

August 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

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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 August, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **4.1** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$79.5** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$8.4** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **2,785** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$2,200** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$117,957** in damage to natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During August, coyotes accounted for **\$28,753** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **147** 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 August, **6** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of August, 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 August 1st, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Mac Crome confirmed the loss of two lambs valued at \$400, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a remote band of sheep near the Idaho border in Elko County. The following day, WS Crome, with the aid of his well-trained coyote decoy dogs, was able to call and shoot two adult coyotes near the kills. A field necropsy revealed both coyotes had lamb in their stomachs. No further losses have occurred. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.



On August 8th, WS Scott Little confirmed the loss of one calf valued at \$400. WS Little requested the assistance of the Ely plane. The following day the Ely plane responded to the location in southern White Pine County. During the flight, six coyotes were removed near the location of the kill. WS Little also shot one coyote near the kill, bringing an end to the damage.

On August 8th, the East district office received a call concerning the loss of two lambs, valued at \$400, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a farm flock of sheep in Elko County. On August 10th, the Ely plane responded to the location. During the morning's flight, six coyotes were removed, bringing an end to the damage. No further losses have been reported.

During a two week period starting August 1st, a sheep producer in central Elko County lost 10 lambs, valued at \$2000, to coyote predation. After confirming the losses, Crew Member (CM) Wayne Rowley was able to access the sheep with his horse and call and shoot three coyotes near the kills, bringing an end to the damage. A field necropsy revealed the coyotes had lamb meat and wool in their stomachs. No further losses have been reported. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an effort to prevent future losses.



On August 15th, WS Mac Crome confirmed the loss of two lambs, valued at \$400, to coyote predation. The predation occurred on a band of sheep in northern Elko County. During the following two days, WS Crome was able to call and shoot three coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported on the band of sheep. WS Crome continues to monitor all the livestock in his assigned work area.

On August 27th, a call was received from a sheep producer in central White Pine County concerning the loss of three lambs valued at \$600. On August 28th, the Ely plane responded to the location. With the assistance of Field Assistant (FA) Allen Eldridge as the ground crew, three coyotes were removed near the location of the kills. To date no further losses have been reported.

On August 30th, the Ely plane responded to a call in Elko County concerning the loss of two lambs, valued at \$400. The rancher reported seeing a pair of adult coyotes near the sheep. During the morning's flight, the plane removed two very educated adult coyotes. CM Wayne Rowley assisted as

the ground crew. No further losses have been reported.

During the month of August, work continued on an organic watermelon field in Nye County. Coyotes had done thousands of dollars in damage to the field by eating the watermelons. The coyotes in the organic field were also a concern to the producer as well. With the assistance of the Ely plane, 35 coyotes have been removed near the field. Work is ongoing until the producer finishes harvesting in mid-September. The watermelon grower said that without the help he has received from Wildlife Services he would have lost the entire crop.



During the month of August, FA Allen Eldridge received reports of at least 14 lambs, valued at \$2,800, lost to coyote predation. All of the damage occurred in the high mountains of central White Pine County. FA Eldridge used traps and shooting to remove seven coyotes near the location of the kills. FA Eldridge continues to work and monitor all the sheep in his work area. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance on several occasions in an effort to help minimize losses.

During the month of August, WS Randy Evans confirmed the loss of four lambs valued at \$800. Using his well-trained coyote decoy dogs, WS Evans was able to remove seven coyotes near the location of the kills in southern Elko County. Work is ongoing until the lambs are shipped in late September. WS Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

During August, WS Scott Little confirmed the loss of seven lambs valued at \$1,400 to coyote predation. The damage occurred in central White Pine County. WS Little used traps and calling to remove two coyotes near the kills. To date, no further losses have been reported. WS Little will continue to work on several allotments in his assigned work area.

During the month of August, FA Scott MacDonald was very busy protecting four bands of sheep in his assigned work area. FA MacDonald also assisted his neighboring Wildlife Specialist that was experiencing heavy losses. FA MacDonald used traps to remove ten coyotes near the sheep in his work area. FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance on numerous occasions in an effort to help reduce losses. FA MacDonald will continue to work around the sheep in his area until the lambs are shipped in late September.

During August, WS Mike Eldridge and WS Ben Miller traveled to the Stonewall Mountain Range in NDOW's hunt unit 252. During the past year or so, 37 desert bighorn sheep were confirmed killed by lions. With the help setting the snares and knowledge provided by WS Ben Miller, one large male lion was snared with the use of a call box. Work is ongoing to determine if any other lions are killing bighorn sheep in the area.



West District

On August 2nd, DS Jack Spencer conducted a field inspection with WS Cameron Green at a joint use aviation facility in Washoe County. During the inspection, DS Spencer and WS Green performed a perimeter check of the airport property and checked modified Swedish Goshawk traps.



On August 28th, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard completed recurring pilot training with IP Tim Keogh. IP Gossard conducts annual aerial training to stay up to date on his required pilot certificate.

During the month of August, WS Mark Bentz set equipment around several livestock cooperators in Lyon and Douglas Counties. WS Bentz also checked on two remote sheep bands in Lander County, conducting calling stands to check on coyote activity. WS Bentz will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

On August 10th, DS Spencer conducted a field inspection with IP Gossard, CM Brandon VanderMay and WS George Hansen in Lander County. During the field inspection, DS Spencer conducted/monitored aerial operations around several sheep and cattle producers in Lander County.

On August 10th, WS Bentz continued to check field equipment around several ranches in Lyon and Douglas Counties. During his trap check, WS Bentz removed three coyotes. WS Bentz will continue to protect livestock in his work area.

