

July 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 July, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **3.6** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$48.3** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$6.1** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **1,870** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$3,600** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$72,938** in damage to natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During July, coyotes accounted for **\$12,442** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **78** 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 July, **3** samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of July, 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 July 4th, a sheep producer in Eureka County contacted Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Field Assistant (FA) Hunter Bodenchuk concerning the loss of one lamb valued at \$200 to coyote predation. The lamb was killed on a remote band of sheep at about 9000 feet of elevation. On July 5th, FA Bodenchuk hiked into the kill site and confirmed that a coyote had killed the lamb. FA Bodenchuk used calling that same day to remove one large adult coyote. A field necropsy revealed that the coyote had lamb in its stomach. No further losses have been reported. FA Bodenchuk also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent any future losses.



During the first week of July, Crew Member (CM) Nathan Fowler confirmed the loss of at least four lambs to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in central White Pine County. The value of the lambs was placed at \$800. The sheep herder reported that he was seeing one large coyote near the sheep. Utilizing calling, CM Fowler was able to remove one large adult male near the location of the four kills. A field inspection revealed that the coyote had lamb in its stomach. No further losses were reported in that area. CM Fowler also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On July 5th, FA Scott MacDonald confirmed the loss of two lambs valued at \$400. The damage occurred in northern White Pine County. FA MacDonald used traps to remove several coyotes just below the location of the two kills. Work will be ongoing in the area. FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On July 12th, District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett conducted a day long field inspection with WS Scott Little. Several traps and snares were inspected during the day. Field inspections help ensure that all Wildlife Services policies and directives are being followed and the employee has the necessary equipment to safely protect livestock.

On July 18th, the East District office received a call concerning the loss of one lamb, valued at \$200. The lamb was lost in western White Pine County on a small farm flock. On July 21st, the Ely plane responded to the location. During the morning's flight, one coyote was removed near the kill. No further losses have been reported.



On July 19th, DS Bennett conducted a field inspection with the feral swine Specialist Dayne Barnes. During the inspection, a

number of water sources and trail cameras were inspected.

On July 21st, a power company in White Pine County contacted the East District office after ravens caused more than \$32,000 in damage to their utility lines. The damage ranged from power outages to fires caused by nesting ravens. With the extreme fire danger in eastern Nevada, the power company asked Wildlife Services for help. On July 24th, DS Bennett traveled to the areas suffering the worst problems. DS Bennett confirmed the damage and placed out DRC-1339 treated egg baits, removing 30 ravens. Work will be ongoing. The power company was very thankful for the assistance they received. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an attempt to help prevent future losses. Almost all of the non-lethal recommendations were already being practiced by the power company.



On July 21st, the East District office received a call from a farmer in Nye County concerning a problem with coyotes eating watermelons. Several coyotes were coming into the watermelon fields and consuming a large number of melons every night. The farmer reported that this is the second year he has tried to grow organic "Nevada Grown" watermelons. On July 24th, DS Bennett traveled to the location and confirmed the damage. The producer estimated the loss at more than \$10,000 in damage. DS Bennett placed several traps around the field. During the next week, DS Bennett removed three coyotes by shooting and one coyote by trapping. DS Bennett also requested the assistance of the Ely plane, which flew two days and removed nine additional coyotes. The producer is very happy with the help he has received from Wildlife Services. He reported that he was about to give up on trying to grow "Nevada Grown" watermelons but will now stay in business. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided in an attempt to help prevent future losses.



On July 29th, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen was contacted by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) after a report was received concerning a woman getting bitten by a coyote in Henderson, Nevada. NDOW had sent out a game warden and the reporting party told the warden that she let her puppy out her front door and three coyotes attempted to grab the puppy. The woman grabbed her puppy and when she did the largest of the three coyotes bit her on the side. The woman was able to make it back into her house and called for help. The same day, DS Bennett responded to the location. After searching the area throughout the night, DS Bennett was able to call in and shoot two adult coyotes a short distance away in a drainage ditch the following day about 11:30 am. One coyote was an adult female and the other was a large male. Both coyotes will be sampled by NDOW for rabies. The area was searched by DS Bennett and an NDOW Game Warden the rest of the day, the following night and into Monday morning. The two coyotes removed were the only coyotes located in the immediate area. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also pro-

vided in an effort to help prevent in future problems.

