

Wildlife Program – Bi-weekly Report

September 1 to 15, 2021

LANDS DIVISION

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

Conserving Natural Landscapes

Chelan Wildlife Area – Swakane Forest Restoration Project: Forester Mize, along with assistance from Forester Pfeifle and Forestry interns, finalized re-marking and re-flagging the portions of Unit 4 that were impacted by the Red Apple Fire in July. Forester Mize revised all paperwork for harvester and log auction bid packets to address the changes caused by the Red Apple Fire. These packets were reposted on the Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website. Bids for these contracts will be due during the second half of September. The goal is to begin work around October 1 to finalize harvest operations in Unit 4 before the winter weather and road conditions set in.

Colockum Wildlife Area – Colockum Restoration Thinning Project Phase 1: Forester Mize continues to conduct layout and leave tree marking activities on this project, with no harvest skip marking and road layout in Units 1 and 3. Mize has sent out an email to set a date for a field review of this project with collaborators from the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Ecology, and the Yakama Nation.



Colockum Forest Restoration Project Unit 1 as viewed from across the North Fork Colockum Creek. Photo clearly shows a very dense stand with few gaps above the talus near the stream



Colockum Forest Restoration Project Unit 6. Photo demonstrates overstocked conditions prevalent throughout this project area

L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Grazing Permits Monitoring: Range Ecologist Burnham completed Multiple Indicator Monitoring of riparian habitat on the L.T. Murray Wildlife Area.

Teanaway Community Forest: Burnham conducted the 4th round of 2021 grazing monitoring on the Teanaway Community Forest (TCF) leases. Burnham also completed a draft report on the degree to which the TCF Grazing Framework had been implemented and how effective it was. This report was requested by the grazing technical team for the forest and will presumably be used to help develop lease renewal language.

Shrubsteppe Proviso: Range Ecologist Burnham attended meetings for two of the near-term technical action committees (hay and wildlife-friendly fences) and followed up gathering information to report at subsequent meetings.

Wildfire Suppression: Prescribed burn staff members continued to assist with wildfire suppression as they have over the past couple months as needed. Wildfires in eastern Washington are still a concern, but current suppression efforts are making good progress on control and containment.

Preparation for Controlled Burns on Eastern Washington Wildlife Areas: Staff members have been evaluating conditions for conducting prescribed fires this fall. Prescribed fire, used at certain times of the year when conditions are not so volatile, can greatly reduce wildfire intensity and create favorable resilient forest habitat. Areas to potentially burn this fall include the Methow's Ramsey unit, Colockum's Stemilt Lilly unit, L.T. Murray's Hutchins unit, and Oak Creek's Oak Creek drainage and Cougar units.

Weed Control Field Work: The North Crew treated butterfly bush on the Skagit Wildlife Area Island Unit, blackberry at Fir Island Farm, and knotweed at Southfork and Cottonwood. The crew treated cattail at the New Steamboat, Seattle Pond, and Deepwater sites. The crew also led a cooperative treatment effort with the Washington State Department of Agriculture, Snohomish County Weed Board, and Pat Cole of Wildlands Management for *Spartina anglica* at North Leque Island.

The South Crew treated weeds at the Chehalis Wildlife Area. Les Holcomb, Nels Mikkelsen, and Russ Nunez supported the United State Geological Survey and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by using airboats to access sites and sample burrowing shrimp. This work was done over two days in Grays Harbor as part of a research study. The crew surveyed Cedar River along the slough banks, and Brad Morgan surveyed Hawks Point, Clam Beach, and Cedar River meadow in Willapa Bay, treating where needed. Nunez and Mikkelsen supported the Benton County Weed Board, with the help of Franklin County Weed Board, on the annual Yakima River flowering rush survey and control project using airboats. The river is running higher than usual and very little flowering rush was located compared to previous surveys that occurred in July when water levels were lower with plants more exposed and in flower.

Weed Coordinator Heimer visited the three project sites and took post-treatment pictures looking at treatment efficacy. All treatment plots (a diquat application, followed by imazapyr) show efficacy compared to the controls. Heimer also treated samples of marshpepper with Procellacor, an aquatic herbicide, to determine efficacy. A separate site visit to record post-treatment efficacy at Flett Ponds was also done. Heimer revisited Minter Creek and treated a handful of knotweed regrowth for the Capital Asset Management Program (CAMP) in preparation for 2022 construction.

Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Wildfire Risk and Public Access to WDFW Lands: Section Manager Dahmer coordinated cross-program discussion reviewing wildfire risk and developing recommendations to revise public access restrictions on eastern Washington wildlife areas and water access areas. WDFW's day-use-only restriction was lifted on September 16, consistent with the Department of Natural Resources opening eastern Washington lands to public access. WDFW's restrictions on campfires, target shooting, chainsaw use, and smoking continue until the end of September. Dahmer also presented draft protective measures for land stewardship activities on wildlife areas and water access areas to regional wildlife program managers for input. The intent was to continue work on these measures and have the process be ready for the next burn season.

Bonneville Power Administration Fund Distribution: Vegetation Ecologist Merg previously coordinated work to distribute new Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) mitigation dollars to eight wildlife areas. BPA had some concerns regarding the proposal with a portion of funds going to BPA enhanced lands rather than all funding going to BPA fee title lands. Staff members are coordinating with BPA regarding their concerns while ensuring funding availability to provide land stewardship.

REGION 1

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

Managing Wildlife Populations

Feeding Preparations: Wildlife area staff members continue to prepare for an emergency winter feeding operation this upcoming winter season. With approximately 95% of winter ranges burned in the Lick Creek Game Management Unit, elk especially will likely have a hard time finding enough forage to survive the winter. So far, we have prepared our South Fork Hayshed by removing all materials and equipment for hay storage. Hay deliveries are scheduled to begin on September 20, with approximately 250 tons ordered. Snowplows, hay moving equipment, trucks, and other equipment issues are being worked on. We anticipate beginning feeding around the middle of December and will plan on feeding every day for 90 days.

Bluetongue Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease Response: Wildlife biologists in all three districts continue to respond to reports of dead and/or dying deer with symptoms of bluetongue and/or epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD). The outbreak is widespread this year and affecting mostly white-tailed deer, however we have documented bighorn sheep and mule deer with the virus as well.

Bog Lemming Surveys: Wildlife Biologist Turnock finished up this summer's pilot bog lemming surveys. With assistance from the Forest Service, district staff members were able to survey two meadows with historic detections. One meadow produced the minimum 50 samples needed, while the other had very few samples.



Scat board with a plethora of droppings/samples

Grizzly Bear Hair Corrals: Wildlife Biologists Prince and Turnock picked up a few grizzly bear hair corrals within the Selkirk Recovery Zone. A few corrals produced potential grizzly bear samples, but time will tell. Samples will be analyzed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS), and results will be available next season.

