

# Wildlife Program – Bi-weekly Report

May1 to 15, 2022

## **REGION 1**

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

#### **Managing Wildlife Populations**

**Grouse Surveys:** Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Finch worked with grouse survey coordinator Thorburn on providing lodging and administrative assistance for the last group of sharp-tailed grouse surveyors at Swanson Lakes this season.

#### **Providing Recreation Opportunities**

**Liberty Lake:** Contractors finished the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) grant work at Liberty Lake Access Area. The new boarding float was delivered and installed, and a crew member repaired the asphalt. The contractors had placed signage at the nearest intersection to the access area, but the signage wasn't clear that it was referring to the access area, as it simply said, 'road closed ahead.' Many would-be visitors drove past the sign and then had to back up down the street to turn around. So, Access Manager Dziekan fabricated a large sandwich board sign specifically saying the launch was closed, to reduce the traffic problems from the closure. Dziekan placed his sign next to a side street that boaters could turn onto, to get out of the neighborhood without having to back up their trailers. Work was completed and the access area was reopened on May 17.



*Dziekan's sign to prevent backing-up of trailers*

**Septic Pumping:** Dziekan met with septic pumpers at Silver, Newman, Waitts, and Jump-Off Joe Lakes to empty the vault toilets. Dziekan assisted the pumpers by removing litter from the vault to prevent their hoses from getting clogged and providing water and sanitation to clean their equipment.

**Vehicle Counters:** Dziekan installed vehicle counters at Williams Lake, Newman Lake, and Silver Lake. The numbers will help give the Newman Lake property owners a good comparison with other lakes in the region. Silver Lake and Newman Lake are very similar in their use, while Williams adds a little bit of diversity: it's very popular but further away from Spokane.

**Waikiki Springs:** Dziekan performed a site inspection at Waikiki Springs. He focused on inspecting trees and flagging those that require immediate work or will soon. He also documented the work volunteer members have done over the years to block social trails (unauthorized trails, often "cuts" between switchbacks) with woody debris and new plants.

### **Providing Conflict Prevention and Education**

**Canid Concerns in Pend Oreille County:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett continued to work with landowners in Pend Oreille County preparing for the upcoming grazing season. Preparation included deterrent planning and trail cameras were checked. No photos of carnivores were captured.

**Range Rider Coordination:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett continued season planning with a group of ten and a group of six potential range riders on possible assignments and contract changes. This included individual meetings associated with stakeholders. InReach devices and GPS units are being deployed as well.

**Field Checks:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett continued checking grazing locations and locations with damage concerns in Stevens and Pend Oreille counties. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Kolb checked in with numerous producers that graze or plan to graze in Columbia pack territory.

**Possible Range Rider Candidate:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Kolb remains in contact with a potential range rider for the Blue Mountains and will provide updates as they become available.

**Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for livestock (DPCA-L):** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Wade conferred with Wildlife Conflict Specialist Kolb on the allotment of DPCA-L funds for the 2022-2023 grazing season. Wade and Kolb will be issuing DPCA-L contracts to eligible producers over the next several weeks.

**Non-Lethal Deterrent Research Project Coordination:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett worked with several stakeholders on research being conducted to look at the efficacy of range riding. Information on the program and data sheet reviews were conducted.

**Conflict Prevention:** Natural Resource Technicians Barron and Janowski assisted Conflict Specialists Samsill and McCarty in deploying turbo fladry and foxlights to deter coyotes depredating on a landowner's calves and lambs.



### **Conserving Natural Landscapes**

**Tree/Shrub Planting:** Private Lands Biologist Gaston planted more trees and shrubs on a property in Northwest Whitman County which is enrolled in the Private Lands Access Program. The property is still recovering from the wildfire which swept through the Pine City-Malden area.

**Farm Bill:** Biologist Baarstad worked with Biologist Braaten and Farm Bill Coordinator Reseland to draft a letter about Conservation Reserve Program/State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement (CRP/SAFE) contracts related to landowner incentives and contract re-enrollments. This letter will be presented by WDFW at an upcoming meeting in Washington D.C. regarding CRP programs.

