

April 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

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 April, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **6.7** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$103** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$12.2** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **1,524** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$715,493** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$30,410** in damage to natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During April, coyotes accounted for **\$6,615** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **333** 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 April, **11** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of April, 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 April 1st, the Ely plane responded to a call for assistance from a cattle rancher in western White Pine County. The cattle rancher had lost at least one calf, valued at \$500. The rancher said his neighbor had also spotted a pair of coyotes chasing another calf. During the morning's flight, a pair of coyotes was removed near the location of the loss. As this rancher just started to calve out, work will be ongoing.

On April 3rd, the Elko plane responded to a call for assistance from a cattle rancher in Eureka County. The rancher had just started to calve out and coyotes had already killed two calves valued \$1,000. During the morning's flight, the plane was able to remove three coyotes near the location of the kills. No further losses have been reported.



On April 3rd, the Ely plane responded to a call from a rancher in southern Elko County. The rancher reported that a coyote had attacked and killed one of his calves, valued at \$500. During the flight, only one coyote was removed, but since then, no further losses have been reported.

On April 4th, the Elko plane flew for several bands of sheep in eastern Elko County, near the Utah border. WS Crome had confirmed the loss of at least two lambs, valued at \$400, to coyote predation. During the aerial operation, the plane killed two coyotes as they fed on one of the kills. No further losses have been reported and technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was provided by WS Crome in an effort to help reduce future losses.

On April 4th, the Ely plane responded to a request for assistance from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County. The rancher had lost at least four ewes, valued at \$1,000, to coyote predation. With Field Assistant (FA) Allen Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove five coyotes near the location of 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.

On April 5th, FA Eldridge confirmed the loss of two ewes, valued at \$500. Over the next two weeks, FA Eldridge was able to remove three coyotes using calling and trapping. No further losses have been reported. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On April 5th, the Elko plane responded to several cattle ranches in central Elko County. One of the ranchers reported that coyotes had killed at least two calves, valued at \$1,000. Several other adjoining ranches reported that they were seeing and hearing a large amount of coyotes in their calving pastures. With WS Crome as the ground crew, 23 coyotes were removed including five near the location of the two losses. No further damage has been reported and WS Crome continues to monitor the ranches for problems.

On April 5th, the Ely plane responded to the same call for assistance from the cattle rancher in western White Pine County that was flown on April 1st. During the morning's flight, four more coyotes were removed. Work will be ongoing as the rancher continues to calve out.

On April 10th, the Ely plane responded to a request from a cattle rancher in Nye County that had lost at least one calf to coyote predation. The rancher also reported that several other calves were missing. The value of the one calf was placed at \$500. During the flight, four coyotes were removed near the kill site. No further losses have been reported.

On April 11th, the Elko plane responded to a cattle ranch that had just lost two calves, valued at \$1,000. During the morning's flight, three coyotes were removed including one large adult coyote at the kill site. No further losses have been reported.

On April 11th, the Ely plane flew on Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) project 38. The project is designed to remove coyotes in areas identified by NDOW with low fawn recruitment. During the mornings' flight, five coyotes were removed.

On April 12th, the Elko plane responded to a call for assistance from a sheep producer in eastern Elko County on the Utah border. A sheep producer had lost at least two lambs and two adult ewes to coyote predation. The damage was confirmed by WS Crome with the value set at \$800 for the four sheep. During the morning's flight, one coyote was removed near the location of the kills. WS Crome was the ground crew for the flight and also removed several other coyotes near the location of the kills using ground equipment. WS Crome is just finishing up his work in the area and has spent the winter camped near the sheep. Ten to twelve bands of sheep winter in his areas and losses have been very low thanks to all of WS Crome's hard work and the help of the Elko plane.

On April 12th, the Ely plane responded to a call for assistance from a sheep producer in central White Pine County. FA Eldridge had previously confirmed the loss of two ewes, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. With FA Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove eight coyotes. No further losses have been reported. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to prevent future losses.



On April 14th, the Elko plane responded to a call for help from a sheep producer in southern Elko and northwestern White Pine Counties. The rancher was just starting to lamb and was hearing several coyotes near his sheep. Losses in this area have been historically high in the past. Since the ranch is near NDOW project 40 both the sheep producer and the NDOW Projects were worked. With WS Randy Evans as the ground crew the plane was able to remove eight coyotes near the sheep and three from NDOW Project 40. By working both NDOW projects and livestock producers, both benefit from the relationship. Work will be ongoing in the area.