Providing Recreation Opportunities

Heller Bar Boat Ramp Gravel Bar Issue: Extremely low flows in the Snake River have produced an underwater gravel bar about 25 feet away from the end of the boat ramp. The gravel is only about 8 inches underwater and has been a boating hazard for the last month or so. Boats are hitting the obstacle and jet boats are sucking gravel through their pumps as they attempt to load their boats. Capital Asset Management Program (CAMP) has been notified and are working with Habitat Management to obtain proper permits allowing CAMP to remove or relocate the obstacle. The gravel has likely been pushed up from the bottom of the ramp by jet boats power loading onto trailers.

W.T. Wooten Wildlife Area: The W.T. Wooten Wildlife Area, including the Tucannon lakes, reopened to the public this month after being closed all summer due to wildfire activity.

Conserving Natural Areas

Farm Bill: Biologist Baarstad spent most of the week working on the Lincoln County Conservation Reserve Program with the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (CRP-SAFE) contracts and meeting with landowners to discuss implementation procedures.

4-O Ranch Wildlife Area Boundary Stock Fence Project: Wildlife area staff members continue constructing boundary stock fence along the west side of the 4-O Ranch Wildlife Area. Two crew members left their positions in late August. We are closing in on completing this job that was started in April.



Blake Rimmelspacher, Scott McGee, and John Johnson preparing to attach wire to a new brace. The new fence intersects old fence at this location

Asotin Creek Wildlife Area Trespass Livestock Update: The Lick Creek Fire has destroyed livestock fences over a wide swath of the landscape. Many grazing unit management fences on U.S. Forest Services (USFS) land, along with infrastructure such as watering facilities, have been destroyed. Most boundary stock fences between WDFW land and USFS land have been heavily damaged. Livestock from USFS permittees are wandering in all major drainages of the Asotin Creek Wildlife Area, including the Weatherly Unit. WDFW riparian zones such as the South Fork of Asotin Creek and Charley Creek have livestock in them. Cows are on and grazing Weatherly. Wildlife area staff members contact the Forest Service Permittees when cows are observed on state land. Additionally, there has been chronic situations of trespass livestock on the Wooten Wildlife Area where cows are ending up at the headquarters buildings along the Tucannon River. The boundary stock fence has not been burned but is in a severe state of disrepair. Overall, there simply isn't much that can be done. The problem won't go away until the permittees make their final gather and take their cows home for the winter.

Providing Education and Outreach

Columbia County Fair Booth: Wildlife Area Manager Dingman and Natural Resources Worker Jensen decorated the WDFW booth for the Columbia County Fair. The booth won second place in its class.



Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Columbia Plateau Wildlife Management Association Landowner Hunting Permit Program: Private Lands Biologist Gaston and District Biologist Atamian met with the Columbia Plateau Wildlife Management Association (CPWMA) to discuss upcoming landowner hunting permit (LHP) seasons and next year permit numbers.

Culture Improvement Team and Steering Committee Meeting: Wildlife Conflict Supervisor McCanna presented a portion of a Culture Improvement Team (CIT) PowerPoint to the steering committee for review and comments. The CIT is getting prepared to present to the District 1 team and the Executive Management Team.

Other

Green Ridge Fire: The Green Ridge Fire was started by lightning on July 7, 2021 and continues to actively burn in the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness. The W.T. Wooten Wildlife Area was being used as a Fire Camp until Labor Day weekend but has now reopened to the public. Rehabilitation work will occur this fall on fields that received heavy use by the Fire Camp.

W.T. Wooten Headquarters: Wildlife Area Manager Dingman and Natural Resources Worker Jensen spent a week prepping and painting the exterior of the W.T. Wooten Headquarters. It desperately needed a new coat of paint going into the rainy fall and winter months.



Natural Resources Worker Jensen caulking the windows after painting was completed



W.T. Wooten Wildlife Area Headquarters after being painted in September 2021

REGION 2

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

Managing Wildlife Populations

Glacier Peak Wolverines: After mortally wounding a mule deer late in the day, archery hunters in the Pass No Pass area of the Glacier Peak Wilderness observed three wolverines, likely a female with her two kits. Shortly after the deer was wounded, wolverines were observed in the distance following the blood trail and traveling quickly to the area in which the dying deer was hiding. Night closed in before the hunters could make it to retrieve the deer, but early the following morning the hunters tracked it to where the wolverines had caught up with it. It was evident that the wolverines had chased the deer to its death and then fed on the rear, head, and even the velvet off the antlers. The sighting of this very rare and elusive carnivore in Chelan County, particularly a breeding female and her young, is very exciting and is encouraging to wildlife biologists. It shows that some suitable wolverine habitat still remains this far south. This is significant because wolverines once ranged contiguously from the far north of Canada and Alaska to southern California and east to New England, but their range within the lower 48 is now restricted to several pockets in the west. This is largely due to centuries of unregulated trapping for the fur trade as well as climate change altering the alpine landscapes on which wolverines depend. Beginning this fall, WDFW and USFS biologists will be conducting a wolverine survey using baited camera traps across potential habitat in Washington State.



One of a group of three wolverines sighted by archery hunters in the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area – Photo by Kyle McGill

Northern Pacific Rattlesnake Research and Management: Biologist Fitkin assisted USFS Biologist Rohrer with annual pit-tagging of conflict snakes. Tagged snakes will soon be translocated to a known den away from human development. In addition to the pit tags, this year we attached radio transmitters to two snakes to help locate previously unknown hibernacula. This year we are using a thread and epoxy technique pioneered by other researchers that is much less invasive than internal implantation. Once dens are located, the epoxy shell can be snapped open and removed from the snake for future use.



Biologist Rohrer and volunteer staff members processing northern pacific rattlesnakes – Photo by S. Fitkin



Radio-marked snake – Photo by S. Fitkin

Golden Eagles: Biologists Comstock and Jeffreys are coordinating with Raptor Specialist Jim Watson in an effort to capture and put a GPS transmitter on an adult eagle occupying a breeding territory within the footprint of the proposed solar facility on Badger Mountain. Golden eagles have experienced population declines in recent years and are federally protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and this particular eagle pair has successfully fledged offspring for multiple years. The construction and operation of a solar facility within or near the breeding territory has a high potential to negatively impact breeding success in a number of ways, including possibly causing nest failure or abandonment. By attaching a GPS transmitter to one of the adults, biologists hope to gain a better understanding of the eagles' movements throughout their territory and the area proposed for development. To capture a golden eagle, biologists need to place a large mammal carcass as bait within the eagles' territory at a location where a bow net can be deployed. It is important to get the eagle accustomed to visiting this area ahead of the capture, so biologists have set up two bait stations with roadkill deer, sheep carcasses, and game cameras to monitor any visitation by eagles. So far, only a juvenile eagle (shown below) has been observed feeding upon one of the carcasses. This juvenile eagle is likely the young of the year fledged by the resident adults this past summer, and placing a transmitter on this eagle would not serve a purpose as it will soon disperse to form its own territory elsewhere. Biologists will keep baiting and monitoring these sites for the next couple of weeks.