## **Providing Education and Outreach**

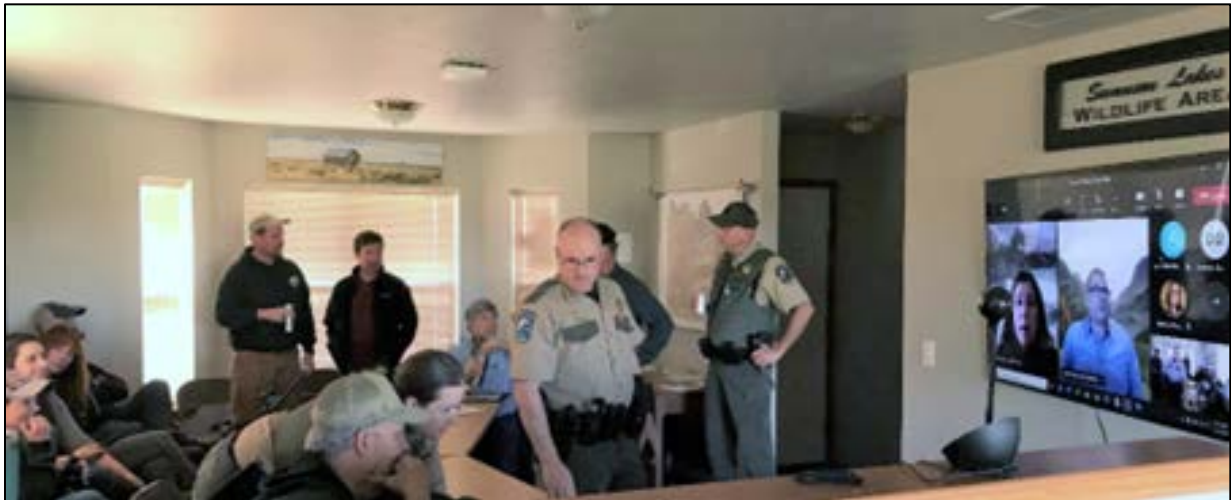
**Walla Walla County Cattlemen’s Association Meeting:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Kolb was invited to attend the Walla Walla County Cattlemen’s Association monthly meeting to discuss the upcoming grazing season, contracted range rider opportunities, and the wolf-livestock interaction protocol.

**Education:** Natural Resource Technician Janowski assisted Wildlife Conflict Specialist Samsill with giving a wildlife conflict mitigation presentation at a cattleman’s meeting in Colville. Biologist Baarstad presented basics of wildlife management, private lands hunting access, and an overview of hunting regulations at Human Nature Hunting School near Kettle Falls. Natural Resource Technician Janowski gave a presentation at a local private hunting course.

**Presentation:** Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley presented information pertaining to WDFW hunting access programs and navigating the WDFW Hunt Planner Webmap to thirty participants of the Pheasants Forever Women on The Wing Learning to Shoot Clinic. Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley received feedback from the organizer saying she received great feedback from the women and the entire team was wanting to get on Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley’s volunteer list to help out and learn more!

## **Conducting Business Operations and Policy**

**District 1 Team Meeting:** District 2 Enforcement staff members conducted this quarter’s meeting at the Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area headquarters. This hybrid meeting with in-person and online staff worked reasonably well. Lunch for in-person attendees was catered by a local restaurant, which provided “bonus” homemade cookies as a thank-you for the business.



