

October 2016

# 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)

775-851-4848

## 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 **6.8** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$201.8** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$4.2** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **1,451** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$508** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$3,567** 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 **\$2,651** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **533** 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, **101** samples were processed.

*The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of October, 2016.*

## 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 the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October, a rancher in Eastern White Pine County contacted the Ely office concerning a problem with coyotes. The rancher's wife reported that a pack of eight coyotes attacked two of their ranch dogs killing one dog and injuring another. The coyotes attacked the dogs in broad daylight and chased the surviving dog up on the porch. Before the lady could get to a gun, the coyotes had fled. The Ely plane responded to the ranch and was able to remove a group of five coyotes near the ranch. Wildlife Specialist (WS) Scott MacDonald also set several foothold traps near the ranch and removed two more coyotes. No further problems have been reported. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an attempt to prevent future problems.



On October 11<sup>th</sup>, a rancher in White Pine County reported the loss of two ewe sheep to coyote predation. WS Scott Little responded to the location and set several foothold traps near the kills. Several days later, WS Little removed two adult coyotes, bringing an end to the damage. No further losses have been reported. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an attempt to prevent future problems.



On October 21<sup>st</sup>, a sheep producer in northern White Pine County contacted the East District office concerning a problem with ravens. The sheep producer reported that about fifteen ravens had attacked a young lamb, pecking its eyes out. The value of the lamb was placed at \$175. On October 24<sup>th</sup>, District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett traveled to the location and confirmed the loss. Using hard boiled chicken eggs treated with DRC-1339, the offending ravens were removed. No further losses have been reported. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an attempt to prevent future losses.

On October 21<sup>st</sup>, a sheep producer contacted WS Allen Eldridge concerning the loss of three lambs, valued at \$525. The sheep producer reported he had observed two adult coyotes feeding on one of the fresh kills. WS Eldridge traveled to the remote ranch in northern White Pine County and set several traps near the location of the kills. A few days later, WS Eldridge removed a large male coyote near the location of the kills using foothold traps. No further losses have been reported. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an attempt to prevent future losses.

**West District**

On October 4<sup>th</sup>, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted an aerial operation around a large goat producer in Pershing County. The goat producer re-



ported that coyotes had killed two goats (valued at \$450). During the flight, eight coyotes were removed. WS Koepke provided ground support. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an aerial operation around sheep and cattle producers in Humboldt County. During the flight, 13 coyotes were removed with WS John Peter providing ground support. Protection efforts will be ongoing.



During the week of October 3<sup>rd</sup> through October 7<sup>th</sup>, WS Carl Frey was busy protecting calving areas and winter sheep bands in Lyon County. WS Frey reported that coyotes have started moving in around livestock areas, however, to date, very few livestock losses have occurred. During routine equipment checks, WS Frey removed three coyotes with the use of M-44s and two coyotes with the use of foothold traps. WS Frey will continue to protect his many livestock producers in Lyon County.

During the week of October 3<sup>rd</sup> through October 7<sup>th</sup>, WS George Hansen was also busy protecting calving areas and winter sheep bands in Lander County. During equipment inspections, WS Hansen removed 10 coyotes caught with foothold traps and trail snares. WS Hansen will continue to protect his many livestock producers in Lander County. Protection efforts will be ongoing.



On October 12<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an aerial operation around sheep and cattle producers in Humboldt County. Several cattle producers reported losing calves and observing greater than normal coyote abundance around the calves. The cattle producers also reported large groups of coyotes patrolling the calving areas. During the flight, 41 coyotes were removed. The aerial crew found several groups of coyotes of six or more. WS Peter provided ground support by locating many of the coyotes and directing the plane to their location. Protection efforts will be ongoing as the fall calving season is currently underway.

