

December 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 December, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **6.8** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$219.2** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$4.6** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **1,433** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$2,992** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$21,795** in damage to natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During December, coyotes accounted for **\$6,600** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **752** 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 December, **138** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of December, 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 December 1st, the Ely plane responded to a request from a sheep producer in eastern Nye County concerning the loss of at least 8 ewes valued at \$2,000. During the morning flight, the plane was able to remove 9 coyotes, including 1 that was feeding on a fresh kill. 7 more coyotes were observed leaving the area of the kills, 4 of which were promptly removed. Work will be ongoing in the area. District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendation to help prevent losses in the future.



On December 1st, the Elko plane responded to a call from an Indian reservation in northern Elko County. The reservation has a cattle operation and has had high historical calf loss to coyote predation in the past. During the flight, 16 coyotes were removed. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 2nd, the Elko plane responded to a cattle rancher in northern Elko County near the Idaho Border. The rancher reported that he was seeing and hearing lots of coyotes in and around his calving pastures. The ranch has experienced very high historical losses to coyotes in the past. During the morning flight, 26 coyotes were removed. Work will be ongoing as it gets closer to calving season.



On December 4th, the Elko plane responded to a request by a cattle rancher in central Elko County. The rancher reported seeing many coyotes in the pastures he calves out in. During the day long flight, the Elko plane was able to remove 23 coyotes. The rancher was very pleased with the help he received.

On December 4th, the Ely plane flew on Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) project 40. NDOW project 40 is designed to protect both mule deer and sage-grouse from coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 13 coyotes. Work will be ongoing on this project.

During the week of December 4th, Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler and MLS Casey Shields worked on NDOW project 37. NDOW Project 37 is designed to remove mountain lions in areas identified by NDOW to protect big game. On December 7th, the pair of lion hunters located a track in an area that several radio collared mule deer had previously been killed by a lion. After a several hour pursuit, an adult male lion was removed. A freshly killed mule deer was found nearby. Work will continue as needed on project 37.



On December 5th, the Ely plane responded to a request from a sheep producer in Eureka County. The sheep producer reported that he was seeing several coyotes near his sheep. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 6 coyotes near the sheep. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 5th, the Elko plane responded to a call from several cattle ranchers and 1 sheep producer in southern Elko County. The livestock producers reported that they were seeing and hearing a large number of coyotes on their lambing and calving grounds. During the day's flight, with the assistance of Wildlife Specialist (WS) Randy Evans as the ground crew, the plane removed 40 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 6th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in central Elko County.



The rancher has experienced very high losses to coyotes in the past. During the morning flight, the plane was able to remove 7 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as need. WS Mac Crome acted as the ground crew and also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On December 6th, the Ely plane responded to call from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County. The producer had recently lost 4 ewes valued at \$1,000 to coyote predation. With the assistance of Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Field Assistant (FA) Allen Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 6 coyotes near the location of the kills. No further losses have been reported. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

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On December 7th, the Ely plane responded to a call from 3 cattle ranchers in eastern Lander County. All 3 ranchers reported that they were seeing several coyotes in their calving pastures. During the morning flight, the plane was able to remove 10 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as calving season approaches.

On December 8th, the Ely plane worked on NDOW project 40. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 29 coyotes near mule deer fawning areas and sage-grouse leks. Work will be ongoing as fawning and nesting season approaches for mule deer and sage-grouse (respectively).

On December 11th, the Ely plane responded to a call from 2 sheep producers in western White Pine County. Both sheep producers had previously experienced very high losses to coyotes in the past. During the flight, 8 coyotes were removed.

On December 12th, the Ely plane responded to a call for help from 2 sheep producers in Nye County. Both producers had lost several sheep in the past to coyote predation. During the morning flight, with the assistance of WS Scott Little as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 9 coyotes near the sheep. Both sheep ranchers were very happy with the help they received.

On December 13th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County that had lost 5 ewes valued at \$1,250. With the help of FA Eldridge, the plane was able to remove 14 coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported. FA Eldridge also provide technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On December 14th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in eastern White Pine County, near the Utah border. The sheep rancher had lost at least 2 ewes, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. During the flight, with the help of FA Scott MacDonald as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 5 coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported. FA MacDonald provided the sheep rancher with technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.

On December 14th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a sheep producer and a cattle rancher in southern Elko Coyote. Both ranchers have had very high losses to coyotes in the past. During the morning flight, the plane was able to remove 16 coyotes. Work will be ongoing in the area as needed.