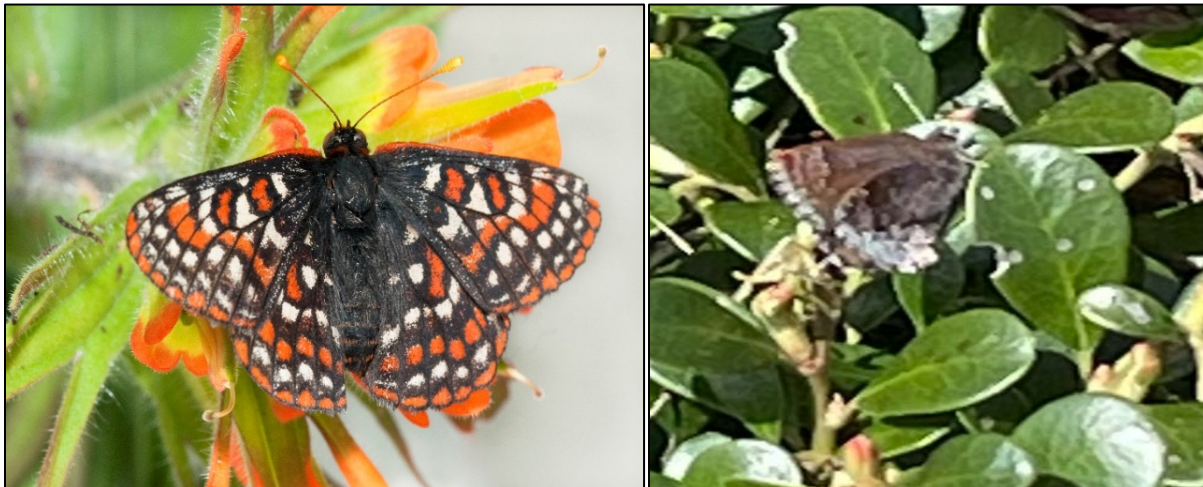
**New Internet Service Provider at Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area:** Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Mike Finch switched over to Starlink for internet service at the Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area headquarters. Both upload and download speeds are an order of magnitude higher than before.

## **REGION 6**

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

#### **Managing Wildlife Populations**

**District 11 – Taylor’s Checkerspot Butterfly Surveys:** Biologists Butler and Tirhi participated in checkerspot survey training conducted by Biologist Randolph (headquarters staff member) followed by a complete survey of the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area South Unit and a partial survey of the North Unit. The checkerspot flight season, and associated surveys, have been complicated by cold and wet weather which makes it difficult to meet survey protocol requirements. Regardless, two sunny afternoons allowed the staff members to get in the 50m based transect surveys. Only one checkerspot was located during the surveys; several hoary elfins and two silvery blues were also recorded. A lack of butterfly nectar plants at the unit is very obvious and is under discussion for future management.



*Left to right: Taylor’s checkerspot (Oregon Zoo) and Hoary Elfin (photo by M Tirhi)*

**District 15 – Taylor’s Checkerspot Butterfly:** Biologist Murphie would usually be aiding in a survey of Taylor’s checkerspot butterflies at a location in District 16 during May. These surveys should be in full swing by now, but the cool, often rainy conditions we are getting in District 16 lately are not conducive to butterfly activity surveys. We did manage to get one survey in during a day with marginal conditions and a few Taylor’s checkerspot butterflies were counted, but this would not be representative of numbers at this site. As the weather improves, survey effort is expected to increase. Stay tuned.

**District 16 – Taylor’s Checkerspot Butterfly Timber Harvest Field Review:** Biologists McMillan and Ament participated in a field review of a timber harvest conducted last fall at one of the documented Taylor’s Checkerspot Butterfly (TCB) sites within the district. Biologist Murphie, Habitat Biologist Bell, and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Biologist Nordstrom also joined the meeting held on March 25, 2022. There were several on-site meetings between WDFW and DNR staff members prior to the proposed timber harvest. Buffers were established to protect valuable TCB habitat. There was a dramatic change to the landscape following the harvest but there was no encroachment into identified TCB habitat at the site.

During the meeting the group identified areas where the removal of slash generated from the harvest would be beneficial. The group also discussed the planned future seeding of TCB host and nectar plants within the harvest unit area. The group also walked the entire TCB survey route and made improvements to station location markers. The group searched for TCB larva during the visit and located active larva at a few locations.