A young golden eagle and several magpies feed on a bighorn sheep carcass – Photo by Emily Jeffreys

Okanogan Bighorn Sheep Management: District staff members investigated two recent mortalities of WDFW radio-collared bighorn sheep from the Mt. Hull herd. Samples were collected to test for *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (Movi) the causative agent for pneumonia in bighorn sheep, bluetongue/epizootic hemorrhagic disease, and psoroptes mites. Over the past few weeks, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation biologists have investigated six of their radio-collared bighorn sheep that have died within the Mt. Hull (3) and the Omak Lake (3) herds, and all those animals tested positive for the bluetongue virus. As such, bluetongue is the leading suspect for the current mortalities and testing is pending. The bluetongue virus is transmitted through biting midges (*Culicoides spp.*), and outbreaks usually subside after the first hard frost kills the biting midge viral host.



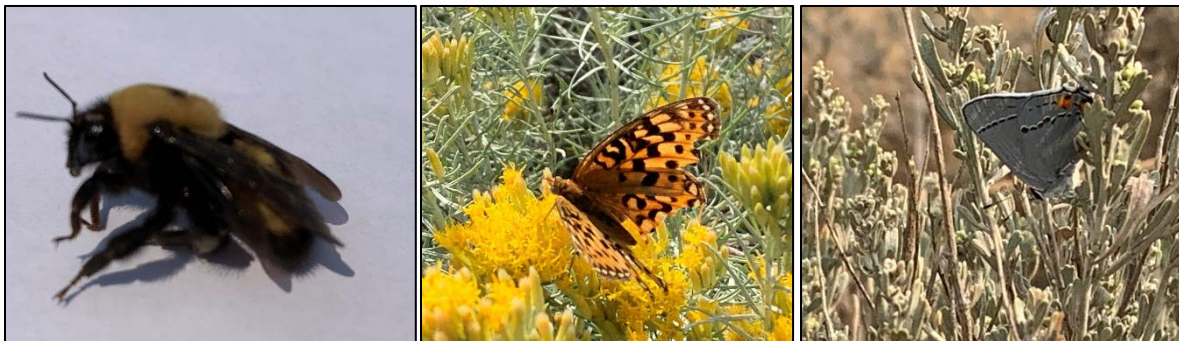
Bighorn sheep habitat on Mount Hull – Photo by S. Fitkin

Mule Deer Management: Each summer a small number of the radio-collared mule deer that winter in the Methow Valley travel north through the Pasayten Wilderness and summer in British Columbia, Canada. We always wondered how a mortality event would be quickly investigated if it should happen in British Columbia (B.C.), especially with Covid-19 restrictions on cross border travel. Well, it finally happened, and Biologist Heinlen contacted his counterpart in B.C. who quickly agreed to go conduct the mortality investigation. Due to the degraded condition of the carcass, no cause of death was able to be determined but requested samples were obtained and the radio collar was recovered. A big thank you to Wildlife Biologist A. Walker for helping WDFW investigate this mortality.



Radio collared mule deer mortality remains in British Columbia – Photo by A. Walker

Bumblebee Surveys: Biologist Rowan spent two days performing surveys for bumblebees at sites surveyed once earlier in the summer. Very few blooms were present on very few species still in-bloom. Those species with a few blooms were predominantly rabbitbrushes, aster, snowy buckwheat, and some plants that insects avoid such as non-native common tansy. People often think every flower benefits pollinators, but each species of insect and plant has co-evolved to allow for optimal transfer of pollen or nectar. For example, some bees and butterflies have shorter tongues and can't reach into flowers adapted for longer-tongued bees and butterflies. The ultraviolet colors of flowers also attract their pollinators, while some plants such as tansy have chemicals that repel insects.



***Bombus nevadensis* and two butterflies observed in the area** – Photos by Ella Rowan

Northern Leopard Frogs: Since the northern leopard frog releases in late summer, Biologist Grabowsky has implemented post-release visual encounter surveys at the release site to determine presence of recently released frog. Unfortunately, only one frog has been observed in the week since the release. This is likely due to dense tall emergent vegetation that has crowded the shoreline, making it difficult to observe basking or foraging frogs. Unlike other species, northern leopard frogs (NLF) leave very little, if any trace of activity and the only way to confirm presence is to actually observe the frog. Fortunately, bullfrog activity at the release site is very limited. Bullfrogs have been a major presence at the release site in the past, so efforts to remove them from this area seem to be taking effect. The next step for the NLF project is to evaluate additional release sites within the Columbia Basin Wildlife Area and surrounding area.

Providing Recreation Opportunities

Bighorn Sheep Hunts: Bighorn sheep hunting season kicked off on September 1 for the raffle and auction permit holders and September 15 for special permit holders. The opportunity to harvest a bighorn ram in the state of Washington is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for special permit hunters, and typically months of careful scouting precede the successful harvest of each ram. Hunters must present the horns of any ram taken in Washington to a wildlife biologist for inspection and the permanent marking of a unique identification number (“pinning”) within 10 days of the kill. District 7 Biologists Comstock and Jeffreys have pinned a couple of sheep so far since the seasons opened.



The 2021 governor's tag hunter with his harvested ram – Photo by Devon Comstock

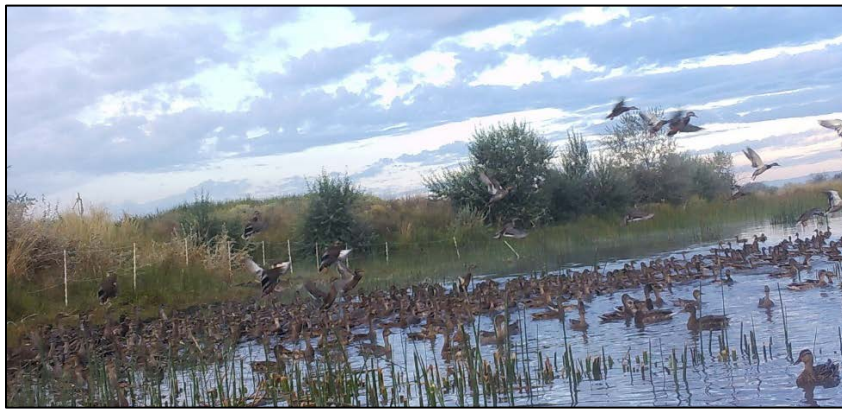


One of two rams harvested under the Swakane Any Ram special permit – Photo by Emily Jeffreys

Waterfowl Management: District staff members have continued waterfowl banding efforts, and the focus has shifted from swim-in traps to rocket netting, mainly because ducks have become somewhat finicky with traps. However, determined biologists are adaptable. District 5 staff members have shifted work priorities and dedicated more time and focus to waterfowl banding efforts this season. This shift has paid dividends because the total band count at this time is roughly 330 mallards and 120 other species, including northern pintails, redheads, wood ducks, and teal. These captures have been accomplished despite drought conditions and seemingly low production, as most of the birds captured have been adults.



