

June 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](http://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 June, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **3.8** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$92.7** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$4.5** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **349** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$0.00** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$26,959** in damage to aviation, natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During June, coyotes accounted for **\$23,709** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **218** 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 June, **22** samples were processed.

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

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler verified the loss of 10 lambs, valued at \$1,500, to mountain lion predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep near the White Pine/Eureka County line. The following morning, MLS Buhler put 6 of his well-trained hounds on the lions track. About 2 hours Later, the dogs treed the depredating lion, which was promptly dispatched. The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) had previously requested a lion carcass for a necropsy class and MLS Buhler was able to bring the lion out whole. When asked by District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett if the mule had any problems with MLS Buhler putting a lion on its back, MLS Buhler responded that the mule didn't have any choice.



On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County. The rancher had lost at least 10 lambs, valued at \$1,500, to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to locate and remove 2 coyotes near the location of the kills. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, a helicopter funded by a number of sheep producers was brought in from Utah to reduce their losses to coyotes. The helicopter flew for 6 days, removing a number of coyotes that had depredated more than 200 lambs.



On June 6<sup>th</sup>, MLS Buhler verified the loss of 3 lambs to a mountain lion. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in western White Pine County. The value of the 3 lambs was placed at \$450. MLS Buhler used his well-trained hounds to remove an adult female lion a short distance from the kills. No further losses have been reported since the removal. The sheep producer expressed his appreciation to the East District Supervisor for all of MLS Buhler's hard work. The producer said that without the assistance of MLS Buhler and Wildlife Specialist (WS) Randy Evans, he might not be able to stay in business.

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in Eureka County. The rancher has a history of very high losses and reported that he was seeing and hearing several coyotes near his sheep. During the flight, with the help of Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Field Assistant (FA) Tyler Bodily as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 3 coyotes near the sheep. Work will continue as needed.

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, WS Nathan Fowler verified the loss of 4 lambs, valued at \$600, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in northern White Pine County. That same day, WS Fowler was able to call and shoot 2 adult coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported. WS Fowler also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On June 12<sup>th</sup> and June 13<sup>th</sup>, DS Bennett spent 2 days in northern Elko County showing WS Tom Smith his assigned work areas and going over WS' policies. During the 2 days, WS Smith confirmed the loss of at least 4 lambs, valued at \$600, to coyote predation. WS Smith set foothold traps near the location of the kills. Work will be ongoing as WS Smith begins his



career with Wildlife Services.

On June 18<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in central Elko County. The rancher had lost at least 10 lambs, valued at \$1,500, to coyote predation during the past several weeks. During the flight the plane was able to remove 3 coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported.

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from 2 sheep producers in southern Elko County. The first producer had a small farm flock of sheep and reported that a coyote had killed at least 6 of his lambs, valued at \$900. The other producer had several bands of sheep and had experienced very high losses during the past month. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 2 coyotes near the location of the kills, 1 on each producer. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, DS Bennett verified the loss of 3 yearling sheep, valued at \$750, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep south of Ely, Nevada. DS Bennett set several traps near the kills. During the next several days, DS Bennett was able to trap 1 coyote and call and shoot another. Work will continue as needed. DS Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.

On June 26<sup>th</sup> the Ely plane responded to a call from several cattle ranchers and 1 sheep producer in southern Elko County. The sheep rancher had lost a very large number of lambs to coyote predation and all of the cattle ranchers reported that they were seeing coyotes near their calves. During the flight the plane was able to remove 11 coyotes. Work will continue as needed.

During the month of June, CM Hunter Bodenchuk verified the loss of 16 yearling sheep to coyote predation. The damage occurred in central White Pine County, with a loss of \$4,000. On June 21<sup>st</sup>, CM Bodenchuk located the depredating coyote and was able to call and shoot it. No further losses have been reported. CM Bodenchuk will continue to monitor the sheep in the area. CM Bodenchuk also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.

During the month of June, FA Allen Eldridge confirmed the loss of 6 lambs, valued at \$900, to coyote predation. All of the kills happened in central White Pine County. FA Eldridge used traps, snares and shooting to remove 4 coyotes near the kills. FA Eldridge will continue to monitor the livestock in his assigned work area. On several occasions, FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



During June, WS Nathan Fowler was very busy protecting 5-6 bands of sheep. During the month, WS Fowler verified the loss of at least 10 lambs, valued at \$1,500, to coyote predation. WS Fowler used traps, snares and calling to remove 16 coyotes. WS Fowler will continue to work on predation problems in his area as the sheep transition into the higher elevations for the rest of the summer.

WS Randy Evans was busy protecting several bands of sheep in northwestern White Pine County and southern Elko County. WS Evans verified the loss of at least 1 ewe and 13 lambs, valued at \$2,200, to coyote predation. WS Evans used calling with his well-trained coyote decoy dog to remove 13 coyotes. WS Evans will continue protecting the livestock in his work area.

WS Scott Little removed 9 coyotes and 1 den near several bands of sheep in Western White Pine County during the month of June. WS Little had no verified losses during the month but was working



areas that have had very high historical losses in the past. WS Little will continue to work and monitor the livestock in his assigned work area.

FA Scott MacDonald verified the loss of 1 lamb, valued at \$150, during the month of June. FA MacDonald used traps and shooting to remove 14 coyotes during the month. Without the control efforts by FA MacDonald the losses, no doubt, would have been much higher.

During June, FA Bodily was very busy protecting livestock in Eureka County. FA Bodily verified the loss of 4 ewes, valued at \$1,000, to coyote predation. FA Bodily used calling, trapping and snares to remove 12 coyotes near several bands of sheep. FA Bodily's cooperators are very happy with all his hard work and dedication to solving their predation issues. FA Bodily will continue to work in his assigned area.