*The team reviews the timber harvest and repairs markers along the survey route*



*Biologist McMillan inspecting TCB larva*

*TCB larva (6) found along survey route*

**District 16 – Taylor’s Checkerspot Butterfly Surveys:** The District 16 TCB survey team has been anxious to conduct assigned TCB surveys at the two known population sites located west of Port Angeles, but the cool spring weather has really impacted planned survey efforts. They finally had suitable survey weather on April 23. Biologists McMillan, Murphie, and Ament each surveyed routes that day. A total of five routes were surveyed that day with the counts only ranging from 0 to 5 adult TCBs. Biologist Ament surveyed two more routes the following day with weather conditions that met protocol. She counted zero TCBs on one route and only one TCB on the other route.

The team has closely monitored the weather every day but have not had suitable weather conditions to meet survey protocols. Temperatures have been significantly low this spring and there has been very little sunshine. A few efforts have been made to initiate surveys, but weather conditions deteriorated quickly, and surveys were discontinued. Surveyors reviewed habitat conditions and searched for larva along designated survey routes. Only one to two adult TCBs were observed flying on site during these aborted early May survey efforts. The team is concerned about the short and long-term impacts of the unusually cool spring weather on the TCB populations in the region.

**District 16 – Taylor’s Checkerspot Butterfly Search Efforts:** Since weather conditions have been unsuitable for surveys at known TCB locations this spring, district biologists have decided to search potential and historic TCB sites when possible. Biologist Ament conducted two search efforts at two historic TCB locations in the Lower Dungeness area. She conducted a search at the west mouth of the Dungeness River on April 22. The weather was acceptable for the search period, but no TCB adults or larva were observed. The habitat at this site has changed substantially from when TCBs were known to occupy this site. She conducted a search at the Dungeness Recreation Area and Wildlife Refuge on April 27. Unfortunately, the weather started out good but quickly deteriorated. There ended up being cloudy conditions so hopefully another search can be conducted with more suitable weather. Some effort was made to review existing plants in openings along the bluff.



*Mouth of the Dungeness River where Biologist Ament observed her first TCB years ago*



*Bluff areas searched for TCBs and habitat at the Dungeness Recreation Area*

**District 15 – Western Pond Turtle:** Biologist Murphie and Research Scientist Lambert conducted turtle trapping activities at a western pond turtle population recovery site in District 15. They report generally unfavorable weather conditions for the three-day effort. One adult female turtle was caught; however, she is part of the first cohort released at this site in 2005 and is about 25 years old. Additional trapping efforts are planned for later in the summer. Biologist Murphie also spent time conducting other management activities at this location.

**District 11 – Western Pond Turtle:** Biologists Butler and Tirhi along with a crew of dedicated volunteer members from the Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) intern program finished up the annual western pond turtle census at the Pierce County recovery site. While the weather was not ideal for turtle trapping with cool water temperatures and rain, 163 individual turtles were captured including 3 turtles that were wild, natural recruits. These wild turtles were estimated to be 3 to 4 years old and had never been caught before this year. Only one wild turtle was caught the previous year, which made catching three this year extremely exciting and shows natural recruitment is occurring.

All the turtles captured during this census were identified by their unique pit tag or notch number, size measurements were recorded, and transmitters were attached to 16 adult breeding size females. These females will be tracked over the nesting season to find nests of which a subset will be sent to the Woodland Park Zoo as part of the head-start program.

**District 11 – Streaked Horned Lark and Oregon Vesper Sparrow:** Biologists Butler and Tirhi conducted the first of three a streaked horned lark and vesper sparrow occupancy surveys at the Violet Prairie acquisition site in Thurston County and at the Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve. Currently, the streaked horned lark and the Oregon vesper sparrow are both listed as endangered by the state of Washington and the streaked horned lark is also federally listed as threatened. The cause of their decline includes the loss and degradation of prairie habitats and disturbances at nesting sites. During these surveys, no streaked horned larks or Oregon vesper sparrows were detected. Two more surveys will be conducted at each site.





*Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve (DNR) where staff members conducted listed streaked horned lark surveys this month*

**District 11 – Oregon Spotted Frog/Bullfrog Control:** Biologists Butler and Tirhi and volunteer member Terry spent a morning cutting grass and woody debris away from a pond on a site used by listed Oregon spotted frog for breeding. Non-native bullfrog which preys upon spotted frogs use such ponds for breeding and have been lethally removed from the site for years by volunteer Terry. This project was to cut back shorelines along the pond to reduce the hiding vegetation bullfrogs depend on with the hope of 1) reducing their breeding potential, and 2) making them easier to target by air rifle as part of control. The new brush hog tractor purchased for the district came in very handy for this project; it is unlikely we would've been able to mow as much woody debris without it!



*Biologist Butler using the brush hog to cut woody vegetation along the pond edge for predatory bullfrog control, Thurston County. Volunteer Terry in the background weed whacking invasive shoreline grass*

**District 11 – Oregon Spotted Frog Tadpole and Other Species Surveys:** Biologists Butler and Tirhi under the training of Section Leader Lambert and staff members from Department of Ecology (A. Yanke) conducted a partial sweep of the wetlands at Salmon Creek, Thurston County, an Oregon spotted frog breeding site. The project is funded by Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP) to conduct bimonthly inventory of spotted frog, other amphibians, and prey (macroinvertebrates) using the area in which spotted frogs breed and lay eggs. The results will be used to determine if eggs are surviving to tadpole stage, if those tadpoles are making it to the deep-water creek they need to before the site dries out, and what other species and prey are present. One species that was found in abundance were listed Olympic Mudminnows!



*Oregon spotted frog tadpoles (top 2 pictures) and Olympia mudminnows (bottom) captured and released at the Salmon Creek Oregon spotted frog breeding site*

**District 17 – Band-Tailed Pigeons:** Technician Martenson and Biologist Novack initiated trapping and banding efforts for band-tailed pigeons near Elma. A recently fabricated trap is now functional and a few dozen birds were banded. Staff members will attempt to install 11 satellite transmitters on birds around the Olympic Peninsula to track movements and to identify mineral sites.



*Band-tailed pigeon*

**District 16 – Clearwater Elk Survey:** Biologists McMillan and Ament participated in an aerial survey to gather composition data for the Clearwater Game Management Unit (GMU) elk population on April 15, 2022. Biologist Murphie had been planning to serve as the lead for the survey. Unfortunately, he was still recovering from a cold and instead of joining the survey he conducted the important duty of flight following of the helicopter. Quinault Tribal Biologist Kristen Phillips had experience with elk composition flights and was a welcome addition for the survey. Pilot Brandon Arago from Northwest Helicopters did an excellent job of helping the team locate elk and gather composition data. A total of 17 elk groups were located. Photos are still being reviewed by the survey team to determine total counts and composition and better photos and data will be provided in the next report.



