

April 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

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 March, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **5.8** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$127.7** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$17.1** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **369** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$2,641** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$286,234** in damage to aviation, natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During April, coyotes accounted for **\$12,341** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **314** 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, **32** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of April, 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

During the week of April 1st, work was performed on Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) project 38. Project 38 is designed to protect big game and sage-grouse from excessive coyote predation. Specific to the project, 62 coyotes were removed in Nye County. Work will continue as fawning season starts.

On April 1st, the Elko plane responded to 3 cattle ranches in central Elko County that lost more than 12 calves, valued at over \$6,000, to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 12 coyotes near the location of the kills. Work will be ongoing as needed. The ranchers were very pleased with the assistance they received from USDA Wildlife Services and Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA).



Also on April 1st, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County. The rancher had recently lost several adult sheep to coyote predation. During the flight the plane was able to remove 16 coyotes near the sheep. Work will continue as needed.

On April 2nd, Crew Member (CM) Wayne Rowley responded to a ranch in central Elko County that was having a very bad problem with ravens attacking their newborn calves and harassing the mother cows as they were giving birth. The ravens had killed at least 2 calves by pecking their eyes and other soft tissues. CM Rowley used hard boiled chicken eggs treated with DRC-1339 to remove the offending ravens. No further problems have been reported. CM Rowley also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On April 3rd, CM Rowley responded to another cattle ranch in western Elko County suffering from problems with ravens. Ravens had killed at least 2 calves valued at \$1,000. CM Rowley again used treated eggs to remove the offending ravens. No further losses have been reported. CM Rowley also provided non-lethal technical assistance to help prevent future losses.



On April 5th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in southern Elko County. The rancher had lost at least 2 calves valued at \$1,000 to coyote predation. During the flight the plane was able to remove 4 coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an effort to help reduce future losses.

On April 10th, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Randy Evans responded to a call from a cattle rancher in western White Pine County. The rancher reported the loss of at least 1 calf valued at \$500 to raven predation. He reported that a large group of ravens were attacking his cattle while calving and that 1 calf was injured so badly that it had to be put down. The depredating ravens were removed with the use of hard boiled eggs treated with DRC-1339. The rancher was very pleased with the help he received from USDA and NDA.

On April 13th, the Ely plane flew on NDOW project 38, removing 5 coyotes on antelope fawning areas in close proximity to several herds of antelope. Work will continue for the next month or so as mule deer and antelope give birth.

On April 15th, NDA Field Assistant (FA) Tyler Bodily confirmed the loss of 6 calves valued at \$3,000 to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a cattle ranch in northeastern Eureka County. The rancher reported 2 large groups of ravens had been attacking his newborn calves and had killed at least 6 and injured several others. FA Bodily used hard boiled chicken eggs treated with DRC-1339 to remove the depredating ravens.

On April 16th, WS Mac Crome confirmed the loss of 5 adult sheep valued at \$1,250 to coyote predation. WS Crome used traps, snares and calling to remove 5 coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported since the coyotes were removed. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an attempt to help reduce future losses.

On April 17th, the Elko plane responded to a call from several sheep producers in eastern Elko County near the Utah Border. Earlier WS Mac Crome had confirmed the loss of at least 5 adult sheep and 5 lambs to coyote predation. The value of the losses was placed at \$2,000. With the assistance of WS Crome as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 5 coyotes amongst the sheep. No further losses have been reported.



On April 17th, WS Evans confirmed the loss of 5 lambs to coyote predation in southern Elko County. The caller reported that they had a small farm flock of sheep and had been raising the lambs in the safety of a barn until they got a little bigger. The caller said the first day they let the sheep out a coyote killed every lamb they had except 1 lamb that was kept in the barn. WS Evans was able to remove the responsible coyote. The resource owner was very happy for the help. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an attempt to help reduce future losses.

On April 18th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in southern Elko County and northwestern White Pine County. The rancher was just getting ready to lamb out and was seeing and hearing coyotes around his sheep. The sheep producer has had very high coyote predation losses in the past. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 8 coyotes. Work will continue as lambing season continues.

On April 22nd, the Elko plane responded to a call from several cattle ranchers in central Elko County that had lost several calves to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 16 coyotes in and around the calving pastures. Work will be on-going.



On April 24th, WS Scott Little confirmed the loss of 3 lambs, valued at \$450, to raven predation. The damage took place on a band of sheep in Nye County. WS Little used hard boiled eggs treated with DRC-1339 to remove the depredating ravens. WS Little also provided non-lethal technical assistance to help prevent future losses. No further losses have been reported.

On April 25th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a sheep rancher in northern White Pine County. The sheep producer was just starting to lamb out and has had very high losses in the past to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 8 coyotes in close proximity to the lambing grounds. Work will continue as needed.

During the month of April, WS Crome confirmed the loss of an adult sheep and 7 lambs valued at \$1,700 to coyote predation. The damage occurred on several bands of sheep in eastern Elko County. WS Crome used calling, traps and snares to remove 4 coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

During the month of April, CM Hunter Bodenchuk was busy not only acting as the Ely Crew Member, but also as a FA resolving raven damage issues with a large landfill and power utility company. CM Bodenchuk confirmed at least \$5,000 in damage by ravens nesting on power poles and spreading trash at the landfill.

