

December 2018-
January 2019

The Trapline

United States Department of
Agriculture

Animal & Plant Health
Inspection Service

Wildlife Services



Cooperating with:

Nevada

Department of Agriculture

Division of Animal Industry



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 Industry (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

Due to the shutdown we have combined two newsletters. During December thru January, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **8.7** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$195.5** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$4.2** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **479** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$200** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$44,227** in damage to aviation, natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During December and January, coyotes accounted for **\$41,877** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **499** 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 December-January, **5** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the period of December, 2018-January 2019.

Resource Protection

State Office

During the reporting period, the State Office provided non-lethal recommendations to Nevadan's to assist in alleviating their conflicts with wildlife, particularly coyotes and raccoons. For more information about resolving conflicts with wildlife, please go to the following website: <http://agri.nv.gov/Wildlife>. Where wildlife biology and damage management methods are offered by species.

East District

On December 3rd, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep and cattle producer in Western White Pine County. The rancher has experienced very high losses to coyotes in the past and reported hearing and seeing several coyotes near his sheep. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 4 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 3rd, the Elko plane responded to a request for assistance from 2 cattle ranchers in Eureka County. Both ranchers reported seeing very high numbers of coyotes in their calving pastures. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 21 coyotes in the calving pastures. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 4th, the Elko plane responded to requests from several cattle ranchers and a sheep producer in southern Elko County. All of the ranchers reported seeing and hearing a higher than normal number of coyotes near their livestock. During the flight, 15 coyotes were removed. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 4th, the Ely plane responded to a call from 2 sheep producers in western White Pine County. The rancher reported the loss of 2 ewe sheep, valued at \$500, to coyotes. With the assistance of Wildlife Specialist (WS) Randy Evans and Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Field Assistant (FA) Tyler Bodily as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 11 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as needed.



On December 6th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in northern Elko County. The rancher reported that he was just starting to calve out and was seeing several coyotes near his newborn calves. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 4 coyotes before the weather turned bad and they had to return to the airport. Work will continue as needed.

On December 6th, the Ely plane responded to several calls from sheep and cattle ranchers in northern White Pine County. Several of the ranchers reported seeing a high number of coyotes in the pastures. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 5 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 10th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep and a cattle rancher in southwestern White Pine and eastern Nye County. The rancher's reported seeing several coyotes in and around their livestock. With the help of WS Scott Little as the ground crew the plane was able to remove 3 coyotes near the livestock. Work will be ongoing.

On December 11th, the Ely plane responded to two cattle ranchers in Nye County. Both ranchers

have had high predation losses in the past and reported seeing several coyotes near their cows and calves. During the flight the plane was able to remove 6 coyotes. Both ranchers called the East District supervisor and expressed their appreciation for the help they have received.

On December 13th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in eastern White Pine County. The sheep producer had recently lost at least 3 adult sheep, valued at \$750, to coyote predation. All kills were confirmed by FA Scott MacDonald. With the help of FA MacDonald as the ground crew, the plane removed 2 coyotes near the kills, bringing an end to the damage. No further losses have been reported and the sheep producer was very pleased with the help and quick response from NDA and WS. FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On December 14th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County. The rancher recently reported the loss of 10 adult sheep, valued at \$2,500, to coyote predation. With the assistance of WS Nathan Fowler as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 5 coyotes near the location of the reported kills. WS Fowler has also removed 8 coyotes near the location of the predation. Work will be ongoing as needed. WS Fowler also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On December 18th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in northern White Pine County. The rancher has experienced high coyote predation in the past and reported seeing several coyotes in his pastures with his cows and calves. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 6 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 19th, the Elko plane responded to several cattle ranches near Elko, Nevada. All of the ranches are getting ready for calving season and have experienced coyote predation issues in the past. During the flight, 10 coyotes were removed. Work will be ongoing as calving season in the area approaches.