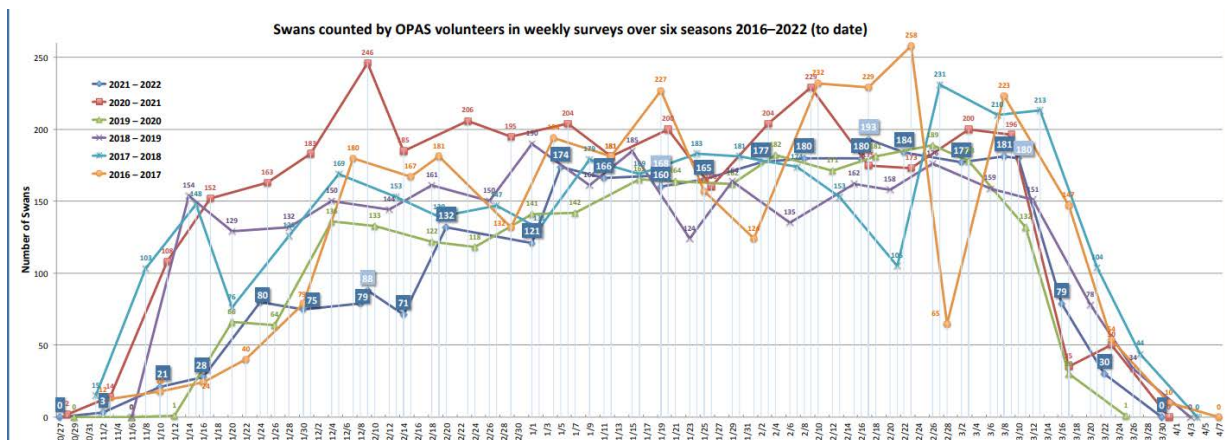
**District 16 – Trumpeter Swan Monitoring:** The Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS) Swan Monitoring Team concluded their efforts to count swans in the Sequim-Dungeness Valley for the 2021-2022 season. One team of two observers counted on the west side of the Dungeness River and the other team of two surveys on the east side of the river. The weekly survey was conducted on the same day and during the same time from late October to the end of March. Swan counts for the entire 2021 – 2011 season are provided below along with a table showing counts from 2016 – 2022.

OPAS 2021-22: survey to date				Total swans*	Adult	Juvenile	% Juv
OLYMPIC PENINSULA AUDUBON SOCIETY							
	east	0	0	0	0	0	
	west	0	0	0	0	0	
10/27/2021	total	0	0	0	0	0	
	east	3	2	1	33%		
	west	0	0	0			
11/02/2021	total	3	2	1	33%		
	east	21	15	6	29%		
	west	0	0	0			
11/10/2021	total	21	15	6	29%		
	east	26	23	3	12%		
	west	2	2	0	0%		
11/16/2021	total	28	25	3	11%		
	east	80	65	15	19%		
	west	0	0	0			
11/24/2021	total	80	65	15	19%		
	east	48	41	7	15%		
	west	27	20	7	26%		
11/30/2021	total	75	61	14	19%		
	east	59	48	11	19%		
	west	20	13	7	35%		
12/08/2021	total	79	61	18	23%		
	DAWN east	52	46	6	12%		
	west	22	15	7	32%		
	TUSW	1	1	0			
	Miller Pen.	13	12	1			
12/09/2021	total	88	74	14	16%		
	east	71	-	-			
	west	0	0	0			
12/14/2021	total	71	-	-			
	east	132	110	22	17%		
	west	0	0	0			
CBC	total	132	110	22	17%		
12/20/2021	total	132	110	22	17%		
	east	34	34	0	0%		
Weather delay from 12/28	west	87	71	16	18%		
01/01/2022	total	121	105	16	13%		
	east	85	82	3	4%		
	west	89	70	19	21%		
01/05/2022	total	174	152	22	13%		
	east	99	92	7	7%		
	west	67	50	17	25%		
01/11/2022	total	166	142	24	14%		
Adult tundra seen at Evans on 01/08.	DAWN east*	160	139	21	13%		
	west	3	3	0			
	Miller Pen.	5	5	0			