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an aerial operation around sheep and cattle producers in Lyon County. During the flight, seven coyotes were removed around livestock. WS Frey provided valuable ground support. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the past couple of weeks, WS Frey was placing equipment around several cattle producers in Douglas and Lyon Counties. WS Frey has been utilizing M-44s more during the fall months because the label allows for a once a week check, thus allowing him to provide service to more cooperators. WS Frey removed 12 coyotes around calving areas with vulnerable calves. WS Frey will continue to work with his many livestock producers which are pleased with his protection efforts.

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an aerial operation around several cattle producers in Humboldt County. WS Peter arrived before daylight and began howling coyotes to his location prior to the plane's arrival. WS Peter had a visual of a group of 20 coyotes before the plane arrived. The plane promptly removed these offending coyotes out of the calving area, then proceeded to enter another nearby calving area and found another group of nine coyotes. During the flight, 61 coyotes were removed around livestock. Livestock producers were very pleased with the protection efforts as several ranchers were present when protection work was being conducted. Livestock protection efforts will be ongoing.



On October 21<sup>st</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an aerial operation around sheep and cattle producers in Washoe County. During the flight, seven coyotes were removed around livestock. WS Koepke provided ground support. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the week of October 17<sup>th</sup> through October 21<sup>st</sup>, WS Peter was out placing M-44s around several calving areas in Humboldt County. In addition to placing out M-44s, WS Peter called in and removed nine coyotes by method of calling and shooting. Lately, there has been a lot of calls for protecting calving areas in northern Nevada. WS Peter will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

On October 26<sup>th</sup>, DS Jack Spencer conducted a field inspection with Wildlife Biologist (WB) Zack Bowers at a military installation in northern Nevada. During the inspection, WB Bowers utilized DS Spencer to help collect road kill on nearby roads to reduce vulture activity around the airport property. WB Bowers picks up hundreds of dead animals that are struck by vehicles entering and traveling on the base each year. DS Spencer also made observations for much needed habitat improvements such as removing perches and dead trees around the runways and will relay those recommendations to appropriate officials. DS Spencer will continue to ride with employees and meet cooperators in the field.



On October 26<sup>th</sup> through October 27<sup>th</sup>, WS Frey worked a large cattle ranch in Washoe County. The rancher reported one calf (valued at \$500) had been killed by coyotes. WS Frey called for two days around the calving area, resulting in 26 coyotes coming to his calling stands and 14 coyotes lethally



removed with a firearm. To date, no other livestock losses have been reported.

During the month of October, WB Bowers continued to deter wildlife from using/crossing the airfield at a military installation in northern Nevada. In an effort to keep these species from crossing the airfield, WB Bowers has utilized harassment with several methods. 354 birds from 14 species were dispersed from the airfield. Wildlife numbers are once again on the rise due primarily to fall migration, and the formation of large flocks of blackbirds/starlings.

During the month of October, there were three reports of bird strikes and three incidents of remains found on the runway. Fortunately, no damage was reported from any of these incidents. The remains found on the runway appear to all be horned larks. One of the samples collected from one of the strikes appears to be an American coot. The last sample is too minute for a preliminary identification, and no sample was able to be collected from one of the reported strikes. All samples will be sent off to the Smithsonian Institute for positive identification. As an update for September's strikes/remains found, there were three additional identifications from the Smithsonian. In addition to the Little brown bat there was a Barn swallow, an American coot and a Savannah sparrow.

During the month of October, WB Hunter Moyles and WS Cameron Green continued protection work on a joint use aviation facility in Reno. WB Moyles and WS Green work together on the airfield because it is a joint use facility. WS Green spends all of his time there, while WB Moyles is only there once or twice a week when he is not working on the other military installations. During the month, WB Moyles and WS Green continued to deter wildlife from using/crossing the airfield property. In an effort to deter these avian/mammalian species from crossing the airfield, WS Green utilized several methods of harassment. WS Green dispersed 505 birds and mammals from the airfield. Wildlife dispersed from the airfield included 16 species of birds and mammals. Many of these birds were congregated around a drainage ditch which holds water on a year around basis. Persistent harassment is necessary as birds and other wildlife are reluctant to leave the water source located on airport property.