On December 20th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in northern Elko County that had lost a calf, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 8 coyotes, near the location of the kill. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 20th, the Ely plane responded to call from a sheep and cattle producer in Eureka County. The rancher had previously lost 3 adult sheep, valued at \$750, to coyote predation. With the help of FA Bodily as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 7 coyotes near the location of the kills. No further losses have been reported. The rancher was very pleased with the assistance he has received. FA Bodily also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations.

During the month of December, WS Nathan Fowler confirmed the loss of 9 adult sheep, valued at \$1,750, to coyote predation. WS Fowler was able to remove 1 coyote near the kills. WS Fowler also

requested the help of the Ely plane. The plane was able to remove several more coyotes near the kills. Work is ongoing in the area due to historically high losses to coyotes. WS Fowler also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendation to help prevent future losses.

During the month of December, FA MacDonald confirmed the loss of 7 ewes, valued at \$1,750, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in eastern White Pine County, near the Utah border. FA MacDonald was able to set traps and remove 6 coyotes near the kills, bringing an end to the damage. FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent more damage.

On January 1st, Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler received a call concerning a problem with a mountain lion in western White Pine County. The sheep rancher reported that a lion had killed at least 8 adult sheep, valued at \$2,000. The rancher reported that his herder had seen the lion as it was attacking the sheep. MLS Buhler traveled to the location and confirmed the losses. Using his mules and well trained tracking dogs, the depredating adult female lion was trailed and removed. No further losses have been reported. The sheep producer was very pleased with the quick response and the help he received from NDA and WS.

On January 2nd, FA Allen Eldridge confirmed the loss of 2 ewes, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in western White Pine County. FA Eldridge used traps and calling to remove 5 coyotes near the location of the kills, bringing an end to the losses. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendation to help prevent future losses.

On January 7th, MLS Buhler received a call from a rancher in eastern White Pine County concerning the \$450 loss of an adult sheep and a lamb. The rancher reported that it appeared to be a lion judging from the tracks. The rancher was very concerned since the attacks took place pretty much in his yard. On January 8th, MLS Buhler and FA Eldridge traveled to the location and confirmed it was a lion that had killed the sheep. After a short pursuit, MLS Buhler removed the adult male lion. Technical assistance was also provided in an attempt to prevent future losses.



On January 9th, District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett confirmed the loss of 5 calves, valued at \$2,500, to coyote predation on 2 allotments in central Nye County. DS Bennett traveled to the location and removed the two depredating coyotes with the use of call/shooting. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an attempt to prevent future losses. Work will be ongoing.

On January 14th, DS Bennett conducted a day long field inspection with MLS Buhler in western White Pine County. MLS Buhler investigated a possible mountain lion predation incident involving 2 adult sheep. After a thorough investigation it was determined that coyotes had killed both sheep. Work will be ongoing concerning the coyote predation. Field inspections are an important part of the Nevada Wildlife Services program. They ensure that employees have all they need to conduct their work within all policies and directives and an excellent opportunity for the supervisor to talk to coop-

erators.

On January 14th, FA Eldridge confirmed the loss of 2 adult sheep valued at \$500 to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in Lincoln County. The sheep rancher reported that he had just moved his sheep to the allotment and in 2 nights had already lost 2 sheep. The rancher reported seeing 4 coyotes feeding on one of the kills. FA Eldridge hiked into the most recent kills and observed 2 coyotes feeding on it, one of which was promptly removed with a firearm. During the next several days, FA Eldridge was able to remove 2 more coyotes from the location of the kills. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On January 22nd, the Ely plane responded to 3 calls from 2 sheep producers and a cattle rancher in Lincoln County. One sheep producer had lost one adult sheep valued at \$250, another sheep producer had lost 2 adult sheep, valued at \$500, and the cattle rancher had lost 3 calves, valued at \$1,500, to coyote predation. With the assistance of FA Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 5 coyotes near the kills. FA Eldridge was able to shoot a coyote near the kills as well. Work will be ongoing as needed. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance to all 3 cooperators in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On January 23rd, the Ely plane responded to a call from 2 sheep producers that had lost more than 10 adult sheep to coyote predation. The damage took place in northern White Pine County and southeastern Elko County. With the help of CM Wayne Rowley as the ground crew the plane was able to remove 13 coyotes, bringing an end to the damage.