During July, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Mac Crome confirmed the loss of seven lambs, valued at \$1,400, to coyote predation. WS Crome used traps, snares, calling and the use of his well-trained coyote decoy dogs to remove six coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported and work is ongoing. WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an attempt to help prevent future losses.

During July, FA Hunter Bodenchuk was busy protecting at least six bands of sheep in White Pine and Eureka Counties. FA Bodenchuk confirmed the loss of at least 12 lambs, valued at \$2,400, in White Pine County. FA Bodenchuk removed two coyotes near the kills. Work is ongoing near the two bands of sheep that have experienced the losses.

During July, Feral Swine Specialist Dayne Barnes has been busy checking cameras, water sources and corral traps in an effort to locate and remove any remaining feral swine in eastern Nevada. No pigs were removed during the month. The feral swine project is set to scale down the end of August. Some monitoring will be conducted to determine the presence of feral swine in Nevada.

During the month of July, CM Wayne Rowley was busy riding his horse into a remote band of sheep high in the Ruby Mountains. CM Rowley only had one reported loss on the band of sheep so far this summer. CM Rowley has also assisted other Specialists in Elko County during the month.

During the month of July, FA Allen Eldridge was very busy protecting four bands of sheep in in central White Pine County. Reports were received of 20 lambs lost to coyotes during the month. FA Eldridge was able to remove six coyotes near the location of the kills. Two other specialists are assisting FA Eldridge until the lambs come out of the high country. Work will be ongoing until the lambs are shipped in mid-September.



West District

During the month of July, the West District experienced a hotter than normal month and livestock losses are usually minimal as newborn livestock have grown and are less vulnerable to predation.

During the week of July 10th through July 14th, CM VanderMay conducted recurring aerial gunner's training in Cedar City Utah. CM VanderMay conducts annual training to stay up to date on his required aerial gunning certificate.



During the month of August, FA Mark Bentz set field equipment around several livestock cooperators in Lyon and Douglas Counties. FA Bentz has only been working a couple of months as a new employee, but is very enthusiastic, protecting livestock in his work area. WS Bentz has been picking up a few problem coyotes here and there and will continue to perfect his trapping skills. In the near future, DS Spencer will provide M-44 training to FA Bentz to assist in protecting livestock.

On July 18th through July 20th, WS George Hansen maintained equipment on several livestock producers in Lander County. During the three days of checking traps WS Hansen removed five coyotes by utilizing foothold traps. WS Hansen will continue to protect livestock in his work area. DS Jack Spencer has had several positive comments from livestock producers about WS Hansen's superb

work ethic and livestock protection efforts.

During the week of July 13th through July 18th, FA Doug Koepke maintained foothold traps and trail snares around five lamb bands in Pershing and Washoe Counties. During the week, FA Koepke removed three coyotes with the use of foothold traps. FA Koepke will continue to work the high elevation summer ranges.



On July 24th and July 25th, WS Hansen conducted a trap check of foothold traps on a sheep producer in Lander County. During the trap check, WS Hansen removed three coyotes. Livestock losses have been minimal lately with WS Hansen on the job. WS Hansen will continue to protect livestock in this area.

During the month of July, WS John Peter rode his mules and horses into the high country working around several lamb bands while employing his decoy dogs. Currently, sheep herders report very few losses. WS Peter will continue to protect these lamb bands before heading to the fall calving country in the near future.

During the month of July, 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. 681 birds from 18 species were dispersed from the airfield. Two species of mammals were lethally removed. With current water levels, the valley is like a very large wildlife refuge. WB Bowers expects to be dealing with these conditions for the foreseeable future.

During the month of July, the remains of one kit fox was found on the airfield. Three strikes were also reported. A sample was collected from one of the strikes and will be mailed to the Smithsonian for possible identification.