On August 17th, WS Koepke checked traps and snares around a sheep, cattle and chicken ranch in Washoe County. During the inspection, WS Doug Koepke removed three depredating coyotes. WS Koepke will continue to protect livestock in Washoe County.

During the week of August 15th through August 18th, WS Hansen checked foothold traps and trail snares around five lamb bands and several cattle producers in Lander County. During the week, WS Hansen removed eight coyotes by method of trapping. WS Hansen will continue to work the high elevation summer ranges. WS Hansen will continue to protect livestock in Lander County.



On August 30th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an early morning flight around a sheep producer and several cattle producers in Humboldt County. During the flight, 17 coyotes were removed. WS John Peter located several of the coyotes and used decoy dogs to push coyotes out of brushy areas for the aerial crew to spot. Protection efforts will be ongoing with fall calving beginning in the West District.

On August 31st, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted an early morning flight around a sheep and cattle producer in Lander County. During the flight, a total of seven offending coyotes were removed. The sheep producer has several guard dogs functioning as a non-lethal

tool to curb predation, which has reduced the need for direct control operations. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the month of August, 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. Normally August is the slowest time of year for wildlife activity at this location. However, even being away for a week for the Nevada Wildlife Services State Conference, WB Bowers still harassed 876 birds from 20 species. Two species of mammals and one species of bird were lethally removed. WB Bowers will continue efforts to protect aviation safety at this facility.

During the reporting period, WB Bowers provided training to maintenance personnel in sample collection for bird strikes. WB Bowers discussed procedures for collection and storage of samples, as well as what to use to collect the samples. WB Bowers had previously put together some instructions for sample collection, these were also handed out to the people in the training. WB Bowers appreciates opportunities to answer questions and have discussions about bird strikes to further awareness. Hopefully this will lead to more samples being collected in the future.

During the month of August, WB Dean Pyzik reported two bird strikes at the military installation in southern Nevada. For Fiscal Year (FY 17) there have been 32 bird strikes totaling \$14,176 in damage. WB Pyzik also completed three courses in Aglearn.

Also during the reporting period, WB Pyzik removed 31 mammals from the installation while dispersing 12,309 birds with his truck, firearms and pyrotechnics. Of the birds dispersed, mourning doves accounted for 85% of the birds dispersed while patrolling and conducting perimeter checks at the installation. Removal of the rabbits directly and indirectly reduces the potential for wildlife strikes to aviation as a removed rabbit will not be struck by an aircraft, nor will it draw in avian/mammalian predators into arriving/departing aircraft.

During the month of August, there were increasing numbers of pigeons and mourning doves prevalent at a joint use aviation facility in Washoe County. In response to this and other threats to aviation safety, the three Reno Wildlife Services' airport staff worked together utilizing non-lethal hazing as well as lethal removal. Of all species dispersed, mourning doves accounted for 75% (1,125), pigeons 11% (166), and other 14% (209). Direct control methods were implemented to encourage

positive responses to non-lethal approaches. To that end, 155 threats were removed throughout the month with the majority of the take involving pigeons and mourning doves. California ground squirrel reduction also continued to keep the prey-base down as birds of prey (raptors) should begin their fall migration within a month.

WS Rick Laffins also identified several American kestrels, red-tailed hawks and a Cooper's hawk frequenting the AOA at the above facility. Two of the raptors were captured, banded and translocated to safer locations away from the airfield.



While WB Frey was in Vegas for a workshop, he cross trained with WB Pyzik at a military installation in southern Nevada. The challenges WB Pyzik faces from wildlife on the airfield and in the airspace that possess the greatest threat to the aircraft is an ongoing battle. WB Frey assisted with the daily control work. This was a busy time on base with extra movements because of the visiting aircraft and countries there for red flag training week. WB Pyzik's safety office is a great wealth of knowledge that benefited WB Frey with the conversations regarding BASH as well as the policy and aircraft used to protect all military aviation assets.

WB Frey is continuing the Wildlife Hazard Surveys at military facilities in Northern Nevada and California. Day and night surveys were conducted at both locations. A total of 2,033 birds and mammals were surveyed throughout the month.

New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

WS Peter and WS Evans attended the National Wildlife Specialists meeting in Ft. Collins, CO during the week of August. A wide variety of topics were discussed with WS Management Team.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report

Future Meeting and Events

Nothing to Report

Information and Communication

On August 5th, DS Bennett, WS Billy Taylor and WS Little attended the Nevada Trapper's Association's trapper education day at Mt Charleston near Las Vegas, Nevada. During the daylong event, WS Little and WS Taylor both provided demos concerning trapping. DS Bennett discussed the Wildlife Services program in Nevada. More than 120 people attended the event. Wildlife Services' fact sheets were handed out to the participants. Events such as this are an excellent way to provide information about the Nevada Wildlife Services program as well as building relationships with other sporting groups within the state.

WB Carl Frey participated in a cooperative non-lethal urban coyote workshop with the Nevada Department of Wildlife. There was a pod cast aired early in the month to drum up interest for work shop attendance and outreach with a little of the information that will help with non-lethal methods in an urban setting. There were two "in-person" workshops offered: one was in Reno at the NDOW office and the other was in Las Vegas at the Clark County library.

The Nevada Wildlife Services Program (NWSP) convened in eastern White Pine County for the mandatory State meeting during the week of August 21st. Employees received programmatic updates and required training from Nevada Department of Agriculture, WS Regional Office, WS OSS Office, WS National Wildlife Research Center, Nevada and Arizona WS personnel. Training includ-

ed: research, wolf identification and damage management, field equipment technology/application, firearms and pesticide application. NWSP would like to thank the many guest speakers for volunteering their time and knowledge and our cooperators for their understanding.



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