On January 24th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in western White Pine County. The producer had lost at least 7 adult sheep, valued at \$1,750, to coyote predation. With the assistance of FA Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 5 coyotes near the kills. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On January 25th, the Ely plane responded to a request for help from a sheep and cattle producer in northern White Pine County. The rancher reported the loss of several adult sheep to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 4 coyotes near the location of the kills. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On January 28th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a rancher in Lander County. The rancher had lost at least 3 calves, valued at \$1,500, to coyote predation. The rancher reported seeing several groups of 5 coyotes and even a group of 10 coyotes in his calving pastures. During the flight, the plane removed 36 coyotes near the location of the kills. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On January 28th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep rancher and a cattle rancher in Lincoln County. The sheep rancher had lost 5 adult sheep, valued at \$1,250, while the cattle rancher had lost a calf, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove a coyote near the sheep kills and a pair of coyotes near the location of the calf kill. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On January 29th, the Ely plane flew on Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) Project 40 in Eureka County. The project is designed to protect both mule deer and sage-grouse by removing coyotes near sage-grouse leks and mule deer fawning grounds. With the assistance of WS Evans and FA Bodily the plane was able to remove 11 coyotes. Work will be ongoing into early summer on this project.



On January 29th, the Elko plane responded to calls from several cattle ranchers in southern Elko County. The ranchers have experienced high losses in the past and reported seeing higher than normal numbers of coyotes in their calving pastures. During the morning flight, the plane was able to remove 17 coyotes. FA Eldridge was the ground crew during the flight and also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to both ranchers to help reduce future losses. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On January 30th, the Elko plane responded to 2 cattle ranchers in northern Elko County. The ranchers had lost a combined total of 5 calves, valued at \$2,500, to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 18 coyotes. Both ranchers were very pleased with the assistance they received from the NDA and WS.

On January 30th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer and a cattle rancher in Nye County. The sheep producer had lost 3 adult sheep, valued at \$700, while the cattle rancher had lost 4 calves valued at \$2,000 to coyote predation. With the help of DS Bennett as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 11 coyotes. Three of the coyotes were right in the band of sheep that had experienced the losses. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On January 31st, the Elko plane responded to calls from 3 sheep producers in eastern Elko County concerning the loss of 12 adult sheep, valued at \$3,000, to coyote predation. The kills were confirmed by WS Mac Crome. With the assistance of WS Crome as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 1 coyote near the kills. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

West District

During the month of December, WS Rick Laffins completed a wildlife hazard assessment (WHA) for an airport in Washoe County. The WHA was conducted due to a triggering event. The WHA was based on a year's worth of wildlife observations on and around the airport to identify wildlife threats to aviation. From the WHA, a Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (WHMP) follows which provides the airport managers with a detailed plan on how to properly respond to the hazard threats that WS Laffins identified.

On December 4th, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several calving and winter sheep band areas in Pershing County. During the flight, 4 coyotes were removed. FA Doug Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

On December 26th, WS John Peter checked M-44s and trail snares around several calving and winter sheep band areas in Humboldt County. The bad weather has made flying efforts tough, so

ground work helps producers receive continual protection efforts. During the equipment check, WS Peter removed 16 coyotes by using trail snares and M-44s. WS Peter will continue to protect livestock in Humboldt County.



On December 20th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several calving and winter sheep band areas in Humboldt County. During the morning flight, 13 coyotes were removed. One producer reported the loss of one calf, valued at \$450. WS Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

During the month of December, WS George Hansen set equipment around cattle and sheep in Lander County. WS Hansen reported very few livestock losses this month and will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

During the week of January 28th through January 31st, WS Peter set and maintained equipment around several calving areas in Humboldt County. WS Peter had several complaints with the loss of 7 calves, valued at \$3,500. During the week, WS Peter removed 23 coyotes to stop the damage. WS Peter will continue to place equipment and work to protect livestock.

