

## June 6, 2018 Board of Agriculture Update

### Animal Industry

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#### Personnel

- On May 24<sup>th</sup> we interviewed two candidates for the Elko Biologist position. We are hopeful to have this position filled by mid-June.
- We completed the interviewing and selection process for the Elko office Brand's Program Officer I position in April. We are very happy to announce that Shannon Sustacha was our selected candidate. Shannon's first day was May 7<sup>th</sup> and she has been very busy learning our processes and programs and is doing a great job. Shannon has a great background with experience in management, compliance, logistics, and agriculture. Shannon is a great fit with our department and staff and we look forward to the advancements our brands program will gain with her oversight.
- Lori Elliott started her full-time state employment with our division as our Elko administrative assistant on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Lori is doing an amazing job and we're very happy to have her join our team.
- We currently have four candidates completing the background check process for our Elko Enforcement Officer I position. We are still accepting new applications while we review these four candidates. We are hopeful to have this position filled in the next quarter.
- Enforcement Officer's last quarter statistics tracking sheet has been provided for reference.

#### Investigations

- This has again been an extremely busy quarter for enforcement staff as the department has gathered and advertised numerous stray animals across the state. Enforcement staff have also been tasked with responding to and/or resolving multiple horse ownership disputes across the state.
- The issue with the two premises in southern Nevada that had illegal Cervidae located on the property and under hold order has been resolved. The owners were able to locate locations outside of our state for these animals and all animals were removed from Nevada in April. Please remember that in order to ensure the safety of Nevada agricultural commodities and the public, all of these animals were tested for tuberculosis and brucellosis prior to being released for export.
- On February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the State Veterinarian was notified by USDA authorities that a horse that had been exposed to Equine Infectious Anemia was being released from the Mexican border. The horse remains under a hold order and has not been presented for a follow up EIA test. Marshal Godinez has been extremely helpful insuring this hold order is enforced and at the time of this report, the State Veterinarian is working to schedule a follow up EIA test.
- A backyard flock of "exhibition" chickens tested positive for Exotic Newcastle Disease in May. The State Veterinarian is working with accredited veterinarians across the state,

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and especially southern Nevada, to monitor all reports of sick poultry. While a trace out to Nevada from this flock has not been confirmed, there is a chance for exposure based upon the nature of this flock.

- Trichomoniasis testing is winding now that the breeding season is starting. Two “pockets” of trich were identified the last 60 days. After lengthy epidemiological studies, the clusters were traced back to two herds with mature bulls that had not been tested in several years. These two herds were subsequently tested and a large percentage of the bulls in the two herds was positive.
- In early May, a week-long exercise dealing with the introduction of Foot and Mouth Disease into the United States was conducted. The State Veterinarian participated in this week-long exercise and discovered the need to update regulations and statutes as a result of the drill. The State Veterinarian has been working with Legislative Council Bureau staff to identify areas that need to be addressed in the next legislative session. This exercise will be discussed in detail during the Western States Livestock Health Association (WSLHA) meeting in June. A detailed report of the exercise and suggested steps forward will be presented after the June WSLHA meeting at the September NDA Board meeting.

#### Administration

- Dr. Goicoechea and Doug Farris are both scheduled to attend the WSLHA annual meeting in mid-June. The WSLHA is the western chapter of the United States Animal Health Association. This is a great opportunity for us to keep strong connections with our western state partners and provide us with knowledge to bring back to our department and benefit our programs and the state. During this meeting, discussions regarding RFID brucellosis tags being used as proof of vaccination regardless of tattoo status will be had. Dr. Goicoechea is leading that discussion in western states and hopes to gain support of surrounding states during this meeting. It is important to note that regulatory and in some cases, statutory changes will need to be made in states in order for this change to occur. This is the first step in a lengthy process.
- During the last Nevada Cattlemen’s Association (NCA) Board of Directors meeting in Fallon, the NCA Board requested that NDA staff begin researching and evaluating a plan to implement mandatory Trichomoniasis testing for the state. This is an ongoing process by department staff.
- On March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Director Barbee, Dr. J.J. Goicoechea, and Doug Farris met with NCA Board members to discuss the brands program and how we can all work together to help make the program operate smoothly. Director Barbee advised NCA members of some of the hurdles we have been working through and the corrections that we have had to implement in the last year. NDA staff believe that this was a positive meeting for all and that this meeting bolstered our relationship with NCA.
- During the above-mentioned meeting, NCA requested that we provide some more training opportunities for our current inspectors. Since this time, Marshal Chris Miller has

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sent several emails to inspectors offering training tips for the electronic system as well as suggestions on how to complete certain inspection certificates correctly. Chris received positive feedback from inspectors that felt they had learned new things not previously provided to them, and has even received more calls with questions. We will also be scheduling some group training opportunities for inspectors at different locations across the state. This part of the training was delayed in scheduling purposely due to many of our inspectors operating their own livestock operations. With our inspectors in mind, we did not feel that we would receive the needed attendance due to calving, branding, and shipping seasons. Although we will be approaching haying season, we are hopeful that our later scheduling will be more conducive to our inspectors.

- We are still on track complete the full implementation of the electronic brand inspection program this year. This will provide that all Brand Inspectors are transferred to the digital system. We currently only have 6 inspectors that are not moved over to the digital system.
- Department staff have been diligently working and completing the launching of our 2018 Livestock Assessment (Head tax) collection program in May and had notices out by June 1<sup>st</sup>. During the beginning of this process, staff identified issues with the list of contacts that we had previously sent assessment notices out to. After many hours spent verifying and updating our contact list, we now have correct and up to date contact information for notifying livestock owners of the 2018 assessment.
- Elko staff have also initiated a tracking system for the Livestock Assessment program. This will ensure that livestock owners who are not current in their assessments will not be provided brand inspections and that if they hold a registered brand, it will be suspended until payment is received.
- The Animal Disease Lab is progressing under the direction of our Lab Supervisor, Laura Morrow. Since Laura's arrival, the lab has begun to function much more smoothly. Laura has implemented new trainings, staff cross training, test tracking charts, and new or updated standard operating procedures.
- For the fiscal year of 2018, the Animal Disease Lab staff have completed 26,341 tests. Animal Disease Lab staff are also ramping up for mosquito season testing and have already received their first positive test for West Nile Virus from a submitted crow.
- PARC employees have been busy across the state providing technical assistance, non-lethal predator recommendations, and removal of predators where required. Multiple species of predatory animals were targeted including coyotes, lions, and ravens.
- Animal Industry staff are currently completing and verifying our FY20 & FY21 budget builds for the next biennium.