

November 2012

The Trapline

United States Department of
Agriculture

Animal & Plant Health
Inspection Service

Wildlife Services



Cooperating with:

Nevada

Department of Agriculture

Division of Resource Protection



www.agri.nv.gov

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Mission Statement

The Nevada Wildlife Services Program (WS) is a collaborative program involving the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Division of Resource Protection (State) and the USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services Program (federal), whose mission is to protect agriculture, natural resources, property, and the human health and safety of the citizens of Nevada from the threat of injury, damage, or resource loss due to wildlife.

Introduction

During November, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **6.8** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$84.7** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$9.8** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **327** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$34,771** in damage and WS Specialists verified another **\$4,000** in damage to other agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During November, coyotes accounted for **\$3,400** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **420** coyotes were taken with a variety of management methods to resolve these and other ongoing complaints. WS routinely collects blood samples or oral swabs from species taken or handled during normal control activities for monitoring the presence of plague, avian influenza, and other diseases. In November, no samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of November, 2012.

Resource Protection

State Office

During November, 2012, the State Office trap loaning program checked out **10** cage traps. The species distribution for the traps loaned out were: badgers **(1)**, rabbits **(1)**, squirrels **(1)**, raccoons **(6)** and skunks **(1)**. Information regarding baits to use, trap placement tactics, handling of trapped animals and safety precautions to take when working with the wildlife species were provided for all equipment loaned.

East District

On November 13th, the East District office received a call concerning the loss of two goats and two lambs, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. The owner of the livestock reported that coyotes could be heard every night near the sheep and goats. Several guard dogs were on duty, but the coyotes were coming in such numbers that the dogs could not keep them all away. On November 14th, the Ely plane responded to the 160 acre ranch, just north of Ely, NV. With District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett acting as the ground crew, the plane removed 11 coyotes from around the ranch. To date, no further losses have been reported. DS Bennett discussed night penning and the use of guard dogs with the owners. Both techniques were already in use.

On November 14th, WS Virgil Fullerton confirmed the loss of two yearling sheep to coyote predation. The value of the two sheep was placed at \$400. WS Fullerton placed several traps near the kills. During the next several days, WS Fullerton removed two adult coyotes. WS Fullerton also requested the Ely plane's assistance. On November 19th, the Ely plane responded to the location and removed two more coyotes. No further losses have been reported. WS Fullerton provided technical assistance to help prevent future predation issues.

On November 17th, the East District office received a call concerning the loss of one lamb, valued at \$150. On November 19th, DS Bennett traveled to the ranch, in Nye County. DS Bennett called at seven locations and removed one adult male coyote. No further losses have been reported and DS Bennett is continuing to monitor the area for predation problems. Technical assistance was also provided in an effort to help reduce future problems.



During the month of November, both WSs Mac Crome and Nathan Fowler spent their time removing coyotes near more than 12 bands of sheep in eastern Nevada. Sheep from at least three States winter in the area and it is very important to remove coyotes near these sheep. Historically, losses have been high in this area and removing coyotes just before the sheep arrive helps to prevent these high losses.

WS Matt Spires had a very good month removing several coyotes near four bands of sheep in northern White Pine County. Although no losses were reported, WS Spires removed the coyotes near the sheep in locations that have experienced high losses, during the past few years. On at least two occasions, WS Spires also acted as the Crew Member for the Ely plane.

WS Derril Fry was busy removing coyotes near several bands of sheep in southern Elko County. No losses were reported, due to WS Fry's hard work. On several occasions, WS Fry ground crewed for the Elko plane as well.

During the reporting period, WS Scott Little moved his camp to his winter range and has been busy checking on several bands of sheep that are just arriving on their traditional winter range in Lincoln and Nye Counties.

West District

On November 7th, Pilot Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted an early morning flight around several fall calving areas, in Humboldt County. During the flight, a total of 13 coyotes were removed. One rancher also reported that two mule deer (valued at \$3,000) were killed by coyotes on the property a couple days prior to the aerial crew's arrival. WS John Peter provided ground crew efforts, during the aerial operation.



During the month of November, WS Doug Koepke was busy running leghold traps and snares around several fall calving areas and one sheep producer, in Churchill County. WS Koepke checked his ground equipment near the livestock sites and removed 16 coyotes, during the past few weeks. To date, no livestock losses have occurred and WS Koepke will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

On November 28th, Pilot Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an early morning flight around several sheep and calving areas, in Lander County. During the flight, three coyotes were removed. WS George Hansen provided ground crew efforts during the operation.

During the Month of November, DS Jack Spencer received a call in the Sparks area, where coyotes had killed three dogs (valued at \$3,000). DS Spencer provided non-lethal technical assistance for the pet owner (such as motion lights, predator-proof fencing and radios played at a moderate volume). Non-lethal approaches do not always work and specific offending coyote removal is sometimes required. DS Spencer employed calling, during early morning hours, on adjacent tracts of land around pet damage sites and during two visits, removed two coyotes with the use of a decoy dog.

