

November 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](http://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 November, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **6.7** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$213.4** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$4.2** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **1,291** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$11,041** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$20,933** in damage to natural and agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During November, coyotes accounted for **\$13,163** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **690** 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 November, **48** samples were processed.

*The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of November, 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 November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a sheep rancher's request for help in southern White Pine County. The rancher had lost at least two ewes valued at \$500, to coyote predation. During the



morning's flight, 10 coyotes were removed near the location of the kills. Technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations were also provided in an effort to help minimize future losses.

On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Elko plane flew on several cow/calf ranches in eastern Elko County. All of the ranches have had very high historical losses in the past and reported seeing several coyotes in the pastures with their cattle. During the morning's flight, 13 coyotes were removed. Work will be ongoing in the area.

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to call from a rancher in Eureka County. The sheep producer had previously lost two yearling sheep to coyote predation. The value of the two yearlings was placed at \$400. The sheep producer reported that he was seeing several coyotes near his sheep. During the morning's flight, the plane was able to remove five coyotes. Wildlife Specialist (WS) Randy Evans assisted as the ground crew. Work will continue in the area.

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to several calls in southern Elko County for assistance. At least two cattle ranches and a sheep producer called and said they were seeing very high numbers of coyotes in close proximity to their livestock. All three ranches have had historically high losses due to coyote predation. With the assistance of WS Evans as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 35 coyotes during the flight. Work will be ongoing in the area.



On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to a request from a cattle rancher in Lander County. The rancher reported seeing a large number of coyotes in and around his cattle. The ranch has had a very high number of coyote predation in the past. During the morning's flight, the Elko plane was able to remove 17 coyotes in the cattle pastures. The rancher was very pleased with the help they received from Wildlife Services and the Nevada State Department of Agriculture. Work will be ongoing as calving season approaches.

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in northern White Pine



County. The sheep producer said his herders were hearing and seeing several coyotes near his sheep. The location has had very high losses in the past. With the help of Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Field Assistant (FA) Allen Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove nine coyotes near the sheep. Work will continue as needed. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendation to help prevent losses in the future.



On November 8<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in northeastern White Pine County. The sheep producer had experienced very high losses to coyotes during lambing in the area. During the morning's flight, 10 coyotes were removed. FA Eldridge assisted as the ground crew. Work will continue as needed in the area and FA Eldridge will continue to monitor the sheep in the area.

On November 8<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to another cattle rancher's request for help in Lander County. The rancher had been seeing several coyotes in his calving pastures and has had very high losses due to coyote predation in the past. During the flight, the Elko plane was able to remove 24 coyotes on the ranch. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On November 13<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to several requests for assistance in southern Elko County from at least one sheep producer and several cattle ranchers. During the flight, 20 coyotes were removed. All the ranches were very pleased with the help they received.

On November 13<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a request for assistance from a cattle and sheep producer in southern White Pine County. The sheep producer reported four ewes, valued at \$1,000, were killed by coyotes. During the morning's flight the plane was able to remove nine coyotes near the sheep. No further losses have been reported. District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

On November 14<sup>th</sup>, FA Eldridge confirmed the loss of three ewes, valued at \$750, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on a band of sheep in the northeast part of White Pine County. FA Eldridge placed several traps near the locations of the kills and also requested the assistance of the Ely plane. During the next several days, FA Eldridge was able to remove three coyotes with the use of traps. The Ely plane also removed an additional five coyotes from the area. No further losses have been reported and FA Eldridge continues to monitor the location for depredation problems. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided to help prevent future losses.

On November 14<sup>th</sup>, FA Scott MacDonald confirmed the loss of four ewes, valued at \$1,000. The damage occurred in eastern White Pine near the Utah border. FA MacDonald set several traps near the kills. Over the next several days, FA MacDonald removed six coyotes with the use of traps. No further losses have been reported and FA MacDonald continues to monitor the livestock in his area.



On November 14<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to calls from several cattle ranchers in central Elko County. All of the ranches had experienced very high historical coy-

ote losses and reported that they were seeing very high numbers of coyotes in their calving pastures. During the flight, the Elko plane was able to remove 24 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as calving season approaches.

On November 15<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to a ranch in northern Eureka County. The rancher reported that he was hearing and seeing many coyotes in his cattle pastures. During the morning's flight, five coyotes were removed from the ranch. Work will be ongoing as needed.

On November 15<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call concerning the loss of seven ewes to coyote predation. The losses occurred on a band of sheep in western White Pine County and eastern Nye County. During the flight, four coyotes were removed near the location of the kills. Work will be ongoing in the area. DS Bennett also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

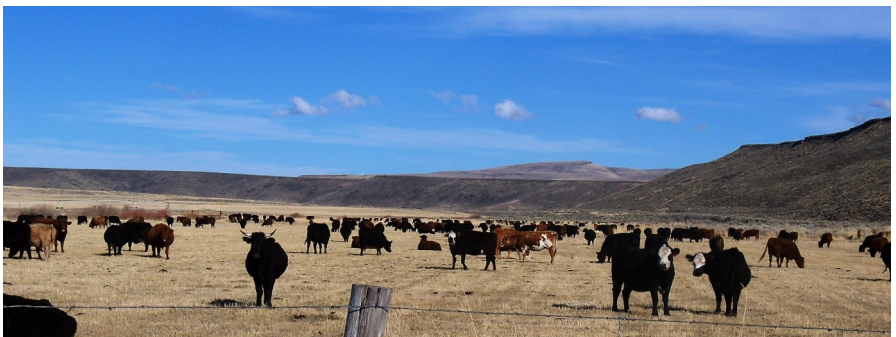
On November 20<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a request from WS Scott Little. Several calves had been killed by coyotes in the location in southwestern White Pine County. Several bands of sheep were also trailing thru the area on their way to the winter grounds. During the flight, 11 coyotes were removed with the help of WS Little as the ground crew. Work will be ongoing in the area.



