

September 4, 2019 Board Update

Animal Industry Division



Division Overview

- Pending matters of significance
 - Dr. Goicoechea, State Veterinarian, submitted his resignation effective August 30, 2019. In order to lessen the impacts to the state and our department during this transition, we have reached out to industry partners and located a retired veterinarian in the Reno area who has agreed to serve as the interim State Veterinarian while we complete the search and hiring process. Included in the hiring process of this position, is the relocation of the State Veterinarian position to the Sparks office. Dr. Goicoechea was a huge asset to the industry, department, and citizens of the state, and he will be greatly missed.
 - The Agricultural Enforcement Officer III position in Sparks is currently vacant. Recruitment was started as quickly as possible as the hiring process to fill law enforcement positions can be lengthy. This is now the third vacant AEO position in the department and has left the NDA with only two law enforcement officers to cover calls for service and needs across the state.

- Partnership activities
 - USDA Wildlife Services
 - NDA staff are currently working with USDA Wildlife Services staff in the drafting and implementation of an MOU between the two agencies. Although there was an agreement and financial plan in place previously covering portions of this partnership, an MOU that specifically details each partners role, expectations, and reporting requirements had never been in place. NDA and USDA Wildlife Services are currently operating under a signed extension of the previous financial plan during this MOU process.
 - Wild Horse Connection
 - Effective August 1, 2019, NDA entered into an additional non-exclusive cooperative agreement with Wildhorse Campaign for the Virginia Range feral/stray horses. This agreement covers the management of the feral/stray horses pertaining to public safety responses, removals, adoptions, veterinary care, and diversionary feeding. The agreement does not contain any provisions for fertility control measures. Wildhorse connection will provide monthly updates to NDA as we proceed forward.
 - American Wildhorse Preservation Campaign
 - NDA has received its third monthly report from AWHC covering the Virginia Range feral/stray horse fertility program. AWHC reported they administered the PZP vaccine to 138 individual mares from July 9, 2019 to August 9, 2019. AWHC reports that with this monthly update they have administered the PZP vaccine to a total of 542 mares since they started darting on April 9, 2019.

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Program Updates

- Commercial Feed
 - This program currently has 74 registered accounts for the 2019 year, with 6 of those accounts registering since July 1, 2019.
- Livestock Enforcement
 - 2 Law enforcement officers have spent their times towards the following duties: 49 investigations; 14 traffic stops; 1 warning citation; 134 phone calls; 158 administrative hours; 2 check sites; 17 inspections; 34 training hours; 3 public service calls; 1 vehicle crash; and traveled 8,955 miles since July 1, 2019.
- Livestock Identification
 - Staff have completed 1,324 brand inspection certificates for 23,498 total animals inspected since July 1, 2019.
 - Staff have issued or renewed 23 brand registrations since July 1, 2019. The online electronic renewal program for the 2020 brand renewals is set to go live as the renewal notices will be mailed out in mid-September.
 - The division has received 2,062 Livestock Assessment filings for the 2019 year.
 - The division currently has 102 agriculture licenses issued for the 2019 year.
 - The Sparks office has received in excess of 53 phone calls relating to the Virginia Range feral/stray horses since July 1, 2019.
- Predatory Animal and Rodent Control
 - PARC employees have provided technical assistance, non-lethal predator recommendations, and removal of predators where required across the state in the last quarter. The primary species of predatory animals addressed during the last quarter includes coyotes 16%, ravens 80%, and the remaining 4% included pigeons, badgers, lions, and feral dogs.
 - Employees provided public outreach to 128 individuals or businesses. 21 samples were taken from predatory animals during the quarter.
 - Agricultural product losses verified by staff consisted of: 1 cattle; 50 sheep; 1 chicken, and 1 pet.
- Veterinary Medical Services
 - The Animal Disease Laboratory (ADL) has performed 2,816 procedures totaling 5,033 tests or services since the start of FY 2020. Most of the testing volumes included Equine Infectious Anemia testing (1,585), supporting partnering agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management. In addition, zoonotic disease testing included West Nile Virus PCR (673), Saint Louis Encephalitis (673), Western Equine Encephalitis (673), and Rabies IFA (107).
 - The ADL has reported a total of 12 rabies positive bat cases for the state of Nevada, with 9 of the 12 occurring during this fiscal year. Also reported were 12 positive West Nile Virus cases, which were 11 positive mosquito pools and 1 positive avian.

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- The department and ADL staff have taken a stronger initiative on rabies and West Nile Virus education within the community providing recent press releases on social media, newspapers, and interviews with local news stations.
- From July 1, 2019, the ADL saw an expected seasonal decline for Trichomonosis testing. The ADL performed 747 PCR tests which included 313 from Nevada with no reported positives. Also documented were 26 cases reported by referral labs with no reported positives. This combined total for Nevada animals tested was 773.
- The ADL continues to see a large amount of testing being submitted to the lab from California clients. The ADL tested 408 tests from California with 14 reported positives.

Industry Impact

- With the recent loss of another agriculture law enforcement officer, responses to calls and incidents for the industry will be strained. The 2 current law enforcement officers have been tasked with monitoring their districts while also receiving calls from the other 3 districts. The officers try to resolve the issues via telephone when permitted. If a call or incident requires an immediate response, the officers direct these calls to the nearest local or state law enforcement agency. Incidents that require the officers to respond, such as stolen reports or suspicious livestock deaths, receive a response from the officers at their earliest availability and with a great amount of travel required. Division staff have been proactive in opening the latest vacancy as soon as possible and locating outside agencies that can perform the detailed background investigations in a shorter amount of time. These 2 officers are also tasked with assisting brand inspectors and providing training across the state when possible. Office staff are also assisting by answering phone calls and questions when applicable, so that no incident is missed or not responded to in a timely fashion.
- Manpower temporary employment agency has requested an increase in their fees from 24% to 34% for employing the divisions brand inspectors. Staff are working with the Governor's Finance Office and the Legislative Council Bureau to make changes to budget account 4546. Changes will make the budget solvent so we can bring brand inspectors back into state service to address the entire issue as a whole.