Throughout the month, WB Moyles and WS Green have seen an increase in raptor presence on the airfields. During the month four American kestrels and five red-tailed hawks were captured and translocated. Raptor presence will continue to increase with the start of the fall migration.

Throughout the month of October, WB Moyles continued monthly surveys on offsite Military drop zones and landing strips. During the surveys, WB Moyles observed 259 avian and mammalian species on his structured surveys. Surveys will continue to get a good baseline of wildlife presence and potential strike hazards to aircraft, which will determine the integrated wildlife damage management (IWDM) techniques he will deploy at the sites during wildlife hazard management implementation.

Along with several non-lethal harassment techniques, WB Moyles and WS Green also had to deploy some lethal means of control to eliminate aircraft strike potential at a large airport in Reno. During the month WB Moyles and Green removed several offending species for public safety including: 11 pigeons, four doves and four California ground squirrels by utilizing trapping and shooting. Aircraft protection methodology will continue to be employed at the facility to better minimize the potential for animal and bird strikes to aircraft. Protection efforts are ongoing.

On October 26<sup>th</sup>, WS Green responded to a call about a hawk dive bombing people and wearing bells on its feet. WS Green inspected the situation and placed a small wire cage trap with a live

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mouse in the cage for bait (bal-chatri trap). In only a few minutes, WS Green caught the hawk. WS Green actually tracked down the owner of the hawk and was informed the hawk had escaped from a falconer three months prior across town. WS Green will continue to address problem wildlife calls for the Reno airport and occasionally the odd calls such as hawks flying with bells on their feet.

During the month of October, WS Green spent considerable effort trapping and translocating hawks found within close proximity of the runways. WS Green has captured 18 hawks to date, from airport property during the past several months. WS Green translocates the captured hawks roughly 60 miles away from the airport as an effective nonlethal approach as research has indicated that if all other factors remain the same, fewer birds return than birds translocated closer or further than 60 miles away. WS Green will continue to address human health and safety concerns at the airport.



During the month of October, WB Dean Pyzik and MSgt Shepherd met with base housing at a military installation in southern Nevada to come up with a plan to resolve the pigeon feeding issue. Base housing will use the next 4-6 weeks to get the word out about “no feeding of birds”. After that, WB Pyzik will contact base housing on the location of decoy traps and start removing birds. WB Pyzik made contact with Red Flag to address the pigeon feces in the aircraft hangars that are causing two issues: health and cost of cleanup. So far, WB Pyzik has removed 23 pigeons from the hangars. WB Pyzik also removed 18 pigeons that were a



health issue for shoppers at the base commissary. Since the removal, no pigeons have been observed hanging around the commissary. WB Pyzik has seen an increase of bird species at this same installation from 12 to 27 species of birds and has dispersed 1,053 birds while patrolling and conducting perimeter checks.

**New and Developing Methods**

Nothing to Report

**Valuing and Investing in Employees**

WB Pyzik was nominated for “Civilian of the Quarter (Aug-Oct’16) Wing Staff Agency Category 2.

**Information and Communication**

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, DS Bennett and Staff Biologist (SB) Jack Sengl attended the N-6 grazing board meeting in Austin. DS Bennett provided an overview and handouts for the meeting.

**Emerging Trends/Issues**

Nothing to Report

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

Nothing to Report

**Future Meetings and Events**

December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, California Cattlemen’s Association and California CattleWomen’s Annual Convention & Allied Industry Trade Show in conjunction with Nevada Cattlemen’s Association and Nevada Woolgrowers Association in Reno, NV. State Director (SD) Mark Jensen, DS Bennett, DS Spencer and WS Frey to attend.





USDA APHIS

# Wildlife Services

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USDA-APHIS-WS  
8775 Technology Way  
Reno, NV 89521

