

October 2017

# 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](http://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 October, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **5.9** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$177** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$4.1** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **1,413** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$900** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$19,309** in damage to natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During October, coyotes accounted for **\$3,942** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **473** 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, **199** samples were processed.

*The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of October, 2017.*

## 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 October 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a request for assistance from a sheep producer in southern White Pine County. During the previous weeks, the sheep producer had lost several lambs to coyote predation. The producer reported that his herders were seeing and hearing coyotes near the sheep every night. With the help of Wildlife Specialist (WS) Randy Evans as the ground crew, the plane removed a pair of coyotes near the sheep. Work will continue as needed.

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Ely plane flew an allotment in northern White Pine County that had experienced very high losses on lambs during the past several months. With the help of Field Assistant (FA) Allen Eldridge, the plane removed a pair of coyotes on the lambing grounds. Work will continue in the area and FA Eldridge will continue to monitor all the livestock in his assigned work area.

On October 4<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a request from a sheep producer in southern White Pine County, concerning the loss of two ewes valued at \$500. The sheep producer reported seeing and hearing several coyotes near his sheep. With the assistance of District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett, the plane was able to remove 19 coyotes in and around the sheep. The sheep producer was very pleased with the help he received from Wildlife Services. DS Bennett will continue to monitor the sheep for predation in the future. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided to help prevent losses in the future.



On October 5<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane flew for several cattle ranchers and one sheep producer in northwestern White Pine County. The area has had very high losses in the past. With the help of WS Evans as the ground crew, five coyotes were removed. Removing coyotes in areas of high historical losses can reduce predation in the future. Work will continue in the area.

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a cattle ranch in Lincoln County and a sheep ranch in southern White Pine County. Both ranches reported seeing a large number of coyotes near their livestock. Both ranches have had high losses to coyotes in the past. During the morning's flight, 13 coyotes were removed. Work will be ongoing.



On October 10<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a request from at least two cattle ranchers in northern White Pine County. Both ranchers reported seeing coyotes near their livestock and near the ranch houses. One of the ranchers had lost at least a dozen chickens to the coyotes. During the morning's flight, four coyotes were removed near the ranch houses. Work will be ongoing in the area.

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a request from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County. The rancher had lost a number of lambs earlier to coyote predation. With the help of FA Eldridge as the ground crew, two adult coyotes were removed. High winds forced the plane to return early to the airport. Work will continue in the area.

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler received a call concerning a possible mountain lion problem in Nye County. The sheep producer reported that something had killed two of his best ram sheep valued at more than \$1,000 for the pair. The sheep producer suspected a lion may have been responsible. The following morning MLS Buhler traveled to the remote ranch. After investigating the kills it was determined that coyotes had attacked and killed both of the sheep. One three point mule deer buck was also found nearby killed by coyotes. MLS Buhler contacted WS Scott Little for help with the group of depredating coyotes. WS Little used calling, shooting and traps to remove five coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported. WS Little also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses. The sheep producer was very pleased with the Wildlife Services' program and the quick response he received.



On October 25<sup>th</sup> DS Bennett confirmed the loss of three calves, valued at almost \$1,500, to coyote predation. The damage happened on a cattle ranch in Nye County. That very day, DS Bennett was able to call and shoot two coyotes near the location of the kills. On October 30<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane followed up, removing eight more coyotes. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an effort to reduce future losses. Work will continue as needed.

On October 26<sup>th</sup>, FA Allen Eldridge confirmed that ravens had killed one lamb and injured another in northern White Pine County. The value of the damage was placed at \$250. The sheep producer reported seeing several ravens attacking and harassing his lambs. Using eggs treated with DRC-1339, FA Eldridge was able to remove ten ravens that were causing the damage. No further losses have been reported. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

During the month of October, WS Evans was very busy protecting livestock in his work area and acting as a crew member (CM) for the Ely plane. Specifically, WS Evans removed 31 coyotes using shooting, calling and trapping. On October 24<sup>th</sup>, WS Evans had an incredible day calling. He called in 12 coyotes and was able to shoot 10 of them in an area that has experienced very high losses in the past. WS Evans also confirmed the loss of two yearling lambs, valued at \$400, during the month. WS Evans will continue to protect livestock in his assigned work area.



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WS Scott Little had a very busy October, removing more than 50 coyotes in his assigned work area using traps, snares and calling. WS Little confirmed the loss of at least two calves and two registered sheep, valued at almost \$2,000, during October. WS Little will continue to protect livestock in his assigned work area.