Perfectly deploying rocket net – Photo by Sean Dougherty



Rocket net site ready for trapping – Photo by Sean Dougherty

Forest Grouse Hunting Season: Forest grouse season opened on September 15 this year. The move from the traditional September 1 opening date was made in an effort to decrease the ratio of brood hens and juveniles harvested relative to adult male grouse. Because hens with broods tend to remain at lower elevations longer than adult males, the majority of grouse harvested in the first two weeks of September are that year's juveniles and breeding hens. Declines in breeding hens in particular represent a significant driver of population declines (although environmental factors such as wildfire and climate are also important factors). Declining grouse populations mean that hunters generally have to spend more days in the field and experience less success. Biologists will continue to monitor forest grouse harvest annually and hope the new opening date will contribute to increased harvest, hunter success, and hunter numbers in the years to come.

Grouse hunter participation in the wing and tail collection program is essential to WDFW's efforts to build estimated population trend datasets for each species to evaluate harvest changes over time. Hunters can help by depositing one wing and the tail of each grouse harvested into wing collection barrels placed around the state or by bringing them to the closest WDFW regional office. District 7 Biologists Jeffreys and Comstock have placed four wing barrels in the same locations as last year across Chelan County. For more information including a diagram explaining the sample collection process and coordinates for wing barrel locations, go to our Forest grouse wing and tail collection page [here](#).



A wing barrel at French Corral (the intersection of Forest Service Roads 7520, 5800, and 5200) in Chelan County – Photo by Devon Comstock

Hunter Access Program: Private Lands Biologist Braaten continues reposting private land Hunter Access properties within the Pearl Hill wildfire boundary. Hundreds of signs need to be replaced, so work continues.



Private lands Hunter Access sign replacement after Pearl Hill Fire – Photos by Eric Braaten

Biologist Cook began spending more time reposting Hunter Access boundary signs in preparation for the general deer season. Cook also finished entering reservation information for Hunt by Reservation properties near Royal City. The first dates available for reservations are in mid-October for regular waterfowl seasons. These properties have been part of the reservation system for several years now and should provide field hunts for waterfowl. Biologist Cook also submitted paperwork for adding approximately 400 acres to a current Hunter Access contract. Cook also is working with one landowner to make changes after a death in the family that will hopefully allow continued Hunter Access near Washtucna.

Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Depredation Investigation: Specialist Heilhecker and Sergeant McCormick investigated a dead calf on a private pasture within the Beaver Creek territory. Thirdhand reports detailed the calf walking around for an unknown number of days with a chunk missing from the hind end. The calf had been dead for a couple days prior to the investigation and likely died because of the injury. During the investigation, they found puncture holes with bruising on the hide of the right rear leg near what appeared to be a “chunk” of missing muscle. Birds, and likely coyote(s) based on tracks in the area, scavenged on the carcass. There was no additional evidence at the site given the calf probably moved from where the incident occurred. There was not enough information to confirm cause of death but based on what evidence remained, it was ruled as a probable depredation caused by a single wolf.

Wolf Report: Specialist Heilhecker spoke to a reporting party regarding wolves howling within their territory. The reporting party walks in the National Forest on a regular basis with her two, unleashed dogs and was aware wolves shared the area. However, she had concerns that the wolves were acting differently. Specialist Heilhecker informed the reporting party that based on the location and the description of the wolves’ behavior, she had found the wolves’ rendezvous site. When people get too close to a rendezvous site, wolves will howl, bark, bark-howl, pace and, at times, growl to warn people to leave the area. If people are alert, they will hear the wolves pacing in the woods and hear the position of the howling change. The reporting party enjoyed hearing and seeing the wolves but had already made the correct decision to avoid the area for the time being.

Big Horn Sheep Fencing Contract: Specialist Bridges continues to work with non-governmental organizations and the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to continue the yearly maintenance of the 97a BHS fence. The Wenatchee Sportsmen’s Association, Washington Wild Sheep Foundation, Washington Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, WSDOT, and WDFW continue to come together for the conservation of big horn sheep. This fence has shown that it has reduced the vehicle/animal collision rate to that of the statewide average, when before it was identified as one of the highest collision rates in the state.

Providing Education and Outreach

Beavers, Bats, and Bears: Biologist Rickel responded to calls received from the public on three separate issues. He provided information on methods to resolve the issue and similar ones in the future, information/education on likely causes to the situation, and advice on ways to reduce future encounters. The issues included a beaver eating ornamental and berry bushes, dead bats found on property, and a bear with cubs in a tree.

Other



White-tailed ptarmigan (Lagopus leucura rainierensis) in its alpine habitat – Photo by J. Heinlen



Mormon metalmark (Apodemia mormo) butterflies in District 6 – Photo by J. Heinlen



Snow buckwheat in late summer bloom on Big Bend Wildlife Area – Photo by Eric Braaten

REGION 3

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

Managing Wildlife Populations

Duck Trapping Season: Productivity indices have been very poor at trap sites in District 4, indicating it was a hard year for locally breeding ducks. However, thanks to high levels of effort from Scientific Technicians Martenson and Merluccio, new trap sites were installed at McNary National Wildlife Refuge. Eight hundred mallards have been banded by the District 4 team this season! In District 8, only one site has been producing. Roughly 350 birds were banded, and they were heavily weighted toward hatch-year birds (good local production). The trapping site at Sunnyside was attracting few birds until Waterfowl Specialist Wilson mowed with the Marsh Master recently. Within six hours of mowing, 50 birds arrived. Trapping will be concluding soon, but we are hoping to trap Sunnyside again before the end.



*Bill freckles: as female ducks age they tend to show more black marks on their bill –
Adult Northern Pintail male (top) and female (below)*



Half dinosaur-half torpedo, this juvenile pied-billed grebe was quickly released from the waterfowl traps after a few obligatory photos

Porcupine Rescued from Industrial Site: District 4 Wildlife Biologist Fidorra assisted a local business who found a large porcupine in their shipping yard, which was largely fenced in and on a busy street. Fidorra captured and released the spikey critter in a more suitable habitat unharmed.



Porcupine ready for release

Bull Elk in Richland: District 4 Wildlife Biologist Fidorra and Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand, along with the Enforcement Detachment, responded to a young bull elk in the suburbs of Richland, which had damaged a car and was trapped by high fences and busy streets. The team immobilized and transported the elk safely for release.



Elk in Richland (photo by homeowner) and preparing for release

Horn Rapids Geese: District 4 Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand responded to a call of several injured geese involved in a car collision near Horn Rapids Golf Course. Upon arriving at the scene, only one goose was located near the roadway and it was deceased. Several hundred geese were located nearby in a pond and shoreline, but none appeared injured.