On December 15th, the Ely plane responded to a call from 2 sheep producers. One producer had recently lost 2 yearling ewes, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. 1 sheep rancher was in western White Pine County and the other was located in central Eureka County. During the flight, with the help of FA Hunter Bodenchuk as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 12 coyotes. 1 group of 3 coyotes was spotted 200 yards from a band of sheep. Work will continue as needed. Both sheep producers were very pleased with the help they received. FA Bodenchuk also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On December 15th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in northern White Elko County. The rancher reported seeing very high numbers of coyotes. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 11 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On December 18th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher and a sheep producer for assistance. With help from WS Little as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 6 coyotes. Work will continue as needed.

On December 18th, the Elko plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in northern Elko County. The rancher is just a couple months away from calving and was seeing a high number of coyotes in his calving pastures. The rancher has experienced very high historical losses to coyotes during past calving seasons. During the flight, 25 coyotes were removed. Work will be ongoing as needed.



On December 19th, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in western White Pine County. The producer had lost 2 yearling sheep, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. During the morning flight, 6 coyotes were removed near the kills. No further losses have been reported.

On December 22nd, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep and cattle producer in southern White Pine County. The rancher reported hearing and seeing a large number of coyotes. The rancher had previously lost at least 10 sheep valued at \$2,500 to coyote predation. During the morning flight, 10 coyotes were removed. No further problems have been reported. The rancher was very pleased with the help he received from the Nevada Department of Agriculture and Wildlife Services.

West District

On December 5th, DS Jack Spencer conducted a field inspection with WB Zack Bowers at a military installation in Churchill County. DS Spencer and WB Bowers checked equipment around perimeter fencing of the military facility. DS Spencer will continue to ride with employees and meet cooperators in the field.



On December 5th, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County after receiving several requests from cattle producers. During the flight, 30 coyotes were removed. WS John Peter provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported for these particular producers. Aerial protection efforts will be ongoing in the West District.



On December 6th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several sheep producers in Lander County to get ahead of some damage. During the flight, 12 coyotes were removed. WS George Hansen provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported for these producers. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On December 8th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County after receiving several requests from cattle producers. During the flight, 21 coyotes were removed. WS

Peter provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported for these particular producers. Aerial protection efforts will be ongoing in the West District.

On December 12th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers and a sheep producer in Pershing County to reduce calving damage from an area that has had historic losses. During the flight, 36 coyotes were removed. FA Doug Koepke provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported for these producers. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On December 11th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several livestock producers in Lander County. During the flight, 27 coyotes were removed. WS Hansen provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported for these producers. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On December 12th, DS Spencer conducted a field inspection with FA Mark Bentz in Lyon County. DS Spencer and WS Bentz inspected field equipment and DS Spencer provided calling training. DS Spencer will continue to ride with employees and meet livestock cooperators in the field.

On December 13th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County after receiving several requests from cattle producers. During the flight, 21 coyotes were removed. WS Peter provided ground crew efforts. Aerial protection efforts will be ongoing in the West District.

On December 14th, DS Spencer conducted a field inspection with FA Koepke in Washoe County. DS Spencer and FA Koepke met with several cattle producers and signed cooperative agreements for aerial work around 800 cows ready to calve in February. DS Spencer will continue to ride with employees and meet cooperators in the field.

During the week of December 11th through December 15th, FA Koepke removed 8 coyotes with the use of foothold traps, calling and trail snares around several winter bands of sheep. FA Koepke will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

On December 18th, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County after receiving several requests from cattle producers. During the flight, 51 coyotes were removed, including a group of 8. WS Peter provided ground crew efforts. Aerial protection efforts will be ongoing in the West District.

During the week of December 19th through December 21st, DS Spencer conducted a field inspection with WS Ben Miller on a NDOW big-horn sheep project in Washoe County. On December 21st, DS Spencer and WS Miller found a female lion track from the previous day and tried to run it with DS Spencer's dogs. After 6 hours and 13 miles, the dogs lost the lion in some rocky ridges. WS Miller will continue to protect bighorn sheep in his area.



On December 28th and 29th, WS Hansen protected livestock in Lander County. WS Hansen has foothold traps and trail snares in place to prevent losses. During the 2 day trap check, WS Hansen removed 4 coyotes with the use of snares and foothold traps. WS Hansen will continue to protect livestock.

During the month of December, WS Peter checked field equipment around livestock cooperators in Humboldt County. WS Peter also monitored for the presence of feral swine in Humboldt County. WS Peter will continue to protect livestock in his large work area and assist with projects when time permits. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the month of December, WB Bowers continued protection efforts at a military installation in northern Nevada. WB Bowers utilized harassment with several methods to disperse 760 individuals from 20 species. One species of mammal and 4 species of birds were removed from the airfield. WB Bowers will continue efforts to protect aviation safety at this facility.