On April 14th, the Ely plane flew for several bands of sheep in western White Pine County. No losses had been reported yet but historically the losses have been very high in the area and the producer was about to start lambing. With WS Little as the ground crew the plane was able to remove three coyotes. Work will be ongoing as the lambing season begins.

On April 15th, the Ely plane flew on NDOW Project 38 in Lincoln County to protect antelope from coyote predation. During the flight, four coyotes were removed. The work will be ongoing as the ante-

lope begin to fawn.

On April 17th, the Ely plane responded to a cattle and sheep rancher in western White Pine County. The rancher reported seeing several coyotes in his calving pastures. During the morning's flight, 11 coyotes were removed with FA Hunter Bodenchuk ground crewing.

On April 17th, the Elko plane responded to a request for assistance from a sheep producer and a cattle rancher in central Elko County. No losses had been reported but both livestock producers have had very high losses in the past and were seeing and hearing lots of coyotes in and around the young livestock. With WS Mac Crome as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove nine coyotes during the flight. Work will be ongoing in the area as more sheep arrive and more calves are born.

On April 18th, District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett was contacted by a sheep and cattle producer in eastern White Pine County concerning a problem with ravens. The rancher reported that he had just starting to lamb out and ravens were attacking his newborn lambs. He said while on the phone that he was watching four ravens attack a newborn lamb and was trying to haze them away. The next morning, DS Bennett traveled to the location. DS Bennett was able to confirm the loss of at least 40 lambs valued at more than \$6,000 to raven predation. Two ravens were observed pecking on a live newborn lamb, one of which was shot. 18 other ravens were observed harassing other newborn lambs. Eight freshly killed lambs were found in one field. Using hard boiled chicken eggs treated with DRC-1339, all of 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 stop any future losses. The rancher was very pleased with the assistance he received from Wildlife Services and commented that he probably would have lost his entire lamb crop had it not been for the help.

On April 19th, the Ely plane responded to a call for assistance from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County. The sheep producer reported the loss of at least two ewes to coyote predation. With FA Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove six coyotes. No further losses have been reported.

On April 19th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in central Elko County. The rancher had lost at least one calf, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. With WS Crome as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 19 coyotes in and around the calving pasture. The rancher was very pleased with the help from the Elko plane, The Nevada Department of Agriculture and Wildlife Services.

On April 20th, the Ely plane responded to a request for help from a cattle and sheep rancher in north-

ern White Pine County. The rancher reported that he was about to start lambing out and he already had calves on the ground and was seeing several coyotes near his calves. During the morning's flight, the plane located and removed three coyotes. Work will be ongoing.

On April 21st, the Ely plane flew for two different sheep producers and two different cattle producers in western White Pine and eastern Nye County. During the flight, two coyotes were removed and the plane was able to help locate an active den. FA Bodenchuk, acting as the ground crew, was able to remove the den. The den was in close proximity to a farm flock of sheep that has experienced very high losses in the past. The owner of the sheep was very pleased that the den was removed so close to her sheep. Work will be ongoing.



On Saturday, April 22nd, both the Ely and Elko planes flew for antelope protection on NDOW project 38. With lambing, calving and several NDOW projects, both the East District planes have been flying six days a week in an effort to keep up with the busy work load. The Elko plane flew an area near the Idaho border and the Ely plane flew in Lincoln County. 16 coyotes were removed between the two planes during the Saturday's flight. Work will be ongoing to protect antelope in several areas designated by NDOW with low fawn to doe ratios.

On April 24th, FA Bodenchuk removed several ravens from a landfill in Eureka County. The ravens were posing a threat to public safety by scattering trash and defecating on landfill equipment. The County manager was very pleased with the help he has received from the Nevada Department of Agriculture and Wildlife Services. Work will continue.

On April 27th, the Ely plane responded to a call for assistance from a sheep rancher in northern White Pine County. FA Allen Eldridge had just recently confirmed the loss of two ewes, valued at \$500. With FA Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove eight coyotes during the morning's flight. No further losses have been reported and FA Eldridge provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations.

On April 28th, the Ely plane responded to call for help from a cattle rancher in southern White Pine County. WS Scott Little had confirmed the loss of one calf, valued at \$500. With the help of WS Little as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove seven coyotes near the kill. No further losses have been reported.

On April 29th, both the Elko and Ely plane flew for NDOW project 38 to protect antelope fawns from coyote predation. During the morning's flight, both planes were able to remove 14 coyotes.

