the landscape photo you can easily see in the close up to the right the bunchgrass is starting to send up green shoots as is the small burnet and other forbs.*

United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wildlife Biologist Jason Lowe, based out of Spokane, stopped by SLWA on Tuesday to pick up some leftover bags of native grass seed from some recent projects. He delivered it to a seed vendor to mix with the sagebrush seed that BLM had in cold storage in Wenatchee. SLWA Assistant Manager Mike Finch ordered \$100,000 worth of native grass seed from a contract vendor. These native seed mixes will be dropped onto specified sites at SLWA by a local crop duster later this fall, followed by light harrowing for good seed-to-soil contact.

**Post-Fire Activities:** Biologist Baarstad spent most of the week contacting partner organizations to secure funding and volunteer labor for current and future habitat restoration activities in Lincoln and Douglas counties. The support from our conservation partners and individuals has been overwhelming. To date, approximately \$22,000 has been raised, primarily for private land habitat restoration. Volunteers from the Inland Northwest Wildlife Council were out this week helping with cleanup and seeding projects. Plans are in place for construction and replacement of nesting boxes, fence repair, and a large work party effort for the spring of 2021 to plant shrubs and trees at selected sites in both counties.

**State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):** Private Lands Biologist Gaston and Natural Resource Worker Holcomb assisted a landowner enrolled in the Palouse Prairie SAFE program. The landowner was planting additional trees and shrubs as part of his contract requirements and needed help with the planting. Private Lands Biologist Gaston and Natural Resource Worker Holcomb planted approximately 100 trees which were a mix of Ponderosa Pine and Serviceberry.

#### 5) **Providing Education and Outreach**

Nothing for this installment.

#### 6) **Conducting Business Operations and Policy**

Nothing for this installment.

#### 7) **Other**

Nothing for this installment.

### **REGION 2**

Nothing for this installment.

### **REGION 3**

Nothing for this installment.



## **REGION 4**

### *HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:*

#### **1) Managing Wildlife Populations**

**Preseason Duck Banding:** With the help of Private Lands staff Brad Otto and Chad Deyo, District biologist C. Moore wrapped up the 2020 preseason duck banding season. Carried out annually, the objective of this project is to band a minimum of 100 mallards to contribute to the statewide mallard quota set by the USFWS. This year, 152 mallards, 60 American green-winged teal, 5 wood ducks, 2 gadwall, and a bonus northern pintail were banded.



*Biologists were excited to see this stunning hatch-year northern pintail in the trap on the third last day of banding. This was the first pintail banded this season in District 14.*

**Forest Grouse Wing and Tail Collection:** District 14 biologists have been checking wing barrels weekly to collect hunter submitted wing and tails. All submissions will be stored until the annual grouse wing-bee. Data from these submissions help WDFW better understand changes in populations and harvest trends throughout the state. Please see our [Forest grouse wing and tail collection](#) page for locations of barrels near you.

**Oregon Spotted Frog Habitat Restoration:** District Biologist Waddell worked with 14 other volunteers to enhance habitat for endangered Oregon spotted frog at a site along the Samish River in Whatcom County. The morning involved cutting and hauling loads of wet (and heavy!) reed canary grass mats away from sites to enlarge existing breeding pools.



*(L) Volunteers are briefed before beginning work to enhance habitat for the Oregon Spotted Frog; (R) An endangered Oregon Spotted Frog hangs out while volunteers create a larger breeding pool at a site along the Samish River*

**2) Providing Recreation Opportunities**

Nothing for this installment.

**3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education**

**Elk Exclusion Fencing:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman, Natural Resource Technician Cogdal, and District Wildlife Biologist Waddell worked with a landowner to install 650 feet of new elk exclusion fencing on his property along State Route 20 in Skagit County. The new fence should help prevent most elk from entering and damaging the landowner’s hayfields.



*New elk exclusion fencing installed along a property boundary adjacent to State Route 20 in Skagit County*

**4) Conserving Natural Landscapes**

Nothing for this installment.



## 5) Providing Education and Outreach

**Skagit County Hunting Prospects Interview:** District biologist C. Moore discussed waterfowl hunting prospects in Skagit county last week during an interview with the Pacific NW edition of America Outdoors Radio, heard every Saturday morning from 7 to 8 AM on Seattle Sports Radio 950 KJR. The interview aired on Saturday, October 10, 2020.