During October, WS Mac Crome moved his camp down to his winter range in eastern Elko County. More than 12 bands of sheep from Nevada, Utah and Idaho winter in this area, keeping WS Crome very busy. WS Crome removed four coyotes in areas that have had very high losses in the past. WS Crome will continue to work this area during the next several months.



During the month of October, FA Eldridge was busy protecting six bands of sheep in his assigned work area. Using traps, shooting and calling, FA Eldridge removed 17 coyotes near the sheep. Work will be ongoing in his work area.

During October, FA Hunter Bodenchuk was also busy protecting four bands of sheep in his assigned work area. FA Bodenchuk confirmed the loss of one lamb valued at \$200 to coyote predation. FA Bodenchuk removed five coyotes using calling and traps. FA Bodenchuk also acted as crew member three days during October for the Ely plane. FA Bodenchuk will continue to protect sheep and cattle in his work area.



## West District

On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and CM Brandon VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle and goat producers in Pershing County. During the flight, seven coyotes were removed. FA Doug Koepke provided ground crew efforts. Protection efforts will be ongoing in the West District.



On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, DS Jack Spencer conducted a field inspection with FA Koepke in Pershing County. During the inspection, WS Koepke removed three coyotes with the use of foothold traps and snares.

During the first week of October, several cattle producers reported some loss and harassment of small calves in the West District. On October 5<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several calving areas in Humboldt County that resulted in the removal of 24 coyotes. The air crew will continue to fly every day there is good flying weather available.

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, DS Spencer conducted a field inspection with FA Bentz in Carson City County. DS Spencer provided trail snare training for FA Bentz on a large calving area, resulting in the removal of two coyotes.

On October 9<sup>th</sup> FA Bentz checked ground equipment around several sheep and calving ranches in Lyon County. During the inspection, FA Bentz removed six coyotes by utilizing trail snares and foothold traps. FA Bentz will continue to protect livestock in his area.

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Pershing County. During the flight, 31 coyotes were removed in close proximity of small vulnerable calves. FA Koepke provided ground crew efforts. Protection efforts will be ongoing during the busy fall calving season.



On October 12<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an early morning flight around several calving areas in Lander County. During the flight, four coyotes were removed including a pair of coyotes actively harming a young newborn calf while it was hanging half out of a cow. WS George Hansen provided crew efforts. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County. During the

flight, 26 coyotes were removed. WS Peter provided ground crew efforts, including using his dogs to push several coyotes out of the brush for the plane to remove. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the week of October 10<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>, WS Hansen removed 15 coyotes with the use of foothold traps and snares to protect calving and winter sheep band areas in Lander County. WS Hansen will continue to protect livestock in his area.

During the week of October 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, DS Spencer conducted foothold trap training and a field inspection for WB Pyzik at a military installation in southern Nevada, resulting in the removal of several coyotes.



On October 18<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Washoe County. During the flight, 14 coyotes were removed in close proximity to small vulnerable calves along the NV-CA border. FA Koepke and WS-CA Affonso provided ground crew efforts.

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County. During the flight, 28 coyotes were removed. WS Peter provided ground crew efforts, also using his dogs to move coyotes out of the brush for the plane to remove. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the week of October 10<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, WS Peter removed 10 coyotes from around calving and winter sheep band areas in Humboldt County with the use of foothold traps and snares. WS Peter will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

On October 27<sup>th</sup>, DS Spencer conducted a field inspection with WS Peter mule-back on several sheep and cattle allotments in Humboldt County, removing several coyotes with the use of trail snares. WS Peter has been trapping Humboldt County for livestock protection for the past 32 years.

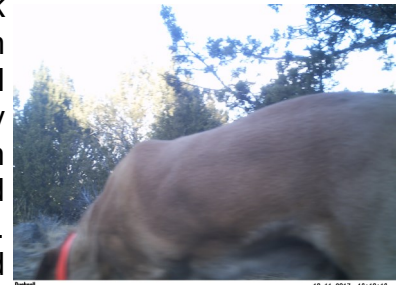


On October 31<sup>st</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County. During the flight, eight coyotes were removed in close proximity to small vulnerable calves. WS Peter provided ground crew efforts. Protection efforts will be ongoing during the busy fall calving season.

During the month of October, WS Ben Miller continued work on NDOW project 22-01, checking snares and call boxes around several California bighorn sheep populations in Hunt unit 013. On Oc-



tober 11<sup>th</sup>, WS Miller was walking up to check some trail snares and observed large lion tracks. WS Miller checked his nearby trail camera and found that he missed the lion by only 28 minutes. WS Miller tracked the lion for about a mile, with his dog working ahead of him, when the male lion took after his dog. After WS Miller provided multiple verbal and visual warnings, the lion veered away from



his dog, treed up and was removed by WS Miller with the use of his handgun. WS Miller estimated the weight of the lion at 125 lbs. WS Miller will continue to protect these augmented bighorn sheep.