During April, work continued on NDOW project 21. The project is designed to remove ravens, coyotes and badgers that have a negative impact on nesting sage-grouse. Several sage-grouse leks have been identified by NDOW for protection. Coyotes and badgers will be removed with firearms near the leks and ravens will be first counted and then removed using eggs treated with DRC-1339. In the East District, leks have been identified in Eureka, White Pine, Elko and Lincoln Counties. Work will continue through the sage-grouse nesting season.

During April, WS Dayne Barnes continued his feral swine removal and monitoring efforts. WS Barnes has placed several trail cameras near water and food sources in an effort to identify areas with feral swine in Nevada. WS Barnes also traveled to Paradise Valley, north of Winnemucca, and checked several ranches in that area, during April. Work will continue on this project.

West District

On April 1, WS Ben Miller inspected several snare/call box set ups near translocated California bighorn sheep populations in Washoe County (hunt unit 013), removing a 130 pound male lion. As mentioned in previous months, WS Miller has noticed a huge decrease in lion activity around these bighorn sheep since he started. The translocated bighorn sheep population appears to be slowly expanding in this area.

On April 4th, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted a flight around a large lambing area in Humboldt County, with WS John Peter operating as ground crew. During the flight, eight coyotes were removed and the aerial crew located two dens, which WS John Peter later removed, along with an additional coyote that WS Peter removed at the den site. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the week of April 4th through April 6th, DS Jack Spencer conducted a field inspection on Wildlife Biologist (WB) Dean Pyzik at a military installation in southern Nevada. During the week, DS Spencer inspected various mammalian and avian traps with WB Pyzik. DS Spencer also met with WB Pyzik's cooperators and received a lot of positive comments about the important work that WB Pyzik is doing to protect our Service members. DS Spencer will periodically meet with cooperators and employees in the field.



On Saturday April 8th, WS Peter placed out DRC-1339 treated egg baits around several sage-grouse lek sites (hunt units 031 and 032) which also overlaps several lambing and calving areas in Humboldt County. WS Peter will continue protecting sage-grouse eggs from ravens until the end of May.

On April 10th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a flight around a large lambing area in Lander County. During the flight, three coyotes were removed. WS George Hansen provided valuable ground support during the flight. WS Hansen also removed a pair of coyotes close to the lambs with the use of foothold traps. Protection efforts will be ongoing from both the air and ground.

During the month of April, WS Miller placed out DRC-1339 treated egg baits around several areas identified by NDOW for raven removal to protect sage-grouse eggs. WS Miller will continue to protect sage-grouse eggs, until the end of May when the broods have hatched out.

During the month of April, WS Rick Laffins has been maintaining field equipment on an NDOW upland game protection project in Lyon County. During the month, WS Laffins removed 12 coyotes with the



use of foothold traps and firearms. WS Laffins will continue to protect upland game birds from predation at this State management area.

On Saturday April 1st, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around a population of antelope in Lyon County (hunt unit 204). NDOW requested assistance to fly several antelope projects in Nevada this spring. There have been several published scientific papers showing the direct benefits of coyote removal near newborn antelope. During the flight, four coyotes were removed. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On April 11th, a manager from a military installation in southern Nevada reported that several bird species were causing conflicts with military aircraft. DS Spencer provided technical assistance to the manager and made himself available if a site inspection is needed to address the damage. Birds on runways are always a problem often requiring an integrated management approach.

On April 11th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a flight around a large lambing area in Lyon County. During the flight, two coyotes were removed. WS Spencer provided valuable ground support during the flight. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On April 12th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a flight around a large lambing area in Humboldt County. During the flight, three coyotes were removed and the aerial crew located one den that was reported to WS Peter to later remove. One of the offending coyotes was spotted eating on a lamb, valued at \$93, before the aerial crew dispatched it. WS Peter provided valuable ground support during the flight. Protection efforts will be ongoing.



On Saturday April 15th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around a population of antelope in Elko County (hunt unit 066). NDOW requested assistance to fly several antelope projects in northern Nevada to increase fawn recruitment. During the flight, 13 coyotes were removed. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the week of April 19th through April 21st, WS Hansen checked trail snares and foothold traps around a large lamb band in Lander County. During ground crewing efforts, WS Hansen removed five coyotes and removed one coyote den. WS Hansen has over 30 years' experience as a government trapper.