WS Smith hit the ground running in Elko County. Not only did he get all of his required new employee training and paper work done, he spent the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the month learning his new work area and protecting 2 bands of sheep. WS Smith verified the loss of 9 lambs, valued at \$1,350, to coyote predation. WS Smith used shooting and trapping to remove 2 coyotes near the location of the kills. WS Smith will continue protecting livestock and learning his new work area.

## West District

During the week of June 3<sup>rd</sup> through June 7<sup>th</sup>, WS Ben Miller inspected trail snares placed around call boxes in NDOW hunt units 011-013 (Washoe County) as part of NDOW project 22-01. This project is designed to relieve California bighorn sheep from lion predation. During the inspection, WS Miller removed 2 adult male lions, one of which was estimated to be 5 years old. Both lions were in close proximity to the bighorn sheep. WS Miller will continue protection efforts.



On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and CM Brandon VanderMay flew around several lambing areas in Washoe County that have experienced lamb losses to coyotes. The flight resulted in the removal of 5 coyotes and the location of 1 coyote den which was relayed to the ground crew (FA Doug Koepke) for removal. Protection efforts will continue.

On June 18<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay flew around several lambing areas in Washoe County. During the morning flight, 4 coyotes were removed. Three of the coyotes were running from a fresh lamb kill near the lamb band. The sheep had been grazing on an allotment in designated wilderness where WS has not been able to provide protection since the latter part of 2016 as part of a settlement agreement. Once the lamb band trailed out of the wilderness area, the coyotes followed which were then removed. No further lamb losses have been reported since the removal of the coyotes. FA Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection work will continue.

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, WS John Peter spent a considerable amount of time around a lamb band where the herders reporting seeing a pair of coyotes that had moved in around the sheep. WS Peter hiked into a remote area and had a pair of coyotes respond to his voice howls. WS Peter walked within close proximity of the coyotes and removed the coyotes with the help of his decoy dogs, ending the damage.

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay flew around several lambing areas in Lander County, as a sheep producer had recently reported the loss of 2 lambs, valued at \$400, to coyotes. During the flight, 2 coyotes were removed. WS George Hansen provided ground support during aerial oper-

ations. Protection efforts will continue.

On June 27<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM Vander-May flew around several goat kidding areas in Pershing County. The goat producer reported that coyotes had started moving in around his operation with the onset of kidding. During the flight, 3 coyotes were removed. FA Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection efforts will continue.

During the month of June, WB Bowers continued protection efforts at a military installation in northern Nevada. WB Bowers utilized harassment with several methods to disperse 164 individuals from 17 species. No problem animals were lethally removed from on or near the airfield, thanks to the arrival of summer temperatures which reduced wildlife activity considerably. WB Bowers will continue to protect aviation safety at this facility.

Also during the month of June at the above facility, American white pelicans, which have been a concern in the last couple months, have been feeding in other areas of the valley. This has reduced the amount of time the large pelicans are spending in conflicting airspace with aircraft. Because the pelicans are still spending time in the valley, WB Bowers will continue to monitor this situation.

Throughout June, the annual Canada goose round-up was conducted in the Truckee Meadows to protect aviation safety. The birds were captured during the molting period when they were flightless. All birds were banded with a United States Geological Survey (USGS) leg band for data collection and released in state managed wildlife management areas away from aviation facilities and urban areas. To that end, 592 Canada geese were translocated in a matter of a few days. NDOW was a major contributor to the roundup, supplying translocation transportation, holding facilities and volunteers.

During the month of June, WB David Carrasco continued protecting flying Service members and their aircraft at a military facility in southern Nevada. Specifically, WB Carrasco: removed a turkey vulture that was soaring in occupied airspace; removed a coyote with the use of a foothold trap adjacent to the golf course and the airfield; removed 12 Canada geese at the golf course; and trapped 3 American kestrels with the use of a Bal-Chatri trap, which were translocated away from aviation facilities. In addition to WB Carrasco's protection efforts, he assisted the Environmental Natural Resource Division with the capture and banding of burrowing owls, a crucial part of their "burrowing owl habitat use" study.

## New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report





**Valuing and Investing in Employees**

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Thomas Smith began working for Wildlife Services in the East District. WS Smith will be replacing WS Mac Crome who took a position with Wildlife Services in Idaho. WS Smith will be working in Elko County and has several years trapping experience in Nevada as a private trapper. We would like to welcome WS Smith to the program.



On June 10<sup>th</sup> and June 11<sup>th</sup>, WS Cameron Green traveled to Elko and provided firearms training to FA Bodily and new Wildlife Services employee Tom Smith. Firearms training is required by all federal and state employees to ensure safe firearms practices are being followed by Wildlife Services employees.

**Information and Communication**

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen, DS Bennett and MLS Buhler attended the annual N-4 Grazing Board meeting in Eureka, Nevada. SD Jensen gave a report on Wildlife Services activities from the past year. Cooperation between the Nevada Grazing Boards and Wildlife Services has a long history.

**Emerging Trends/Issues**

Nothing to Report

**Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)**

Nothing to Report

**Future Meeting and Events**

July 22<sup>nd</sup>. East District meeting in Ely, Nevada. SD Jensen and WS Green to attend.

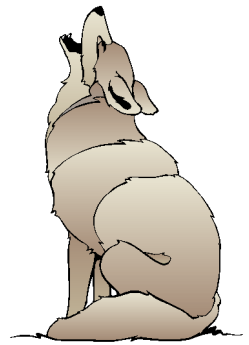
July 22<sup>nd</sup>. N-2 Grazing Board meeting in Winnemucca, NV. DS Jack Spencer to attend.



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# Wildlife Services

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