

July 2014

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 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

During July, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **3.1** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$41.1** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$3.1** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **109** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$27,642** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$25,000** in damage to utilities and other agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During July, coyotes accounted for **\$22,550** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **68** 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 July, **4** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of July, 2014.

Resource Protection

State Office

The State Office cage trap loaning program has been suspended. Those in need of a cage trap will be directed to their local private pest control company. Information and technical assistance to assist Nevadans with alleviation of damage will still be provided, as well as response to imminent threats to human health and safety.

East District



On July 1st, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Scott Little rode his horse into a remote band of sheep in Northwest White Pine County and confirmed the loss of one lamb, valued at \$150, to coyote predation. Knowing the kill was very fresh, WS Little set out to solve the problem and was able to call and shoot the offending coyote with the aid of his well-trained coyote decoy dogs. No further losses have been reported and WS Little continues to monitor the many bands of sheep in his designated work area.

On July 3rd, a sheep producer in White Pine County contacted the East District office concerning a problem with coyotes. The producer reported that a coyote had killed one lamb, valued at \$150. During the next several days, WS Randy Evans, WS Matt Spires and District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett worked the area around the sheep. Making the situation much more difficult was the fact that one of the sheep herders had seen the offending coyote and fired several shots at it, unintentionally educating the coyote. During the next few days, the coyote killed six more lambs, valued at \$900. On the evening of July 7th, WS Spires was able to locate a female coyote with young but was unable to get into position to shoot the coyote before darkness. The following morning, DS Bennett walked into the area before daylight and was able to call and shoot the adult female. During the next week, WS Spires and WS Evans were able to remove two more adult coyotes and three young ones near the kills. No further losses have been reported to date.



Between July 4th and July 10th, WS Derril Fry confirmed the loss of eight lambs, valued at \$1,200, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in southern Elko County. On July 10th, WS Fry was able to call and shoot one adult coyote near the kill locations. WS Fry also requested the assistance of the Elko plane. The Elko plane responded to the location and was able to remove one more adult coyote, helping to bring an end to the damage. No further losses have been reported and WS Fry provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On July 11th, WS Randy Evans confirmed that coyotes had killed one lamb, valued at \$150. The damage occurred on a remote band of sheep in Eureka County. WS Evans placed several pieces of ground equipment near the location of the kills. On the next inspection, WS Evans removed one large adult coyote, bringing an end to the damage. No further losses have been reported and WS Evans continues to monitor the area for predation issues. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On July 12th, a sheep herder near Ely observed a lion near his sheep. The sheep producer contact-

ed Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler that evening. The following morning, MLS Buhler rode into the remote camp in central White Pine County. Upon inspection, MLS Buhler found one lamb and one ewe, valued at \$350, killed by the lion. During the next several days, MLS Buhler hunted for the offending lion. Despite extensive efforts, the offending lion has not been captured. MLS Buhler is still monitoring the band of sheep and to date no further losses have occurred.

On July 15th, WS Matt Spires confirmed the loss of 15 lambs, valued at \$2,250, to coyote predation. On July 18th, WS Spires was able to call and shoot three coyotes near the kill sites. WS Spires also placed several pieces of ground equipment near the kills and work is ongoing in the area. To date, no further losses have been reported.



On July 17th, WS Scott MacDonald confirmed the loss of ten lambs, valued at \$1,500, to coyote predation. In response, WS MacDonald was able to call and shoot one coyote near the kill site, work is ongoing in the area but no further losses have been reported.



On July 30th, a sheep producer contacted the East District office concerning a problem with a mountain lion. The following morning MLS Buhler took six well trained tracking hounds and rode into the remote band of sheep north east of Ely Nevada in White Pine County. MLS Buhler confirmed that a lion had killed two adult ewes, valued at \$500. MLS Buhler then set six hounds on the lion's track, which treed the adult female lion a short distance later. No further losses have been reported and the sheep producer was very pleased with the fast response and resolution provided by MLS Buhler.

West District

On July 2nd, WS Nick Smith inspected a situation in Lyon County, where a black bear killed a goat (valued at \$200) in a semi residential area. Previously, WS Smith had assisted the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) in setting a large culvert trap for the problem bear and checking it for five days. The bear never returned, so the trap was removed. Black bears that kill livestock near residential areas are usually problem bears, often it's just a matter of time before it causes problems again.



On July 14th, a sheep producer from Lander County called and reported that six lambs (valued at \$900) had been killed by coyotes. On July 15th, Pilot Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted an early morning flight around the small sheep flock, which resulted in the removal of three coyotes. The coyotes were right in the sheep when the aerial crew removed them and to date, no further livestock losses have been reported. WS George Hansen provided valuable ground support, during aerial operations.

During the month of July, numerous coyote calls were received from citizens in Washoe, Nye and Clark Counties. Many of the problem calls are from urban areas where coyotes hunt backyards killing and maiming pets.



During the month of July, DS Spencer provided technical assistance to 53 people with coyote related issues. A total of 12 pets (valued at \$6,000) were killed by coyotes. Some of the bold coyotes simply jumped fences into back yards, while others snatched pets off leashes as they were being walked by their owners. Coyote complaints in urban and suburban areas of Washoe, Nye and Clark Counties will likely increase in future years for a number of reasons including: constant supply of do-

mestic pets; lack of prey due to drought and rodent hibernation; feral cat colony establishment ordinance (Clark County); and no control mechanisms such as shooting or trapping.

During the week of July 7th through July 11th, WS Hansen placed trail snares and leghold traps around several sheep bands in Lander County. The sheep producer reports only the occasional lamb loss this time of year, to prevent greater losses, WS Hansen is constantly removing coyotes before they enter the vulnerable sheep bands. On July 11th, WS Hansen removed two coyotes by method of trapping. WS Hansen will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.



