

September 2019

# 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 September, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **4** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$121.7** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$2.8** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **250** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$2,400.00** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$88,591** in damage to agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During September, coyotes accounted for **\$9,925** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **171** 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 September, **29** samples were processed.

*The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of September, 2019.*

## 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 September 3<sup>rd</sup>, the East District office received a call concerning a problem with raccoons in Lincoln County. The reporting party explained that she had planted a vineyard and a large number of raccoons were consuming and contaminating her crop. The total loss was estimated at more than \$11,000. Wildlife Specialist (WS) Scott Little traveled to the location and used firearms, traps and snares to remove 10 raccoons. No further losses have been reported. The vineyard owner was very happy with the quick response from WS Scott Little. WS Little also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Field Assistant (FA) Allen Eldridge confirmed the loss of 1 lamb, valued at \$200, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in central White Pine County. FA Eldridge was able to use calling to remove 2 coyotes. No further losses have been reported. FA Eldridge also provided non-lethal technical assistance to help prevent future losses.

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, WS Little confirmed the loss of 2 calves, valued at \$1,000, to raven predation. The damage occurred on a ranch in southwestern White Pine County. WS Little used hard boiled chicken eggs treated with DRC-1339 to remove the depredating ravens. WS Little also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.



On September 9<sup>th</sup>, the East District office received a call concerning the loss of 3 lambs, valued at \$450, to coyote predation. The predation happened on a band of sheep in eastern Eureka County. On September 10<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to the location but, due to smoky conditions and poor visibility, did not remove any coyotes. The following day, WS Randy Evans hiked into the band of sheep and, using his well-trained coyote decoy dogs, was able to call in and shoot the depredating coyote. WS Evans will continue to monitor the band of sheep. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.



On September 16<sup>th</sup>, WS Scott Little confirmed the loss of 2 calves, valued at \$1,000, to coyote predation. The damage occurred in southern White Pine County. WS Little used traps and snares to remove 3 coyotes near the kills. WS Little will continue his efforts to remove coyotes near the calves. WS Little also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler confirmed the loss of 1 calf, valued at \$500, to mountain lion predation. The damage happened on a ranch in western White Pine County. The following day, MLS Buhler used his well-trained tracking and trailing dogs to remove the adult female lion. No further losses have been reported.



On September 17<sup>th</sup>, WS Nathan Fowler confirmed the loss of 1 lamb, valued at \$200, to coyote predation. The predation took place on a ranch in north east White Pine County. On September 18<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to the location. With the assistance of WS Nathan Fowler as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 4 coyotes, including a pair at the kill location. No further losses have been reported. WS Fowler also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, WS Evans confirmed the loss of 3 lambs and 1 ewe to coyote predation. The total value of the loss was placed at \$775. The following day, WS Evans used calling and his coyote decoy dogs to remove 2 adult coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to prevent future losses. The sheep producer was very pleased with all of WS Evans hard work.

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, the East District office received a call concerning the loss of 1 adult sheep, valued at \$250, to coyote predation. The kill took place on a ranch north of Ely, Nevada. The rancher reported seeing at least 2 adult coyotes coming into his yard but was unable to get to a gun in time to shoot them. On September 19<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to the ranch. During the morning flight, 5 coyotes were removed. The rancher was very pleased with the help he received from Wildlife Services and the Nevada Department of Agriculture.

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, WS Little confirmed the loss of 1 calf, valued at \$500, to raven predation. WS Little used hard boiled chicken eggs treated with DRC-1339 to remove approximately 30 ravens, bringing an end to the damage. WS Little also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, WS Little received a call concerning the loss of 1 calf, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. WS Little traveled to the location in southern White Pine County and confirmed the loss. A short time later, WS Little was able to shoot the depredating coyote. No further losses have been reported but work will continue as needed.

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call in southern Elko County concerning the loss of 3 lambs and 1 ewe, valued at \$850, to coyote predation. With the assistance of WS Evans as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 8 coyotes, bringing an end to the damage. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

During the month of September, District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett confirmed the loss of 4 adult sheep, valued at \$1,000, to coyote predation. DS Bennett used shooting and traps to remove 3 coyotes. The Ely plane also responded to the ranch and removed 5 more coyotes. DS Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.

During the first 2 weeks of September, DS Bennett confirmed more than \$35,000 in feral swine damage to 3 corn fields in Lincoln County. On September 16<sup>th</sup>, a helicopter was used to remove 5 feral pigs from the corn field. Work will be ongoing. At least 3 of the pigs were sampled for several diseases and genetics samples were also obtained. Feral swine continue to be a problem in Nevada. Although the feral swine population is isolated and very small, they persist likely with the assistance of some private augmentation. Work will continue to attempt to eliminate feral swine from Nevada.