Elk Hooves to Washington State University: District 4 Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand coordinated with Washington State University staff members on transferring nine sets of elk hooves collected from a damage permit hunter on Rattlesnake Mountain. The hooves will be used to further studies on Treponeme-Associated Hoof Disease (TAHD).

Wildlife Disease: District Wildlife Biologists Oates and Jeffreys collected samples from a dead bighorn sheep lamb in the Quilomene herd that was reported south of Wenatchee on private property near Jump Off Ridge. The physical symptoms observed by the reporting party pre-mortem and lungs examined post-mortem were consistent with pneumonia (*Mycoplasma Ovipneumoniae*). Results are pending from the Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab at Washington State University. Biologist Oates also responded to a sick deer near Cle Elum that was dead upon arrival. There have been several reports from the district and statewide of sick or dead deer. Samples were collected and sent to Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab at Washington State University.

Bighorn Sheep Sampling: District 8 Wildlife Biologists Bernatowicz and Oates worked with permit hunters to collect samples from hunters who harvested bighorn sheep. Hunter participation/harvest has been unusually low, possibly due to heat/smoke in the area.

Providing Recreation Opportunities

Private Lands Program Outreach: Region 3 Natural Resources Technician Byers began creating advertisement flyers for the Private Lands program, which will describe the details of the program and hopefully encourage more involvement from private landowners. Byers also created maps and rules for each Register to Hunt and Hunt by Reservation site in Franklin County in preparation for deer season.

Landowner Hunting Permit (LHP) Program: District 4 Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand coordinated with several of the hunt managers for the Silver Dollar and Blackrock LHPs concerning hunt scheduling and animal movements. Very warm and dry conditions have had some areas closed to hunting for fear of wildfire and other weather-related concerns.

Youth Pheasant Hunt: District 8 Wildlife Biologist Bernatowicz and Hunter Education and Volunteer Coordinator Garcia worked with Pheasant Forever and First Hunt Foundation to set up mentored pheasant hunts in District 8. Only eight youth signed up, which low turnout is not unusual in September. Participation/demand for mentored hunts is much higher during school breaks in November and December.

Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

West Richland Deer Complaint: District 4 Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received and responded to a deer damage complaint from a grower of sweet corn and pumpkins. The fields are located near the Yakima River and in proximity of several private residences. Several non-lethal hazing strategies were discussed as well as upcoming hunting seasons and use of either Master Hunters or Youth Hunters off our Region 3 Damage Roster. Active hazing will continue until the crops are harvested. One Master Hunter has been deployed and depending on his success others may soon be deployed.





Deer damage in sweet corn

Sunnyside Cornfield Elk Damage: District 4 Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received and responded to an elk damage complaint at a large circle of silage corn near Sunnyside. A small group of elk are foraging and trampling the crop and hazing has become ineffective. After discussing other options, it was decided to obtain a damage permit from an adjacent landowner hopefully to lethally remove one elk and pressure the rest out of the area. A neighboring large acreage landowner enrolled the Landowner Hunting Permit program was also notified of the elk activity to further concentrate hunting pressure in the area.

Corral Canyon Elk Damage Hunts: Conflict Specialist Hand continued to patrol irrigated crops on Rattlesnake Mountain for elk damage activity. Some damage has occurred in small cornfields and a few tree fruit operations have noticed elk presence, but fortunately damage has been minimal. Coordination with Master Hunters, landowners, and permit hunters on elk activity and movements has been beneficial in pressuring animals away from crops. One elk was reported harvested by a Master Hunter. Increased human presence from farm workers conducting harvesting activities and hunting from dove and archery deer hunters has assisted in pressuring animals away from crops.

Badger Canyon Deer Complaint: District 4 Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received and responded to a deer damage complaint from an apple orchard operation in Badger Canyon. A small herd of mule deer have browsed on several new seedling trees that will need to be replaced. The landowner has attempted to spray the trees with a deer deterrent chemical as well as use acoustic deterrents with failing results. With archery deer season currently open, increased pressure from hunters was recommended as well as other non-lethal techniques. Further follow-up will be made to monitor the situation.

South Finley Deer Damage Complaint: District 4 Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand responded to a new deer damage complaint to a large wine grape operation in Southern Benton County near the Columbia River. Heavy browsing damage by deer is occurring as the fruit builds in sugar content. Several deterrent measures were discussed with the farm manager, who is really interested in using youth hunters from the Region 3 special permit hunter pool. Coordination will continue to monitor the damage and provide hunter opportunities.



Deer browse on a wine grape vineyard

Conserving Natural Landscapes

Weed Control on the L.T. Murray Wildlife Area: Natural Resources Technician Blore sprayed Russian thistle at the Whiskey Dick Wildlife Area's Corrals and Hell's Kitchen restoration sites. The scattered plants within restoration site boundaries had such shallow roots, they were easily removed using hand tools. Blore sprayed scattered weeds in the L.T. Murray's Ragland restoration site. The site will be disced again in the upcoming weeks and replanted in the fall of 2022.

Natural Resources Specialist Nass assessed Heart K and Gress (Taneum) properties for Canada thistle and ventenata for fall weed control. Now that there's moisture in the forecast, it's time to start thinking about residual herbicide treatments. Laramie 25DF will be applied at the Gress site located between Taneum Creek and I-90. Plateau will be applied to small, isolated patches of ventenata in the forested area of the L.T. Murray Unit.



Russian thistle plants were easy to kick over at the Corrals site on the L.T. Murray's Whiskey Dick Unit



Vehicles going through and around boulders on the L.T. Murray's Yakima River Unit

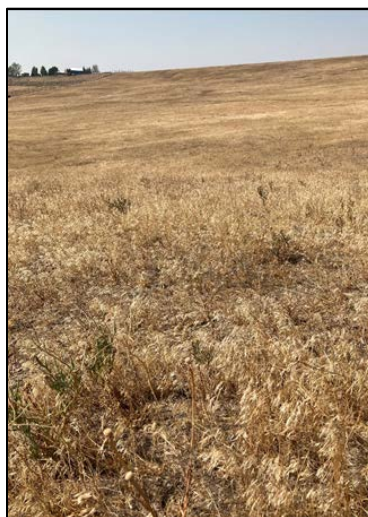


Material staged at the Ragheart site of the Taneum Creek Habitat Enhancement Project

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Contracts: Region 3 Private Lands Biologist Hulett continued working on 11 State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) contracts for the Benton and Franklin County Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Hulett contacted a landowner about their two Franklin County SAFE contracts and spoke to them about the SAFE program, their goals for enrolling the land into the SAFE program and finding a time to set up a site visit. Due to post-harvest tasks the landowner could not meet with Hulett until the second week of September. The nine Benton County SAFE contracts have yet to be submitted to Region 3 private lands, but Hulett expects these contracts soon. At this time, it is expected that these contracts will need to be completed by September 17.