01/19/2022	total	168	147	21	13%
*Age/species less accurate; 123 of these swans counted from drone photos.					
	east	148	128	20	14%
	west	12	6	6	50%
01/19/2022	total	160	134	26	16%
	east	135	110	25	19%
	TUSW	1	1	0	
	west	29	23	6	21%
01/25/2022	total	165	134	31	19%
	east	140	129	11	8%
	west	37	22	15	41%
	TUSW	2	2	0	0%
02/02/2022	total	177	153	26	15%
	east	128	119	9	7%
	west	50	31	17	34%
	TUSW	2	2	0	0%
02/08/2022	total	180	152	26	14%
	east	118	109	9	8%
	west	62	44	18	29%
	TUSW	2	2	0	0%
02/16/2022	total	180	153	27	15%
	DAWN east*	169	149	20	12%
	TUSW east	2	2	0	
	Miller Pen.	5	5	0	
	west	17	10	7	
02/17/2022	total	193	166	27	14%
*Age/species less accurate; 108 of these swans counted from drone photos.					
	east	128	116	12	9%
	west	56	47	9	16%
02/22/2022	total	184	163	21	11%
	east	121	111	10	8%
	TUSW east	1	0	1	100%
	west	55	41	14	25%
	TUSW west	2	2	0	0%
03/02/2022	total	177	154	25	14%
	east	134	118	16	12%
	TUSW east	1	1	0	0%
	west	46	36	10	22%
03/08/2022	total	181	155	26	14%
	DAWN east	172	152	20	12%
	Miller Pen.	7	6	1	14%
	west	0	0	0	
	TUSW west	1	1	0	
03/10/2022	total	180	159	21	12%
	east	67	55	12	18%
	west	12	9	3	25%
03/16/2022	total	79	64	15	19%
	east	18	14	4	22%
	west	12	7	5	42%
03/22/2022	total	30	21	9	30%
	east	0	0	0	
	west	0	0	0	
03/30/2022	total	0	0	0	

\* Identified as Trumpeter Swans except as indicated.



**District 16 – Swan Safe Abstract:** Biologist Ament spent time the last week of April working with Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS) volunteers developing an abstract to be submitted to the [International Swan Symposium](#) to be held in Wyoming in October. The team is hoping to submit a poster for display at the conference. The poster will contain information about the Swan Safe Project where a Go Fund Me Campaign helped raise the funds to bury the power lines at Kirner Pond located near Sequim. The poster would be a great addition to the conference and showcases a community effort to protect trumpeter swans from line strikes and electrocution from power lines. The decision by the Scientific Committee for accepting the submitted abstract will be made by June 15.

**District 16 – Purple Martin Boxes:** Biologist Ament previously reported on the efforts by the Sequim High School FFA/Agriculture students to build purple martin boxes for distribution within the region. A [recent story](#) was published in the Sequim Gazette.

Biologist Ament used funding from Watchable Wildlife to purchase the materials for the boxes. The boxes provided by the students needed some improvements that were completed by WDFW staff members and volunteers. Biologist Tirhi was provided 14 double-hole boxes for installation in District 11. The remaining boxes were installed at Biologist McMillan’s property along the Olympic Discovery Trail. Biologist Ament has observed purple martin activity at boxes previously installed at the WDFW Three Crabs location. Hopefully martins will find the new boxes suitable for new homes this season. With some improvements planned, hopefully the partnership with Sequim students will continue and more boxes will be constructed in the future.



*New (and improved) purple martin boxes*



*Installation of new boxes*

**District 16 – Black Bear Density Project:** Biologists McMillan and Ament, along with assistance from District 15 Biologist Murphie, have been spending time doing prep work for the Black Bear Density Project. The Clearwater game management unit was selected for the study area in District 16. Survey routes have been identified, land use agreement with the Department of Natural Resources is being developed, bear lure storage location identified, and initiating scheduling field teams for this exciting project.

**District 16 – Bald Eagle Electrocution:** Biologist Ament responded to a report of a dead bald eagle located along a county road north of Sequim. She was able to locate the juvenile eagle in tall grass along the road. She found a blood area on the paved road and concluded that someone had moved the dead juvenile bald eagle off the road. After further inspection she was able to determine that the bald eagle had been electrocuted on the power lines or pole located directly south of the road. She promptly contacted Clallam County Public Utility District (PUD) to report this event.

Biologist Ament was aware of past eagle electrocutions in this vicinity and had previously requested that PUD modify the lines. The PUD reported that they reframed some power poles to the east of the location to provide more spacing due to eagle strikes. Apparently, they plan to rebuild poles in that area this summer and will specifically modify the pole near where this eagle was collected to help prevent future electrocutions. This eagle is stored in a secure freezer and will be provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Eagle Repository.