Also during the month of July, WB Bowers received a phone call reporting a hawk stuck on the perimeter fence. While en route to the situation, WB Bowers was contacted by security who were at the scene and standing by. WB Bowers arrived to find a juvenile red-tailed hawk hanging upside down from the fence. The young hawk had gotten a talon caught in one of the barbs, and when it tried to fly off ended up dangling upside down. WB Bowers quickly freed the hawk from its predicament, and had it in an air conditioned cab in short order. WB Bowers checked out the hawk, and aside from being wore out from the ordeal it was in good condition. The juvenile hawk wouldn't have lasted much longer hanging upside down in 100 plus degree temperatures. Fortunately for the hawk, some concerned citizens knew who to contact in this situation.

WB Bowers went down to a military installation in southern Nevada for some cross training with WB Dean Pyzik during the reporting period. The facility has a very proactive BASH plan in place at this facility, and WB Bowers was impressed by the level of dedication and importance placed on their BASH program. WB Pyzik and the safety crew that make up the BASH team gave WB Bowers an in



depth look at their operations. WB Pyzik is highly respected and appreciated by the facility and is an integral component of their BASH program. WB Bowers would like to thank WB Pyzik and the safety crew that make up the BASH program for their hospitality and knowledge transfer.

During the month of July, WB Dean Pyzik reported six bird strikes at a military installation in southern Nevada. Of the strikes, the Smithsonian Institute identified mourning doves as the species causing three strikes, while the remaining three are pending identification. For Fiscal Year (FY 17) there have been 29 bird strikes with no reportable damage. WB Pyzik attended the bird hazard working group chaired by the new Vice Commander for the 57th wing. WB Bowers conducted a visit, provided some cross training while helping WB Pyzik finish his categorical exclusion, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Also during the reporting period, WB Pyzik removed 30 mammals from the installation while dispersing 9,845 birds with his truck, firearms and pyrotechnics. Of those 9,845 birds dispersed, mourning dove accounted for 96% of the birds dispersed while patrolling and conducting perimeter checks at the installation. Removal of the rabbits directly and indirectly reduced 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, there was an increase in pigeons, mourning dove and Eurasian collared dove abundance at a joint-use aviation facility in Washoe County. The three Wildlife Services Airport staff working out of the State Office worked together on the facility to use non-lethal hazing as well as lethal removal to reduce the threat of wildlife strikes to aircraft. There have been close to 300 mourning doves dispersed with no reported strikes. The pigeons have become a bigger problem on the terminal and around the gate. As well as causing property damage to some of the general aviation aircraft. There has been active trapping as well as lethal removal. There has been over 70 birds removed. There has also been prey reduction work continuing to make the area less desirable removing 30 ground squirrels with trapping and shooting. There has also been a few zinc-phosphide treatments in the areas with the highest densities of squirrels.

With American kestrel and red-tailed hawk activity on the rise several birds of prey were captured



throughout the month. They were all banded and relocated to safer locations away from the airfield. There was also a black crowned night heron removed from RNO that was hunting the waterways near the runways.



WB Frey is continuing the Wildlife Hazard Surveys at: a DoD facility in California shared with NV DoD; and in Sweetwater, NV. Day and night surveys were conducted at each location. A total of 1,073 birds and mammals were surveyed throughout the month.

WB Frey and WS Green conducted a half day shotgun familiarization class for the airport operations staff from an airport in Washoe County. Emphasis was placed on safe handling, firing and down range performance of the shotguns. There was positive feedback from the attendees and more future training was requested.

**New and Developing Methods**

Nothing to Report

Valuing and Investing in Employees

During the reporting period, the National Aphis Safety and Health Council awarded WB Pyzik the Safety & Health Special Achievement Award for FY 2016.

Information and Communication

Nothing to Report

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

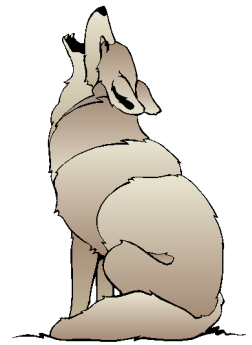
Nothing to Report

Future Meeting and Events

Nevada Wildlife Services Program State Conference in Baker, NV. August 21-25. All personnel to attend.



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Wildlife Services