Oregon and Washington SAFE Contract: Region 3 Private Lands Biologist Hulett worked with Region 1 Private Land Biologist Thorne-Hadley on a SAFE contract. It is located in Walla Walla County but being administered out of the Umatilla County Farm Service Agency (FSA)/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Oregon. Hulett worked to inform NRCS staff members in Oregon about the requirements of the Ferruginous Hawk SAFE and provided Region 3's seeding specifications. It was a surprise to have a Washington SAFE contract being administered out of Oregon, but it is not unheard of. In the future, WDFW Private Lands will need to prepare because our current NRCS statement of work agreement is only with Washington and not our neighboring states.

Fall Aerial Spraying: Wenas Wildlife Area Manager Hughes and Technician Kass began prioritizing areas for fall aerial spraying. Long term habitat management strategies for areas chosen were discussed. Hughes and Kass conducted site visits to Huntzinger corner, Lower Bull Pasture fields, and Hessler Flats. Roza is another area that will be a top priority for fall treatment. A pre-emergent control for cheatgrass is the main objective. Hughes began mapping out the areas for treatment. The Wenas recently received additional funds through the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for fire recovery, which will aid in the aftermath of the Evans Canyon Fire. Environmental Clearance was given for the Wenas to be able to aerial spray while using BPA funds. These additional funds will be used to make this effort happen for post fire weed control.



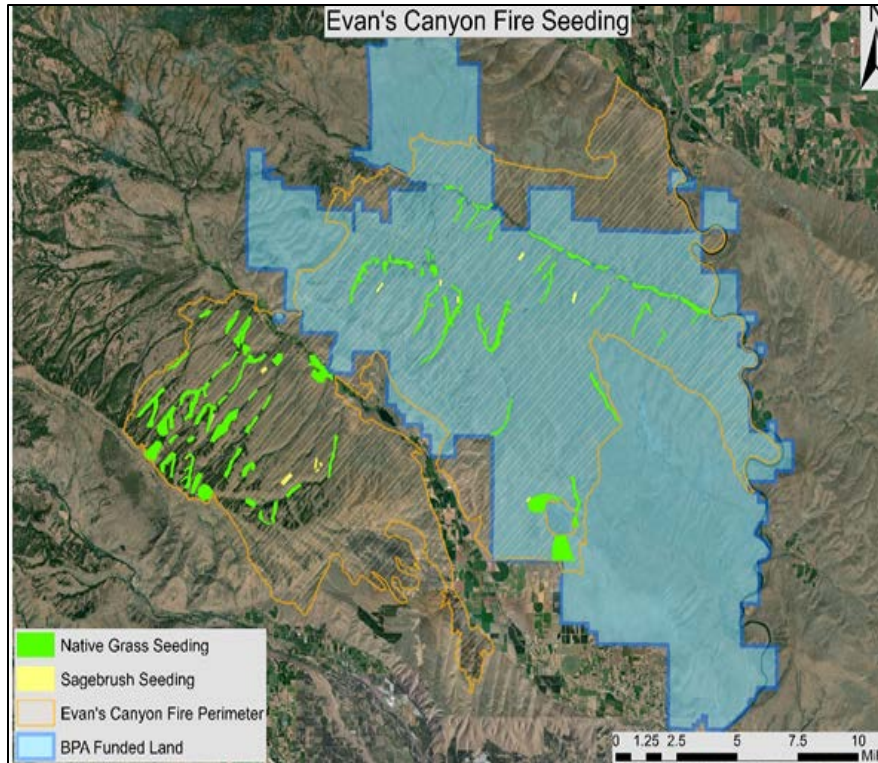
Cheatgrass in Lower Bull Pasture. Preemergent will be sprayed to begin control

Legoman Fence: Wenas Wildlife Area Biologist Daling spent a few days out on the new NJK Timber Company property aiding Assistant Manager Taylor, Technician Stultz, and Technician Kass in the construction of boundary fence. Biologist Daling will head out and finish the work while Technician Stultz and Technician Kass have been putting in on the fence by finishing up the clipping and bringing the project to an end.



Section of NJK Timber Company boundary fence along the “horseshoe bend” in the road

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Reporting: Biologist Daling completed the end of contract bi-annual report for the BPA Operation and Management contract for the years 2019-2020. The report gives BPA a summary of work completed under the contract, as well as highlights the accomplishments of the Wenas Wildlife Area staff members for the year. Some of the highlights included were: The opening of the Sheep Company Shooting Range, the control of invasive plant species on over 210 acres of the wildlife area, and the seeding of over 1,300 acres of ground burned in the Evan’s Canyon Fire.



Map showing the extend of BPA Land effected by the Evan's Canyon Fire, as well as fire recovery seeding efforts

Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Firearm Qualification: L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Winegeart and Natural Resource Technician Blore qualified with the L.T. Murray firearm in Ephrata.



Manager Lopushinsky and Assistant Manager Hagan on the firing line in Ephrata

Landscape Vegetation Monitoring: L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Winegeart performed landscape vegetation monitoring ahead of domestic sheep crossing the L.T. Murray Unit, before finding out sheep were not turned out on the forest allotment this season due to fire danger.

Weed Control Grants: L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Winegeart worked with Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation personnel and Olympia to close out two grants that were used for weed control on the Colockum and L.T. Murray Wildlife Areas.

Other



Cabin Creek running low on the L.T. Murray's Yakima River Unit

Abandoned Camper: Natural Resources Specialist Nass reported an abandoned camper at the Joe Watt Canyon parking area. Nass is working with Enforcement Officer Nasset to have the camper removed.



Abandoned camper at the L.T. Murray's Joe Watt parking area

REGION 5

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

Managing Wildlife Populations

Hoof Disease Hunter Incentive Program: Biologist Holman assisted Hoof Disease Technician Downing in setting up collection stations for hunter-submitted elk hooves associated with the Incentive Program. Western Washington elk hunters are being asked to voluntarily select animals showing signs of hoof disease when harvesting elk this fall. Hunters then submit hooves for WDFW evaluation. If hoof disease is confirmed in the submitted hooves, the hunter is entered into a drawing for special bull elk permits. The goal of this initial year of the Incentive Program is to evaluate whether encouraging hunters to harvest elk with hoof disease can be an effective management tool in an overall effort to reduce the prevalence of hoof disease. For more information about the Incentive Program see the WDFW website here: [Elk hoof disease incentive permits | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)



Elk Hoof collection station at the Merwin Fish Hatchery

District 9 and 10 Grouse Wing and Tail Collection Sites: Biologist Holman and Cowlitz Wildlife Area staff members put out grouse wing and tail collection barrels in District 10 prior to opening day of grouse season. Biologist Bergh set out the grouse wing collection barrels at the three sites in Skamania and Klickitat counties in District 9. Hunters are asked to submit one wing and the tail of each grouse they harvest in collection sites throughout Washington. The collection of grouse wings and tails allows wildlife managers determine age, sex, and species of the grouse harvested by Game Management Unit (GMU), which helps to evaluate population trends.