During the month of October, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Zack Bowers was on leave quite a bit and as a result only had 13 working days in the month to report on. However, WB Bowers continued protection efforts at a military installation in northern Nevada. WB Bowers utilized harassment with several methods to disperse 137 individuals from 13 species. One species of mammal and one species of bird were removed from the airfield. WB Bowers will continue efforts to protect aviation safety at this facility.

During the month of October, WB Dean Pyzik reported three bird strikes at the military installation in southern Nevada, two of the strikes came back from the Smithsonian identified as an American Pipit. Two Cooper's hawks were trapped in a modified Swedish goshawk trap and translocated to reduce the chance of the birds being struck or sucked into a jet intake.

Also during the reporting period, WB Pyzik removed 11 mammals from the installation while dispersing 931 birds with his truck, firearms and pyrotechnics. Of those 931 birds dispersed while patrolling and conducting perimeter checks, mourning doves, meadowlarks and house finches accounted for 60% of the birds. Removal of the rabbits directly and indirectly reduces the potential for wildlife strikes to aviation as a removed rabbit will not be struck by an aircraft, nor will it draw in avian/mammalian predator into arriving/departing aircraft.

During the month the presence of migratory birds has been increasing steadily. The Reno Wildlife Services' airport staff have been working together on a joint use facility in northern Nevada to use non-lethal hazing as well as lethal removal. There were 1,228 birds and mammals dispersed from the airfield. There are several waterfowl and wader species posing a threat to aircraft as they layup/migrate through. The most notable is the return of the Canada geese, requiring one lethal removal to encourage the non-lethal dispersal of 280. Other hazardous species included mallards with 17 removed and 149 hazed. In sum, 84 threats were removed from the airfield with around 35% of which being pigeons. The pigeons also cause an additional threat to aviation as a prey item that draws in local/migrating raptors, such as Red-tailed hawks (RTHA) and Cooper's hawks.



WS Laffins responded to the above facility to remove a coyote, several raccoons and skunks that were a threat to arriving/departing aircraft. WS Laffins also rebuilt and modified an old goshawk trap and was successful in capturing a problem RTHA. There has been a huge influx of migratory RTHAs coming through the area, hunting in and around arriving/departing aircraft. Wildlife Services' airport staff have translocated 10 RTHAs all of which were banded for return rate data. Nevada's airport staff are banding both legs of the larger hawks now similar to the kestrels, one with a USGS metal band and one with a Wildlife Services' specific auxiliary band that is orange and white.

Also during the reporting period, WB Frey continued Wildlife Hazard Surveys at several military facilities in NV and CA, conducting both day and night surveys at both locations. A total of 2,515 birds and mammals were surveyed throughout the month.

## New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

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## Valuing and Investing in Employees

During the reporting period, WB Pyzik and WS Green attended WS airport training at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and learned a few new management approaches that can be implemented at military and civilian aviation facilities in Nevada.

WB Pyzik also attended and received his National “Special Achievement Award for Emergency First Aid Response” in Riverdale Maryland during the reporting period.

## Information and Communication

Throughout the reporting period, WB Frey, WS Miller and WS Laffins sampled 117 hunter harvested waterfowl throughout the Central Lahontan Watershed for Highly Pathogenic Avian influenza. The goal of the project (funded by APHIS-Veterinary Services via the WS’ National Wildlife Disease Program) is to sample birds weekly throughout the waterfowl hunting season to increase the chance that the disease will be detected from resident and migratory dabbling ducks. NDOW had previously live-sampled 90 ducks during the late summer (Greatly Appreciated). The sampling goal for Oct-Nov is 140 samples; and 170 samples for Dec-Jan. As the work typically is conducted on the weekends or other off-days, the extra effort is greatly appreciated.



On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen and DS Bennett attended the N-6 grazing board in Austin, NV. A program overview for the year’s activities was provided by SD Jensen.

## Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

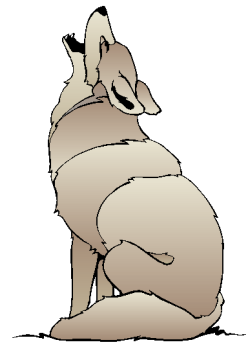
## Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report

## Future Meeting and Events

NV Cattlemen’s Association and Woolgrower’s Convention in Elko, NV. December 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. SD Jensen to attend.

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# USDA APHIS Wildlife Services

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