During the week of July 14-18th, WS Ben Miller was out learning his new work area in NDOW hunt units 011-013 for bighorn sheep protection. WS Miller found where the translocated California bighorn sheep and mountain lions were living in the three hunt units. WS Miller placed a call box broadcasting prey distress sounds in a large canyon away from the bighorn sheep to "pull" the offending lions away from the bighorn sheep and near his equipment. WS Miller returned to the call box during the week and found that he had removed a 125 pound male lion with a trail snare. WS Miller will continue protection efforts in the protection area.



On July 21st, a resident from Humboldt County reported that a feral dog killed two of her sheep (valued at \$400). This area has several sheep producers on small acre farms, but heavily relies on livestock for personal food. This area was not conducive for traditional removal methods, so WS John Peter loaned the sheep producer a large cage trap to trap the feral dog. The feral dog may appear one day and not show up for a month, so WS Peter wisely decided to have the owner keep the live trap set right next to the sheep pens, before the dog has a chance to kill again.

During the month of July, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Zack Bowers continued to deter wildlife from using/crossing the airfield at a military installation in northern Nevada. In an effort to keep conflicting species from crossing the airfield, WB Bowers has utilized harassment with several methods. WB Bow-

ers harassed eight species of birds from on and around the airfield including red-tailed hawks, great blue herons and great egrets. WB Bowers continued to reduce the attractiveness of the airfield to red-tailed hawks. In order to do this, WB Bowers removed 23 black-tailed jackrabbits (the main prey source for red-tailed hawks in the area). WB Bowers also dispersed four red-tailed hawks from on and near the airfield. There were many hatch-year (young of the year) red-tailed hawks in the area during the month of July. Hatch year hawks as well as other birds in general, don't have full control over their movements until they are able to gain some flight experience. This can be a dangerous time for juvenile birds as well as aviation safety. WB Bowers will continue to try to deter red-tailed hawks and other species of bird animal strike hazard (BASH) concern, from the airfield.

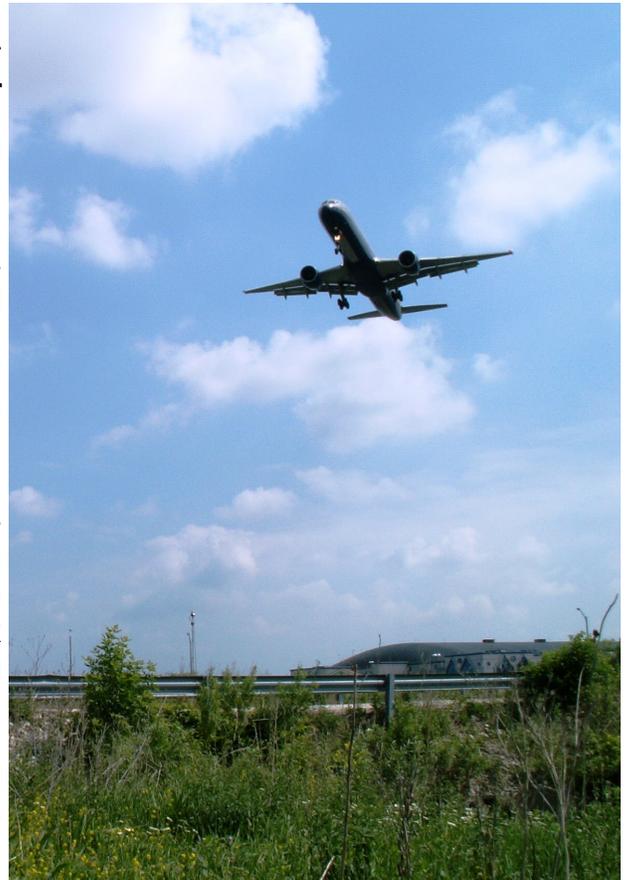
Throughout the month of July, WB Luke Barto removed: 96 rock doves (feral pigeons), five ground squirrels, four mourning doves, two California gulls and two killdeer from a local airport in Washoe County, in an effort to reduce bird and aircraft collisions. Of Interest, this airport is categorized in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems as a primary commercial service airport and listed as the second busiest airport in Nevada and the 61st busiest commercial airport in the nation.

No bird strikes were reported at the above mentioned airport for the month of July. This is the **second month in a row that this airport has reported "strike-free"**. A benefit of an effective wildlife hazard management program and working group.

Non-lethal methods of dispersal, including pyrotechnics, were also utilized to reduce the hazards found on/around the airfield. A total of 410 rock doves (feral pigeons) and 300 barn swallows were dispersed from airport property by WB Barto, in an effort to reduce wildlife threats to aviation.

One coyote was also removed from the above mentioned airport in an effort to reduce wildlife threats to aviation. Coyotes can be a direct threat to aviation safety while searching for carrion that has been struck on runways and taxiways as well as indirectly scaring birds into pathways of aircraft.

Two point-count and off-site surveys were conducted during the month of July at the above mentioned airport.



New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

Nothing to report

Information and Communication

The Nevada Wildlife Services Program (NWSP) convened in northeastern Elko County for the mandatory State meeting during the week of July 21st. Employees received programmatic updates and required training from Nevada Department of Agriculture, WS Regional Office, WS National Wildlife Research Center, Nevada and Idaho WS personnel. Training included: research, wolf identification and damage management, field equipment technology/application, firearms and pesticide application. NWSP would like to thank the many guest speakers for volunteering their time and knowledge and our cooperators for their understanding.



Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report

Future Meetings and Events

Nothing to Report

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