Grouse wing barrel collection station ready to collect wings and tails in District 9 and 10

Chronic Wasting Disease Training: Biologist Wickhem attended a training with other DFW staff members on chronic wasting disease. Chronic wasting disease is a fatal illness of deer, elk, moose, and caribou. The disease is caused by mutated proteins known as prions, which can contaminate the environment and be transmitted between animals through their feces, saliva, urine, and other bodily fluids. This devastating disease is found in ungulate (hoofed mammal) populations throughout the Midwest, interior western United States, Canada, and select locations in the south and on the east coast. The training included a background on chronic wasting disease, WDFW's draft Chronic Wasting Disease Management Plan and included hands-on practice at locating and removing the retropharyngeal lymph node (RPLN) from deer carcasses. The RPLN is in the neck of the animal (and rather difficult to find), and is the standardized tissue used to test for chronic wasting disease (CWD) in wild ungulates. This fall, Wickhem and several other DFW staff members will be working at check stations throughout northeast Washington to collect RPLNs from harvested white-tailed deer, so they can be tested for CWD. CWD has not been detected within Washington State yet, but before now only opportunistic testing has occurred. To learn more about CWD and WDFW's 2021 surveillance program, read more [here](#).



Biologist Wickhem searches for the retropharyngeal lymph node in the head of a roadkill deer



Research Scientist Devivo demonstrates the best place to make the incision when looking for the desired lymph nodes

Duck Banding: Biologist Bergh joined District 4 Biologist Fidorra for a day of duck banding near Pasco. Fidorra had three duck traps set-up at the McNary National Wildlife Refuge. Biologist Bergh has banded geese, but never ducks so this was a good learning experience in addition to helping Fidorra for the day. Most of the ducks in the traps were mallards with a few teal, one gadwall, and one grebe. When hunters harvest and report a duck with a band, that information is used to generate survival estimates as well as learn about distribution. To report a banded or neck-collared bird, please use the U.S. Geological Survey website [here](#).



Biologist Bergh releases a mallard after banding it

Radio-Collared Deer: Biologist Bergh investigated a radio-collared deer mortality that occurred over the Labor Day weekend. Unfortunately, very little of the carcass remained four days after its death and a cause of death could not be determined. The radio-collar was retrieved and will be put out on another deer this coming winter. Biologist Bergh also checked for very high frequency (VHF) signals for two deer whose collars have not been sending GPS locations. The VHF signal on one sound normal and the VHF signal for the other deer was not found. It appears that both collars are malfunctioning, which is disappointing. All these deer were radio-collared as part of a project to learn more about mule deer migration, corridors, and wintering areas which is funded by [Secretarial Order 3362](#). Another goal of this project specific to the deer collared in Game Management Units (GMUs) 388 and 382 is to attempt to determine cause of mortality when we can reach the carcass soon enough.

Annual Status and Trend Report Development: Regional wildlife biologists worked on development of the annual status and trend reports for several of the hunted species found in Region 5. Draft versions of the reports have been developed for Columbia River Gorge mule deer, South Cascades black-tailed deer, Willapa Hills black-tailed deer, mountain goats, South Rainier elk, Mount Saint Helens elk and Willapa Hills elk. The effort includes compiling all information related to population trends, survey results, hunter harvest, habitat conditions, conflict management, etc. for the period encompassing July of 2020 through June of 2021. Final versions of the documents will be available on the WDFW website later in the fall. In the interim, find the 2020 Reports [here](#).

Providing Recreation Opportunities

Klickitat Wildlife Area Reopens for Camping: The emergency rule limiting recreation on the Klickitat Wildlife Area and nearby water access sites was lifted September 16. Leidl Park, Stinson Flat, Mineral Springs (also known as Old Icehouse), and Turkey Hole Campgrounds are once again available for camping. Wildlife Area Manager VanLeuven removed the Day-Use Only signs on the Soda Springs Unit of the Klickitat Wildlife Area. A few of these signs remain on the Simcoe Mountains Unit and will be removed as soon as possible.

Klickitat Wildlife Area Youth and Senior & Disabled Hunter Pheasant Hunt: Private Lands Biologist Ferris, Wildlife Area Manager VanLeuven, and volunteer Morrison distributed pheasants at the three pheasant release sites in Klickitat County prior to the youth pheasant opener on September 18. Forty-two birds were released at the Goldendale Hatchery property, 24 were released at the Gun Club site, and 16 were released at the Finn Ridge Road site.

Hunter Contacts as the 2021 Season Approaches: Regional wildlife biologists, conflict specialists, private lands biologists, and customer service staff members fielded many contacts from the hunting public regarding the upcoming hunting seasons. Popular topics for contacts have included a desire for general information about elk hunting, access for hunting, as well as a desire for more details regarding special permit hunts that the hunters have drawn. Hunters are encouraged to visit the [Hunting Prospects](#) section of the WDFW website for lots of good information on hunting throughout Washington.

Access Sites: Access staff members continue to have increased graffiti and dump sites to clean up at multiple access sites. Vancouver Lake is shown below with three different locations that were painted. All the graffiti has been painted over. Staff members have also begun their fall herbicide treatments beginning with Satturlund and Hand access.



Continued vandalism at Vancouver Lake Access Site

Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Bear Sighting: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Aubrey followed up on a second-hand bear sighting report near a rural high school. Information was passed on to administration about safety in bear country and who to contact should there be further sightings or issues. As of now, there have been no other sightings in the area.

Elk Damage Complaints: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Aubrey continued to work with landowners experiencing damage to crops from elk. Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements (DPCAs) have been signed and landowners have been issued permits. Master Hunters have also been deployed on damage hunts throughout the district.

Beaver Release: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Aubrey met a wildlife rehabilitator to release a beaver back into the Columbia River. The beaver was captured months ago and was thought to have been struck by a boat prop. The injuries took some time to heal properly, but the beaver was able to swim away without any noticeable problems on the release day.

Beaver Damage Complaint: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Aubrey met with a small commercial farmer who was having issues with beavers damaging and cutting down fruit trees in an orchard. The landowner had experienced minor issues in the past, but the damage has become significantly worse this year. There were deterrents in place, including perimeter fencing and individual tree cages around the trees, however, the unique shape of the trees left many weak areas of protection the beavers could take advantage of. Other non-lethal options were discussed as was the process of finding a licensed Wildlife Control Operator to remove some of the animals causing damage.

Conserving Natural Landscapes

Klickitat Wildlife Area Preparation for Hunting on Hatchery Unit: With pheasant hunting season approaching, Wildlife Area Manager VanLeuven replaced a missing sign at the entrance to the Hatchery Unit. They also used a brush cutter to cut down tall weeds and grass between wheel tracks on the road and in a parking area to reduce the risk of wildfire.

