

January 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 January, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **5.7** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **91.2** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$4.6** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **1,459** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$3,573** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$11,323** in damage to natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During January, coyotes accounted for **\$11,015** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **464** 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 January, **49** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of January, 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 January 4th, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Mac Crome confirmed the loss of two ewes, valued at \$500, to coyote predation. The following day, WS Crome was able to use trail snares to remove two adult coyotes near the kills. Work is ongoing and no further losses have been confirmed. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On January 6th, a call was received by the East District office from a Nye County cattle rancher concerning the loss of two calves valued at over \$800. The rancher reported he saw two coyotes eating a freshly killed calf in one of his pastures. The rancher also reported that later the same day he found another partially eaten calf nearby. On January 10th and January 11th, District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett worked the area as the fixed wing aerial program was in a temporary stand down for the month. A total of three coyotes were removed using calling and shooting. No further losses have been reported and work is ongoing in the area. DS Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help stop future losses.

On January 9th, WS Scott Little confirmed the loss of three calves, valued at \$1,500, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a ranch in south west White Pine County. Despite mud and snow conditions, WS Little placed several traps near the kills. During the next several days, WS Little removed five coyotes, bringing an end to the damage. No further losses have been reported and work is ongoing. WS Little also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help stop future losses.



On January 9th, a Nye County cattle rancher called concerning the loss of one calf, valued at \$400, to coyote predation. The rancher reported seeing several coyotes in his calving fields. On January 11th, DS Bennett traveled to the location. During the morning, DS Bennett called and shot one coyote near the location of the kill. Work is ongoing. DS Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help stop future losses.

On January 10th, Nevada Department of Agriculture Field Assistant (FA) Scott MacDonald confirmed the loss of one ewe to coyote predation. The damage occurred in eastern White Pine County, near the Utah border. FA MacDonald set ground equipment near the location of the kill. During the next two weeks, FA MacDonald was able to remove three coyotes near the kill. No further losses have been reported and FA MacDonald continues to monitor the several bands of sheep in his assigned work area. In an effort to help reduce future losses, FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations.

On January 11th, FA Allen Eldridge confirmed the loss of six ewes valued at \$1,500 to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep near the Utah border in White Pine County. A group

of about one hundred ewes got separated from the main band during a snow storm and coyotes took advantage of the sheep's misfortune. FA Eldridge was able to locate and remove one coyote near the kill location. During the next several days, FA Eldridge removed two additional coyotes near the kills, bringing an end to the damage. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On January 12th, FA Allen Eldridge confirmed the loss of five ewes valued at \$1,250 to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a remote band of sheep in northern White Pine County. Using calling, FA Eldridge was able to remove two coyotes on January 17th, and one more on January 26th, bringing an end to 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 January 12th, FA Hunter Bodenchuk confirmed the loss of three ewes in northern White Pine County to coyote predation. FA Bodenchuk used calling and shooting to remove two coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported and work is ongoing. FA Bodenchuk also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On January 17th, WS Mac Crome confirmed the loss of two ewes near the Utah border. The value of the two ewes was placed at \$500. On January 18th, WS Crome removed two coyotes near the kills in trail snares. No further losses have been reported. WS Crome is very busy protecting eleven bands of sheep in his assigned work area. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On January 17th, WS Mac Crome confirmed the loss of one ewe on another band of sheep in his work area. The value of the ewe was placed at \$250. WS Crome was able to remove one coyote near the kill. No further losses have been reported. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On January 24th, FA Allen Eldridge confirmed the loss of one ewe valued at \$250. The damage happened on a band of sheep in eastern White Pine County. Using calling and shooting, FA Eldridge was able to remove one coyote the same day and one more the next day, bringing an end to the damage. No further losses have been reported. FA Eldridge continues to protect six bands of sheep and several thousand head of cattle in his assigned work area.

On January 28th, the East District office received a call concerning the loss of one lamb to coyote predation. On January 30th, DS Bennett traveled to the location in western White Pine County and confirmed the loss valued at \$125. Using calling, DS Bennett was able to remove one coyote near the kill location. DS Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses. Work is ongoing.

On January 26th, Wildlife Services used a helicopter on Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) project 40. NDOW project 40 is located in hunt unit 144 in Eureka and White Pine Counties. The project is designed to remove coyotes to protect mule deer and sage-grouse. During the four day aerial operation, 367 coy-



otes were removed near mule deer fawning areas and sage-grouse leks. The project is ongoing.

During the month of January, WS Dayne Barnes continued to monitor feral swine activity in Nevada. No pig activity was observed in his assigned work area. The five year feral swine removal project is a project funded by USDA to remove invasive feral swine that cause extensive damage to rangeland, crops, property and threatened and endangered species on a national level. WS Barnes will continue to use, trail cameras, thermal imaging, spot lighting and tracking and trailing to try to identify and remove feral swine in Nevada.

During the month of January, East District employees as well as the Elko and Ely offices conducted their annual inventory. Conducting annual inventories helps ensure that all equipment and firearms are accounted for and are in good working order.

During the month of January, Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler and MLS Casey Shields worked NDOW project 37. NDOW project 37 is a statewide mountain lion project designed to protect bighorn sheep and other wildlife from excessive mountain lion predation. Both lion hunters use snow mobiles to check bighorn sheep wintering areas in White Pine County. Work is ongoing.



West District

On January 3rd thru the 5th, WS Frey inspected equipment he had placed on a large sheep producer in Lyon County. Although the sheep producer had not had any livestock losses, herders reported that several coyotes had been seen around the sheep. The result of the effort was the removal of two coyotes with the use of M-44s and an additional two with the use of foothold traps.