Between September 26<sup>th</sup> and September 29<sup>th</sup>, DS Bennett, WS Little and FA El-dridge traveled to Lincoln County to follow up on the feral swine as the corn fields were being cut. During the cutting process, 12 feral pigs were removed. The farmer was very pleased with the help he received from Wildlife Services and the Nevada Department of Agriculture. A number of the pigs were also sampled for several different diseases and genetics samples were also taken from the pigs.

## West District

During the week of September 9<sup>th</sup> through September 13<sup>th</sup>, FA Alex Wallis set equipment around several sheep and cattle producers in Lyon County, resulting in the removal of 4 coyotes. Although there had been no reported kills, coyotes are starting to move in around calving areas.

On September 13<sup>th</sup>, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several calving areas in Humboldt County. The livestock producers reported coyotes moving in around their cattle operations. During the flight, 14 coyotes were removed. WS Peter provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

On September 17<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay flew several calving areas in Lander County, resulting in the removal of 3 coyotes. The livestock producers had reported coyotes were moving in



around their calving areas. WS George Hansen provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

During the week of September 16<sup>th</sup> through September 19<sup>th</sup>, FA Doug Koepke and WS John Peter spent the week trying to stop ongoing lion depredations (41 lambs valued at \$6,150) on 2 bands of sheep in Pershing County. The area was very remote and required the use of mules to carry equipment in the back

country. The herders had seen and harassed lions several times at sheep kills with firearms, which would keep the lions away for a week or two. WS Peter set trail snares, resulting in the removal of 1 lion. The sheep losses ceased on this band of sheep, unfortunately, a herder from another band of sheep reported that he had just lost more lambs to lion(s) and a resident reported seeing a lion walking in front of his house in the general area, prompting more equipment setting.



During the following equipment check, 2 additional lions were caught and removed. To date no other livestock losses have occurred on these lamb bands. FA Doug Koepke and WS Peter will remain in close contact with the sheep producer.

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, WS Peter checked snares that he had set for feral swine, resulting in the removal of a sub adult feral pig. This population of feral swine will stay away in the thick brush and then randomly move into the bait sites that WS Peter has established. Once they get on bait, WS Peter increases the amount of capture equipment set. By setting the equipment when the pigs are coming into bait, he reduces the chance that he catches a non-target species. Monitoring for and removing feral swine is difficult when you are faced with a lot of country with thick brush, poor access and the need to protect calves and sheep in other areas.



During the month of September, WS Reed Thomas continued to protect property and public safety by implementing a wildlife hazard management plan at an aviation facility in Washoe County. WS Thomas has been settling into his new position and has been successful in capturing and banding several hawk species. WS Thomas will continue to protect aviation safety and other work on other projects as necessary.

During the reporting period, Wildlife Biologist (WB) David Carrasco continued to protect flying service members from wildlife at a military facility in southern Nevada. Specifically, 30 mourning doves were dispersed, 10 were removed, along with 21 pigeons, 7 desert cottontail rabbits and 5 black-tailed jackrabbits during the week of September 9<sup>th</sup>. During the week of September 16<sup>th</sup>, WB Carrasco: euthanized a turkey vulture that had been soaring at the approach of runway 03; euthanized 12 mourning doves and 2 pigeons at the golf course, and dispersed 66 mourning doves and 1 American kestrel from the field near the taxiway. WB Carrasco also trapped and translocated 4 American kestrels and a red-tailed hawk that were near the movement area, along with dispersing 70 additional mourning doves during the week of September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **New and Developing Methods**

Nothing to Report

### **Valuing and Investing in Employees**

On September 30<sup>th</sup>, WB Carl Frey accepted a transfer to the WS-Washington program. WB Frey has been with the Nevada program for 4 years protecting livestock, public safety and natural resources and will be missed, but we wish him well in his career development.

### **Information and Communication**

Nothing to Report

### **Emerging Trends/Issues**

Nothing to Report

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

Nothing to Report

### **Future Meeting and Events**

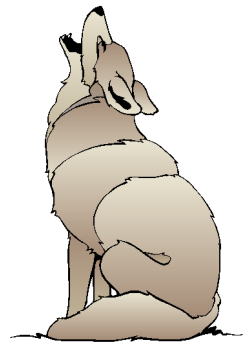
September 30<sup>th</sup>-October 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Wildlife Society (TWS) Conference in Reno. State Director Mark Jensen and DS Spencer to attend.



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# Wildlife Services