Klickitat Wildlife Area – Turtle Ponds: Water levels have continued to drop in the ponds on the Sondino Unit. However, two of the most important ponds still have water as of September 1, which is a small improvement over last year. A few rafts placed in the ponds for turtles are still afloat. One of them has several bryozoans, which are a coral-like organism found in freshwater ponds. In addition, several other wildlife species use this unit regularly such as the bobcat pictured below.



Raft with Bryozoans



Sondino Unit Bobcat

Klickitat Wildlife Area – Potential Acquisition: Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager VanLeuven, Habitat Biologist Johnson, and Wildlife Biologist Bergh took a tour of a property near the Soda Springs Unit. The landowner is interested in selling their property to WDFW for inclusion into the Klickitat Wildlife Area. The property was in good shape and had a spring with a healthy stand of white oaks. Deer and western gray squirrels were seen on the property during the tour.



Wildlife Area Manager VanLeuven and Habitat Biologist Johnson with a landowner who is interested in selling his property to WDFW for permanent conservation

Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Firearms Recertification: Biologist Holman attended one day of Firearms Recertification Training conducted by WDFW’s Hunter Education staff members. The course was held at a range in Puyallup. Holman demonstrated passing proficiency in 30.06 rifle, .22 rifle, 12-gauge shotgun, and .357 revolver as well as safe firearm handling. Certification lasts for 3 years and is a requirement for all non-Enforcement WDFW staff members who sometimes use firearms in their work along with criminal background checks and drug testing.

REGION 6

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

Managing Wildlife Populations

Chronic Wasting Disease Sampling Training: Biologist Murphie attended training in Spokane on the collection of samples needed to test ungulates for chronic wasting disease (CWD), a disease not yet reported in Washington State. Funding provided to WDFW allows for the collection and testing of samples taken from deer in select Game Management Units in Region 1 this year.

Grouse Wing and Tail Collection Barrels: Murphie placed grouse wing collection barrels at two locations in District 15. They are located at Simpson Mill 5 near Matlock and at the George Adams Hatchery north of Shelton.

Band-tailed Pigeon Mineral Source Investigation: Biologist Michaelis and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) representative Todd Sanders visited a site used by band-tailed pigeons as a mineral source along the Willapa River. This area was discovered from movements by pigeons marked earlier in the year with GPS transmitters. One site along the tidally-influenced area was sampled.



Photo of a mineral source for band-tailed pigeons along the Willapa river in Pacific County

This area has distinctive “staging,” or areas where birds perch before landing in the mud containing sodium content. Samples are taken in an area where pigeons are using. The samples collected will be sent to Oregon State University for analysis.



USFWS representative Todd Sanders collecting a sample of a mineral source for band-tailed pigeons

Snowy Plover: Biologist Michaelis and Sundstrom finished removal of signs at Midway beach which delineated the plover nesting area. The breeding season is over and, beach protections are lifted by September 15 each year.

Mazama Pocket Gopher: Biologists Butler and Tirhi collected soil samples at the South Puget Sound Prairie and Prairie Species Conservation Easement property located in Tenino per the site management plan. The plan requests a baseline of soil conditions be established for management purposes and then sampled every three years. Soil was sampled in 2019 and 2021. Tirhi intends to use the results combined with advice from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) consultants to meet with the property owner and discuss ongoing soil management. The intent is to provide the best medium for the existing listed Mazama pocket gophers onsite.



Biologist Butler using a gas-powered auger to take soil samples. Only areas lacking gopher mounds are sampled and samples are taken 6" from surface

Providing Recreation Opportunities

Waterfowl Hunting Rapjohn Lake in Pierce County: Biologist Tirhi inspected the two floating blinds at Rapjohn Lake in preparation for the 2021-22 season. Both blinds are accessible and in decent condition. Tirhi also had phone and email conversations with B. Burns of the Washington Waterfowl Association (WWA) Pierce County Chapter regarding on-going use and maintenance of the blinds. Although there is no formal agreement between WDFW and WWA for maintenance, WWA verbally agreed to help upkeep the blinds and Tirhi thanked them for that assistance. Burns reports that several local waterfowl hunters including members of the local chapter regularly use the blinds for hunting. Burns also reports that he and members are planning a maintenance day for the blinds this fall/winter.



One of two floating blinds at Rapjohn Lake in Pierce County. Waterfowl hunting is only permitted from the blinds on a first come basis. This regulation was enacted many years ago to address perceived safety concerns expressed by lakefront property owners to allow waterfowl hunting to continue

Checking Game: Biologist Tirhi checked a 9-year-old billy goat harvested in the Naches goat unit by a local Buckley hunter.

Naselle River Resort Hotel: On March 15, 2019, the water access program was directed to stop maintenance and remove all DFW regulatory signs from this site. It was noticed that the agreement between Pacific County and DFW for maintenance had expired. On September 3, 2021, a new agreement with Pacific County was executed for DFW to resume the operation and maintenance of this highly valuable fishing site. Special thanks should go out to Alice Beals (DFW Real Estate) and Rob Allen (Fish Program) for working together with Pacific County to accomplish this project.

On September 8, the district water access team arrived on site to deal with the two-and-a-half years of no site maintenance. Using a tractor, pole saw, chainsaws, and weed eaters, the team brushed out the two parking areas and the adjacent road system. Additionally, the launch area was brushed out and several yards of silt was removed from the ramp. DFW regulatory signs were also installed and now valid.

Before Improvements:



During Improvements:



Final:





Silt removal from launch ramp

Horseshoe Lake: The team showed up on site with a dump trailer loaded with 1 ¼ inch rock. Potholes were filled on the approach road, and rock was added between planks and on the edges of the ramp to prevent planks from breaking in the future. Additionally, the team fell and cleared two dead danger trees overhanging the entrance road.



Chehalis River South Montesano: A large log blocking the launch ramp and holding up boats attempting to launch was removed and hauled to higher ground where it was used to block off a past wash out on site.



Other Work Performed: Along with the normal on site litter pick ups, five illegal dump sites were removed. Chehalis River Oakville, Chehalis River Porter Bridge, Wishkah River Long Swamp, Humptulips 101, and Humptulips River Morely.

Conserving Natural Landscapes

Elk River Unit: Habitat restoration and noxious weed control activities restarted on the Elk River Unit with mastication of overgrown areas.

Providing Education and Outreach

General Wildlife Inquiries: Biologist Murphie responded to inquiries received by phone or email related to deer, elk, bear, and Olympic goat hunting, pheasant release sites, an osprey nest, and turtle identification.

Other

Tracked Quad: Biologists Tirhi and Butler experimented with loading the new district tracked quad, purchased for high elevation snow work in winter, onto the district trailer. Tirhi and Butler also practiced operating the machine at the wildlife area.



Biologist Butler operating the new tracked quad for high elevation winter work