

June 2018

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

During June, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **5.4** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$94.6** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$7.1** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **2,683** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$36,924** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$41,759** in damage to aviation, natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During June, coyotes accounted for **\$27,750** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **113** 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 June, **10** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of June, 2018.

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 June 4th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a cattle and sheep rancher in southern White Pine County. The rancher has had very high losses to coyotes in the past and reported seeing and hearing several coyotes near his calves. During the morning flight, the plane was able to remove 7 coyotes near the cattle. Work will continue as needed.

On June 5th, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Mac Crome confirmed the loss of 3 lambs, valued at \$600, to coyote predation. The damage occurred in Elko County near the Idaho border. During the next several days, WS Crome was able to remove 4 adult coyotes and 1 den near the location of the kills. To date, no further losses have been reported. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On June 5th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in western White Pine County and eastern Eureka County. The sheep producer had lost at least 12 lambs to coyote predation. With the assistance of WS Randy Evans as the ground crew, the plane was able to locate and remove 4 coyotes near the location of the kills. No further losses have been reported. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On June 7th, the Ely plane responded to a sheep and cattle rancher in northern White Pine County. The rancher had recently lost 3 lambs to coyote predation. With the help of Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Field Assistant (FA) Allen Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 7 coyotes

near the location of the kills. No further losses have been reported. FA Eldridge also provided non-lethal recommendations in an attempt to help prevent future losses.

On June 8th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep and cattle rancher in western White Pine County. The rancher had lost at least 20 lambs, valued at \$4,000, to coyote predation. During the morning flight, the plane was able to remove 4 coyotes near the band of sheep that were experiencing the losses. Work will continue as needed.

On June 11th, the East District office received a call concerning a problem with ravens. The sheep producer was still lambing and reported that he counted 89 ravens attacking his newborn lambs and had confirmed at least 6 lambs that had been killed. The value of the lambs was placed at \$1,200. On June 12th, DS Bennett traveled to the location and confirmed the loss. Hardboiled chicken eggs treated with DRC-1339 were used to remove the depredating ravens. No further losses have been reported since the treatment. DS Bennett also provided technical



assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On June 12th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher and another cattle and sheep rancher in northern White Pine County and southern Elko County. Both beef operations had lost a couple of calves to coyote predation and the sheep producer had lost at least 6 lambs valued at \$1,200 to coyote predation. With the help of FA Scott MacDonald as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 5 coyotes near the location of the kills. Work will be ongoing as needed. FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On June 12th and 13th, DS Bennett conducted a field inspection with Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler in Eureka County. MLS Buhler has been very busy protecting several bands of sheep as well as removing lions to protect mule deer. During the 2 days, several areas were checking for lion activity. Field inspections are very important to assure all policies and directives are being followed and that employees have what they need to safely and effectively work. MLS Buhler has done an excellent job by removing 8 lions for a Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) project to protect mule deer. MLS Buhler will continue to protect wildlife and livestock in Eastern Nevada.

On June 18th, WS Mac Crome confirmed the loss of a lamb, valued at \$200, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of

sheep in Elko County near the Idaho border. WS Crome was able to use his well-trained coyote decoy dogs to call and shoot 4 coyotes near the kill. WS Crome also used trail snares to remove 2 more coyotes, bringing an end to the damage. WS Crome will continue to monitor the livestock in his assigned work area.



On June 19th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep and cattle producer in northern White Pine County. The rancher has had several lambs killed by coyotes and 1 ewe that was killed and completely eaten in 1 night. With the help of FA Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 5 coyotes near the location of the kills. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On June 13th, the Ely plane responded to a call for assistance from a sheep producer in southern Elko County. The sheep producer had just recently arrived with his ewes and lambs at their summer range and reported hearing several coyotes near his sheep. The area has had historically high losses in the past years. With the assistance of WS Evans as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 4 coyotes near the 2 bands of sheep. WS Evans will continue to monitor the area for losses.

On June 14th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in central Elko County. The rancher had lost several lambs to coyote predation during the past several weeks. During the morning flight, the plane was able to locate and remove 3 coyotes, near the location of the kills. No further losses have been reported. WS Crome also provided non-lethal recommendations in an attempt to minimize future losses.

On June 18th, DS Bennett conducted an all-day field inspection with WS Scott Little. WS Little spent the day setting equipment near 2 bands of sheep high in the mountains of central White Pine County. WS Little has been very busy this season protecting several bands of sheep in his assigned work area.