## 6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Nothing for this installment.

## 7) Other

Nothing for this installment.

## **REGION 5**

Nothing for this installment.

## **REGION 6**

*HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:*

### 1) Managing Wildlife Populations

**Taylor's Checkerspot Site Visits and Survey Station Measurement Records:** Biologist McMillan made site visits on October 12 and 14 to gather detailed survey station records at the northern site. It became apparent these records were needed to be verified soon since there is a planned Forest Harvest that is going out to bid soon. The planned forest harvest at the site will cause vegetation removal at some of the stations so the slope and percentage of obstructed view were checked to make sure they represented the conditions during the 2020 surveys. The planned forest harvest and site treatments are planned for as early as winter 2020-2021. While on-site and checking station measurements some additions and adjustments were made to the stations for the 2021 season.





*Forest Harvest flagging and Site Treatment Signage; Biologist McMillan measuring for 2020 and 2021 survey route analysis. Photos demonstrate interface of habitat types, including moss dominate, bunchgrass dominate, and Oregon grape dominate.*

**Gather Seed from Native Vegetation for Taylor's Checkerspot Habitat:** Biologist McMillan made site visits on October 12 and 14 to gather native seed primarily from native bunch grasses, Oregon Sunshine, Fritillaria, Clarkia, and Castilleja.





**Pocket Gopher Documentation:** Biologist McMillan was up at Appleton Pass (between Elwha and Sol Duc Watersheds) during her September vacation and documented many locations of recent and current Mazama pocket gopher activity.



*Appleton Pass Mazama Pocket Gopher Sign pointed out by Mike Langley*

**Snowy Plover:** Biologist Novack, with assistance from Technician Tupen, removed signs from the snowy plover nesting area at Midway Beach.

**Wolf Management:** Biologist Tirhi continues to participate and represent District 11 in the internal state monthly wolf management virtual meeting. In preparation for this meeting, Tirhi normally reviews the state wolf sighting portal for new wolf reports in the district, contacts the public on credible reports, and plans ongoing wolf monitoring in the district. Several new wolf reports in the southeastern quarter of the district or just outside district boundaries were reported in 2020, which Tirhi is following up on. At this time, Tirhi's wolf management activities include a limited number of trail cameras deployed (ten), contacting public reporters, and partnering with NW Trek and Mount Rainier National Park on future monitoring within the park boundaries. Wolf reports can be found [here](#).

**Mazama Pocket Gopher Surveys:** Biologists Tirhi and Butler worked with Diversity Division biologists Olson and GIS specialist Simper to use ArcGIS Collector software and newly purchased iPad/GPS units to field trial on Mazama pocket gopher surveys at various gopher occupied sites in Thurston County. Simper and Olson created data collection forms and maps containing the survey track lines using Collector for the surveys. Tirhi found the units and software easy to use, durable in the field, and very helpful for keeping on transect lines while recording gopher mounds. Surveys were completed at Scatter Creek North and West Rocky Prairie WLAs. More surveys are planned through October depending on the weather (heavy rains would lead to canceling surveys). The district team wants to thank research scientist Olson and IT Specialist Simper for the amazing work they do improving gopher and other priority species monitoring for species recovery work!



**Oregon Spotted Frog Habitat Enhancement:** Biologist Tirhi met with Wildlife Area Manager Lowery and Thurston County public works staff members on a property in the gate area of Thurston County to review a culvert replacement and creek rerouting project. Tirhi applied and received funds for the purchase of the 168-acre property through the [Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program](#). The property was purchased for listed Oregon spotted frog recovery as well as for the oaks, prairie, wetlands, and section of Mima Creek onsite. A section of Mima Creek on the property had been ditched and moved to run alongside Gate Road including a hairpin turn into a small culvert. This impedes the creek's natural flow and causes a barrier to water and species movement. Public works received funding to reroute that section to its normal course and remove the culvert and hairpin and replace it with a wide bridge. Tirhi intends to seek grant funds to create shallow emergent wetlands on the property for spotted frog breeding and egg-laying. She was interested in whether the creek could be rerouted to help fill these ponds once built.