As a capstone for 2017 at the above mentioned facility, there were 21 reported strikes or incidents of remains found on the runway. From these strikes/incidents 18 samples were collected, which resulted in 11 identifications and seven unknowns. The breakdown of the species were 5 horned larks, 3 white-faced ibis, 1 cliff swallow, 1 bat and 1 kit fox. Of the 7 unknown, 2 were identified to the order Passeriformes (perching birds) and 1 as a member of the swift family. The identifications are species which for the most part, are known to be a problem on and near the airfield. Having these identifications supports and reinforces what is being observed on and near the airfield as being problem species. None of these strikes/incidents resulted in damage. However, the real victory in these numbers is the fact that samples were collected from all but 3 of the strikes/incidents.

During the month of December, WB Dean Pyzik reported 1 bird strike to aircraft at a military installation in southern Nevada. Remains of the bird strike were sent to the Smithsonian Institute for species identification. The Smithsonian identified the species as a European starling.

Also during the reporting period, WB Pyzik removed 23 mammals from the installation while dispersing 2,637 birds with his truck, firearms and pyrotechnics. Of those 2,637 birds dispersed, starlings and doves (mainly mourning) accounted for 65% of the birds dispersed while patrolling and conducting perimeter checks at the installation. The majority of the mammals removed were black-tailed jackrabbits which are removed because they are a direct threat to aviation (strike hazard) and an indirect threat to aviation by drawing in birds of prey, coyotes and feral dogs into conflicted airspace and occupied runways and taxiways.

WB Carl Frey continued day and night Wildlife Hazard Surveys at military installations in western Nevada and Eastern California. 679 birds and mammals were surveyed throughout the month. Survey numbers are trending down due to decreasing water levels from freeze up and lack of snow this year. Livestock are also being moved from the survey area.

During the reporting period, WB Frey conducted some cross training with WS Miller at a military installation in western Nevada. Specifically, WB Frey and WS Miller conducted day and night wildlife surveys.

During the month of December, WS Cameron Green and WS Rick Laffins continued implementing a wildlife hazard management plan at a joint use aviation facility in Washoe County. Specifically, 1,928 animals were dispersed from the facility using vehicles and pyrotechnic devices and firearms. Firearms were also utilized to remove 32 birds and 4 mammals that failed to respond properly to non-lethal approaches. A free ranging cat was captured and transferred to the custody of Washoe County Animal Services to: reduce the chance that the cat would impede aviation safety; and provide the opportunity for the cat to be adopted out/returned to its owner. In addition, 2 red-tailed hawks and 1 Cooper's hawk were trapped and translocated to reduce the chance of a wildlife strike to aviation. Unfortunately, a mourning dove and a feral pigeon were unable to avoid aircraft and were struck during the reporting period, no damage was reported.



WS Laffins also conducted structured “point-count” wildlife surveys on the airfield and offsite in the general zone during the month. The purpose of the surveys is to document wildlife abundance, frequency, diversity and behavior on/near the airfield over the course of a year, which will then be analyzed for seasonal trends and threats to aviation in a wildlife hazard assessment (WHA). Of interest, 25,060 animals were surveyed throughout the month during daytime and nighttime hours including this mule deer in the general zone, northeast of the airport. 2 reported bird strikes occurred in the month of December involving a mourning dove and a pigeon. No reported damage occurred from the bird strikes.



New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

Nothing to Report

Information and Communication

Throughout the reporting period, WB Frey and WS Miller sampled hunter harvested waterfowl throughout the Central Lahontan Watershed for Highly Pathogenic Avian influenza. The goal of the project (funded by APHIS-Veterinary Services via the WS' National Wildlife Disease Program) is to sample birds weekly throughout the waterfowl hunting season to increase the chance that the disease will be detected from resident and migratory dabbling ducks. WB Frey continues to garner support from local sportsmen and women on efforts for early detection of the highly pathogenic form. Sampling will end mid-January with 31 samples for January.



On December 4th-6th, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen and DS Bennett attended the NV Cattlemen's Association and Woolgrower's Convention in Elko, NV.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report

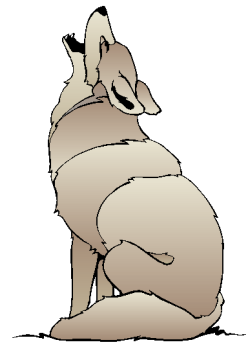
Future Meeting and Events

N-1 Grazing Board Meeting in Elko. January 12th. SD Jensen and DS Bennett to attend.

N-2 Grazing Board Meeting in Winnemucca. January 17th. SD Jensen and DS Spencer to attend.



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