On June 18th MLS Jim Buhler confirmed the loss of 3 lambs and 1 ewe to lion predation. The total value of the sheep was placed at \$650. MLS Buhler traveled to the location the following day and began searching for the lion. On the morning of June 22nd, the lion returned to the location of the kills. Six of MLS Buhler's well trained dogs were put on the lion track. After about an hour, the depredating lion was treed and shot. The lion was an adult female that weighed approximately 115 pounds. No further losses were reported and MLS Buhler continues to check with the sheep producer for losses.



On June 20th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep and cattle rancher in western White Pine County. The rancher had lost 2 lambs, valued at \$400, to coyote predation. The rancher reported that she was hearing coyotes almost every night near her lambs. During the morning flight, the plane was able to remove 3 coyotes near the location of the kills. No further losses have been reported. DS Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On June 20th, WS Evans confirmed the loss of 3 lambs, valued at \$450, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in southern Elko County. WS Evans traveled to the location the following morning and used calling and his well-trained coyote decoy dog to call and shoot one large male coyote. A field necropsy revealed the coyote had lamb meat and wool in its stomach. No further losses have been reported. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On June 25th MLS Buhler received a call from a sheep producer in southern White Pine County concerning a problem with a lion. The sheep producer reported that a lion had killed at least 3 lambs valued at \$450. The following morning, MLS Buhler traveled to the location. Six well trained dogs were put on the lions' track. About 2 hours later, the depredating lion was treed and shot. The lion was an adult male approximately 140 pounds. No further losses were reported.



West District

On June 1st, a livestock producer from Douglas County called and reported that they had 3 sheep, valued at \$900, killed by a lion. FA Mark Bentz verified the damage was caused by a lion and placed a cage trap at the vicinity of the sheep kills, which caught a female lion later that night. No further livestock losses have been reported and the livestock producer was very pleased with FA Bentz protection efforts.



On June 1st, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted a morning flight around a sheep producer in Elko County to reduce some ongoing predation. During the flight, 7 coyotes were removed. WS Mac Crome provided ground support during aerial operations.

On Saturday June 2nd, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around a sheep producer in Washoe County. The sheep producer reported the loss of 17 lambs, valued at \$3,400, on 2 lamb bands. During the flight, 3 coyotes were removed from both bands while standing in or feeding on lambs. WS-CA Affonso provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection efforts will be ongoing throughout the lambing season.

On June 7th, a livestock producer from Lyon County reported that a horse, valued at \$3,500, had been killed, partially fed upon and covered in debris. FA Bentz inspected the kill site and confirmed that a lion had killed the horse. FA Bentz placed foothold traps around the horse just before dark and removed a 145 male lion the following morning that was caught in one of the foothold traps. No further livestock have been lost and the rancher was very pleased with the protection efforts FA Bentz provided.

On Saturday June 9th, DS Jack Spencer checked snares that he had set for mountain lions in NDOW hunt unit 041 back in March as requested by NDOW. The lion(s) had killed a collared bighorn ewe along with enough other bighorn sheep that population objectives were of concern. The equipment check resulted in the removal of a female lion. DS Spencer will continue protection efforts for another month to try to capture the remaining male lion that NDOW provided trail camera pictures of.

On June 12th, WS Ben Miller was checking trail snares around bighorn sheep in northern Washoe County (hunt unit 011), and found that he had removed 2 lions (a male and female) with the use of trail snares. WS Miller will continue to protect California bighorn sheep.

On June 18th, a livestock producer from Washoe County reported that 24 sheep, valued at \$5,760, had been killed by a lion. A herder was walking around the dead sheep and jumped the lion, which ran to a nearby mountain. FA Doug Koepke responded to the kill site and placed trail snares and foothold traps around the dead sheep that evening. Upon inspection the following morning, FA Koepke removed a female lion from one of his snares. FA Koepke performed a necropsy and found mutton and wool in the lion's stomach. To date there have been no more livestock losses and the sheep producer called the district supervisor to express his thanks for FA Koepke's help.

During the week of June 18th through June 22nd, WS Miller was checking and placing equipment in northern Washoe County (NDOW hunt unit 011-013) as part of NDOW project 22-01, which is designed to protect California bighorn sheep from mountain lion predation. During that time, WS Miller removed 2 male lions from his trail snares. WS Miller will continue to protect bighorn sheep populations.

On June 28th, DS Spencer and WS Peter checked for pig sign in Humboldt County along with a Nevada Department of Agriculture Enforcement Officer. DS Spencer and WS Peter walked the river banks and did not see any pig tracks or sign. Several nearby neighbors had reported pigs showing up at their residences eating dog food on their porches and they managed to pen the pigs up and were later collected by the NDA Enforcement Officer. Apparently a neighboring pig own-



er passed away and with no one around, the pigs rooted out to get food. WS Peter will continue to assist by looking for pig sign, as domestic pigs revert to feral swine quite quickly and if allowed to breed, they can cause considerable damage.