Unfortunately, the distance of the repair section is too far from where the ponds are likely to be placed. However, the team did agree to reduce the height and slope that would be built on the rerouted creek section closest to where the ponds will go to allow for flooding onto, and towards, the ponds. Besides potentially helping recharge the ponds, the new process is more likely to keep floodwaters onto the property and off the road which is a win-win for amphibians and public works! While Tirhi was on the property, she assessed another bridge over the main stem of Mima Creek to see if it was also a barrier to movement. Luckily, the water appears to be flowing freely with no obvious blockage.

## 2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

**Volunteer Work Party:** With the help of the Clover Park Rotary in Lakewood and a few other community organizations, over 60 volunteers helped in continuing efforts to improve recreational, educational, and habitat upkeep at the South Puget Sound Wildlife Area unit. Manager Lowery worked with the Clover Park Rotary, who adopted the wildlife area unit, to do grounds maintenance, pull derelict fencing, improve trails, litter pick up, remove brush, and limb up trees. The day resulted in over 219 hours of donated time, ten dump trailer loads of brush removed, and a couple of tons of old material taken to the dump. The event was well organized and attracted the attention of many members of the community. More work parties are being scheduled for the coming months. This and other previous events helped us reach the goal of getting the public portions of the unit back on track to be an urban wildlife interpretive center.





*Year one project area adopted by the clover park Rotary Club in the South Puget Sound Wildlife Area unit*



*A parking lot full of volunteers! Look how clean it is too!*



*Local Boy Scout troop and volunteers removing Scotch broom from Oak plantings*

**Wildlife Area Maintenance:** The Olympic crew has been spread from the Wynoochee mitigation site to the Chinook Wildlife Area for the past few weeks. Mowing began in the Chinook Wildlife Area in late September and will continue until mother nature does not allow it. With lots of acreage and ever-changing ground due to water inundation, this has been a slow but steady process for one machine. The Chinook Wildlife Area also encompasses the Goulter acquisition. Both areas offer many hunting opportunities including pheasant releases. There is still lots of mowing to do in these areas; high tides and standing water will dictate where and how long the mowing can continue.

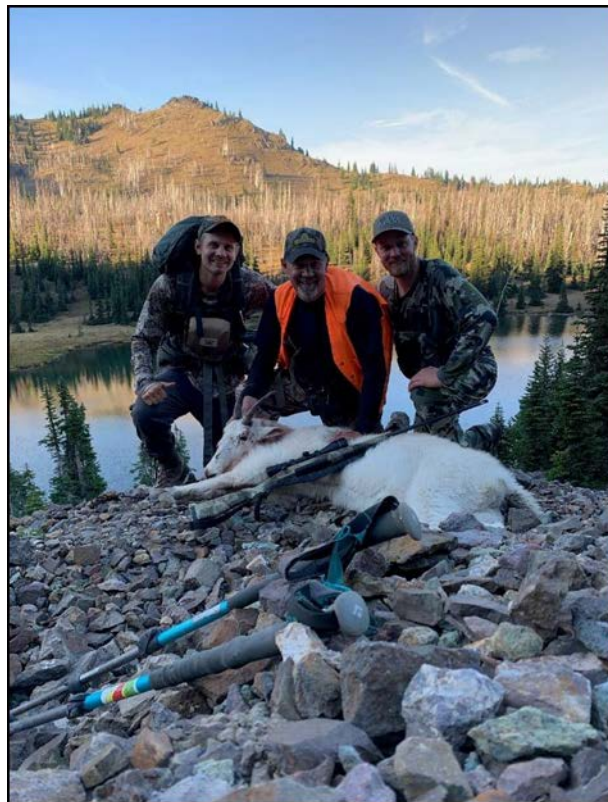
Although there was no re-farming in the Wynoochee mitigation site this year due to Covid-19, the Olympic crew was able to secure agriculture lime, which helps to maintain optimal PH levels, just in time to beat the monsoons. The Olympic Wildlife Area as well as the Wynoochee mitigation site are scheduled to undergo the annual fall fertilizing regime, which has been in process and will be completed by opening day of elk season for modern firearm.