On January 4th, DS Jack Spencer participated in a mid-winter waterfowl survey along with NDOW and USFWS biologists in the Truckee Meadows area. The biologists surveyed over 10,000 waterfowl, in which most were Canada geese. The one day waterfowl census has been conducted for many years as DS Spencer has conducted most of the surveys in this area for the past 20 years.



During the month of January, WS George Hansen ran and inspected equipment to protect calving areas and winter sheep bands in Lander County. Several problem coyotes were removed with the use of trail snares and foothold traps. WS Hansen will continue to protect livestock in his large work area. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On January 27th, DS Spencer conducted a routine field inspection with WB Zack Bowers at military installation in Northern Nevada. During the inspection, DS Spencer and WB Bowers checked equipment and met with local military officials. DS Spencer will continue to ride along with employees and cooperators in the field.

During the month of January, WS Frey assisted a livestock producer in Lyon County with a feral dog

problem. The cattle producer reported that nearly 20 feral dogs in several packs were killing, biting



and chasing their cows. A handful of the calves were also missing tails. The cattle producers removed a few of the feral dogs, however, the remaining feral dogs were wary and quickly learned to avoid people. The local Sheriff was also called in to assist,



but ultimately WS Frey was asked to resolve the problem. WS Frey inspected the situation and after several days removed seven feral dogs that were attacking the calves. To date, no further livestock losses have been reported and the ranchers were very pleased with the protection efforts WS Frey provided.

On January 23rd, WS Frey accepted a new position as a Wildlife Biologist (WB), backfilling behind WB Hunter Moyles who transferred to the Oregon program. WB Frey will primarily be responsible for assisting the military with their BASH program and conducting wildlife surveys on two military installations in western Nevada and one in eastern California.

During the month of January, WS Ben Miller inspected several areas around bighorn sheep in northern Washoe County (hunt unit 013). WS Miller found where a lion moved in and out of the protection in a day, but never returned. WS Miller has trail snares and call boxes placed near translocated bighorn sheep populations in case the lion returns. WS Miller will continue to protect bighorn sheep in this area for the next six weeks before he starts sage-grouse protection work.



The fixed wing program has been in a stand down for safety inspections for the past couple of months with operations expected to resume in mid-February. The aerial program is an integral part of the Nevada Wildlife Services Program and everyone is pleased to see operations continue.

During the month of January, 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 utilized harassment with several methods. 523 birds from 10 species were dispersed from the airfield. One species of mammal and one species of bird were lethally removed. Similar to the previous month, mallards and horned larks were both on and near the airfield in relatively high numbers.

During the month of January, WB Dean Pyzik began his yearlong bird survey at a military installation in southern Nevada, also there has been a significant slowdown in bird activity. WB Pyzik and Master Sergeant (MSGT) West conducted a perimeter inspection when they came across two red-tailed hawks so they deployed a Bal-Chatri trap in hopes to catch one. After about five minutes they had caught their first red-tailed hawk at the southern Nevada military institution. MSGT West held the hawk (pic) while WB Pyzik prepared the crate for translocation. At the translocation site, MSGT West took a video of the release for the Airforce.



WB Pyzik removed six black-tailed jack rabbits from the installation while dispersing 788 birds. Of those 788 birds, house finches and mallards accounted for 59% of the birds dispersed while patrolling and conducting perimeter checks at the installation.

During the last week of January WB Frey transitioned into his new assignment in Reno. WB Frey and WS Cameron Green did some cross training at a joint use facility in Northern Nevada on safety procedures, equipment and techniques. WS Green assisted in the airport badging process for WB Frey which expedited the process greatly with his knowledge of the airport and great relationship with staff.

During the month, above average precipitation caused water ponding on airport property which drew in an abundance of water fowl and shore birds. During this time, WB Frey and WS Green continued the use of nonlethal hazing methods to disperse several hundred geese daily, along with several flocks of mallards and gadwalls. In total 6,424 birds were dispersed during the month with a majority being Canada Geese. WS Green also trapped and translocated a red-tailed hawk from the airfield.

To reinforce above non-lethal measures, WB Frey and WS Green applied firearms and ground equipment to remove one Gadwall, seven Mallards, 14 Canada geese, one red-tailed hawk, one yellow-bellied marmot and two invasive California ground squirrels. WB Frey and WS Green will continue to implement their respective Wildlife Hazard Management/BASH plans.

New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

During the reporting period, WB Pyzik was presented with the 57th Wing Staff Category two civilian award for the 3rd quarter.

Information and Communication

WB Pyzik, along with 57th Wing flight safety staff volunteered at "Three Squares", southern Nevada's only food



bank that provides food assistance to the residents of Lincoln, Nye, Esmeralda and Clark Counties. During the three hours spent volunteering, we prepared enough boxes to distribute 9,000 “Kids Café” meals for children who are food insecure and hungry in our community along with preparing about 600 prepackaged meals that went to a local church.



On January 23rd, the West District hired WS Rick Laffins as the new part time Wildlife Specialist in Reno. WS Laffins will be working on NDOW funded projects protecting waterfowl, turkeys and antelope in Lyon County. WS Laffins previously worked in law enforcement for both NDOW and the Sparks Police Department.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report

Future Meeting and Events

February 10th, Board of Wildlife Commissioner’s meeting in Carson City. State Director (SD) Mark Jensen to attend.

February 14th thru 16th, Aviation Safety Meeting in Utah. SD Jensen and NV Pilots to attend.



USDA APHIS

Wildlife Services



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

