

October 2013

The Trapline

United States Department of
Agriculture

Animal & Plant Health
Inspection Service

Wildlife Services



Cooperating with:

Nevada

Department of Agriculture

Division of Animal Industries



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 Animal Industries (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 October, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **4.2** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$77** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$8.9** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **41** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$1,571** in damage and WS Specialists verified another **\$3,545** in damage to other agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During October, coyotes accounted for **\$3,545** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **266** 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 October, **24** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of October, 2013.

Resource Protection

State Office

During June, 2013, the State Office trap loaning program was suspended because of personnel deployed to Afghanistan. The State Office hopes to resume the trap loaning program in November-December. Technical assistance to assist Nevadans with alleviation of damage will still be provided, as well as response to reasonable imminent threats to human health and safety.

East District



On October 21st, the East District office received a call near Eureka, NV concerning the loss of 50 chickens, valued at \$500. Wildlife Specialist (WS) Randy Evans traveled to the location and confirmed that coyotes had killed the chickens. On October 23rd, the Ely plane responded to the ranch. A nearby sheep producer had also lost two ewes, valued at \$500, to coyotes. With the assistance of WS Evans as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove four coyotes near the location of the losses. No further losses have been reported and WS Evans will continue to monitor the area. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

During the first week of October, a call was received concerning the loss of three lambs, valued at \$375. The damage occurred on a small farm flock in western White Pine County. District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett traveled to the location and confirmed that coyotes were responsible for the losses. On two different occasions, DS Bennett called and shot two coyotes, bringing an end to the damage. DS Bennett provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses. No further losses have been reported.



During the month of October, a call was received from the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) concerning a possible public safety lion issue in the town of Eureka. On two different occasions, Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler and DS Bennett responded to the location. DS Bennett and MLS Buhler worked very closely with NDOW and the Eureka County Sheriff's office. During the incident the lion was observed by the sheriff and three shots were fired at the lion. The lion escaped and has not been observed since. Both DS Bennett and MLS Buhler remain on call in case it returns.

During the month of October, WS Derril Fry confirmed the loss of six replacement ewes to coyote predation in north western White Pine County. The value of the sheep was placed at \$1,200. WS Fry was able to remove three coyotes near the kills. WS Fry requested assistance from the Ely plane and in one morning an additional six coyotes were removed by the plane near the losses. No further losses have been reported. WS Fry provided non-lethal technical assistance and continues to monitor the area for predation problems.



WS Scott MacDonald has been protecting livestock on his winter range along the Utah border in eastern White Pine County and northern Lincoln County. WS MacDonald removed thirty coyotes, during the month, in locations with very high historical losses. The livestock producers are very happy with WS MacDonald's work.

During the first week of October, a call was received by the East District office concerning the loss of two lambs to coyotes. The value of the lambs was placed at \$300. The rancher reported that he had a small farm flock of sheep and that three coyotes had been hanging around in his pasture. The rancher reported that he was keeping the remainder of his sheep in the barn in an effort to keep the coyotes from killing them. WS Scott MacDonald responded to the area and confirmed the losses. WS MacDonald set fourteen traps near the kill site. Two adult coyotes were removed. No further losses have been reported. The rancher was very pleased with the assistance provided by Wildlife Services and WS MacDonald. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided to help prevent future losses.



During the month of October, WS Scott Little was protecting several bands of sheep on their way to the winter grounds. WS Little removed several coyotes as the sheep trailed south. It is very common to have high losses along the winter trail as these bands of sheep traveled south through new areas that have not had protection efforts.

Several of the East District federal employees were on furlough during the government shutdown. Luckily the shutdown occurred just after the lambs were shipped. Five State employees remained on and picked up the slack. Thank you to the remaining State of Nevada employees for stepping up during the government shutdown.

West District



On October 21st, a livestock producer from Lyon County reported that one lamb, valued at \$120, was killed by a predatory animal. WS Smith inspected the lamb and confirmed that a lion had killed the lamb. WS Smith released his hounds near the dead lamb and a short while later; the hounds treed a small male lion. WS Smith removed the offending lion and to date, no further livestock losses have been reported. The livestock cooperater was very pleased with WS Smith's livestock protection efforts.

On October 21st and October 22nd, Pilot Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several fall calving areas in Humboldt County. During the fall months, cattle producers request aerial assistance on a frequent basis. During the two day flight, 41 coyotes were removed. WS Peter provided ground support during the aerial operations. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On October 24th, Pilot Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around two cattle producers in Pershing County. The livestock producers reported that several groups of coyotes showed up on the calving grounds. During the morning flight, ten coyotes were removed by the aerial crew with WS Doug Koepke as ground support.



On October 25th, Pilot Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around a sheep and cattle producer in Lander County. During the flight, eight coyotes were removed by the aerial crew, with WS George Hansen as ground support.

During the month of October, WS John Peter was busy setting snares and M-44s that were removed for the two week furlough in several calving areas in Humboldt County. In short order, four coyotes were removed during the protection efforts upon return from the furlough. WS Peter will continue protection efforts.

During the month of October, WS Ben Miller was busy protecting mule deer on the Washoe County Mule Deer project (hunt unit 014). WS Miller continued to run ground equipment but at a much smaller scale because now there are several hundred mule deer hunters in the protection area. This is the goal of removing large predators, thus allowing more deer on the mountain and more hunting opportunities. WS Miller spent several days calling around mule deer with good success removing coyotes. WS Miller talked to many happy deer hunters while out in the field and received many reports of lots of bucks and lots of sportsman opportunity to harvest mule deer.



Several hunt parties included Junior hunters who drew tags in unit 014. In fact, in 2013 there were 48 Junior tags issued for hunt unit 014, that's more tags than all other hunts combined back in 2005 when Project 18 started. Another lucky mule deer tag holder observed 103 mule deer bucks in a single day and after six days of hunting, saw over 400 different bucks before harvesting a nice buck.



Also, a California Bighorn sheep hunter reported seeing over 40 rams on a single hunt before taking a trophy bighorn sheep within the protection area. This area is definitely one of the best mule deer hunting areas in the state. WS Miller will continue to protect mule deer, antelope and bighorn sheep on the Washoe County Mule Deer project.



During the month of October, DS Jack Spencer provided protection efforts for a large airport in Reno. DS Spencer conducted ground squirrel removal projects to reduce avian predator occurrences in and around the airport. DS Spencer also employed the use of pyrotechnics to harass mule deer and coyotes on airport property with good success. DS Spencer will continue to provide protection efforts for the airport.

During the month of October, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Zack Bowers continued airbase protection efforts at a military installation in Churchill county. Protection efforts included harassment techniques

and lethal reinforcement of non-lethal methods.

New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

Nothing to Report

Information and Communication

During the month of October, WB Luke Barto continued wildlife damage management activities on his Kandahar, Afghanistan TDY. Primary work for the reporting period included habitat manipulation, direct control and continuing the write-up portion of the Wildlife Hazard Assessment. WB Barto is expected to return to Nevada in early November, where he will have some required down-time before returning to work. WB Barto and his predecessor were commended by the Safety and Wing Leadership for their motivation, professionalism and commitment, even volunteering to do litter transports for wounded soldiers and Airmen.



Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report.

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report

Future Meetings and Events

November 11th –14th. Cattlemen and Woolgrowers annual convention in Reno. State Director (SD) Mark Jensen, DS Spencer, DS Bennett and others to attend.

November 16th. N-6 Grazing Board Meeting in Austin, NV. SD Jensen, DS Spencer and DS Bennett to attend.



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