*Power lines/pole near the Olympic Game Farm*



*Electrocuted juvenile bald eagle*



## Providing Recreation Opportunities

**District 16 – Cougar and Bobcat Sealing:** Biologist Ament sealed several bobcats during the past month. All records have been submitted in the CITES form in Survey123. She had been contacted by the regional office to seal a cougar on April 25, 2022. There was some concern about the license purchase and harvest dates. Enforcement staff members were advised and elected to contact the hunter.

**District 11 – Sealing Pelts:** Biologist Tirhi met to seal several otter and bobcat pelts collected legally by local father-son trappers. Pelts had to be sealed by April 20 to be legal in Washington.



*Satisfied local trappers showing their catch, Pierce County*

## Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

**District 11 – Dead Swallows:** Biologist Tirhi picked up numerous dead swallows reported by a homeowner in Rochester. Half of them were found one morning, collected, and put in freezer by homeowner. A second bunch was found dead in the same location the following morning. All were collected and are being sent to a lab for diagnosis.

**District 16 – Injured/Sick Wildlife Response:** Biologist Ament responded to a significantly lower number of sick/injured/dead wildlife reports this past month or so. She was able to deal with most reports over the phone. Landowners will be monitoring a few deer that have injuries or appear to be sick.

Biologist Ament did collect a dead raccoon from a sweet elderly Audubon member who lived only a few miles away from her home office. There were no obvious injuries or evidence of cause of death for this young female raccoon. Biologist Ament conducted a simple necropsy of the raccoon and was suspicious that it may have died from poisoning. She later learned from the reporting party that her neighbors have aggressively been trying to control rats. Neighbors were advised that the raccoon may have died from poisoning and to report any sick or dead raccoons.

### Conserving Natural Landscapes

**District 11 – Oregon Spotted Frog Acquisitions and the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan:** Biologist Tirhi completed a fourth application for the acquisition of either fee title or conservation easement of an Oregon spotted frog breeding site in Thurston County. The property connects directly to an existing conservation easement owned by WDFW and purchased with [Washington Wildlife Recreation Program](#) funding. The acquisition of property used by state and federally listed spotted frogs is important to their recovery since most of these sites are privately owned which can restrict the habitat management options staff members have and conservation opportunities. Acquisition of this site and the connected conserved site would protect the largest breeding population of spotted frogs in the Allen Creek drainage.



*Conservation options typically increase when habitat for listed species is purchased by public agencies. Example of private property purchased to control invasive reed canary grass (control plots on right of fence) that invades wetlands and threatens wetland species including Oregon spotted frogs*

**District 11 – Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan and Olympia Airport Master Plan:**

Biologist Tirhi spent considerable timing completing her review of the draft of these two very important documents. Both have the potential to significantly affect state and federally listed streaked horned larks and Mazama pocket gophers and to a lesser degree Oregon spotted frogs and Oregon vesper sparrows. WDFW greatly appreciates the proactive approach to planning on behalf of the City of Tumwater (Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan) and the Port of Olympia (Olympia Airport Master Plan) and looks forward to working towards plans that allow each entity to function while leading to the recovery of these listed iconic prairie species of the South Sound Region. The public is encouraged to read the drafts and comment on each plan, which can be found on their respective websites.

**District 17 – Willapa Northern Shoreline:** Biologist Novack finished development of an Recreation and Conservation Office grant application and presentation to obtain funding for the acquisition of 1,500 acres along the northern shoreline of Willapa Bay.

**Providing Education and Outreach**

**District 11 – General Wildlife Inquiries:** Responded to inquiries received by phone or email related to an orphaned fawn, deer hunting, elk hunting, a great blue heron, and bald eagles.

**Conducting Business Operations and Policy**

**District 17 – Staffing:** Biologist Novack and a panel of fellow staff members finalized interviews for the Assistant Wildlife Biologist position that has been vacant since Dec 1, 2021. An offer for employment has been accepted and approved. The new staff member is expected to start June 1.

**District 15 – Aircraft Safety Training Course Instruction:** Biologist Murphie prepped for and conducted two aircraft safety classes recently. Two more are scheduled.