During the month of November, WS Hansen was dealing with coyotes that killed several sheep, in Lander County. WS Hansen continued placing leghold traps and snares around the sheep damage sites and during the week of November 26th thru November 30th, WS Hansen removed 11 coyotes. WS Hansen is highly effective when it comes to capturing offending wildlife around livestock and during the month WS Hansen removed 31 coyotes around sheep and calving areas. Recently several of WS Hansen's cooperators reported to his supervisor about how much they appreciate his hard work.



On November 19th, Pilot Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an early morning flight around several sheep and calving areas, in Humboldt County. During the flight, nine coyotes were removed. WS Hansen provided ground crew efforts, during the operation.

On November 20th, Pilot Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an early morning flight around several fall calving areas, in Humboldt County. During the flight, six coyotes were removed. WS Peter provided valuable ground crew efforts, during the operation. Protection efforts are ongoing.

During the month of November, WS Nick Smith was busy protecting livestock from coyotes in Lyon and Douglas Counties, removing 12 coyotes, during the reporting period, two of which were taken

on private property by utilizing the M-44 device that WS Smith just recently received training for. WS Smith will continue to protect livestock in his work area.

On November 28th, DS Spencer placed out DRC-1339 treated egg baits to protect sheep, in Lyon County. A sheep producer reported that at least four newborn lambs, valued at \$400, had been killed by ravens. The offending ravens were removed and no further livestock losses have been reported.

During the month of November, WS Peter was busy running equipment around several fall calving areas and one sheep producer in Humboldt County. WS Peter worked his ground equipment near the livestock sites and removed 22 coyotes by utilizing: M-44s, leghold traps, trail snares, and calling, during the past few weeks. To date, no further livestock losses have occurred. WS Peter will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

During the month of November, WS Ben Miller was busy placing ground equipment in various locations where mule deer and bighorn sheep reside on the Washoe County Mule Deer project (hunt unit 014). On November 30th, WS Miller observed where a female lion had killed a mule deer (valued at \$1,500) in an area where mule deer and bighorn sheep cohabit within the protection area. WS Miller found where the offending lion fed on the deer carcass and traveled down a small ravine where it was captured in a previously placed trail snare. The depredating lion was an 80 pound female lion, about four years old. WS Miller will continue to protect Nevada's natural resources in his designated protection area.

Throughout the month of November, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Luke Barto continued to protect aviation safety at a local airport, removing: 21 pigeons, two raccoons, two striped skunks and one American crow. WB Barto also utilized non-lethal harassment techniques to disperse: 287 American crows, 40 mourning doves, 25 ducks, 17 Canada geese, two great egrets and one great blue heron. WB Barto also removed a feral/free ranging domestic cat and an injured tundra swan from the aforementioned airport. Domestic animals that are captured on airport property are then transferred to Washoe County Animal Control for the safety of the animal as well as the aircraft. Injured wildlife, such as the above mentioned tundra swan, can be, and in this case was transferred to a local veterinarian's office to be examined before being transferred to a certified wildlife rehabilitator. WB Barto also continued with routine runway-surveys that assess wildlife abundance and frequency on/around the airfield. It is important to continue monitoring of wildlife activities, in order to recognize possible threats and be proactive in preventing strikes.



During the month of November, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Zack Bowers completed the survey portion for a Wildlife Hazard Assessment (WHA) at a military installation in Northern NV. The WHA involved conducting structured surveys on the airfield and the surrounding area, as well as general observations. This data was collected for a 12 month period in order to determine seasonal and spatial trends of wildlife usage on the airfield and surrounding area. Now that the data collection is complete, WB Bowers will analyze the data and write the WHA which will include



recommendations regarding species management, habitat alterations, and agricultural management practices. Based upon the threats/attractants noted in the WHA, WB Bowers will then prepare a Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (WHMP) to address the threats/attractants, which will then be converted into a BIRD/WILDLIFE AIRCRAFT STRIKE HAZARD (BASH) plan.

New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report.

Valuing and Investing in Employees

During November 26th-28th, WB Barto attended a briefing in Washington DC, regarding duties and expectations for his four month overseas tour of duty (TDY) at a military installation in Afghanistan.

Information and Communication

During the week of November 14th through November 16th, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen, DSs Spencer and Bennett and WS Peter attended the annual Cattleman's meeting held in Winnemucca, NV. The WS representatives manned the Wildlife Services booth and met with livestock producers and members of the public who attended the Cattleman's meeting. On November 15th, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen also presented a program overview to sheep producers at the Woolgrowers breakfast.

On November 20th, SD Jensen and DS Bennett traveled to Austin, Nevada and attended the N-6 Grazing Board meeting. The support received from all the Grazing Boards in Nevada is essential to the Nevada Wildlife Services program.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report.

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report.

Future Meetings and Events

Nevada Board of Agriculture Meeting in Sparks, December 12th. SD Jensen to attend.

N-2 Grazing Board Meeting in Winnemucca, December 5th. SD Jensen and DS Spencer to attend.

Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners Meeting in Reno, December 7th and 8th. SD Jensen to attend.

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