During the month of April, WS Billy Taylor worked on NDOW project 21 protecting sage-grouse and also assisted a large power company that has been experiencing problems with ravens. During the past year, the power company has had more than \$245,000 in damage from power outages, fires and other damage caused by nesting ravens. Work will be ongoing into the early summer months.

During the month of April, FA Scott MacDonald responded to a call concerning the loss of 10 adult sheep, valued at \$2,500, to coyote predation. The damage occurred during the past several weeks in northern White Pine County. FA MacDonald used traps and calling to remove 6 coyotes near the kills. Work will be ongoing. FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

During the last 10 days of April, coyotes killed 8 adult sheep and at least 1 lamb in central White Pine County, resulting in a combined loss of \$2,125. With the assistance of FA Eldridge as the ground crew, the Ely plane was able to remove 3 coyotes. FA Eldridge removed another by shooting. Work will continue during the lambing season.

West District

During the month of April, WS Ben Miller and WS John Peter used DRC-1339 treated egg baits to protect sage-grouse nests and eggs at sage-grouse lek and nesting sites at the request of NDOW. Sage-grouse protection efforts will be wrapping up in May.

During the month of April, a new NDA FA (Alex Wallis) started work protecting livestock in Lyon, Storey, Douglas, Carson City, Washoe and Mineral Counties. The position has been vacant since September, making it hard on livestock producers in the area. With new employee onboarding completed, FA Wallis is hitting the ground running at a critical time. While lambing season continues, District Supervisor (DS) Jack Spencer will help out



and provide training to FA Wallis.

On April 1st, a long time sheep producer from Washoe County reported the loss of 1 ewe, valued at \$200. FA Doug Koepke responded to the report and confirmed that the ewe was killed by an adult female lion. To stop future damage, FA Koepke placed foothold traps around the dead ewe that evening, resulting in the removal of the 100 pound female lion the following morning. WS Koepke will continue to protect livestock in his work area.

During the first week of April, WS George Hansen protected several lamb bands in Lander County. During the week, WS Hansen removed 3 coyotes near the lamb bands with the use of foothold traps and snares. Livestock losses in the area have increased lately with the recent addition of lambs birthing on the high desert. WS Hansen will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

On April 13th, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and CM Brandon VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several lambing areas in Washoe County. During the flight, 5 coyotes were removed. FA Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

On April 20th, a sheep producer from Washoe County reported that 13 lambs and 3 ewes, valued at \$3,100, were killed by a lion. FA Koepke responded to the kill site and confirmed that a small lion was responsible for the kills. Although WS Koepke placed foothold traps around the dead sheep, the lion did not return and likely retreated to the Wilderness area where FA Koepke cannot work. FA Koepke will continue to monitor the situation.

On April 15th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several lambing areas in Humboldt County. During the flight, 3 coyotes were removed and 2 dens were located. WS Peter provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

On April 17th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several lambing areas in Washoe County. FA Koepke had previously confirmed the loss of 10 lambs, valued at \$2,000, to coyote predation. During the flight around the dead lambs, the aircrew removed 2 coyotes and located a den. FA Koepke performed a necropsy on one of the coyotes and found lamb remains in its stomach. FA Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

On April 24th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several lambing areas in Lander County, removing 5 coyotes, 4 of which were in



the sheep. WS Hansen provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

On April 25th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several lambing and calving areas in Lyon County, resulting in the removal of 2 coyotes. DS Spencer took the opportunity to provide ground support training to FA Wallis during aerial operations. FA Wallis also removed a coyote near a lamb band that had previous problems. Protection work will continue.

On April 26th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several lambing areas in Humboldt County, resulting in the removal of 3 coyotes. WS Peter provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

During the month of April, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Zack Bowers continued protection efforts at a military installation in northern Nevada. WB Bowers utilized harassment with several methods to disperse 602 individuals from 29 species. Twenty six problem animals were lethally removed from on and near the airfield that failed to respond to nonlethal approaches. The individuals removed came from 2 species of mammals and 10 species of birds. The area where this airfield is located has received an above average amount of precipitation this winter. Due to the types of soils in this location, there were still large areas of standing water in April, which attracted a variety of birds to the area. WB Bowers will continue efforts to protect aviation safety at this facility.

Many birds of concern to aviation safety are trying to nest on and near the airfield at the above mentioned facility. Some species are very persistent in their efforts to nest in a particular location. The problem with this, is that some of these locations are areas of concern to aviation safety. Examples of these species are Red-tailed hawks, common ravens, killdeer and swallow species. WB Bowers removed 13 nests, 2 of which were active (meaning they contained at least 1 egg in them). The nests were being constructed by Red-tailed and Swainson's hawks, common ravens and black-billed magpies. Some of these species continually try to rebuild the nest, which can take a considerable amount of time and effort to remove every week. WB Bowers is hopeful that in the future the preferred nest trees will be removed.



New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

Nothing to Report

Information and Communication

On April 4th, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen and DS Spencer attended the N-3 Grazing Board meeting in Fernley, where they provided a program overview.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

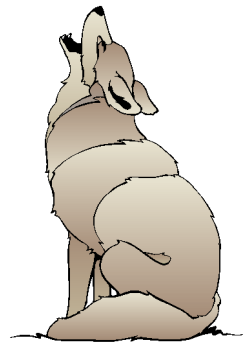
Nothing to Report

Future Meeting and Events

June 14th. N-4 Grazing Board in Eureka, NV. SD Jensen and DS Bennett to attend.



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



USDA APHIS Wildlife Services