*Lime buggy spreading Agricultural lime and the Wynoochee Unit 4 after lime was spread*

**Checking Game Harvest:** Biologists Tirhi and Butler processed (pinned) a bighorn sheep and a mountain goat for two lucky hunters. The sheep was harvested in the Quilomene Unit of eastern Washington. Butler instructed Tirhi on measuring and attaching the legally required metal pin (e.g., pinning) into one of the horns. The nanny goat was harvested in the Naches Goat Management Unit (3-6) of Region 3 above Basin Lake. Both hunters successfully obtained permits to harvest these beautiful animals, which they did with assistance from family and/or friends.



*Successful mountain goat hunter L. Scott in the Naches area with his sons*



**Hunter Contacts and Inquiries:** Biologist McMillan has talked to many hunters that have called to find out more about hunting options within District 16. Biologist Novack responded to multiple inquiries regarding hunting opportunities within the district.

### 3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

**Beaver Relocation Program:** Biologist Tirhi has shared numerous emails with Washington Farmland Trust, Beaver Creek Environmental Services Incorporated, and regional and headquarters staff members on implementing two beaver relocations within District 11 under the new [WDFW Beaver Relocation Program](#). As this is a new program, staff members and users are working through the details of implementing this program for success. Biologist Tirhi assisted by reviewing relocation requirements and ensuring those had been met by the project, assisting applicants with seeking receiving sites as needed, approving two proposed beaver receiving sites, and connecting users with the appropriate internal staff for approval (i.e., WDFW veterinary staff members for cross-watershed relocation). Tirhi believes this is a worthy program that agency personnel and the public want to see succeed and was happy to be part of the process.

### 4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

**Lands 20/20:** Biologist Novack submitted a Lands 20/20 application for District 17 to expand public ownership around the Chehalis WLA. Much of the area went through 20/20 in 2016, but a willing seller with property adjacent to WDFW lands came forth whose land hadn't been through the process. Over 1,500 acres are within the proposed area, all within the Chehalis River or Satsop River floodplain. Multiple potential funding sources were identified in the application.



**Westside Wildlife Regional Climate Workshop:** Biologists Tirhi and Butler represented District 11 at an internal workshop organized by WDFW's Climate Change section Biologist Helbrecht. The task of the participants was to populate a spreadsheet of those activities WDFW districts work on, their desired outcomes, how those activities may be impacted by climate change and the level of impact, and ideas on actions to address those impacts. The process was difficult and stagnant at times, but ultimately the participants were able to bring forth some helpful input. Although most (if not all?) WDFW biologists agree that climate change is impacting the environments we work on, however, determining the magnitude and timing of that impact is very difficult.

**Prescribed Fire for Prairie Restoration at the Scatter Creek and West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area Units:** Prairie restoration specialist Cook and Wildlife Area Manager Lowery, with the assistance of the Southern Prescribed Burn Team and project partners from the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM), conducted prescribed fire three different days totaling 74 acres on units within the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area. All sites and burn units were prepared before each burn day and substantial outreach was conducted to ensure activities were known to neighbors, the community, and the local fire authorities. Prairie habitats need fire on a reoccurring basis to maintain a healthy grassland and oak savannah ecosystem structure. Many species rely upon this unique and critical habitat to include nearly a dozen state and federally listed species.



*Prescribed burning on the West rocky Prairie unit*

## 5) **Providing Education and Outreach**

**Fifth Grade WDFW Virtual Presentation:** Biologist Tirhi prepared a slide presentation and video segment for combined fifth-grade classrooms from Bethel School District. The presentation was at the request of teachers who were beginning a section on environmental ecosystems and the work biologists do in those ecosystems. Tirhi was impressed with how well this virtual presentation was received, how engaged the kids were, and the depth and breadth of their questions. There were some biologists in the making! One of the few benefits of the Covid-19 pandemic are the virtual capabilities that were lacking previously ,which WDFW biologists across the state are using to their advantage to connect with classrooms and the public. The District 11 team would be happy to provide this virtual presentation to other fifth or sixth-grade classes.

## 6) **Conducting Business Operations and Policy**

Nothing for this installment.

## 7) **Other**

Nothing for this installment.