On January 30th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several calving and winter sheep band areas in Lander County. WS Hansen had several complaints with the loss of 3 calves, valued at \$1,600. During the flight, 23 coyotes were removed. WS Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

On January 30th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay flew around several calving and winter sheep band areas in Lyon County. As the NDA FA position for that area has not been filled, WS Koepke volunteered to ground crew. During the morning flight, 3 coyotes were removed.

During December and January, WB Dean Pyzik checked foothold traps around sheep and calving areas in Lander County to reduce livestock losses to coyotes. During the month, WB Pyzik was successful in removing a coyote with a combination of calling and foothold traps. WB Pyzik will continue to protect livestock in Lander County.

During the bad weather the aerial crew stays busy with various projects. Lately, WS VanderMay has been busy welding M-44 anchor stakes for the field trappers. The field staff and the District Supervisor are pleased to have a talented aerial crew.

During the months of December and January, WB Zack Bowers continued protection efforts at a military installation in northern Nevada. WB Bowers utilized harassment with several methods to disperse 3,164 individuals from 24 species. Eleven problem animals were lethally removed from on and near the airfield to reinforce non



-lethal approaches. The individuals removed came from one species of mammal and 2 species of birds. Similar to previous months, common ravens and horned larks accounted for a large percentage (85%) of the individuals dispersed. Both species are year round residents to the area, but their numbers peak on the airfield from November through February. Current agricultural practices in the valley have led to corn being a primary crop, as opposed to a rotational crop as it has been in the past. The abundance of corn left in the fields after harvest attracts a variety of wildlife to the area, many of which are of BASH concern. Discussions are currently underway to take corn out of the allowable crops in the agricultural properties that the Navy has under lease. This would be implemented in the terms of the new leases after the current lease terms expire. This will not provide any relief to the current situation, but would likely benefit future efforts. WB Bowers will continue efforts to protect aviation safety at this facility.

During the months of December and January WB Carl Frey, WS Laffins and WS Green continued to protect the Reno airfield amidst the government shut-down. Winter storms and moisture brought green-up all around the airport as well as standing water, causing a huge influx of waterfowl mostly ducks and Canada geese. Approximately 4,500 waterfowl were moved from the airfield by using several methods. There was also a large increase in birds of prey (raptors) frequenting the airport, resulting in the translocation of 36 raptors from 5 different species.



During the reporting period, WB Frey, WS Laffins and WS Ben Miller assisted a military facility in northern California on their first ever Christmas bird count for the Audubon society. The WS staff acted as group leaders and bird identification experts.

WS Green traveled to a military facility in southern Nevada on multiple occasions to assist with wildlife issues during red flag week as the newly hired Airport Biologist does not report to this facility until February 17.

New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

On January 28th, WS Laffins departed Nevada for an airport position in Florida. Although we wish WS Laffins the best in his new position, he is one of those people that you just can't replace and will be greatly missed. Regardless of the task in front of him, he tore into it. Fair winds and following seas to Rick.

Information and Communication

On January 28th, DS Bennett attended the N-1 Grazing Board Meeting in Elko, NV. DS Bennett provided the Board a presentation summarizing the work that has been conducted in N-1.



During the reporting period, WS Laffins and WS Green provided firearms training and safety training for Operations staff at an airport in Washoe County.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

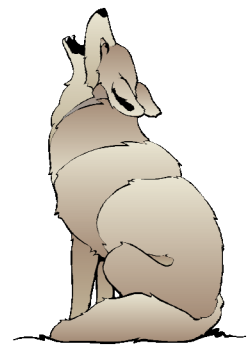
Nothing to Report

Future Meeting and Events

Nothing to Report



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