On June 28th, WS Miller was checking trail snares around some California Bighorn sheep in Washoe County (NDOW hunt unit 011, NDOW project 22-01) when he heard some lion vocalizations and started working towards them. WS Miller quickly realized that he was among more than one lion moving in the long grass and started removal procedures, ending with 3 lions (2 females and 1 male) taken by firearm. A 4th lion averted WS Miller while he was reloading. After the lions had been removed or departed, WS Miller noted an antelope carcass that the lions likely had been fighting over/feeding on. WS Miller went back to his ATV and headed to camp to get a foothold trap to place for the remaining lion. Taking a different route towards the location of the antelope carcass, WS Miller saw the male lion that had ran off previously, standing near the antelope, which he removed with his firearm. WS Miller will continue to protect California bighorn sheep as requested by NDOW.



During the week of June 25th, WS George Hansen protected several lamb bands in Lander County. WS Hansen inspected his equipment and removed 2 coyotes right by the lambs. WS Hansen will continue to protect these lamb bands. WS Hansen has spent nearly 3 decades protecting livestock and will be retiring in the next 6 months.

During the month of June, WB Zack Bowers continued protection efforts at a military installation in northern Nevada. WB Bowers utilized harassment with several methods to disperse 707 individuals from 26 species. Five problem animals were lethally removed from the airfield. The individuals removed came from 2 species of mammals and 1 species of bird. Generally, hot temperatures keep wildlife activity fairly low at this location from about mid-June to mid-August. WB Bowers will continue efforts to protect aviation safety at this facility.

During the month of June, WS Cameron Green and WS Rick Laffins continued implementing a wildlife hazard management plan at a joint use aviation facility in Washoe County. Specifically, 39 animals were dispersed from the facility and adjoining properties using vehicles, pyrotechnic devices and firearms. Firearms and snares were also utilized to remove 85 animals that failed to respond properly to non-lethal approaches. Additionally, 2 raptors were captured and translocated.

WS Laffins surveyed 6,522 animals during structured "point-count" wildlife surveys on the airfield and offsite in the general zone during the month as part of a wildlife hazard assessment that he is conducting.

The 33rd annual goose roundup occurred this month from June 4th through June 7th. The roundups were conducted in the Truckee Meadows and Lake Tahoe areas in cooperation with: NDOW personnel, a pool of great volunteers from the community and Nevada Air National Guard. A total of 396 Canada Geese were captured (220 adults and 176 juveniles). Twenty nine of these geese were recaptures. This number was slightly higher than the 15 year capture average of 387 geese. The interesting figure is that only 1% of the geese captured in the Truckee Meadows were recaptures, the lowest rate ever observed. This is our goal for reducing the risks to aviation and the community

in the Truckee Meadows. The geese were all banded and relocated to State Wildlife Management Areas (Carson Lake, Wildhorse Reservoir, Lahontan Reservoir and Overton Wildlife Management Area).

New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

Nothing to Report

Information and Communication

On June 1st, District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett traveled to Livingston, Montana and gave a demo/presentation to about 150 people at the National Trapper's association's western region conference. DS Bennett along with the Montana State Director for Wildlife Services talked about both the Nevada and the Montana Wildlife Services' programs. Non-lethal predator control techniques were also discussed.

On June 26th, DS Bennett and State Director (SD) Mark Jensen attended the N-1 Grazing Board Meeting in Elko, Nevada. SD Jensen provided the board with a statewide roll up of all Wildlife Services activities. The Nevada Wildlife Services program has a long history of involvement with all 6 grazing boards in the state.

On June 28th, DS Bennett, MLS Buhler and SD Jensen attended the N-4 Grazing Board meeting in Panaca, Nevada. Many topics were discussed including the need for: aerial shooting activities in the area; raven damage management; and mountain lion damage management activities in the East District. A Nevada State Senator was also in attendance, along with several BLM employees and a representative from US Senator Dean Heller's office.

On Saturday June 30th, DS Bennett, WS Evans and WS Billy Taylor participated in a day long Cub Scout day camp. Several topics were covered during the event including the Wildlife Services program, wildlife biology and firearms safety. Approximately 50 Cub Scouts and leaders attended the event. Pencils, rulers, stickers and fact sheets were handed out to every participant.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

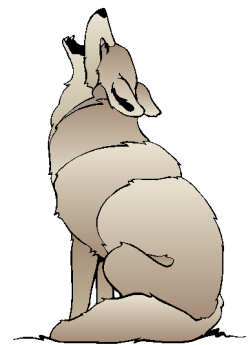
Nothing to Report

Future Meeting and Events

Nothing to Report



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