On April 20th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a flight around a large lambing area in Washoe County. During the flight, seven coyotes were removed. Several of the coyotes were right in the middle of the sheep. FA Doug Koepke provided valuable ground support during the flight. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On April 21st, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a flight around a large lambing area in Lander County. During the flight, eight coyotes were removed. Several of the coyotes were standing right in the lamb bands. WS Hansen provided valuable ground support during the flight. Protec-

tion efforts will be ongoing.

On April 25th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a flight around a large lambing area in Humboldt County. During the flight, seven coyotes were removed. Several of the coyotes were standing right in the lamb bands. WS Hansen provided valuable ground support during the flight. Protection efforts will be ongoing from both the air and ground.

To meet the high demands of protecting newborn livestock and antelope, the aerial crew often flew six days a week during the reporting period.

During the month of April, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Zack 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. To that end, 338 birds from 28 species were dispersed from the airfield. Two species of mammal and three species of bird were lethally removed. In addition, one Swainson's hawk was trapped and translocated from the airfield vicinity. The increase in water throughout the area continues to show an increase in species diversity. As a matter of comparison, during April of 2016 WB Bowers dispersed 18 species of birds from the airfield as compared to 28 this April. With more water on the way, WB Bowers expects to be dealing with these conditions for the foreseeable future.

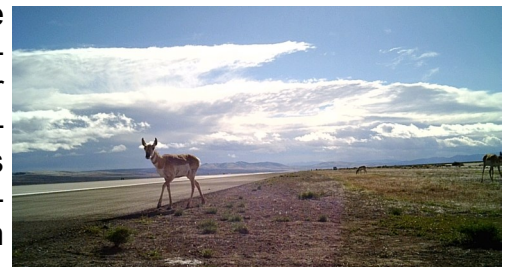
During the month of March, WB Dean Pyzik translocated one Red-tailed hawk and one Great horned owl. WB Pyzik also caught two individuals vandalizing the modified Swedish goshawk trap at the golf course and notified the base police. Citations were issued and the two individuals will have to appear at Las Vegas Municipal court for damaging government property.

Also during the month, WB Pyzik reported 10 bird strikes at the military installation in southern Nevada. Historically, April is the highest month for bird strikes. So far in FY 17, there have been 15 bird strikes with no reported damage.



Also during the reporting period, WB Pyzik remove nine black-tailed jack rabbits from the installation while dispersing 758 birds. Of those 758 birds dispersed, mourning dove and great tailed grackle accounted for 73% of the birds dispersed while patrolling and conducting perimeter checks at the installation. Removal of the rabbits not only directly reduces the chance of an wildlife strike to aircraft but indirectly reduces the chance of a wildlife strike to aircraft, but indirectly reduces the presence of predatory wildlife.

During the month of April, WB Carl Frey conducted three wildlife surveys at military joint use facility in California to collect information for their BASH plan. Also three surveys were conducted at an ANG airfield in Lyon County establishing a baseline data set for the implementation and planning for the hazard assessment. In total 1,779 birds and animals were surveyed. WB Frey has observed several hundred domestic animals being put out on the open range that surrounds the airfields. Although some fencing is established to exclude the domestics from the airfields it is not contiguous, leaving opportunities for both do-



mestic/wild/feral animals and wildlife to access the runways (such as the Pronghorn antelope in the picture).



WB Frey and WS Cameron Green trapped and translocated eight raptors during the month. One Great-horned owl was captured in close proximity to the north approach of the runway. WS Green noted that American kestrel activity and abundance had increased at the airfield. To reduce the threat of wildlife strikes, seven of the American kestrels, and the owl, were translocated away from the county. With the Nevada banding program starting back up WS Green was also able to band one the birds before translocating.



WB Frey and WS Green also removed 58 birds and mammals from a joint use facility in Washoe County. The large percentage was Canada geese and small ground mammals. WS Green was also asked to respond to a coyote on the active runway and was able to remove the threat with the help of airport operations without incident.

New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

WB Frey attended the Initial Airport Wildlife Biologist training in Guam during the month. The training was beneficial to the NV airport program in writing quality wildlife hazard assessments and providing the safest airfield possible with the most up to date management techniques. The cross training from the Guam program was very interesting and unique. All of Guam's staff was very knowledgeable in all aspects of the state's program.

Information and Communication

WB Pyzik was interviewed by a Las Vegas local news channel to talk about the BASH program at the military installation in southern Nevada.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report

Future Meeting and Events

Friday, June 2nd, N-4 grazing board meeting in Ely. State Director (SD) Mark Jensen and DS Bennett to attend.



USDA APHIS

Wildlife Services



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