On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, FA MacDonald confirmed the loss of one ewe on a farm flock of sheep in Eastern White Pine County. FA MacDonald set several traps on the farm. During the next several days, FA MacDonald removed three coyotes, bringing an end to the damage.

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, FA MacDonald confirmed the loss of two ewes on a band of sheep in eastern White Pine County near the Utah border. FA MacDonald set several traps near the location of the kills. The following week, two large adult coyotes were removed. No further losses have been reported. FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations was also provided to help prevent future losses.

On November 28<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to two large cattle ranches in northern Elko County. Both ranches reported seeing and hearing very high numbers of coyotes in their calving fields. During the morning's flight, 25 coyotes were removed. Both ranchers were very happy with the assistance they received.



On November 29<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to a call from several cattle ranches in eastern Elko County. All of the ranches had experienced very high losses in the past and were seeing a very large amount of coyote activity on their properties and allotments. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 25 coyotes. Work will be ongoing



ing.

On November 29<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a request from a sheep producer in northern White Pine County. The sheep rancher had reported the loss of at least three ewes, valued at \$750. With the help of FA Eldridge as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 12 coyotes near the kills. No further losses have been reported and work will be ongoing in the area.

On November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in Lander County. The rancher had lost several calves in the past to coyote predation and had been seeing several coyotes in his calving pastures. During the flight, 15 coyotes were removed. The rancher commented that he probably could not stay in business without the help he received from Wildlife Services and the Nevada Department of Agriculture.

## West District

On November 1<sup>st</sup>, 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 for assistance from cattle producers. During the flight, 33 coyotes were removed. WS John Peter provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported from these producers. Protection efforts will be ongoing in the West District.

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers and a sheep producer in Pershing County. During the flight, nine 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 November 7<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County. During the flight, 14 coyotes were removed. WS Peter provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported for these producers. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, a livestock producer from Churchill County reported that 25 goats, valued at \$6,910, had been killed by coyotes, in little over a weeks' time. FA Koepke responded to the call and placed 13 snares around the location of the livestock losses. FA Koepke also recommended non-lethal night penning of the goats, until he could remove the depredating coyotes. In the following week, FA Koepke removed four coyotes with the use of snares. To date, no further livestock losses have occurred and the livestock producer was pleased with the protection efforts FA Koepke provided.

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, DS Jack Spencer conducted a field inspection with WS Peter in Humboldt County. DS Spencer performed an annual inspection with WS Peter on mandatory M-44 training. DS Spencer and WS Peter also met with a long time rancher and learned of a small population of feral pigs causing problems on his property. A feral pig project will be conducted on the ranch in the near future.



On November 20<sup>th</sup> an urban livestock producer, south of Reno, reported the loss of one llama, two goats and several peacocks (valued at \$2,800) from the previous night. The producer initially called the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and the NDOW warden worked with DS Spencer to offer assistance. DS Spencer inspected the damage site and confirmed that a mountain lion was responsible. DS Spencer also observed where the lion has passed within 15 feet of where a small child plays on a back patio area. DS Spencer set a large cage trap baited with a goat leg 50 feet from the house. The following day, a small male lion was captured in the live trap and removed. The owners of the property were pleased with the results.

During the week of November 20<sup>th</sup> through November 26<sup>th</sup>, WS Peter ran equipment around a dozen properties in Humboldt County to protect calves and winter sheep bands. During the week, WS Peter removed 15 coyotes with the use of M-44s, trail snares and firearms. WS Peter will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.

On November 21<sup>st</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle and sheep producers in Lander County to reduce some ongoing damage. During the flight, four 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 November 22<sup>nd</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle and sheep producers in Pershing County. FA Koepke located several of the coyotes by howling and sent the plane to the coyote's location. During the flight, 10 coyotes were removed. FA Koepke provided ground crew efforts. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

On November 28<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle producers in Humboldt County after several requests from cattle producers. WS Peter located several coyotes for the plane including a group of nine coyotes in the calving area. During the flight, 55 coyotes were removed. WS Peter provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported for these producers. Protection efforts will be ongoing throughout the fall calving season.

During the month of November, FA Mark Bentz remained busy running equipment around fall calving and winter sheep areas in Lyon and Douglas Counties. During the month, WS Bentz removed 12 depredating coyotes. At one location, several sheep were killed and WS Bentz quickly stopped the livestock losses and the sheep producer was pleased with





the quick protection results. WS Bentz will continue to protect livestock in his work area.

On November 29<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted a morning flight around several cattle and sheep producers in Washoe County. During the flight, five coyotes were removed. FA Koepke provided ground crew efforts. To date, no further livestock complaints have been reported for these producers. Protection efforts will be ongoing.

During the month of November, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Zack Bowers continued protection efforts at a military installation in northern Nevada. WB Bowers utilized harassment with several methods to disperse 713 individuals from 21 species. One species of mammal and one species of bird were removed from the airfield. WB Bowers will continue efforts to protect aviation safety at this facility.

WB Bowers was asked to provide guidance on pigeon issues in the hangars as well as in the weapons area, of the above mentioned facility. Both locations are experiencing high levels of fecal accumulation which is causing human health issues, as well as making a mess on some high dollar equipment. This adds up to a hefty price tag when you factor in all the labor hours involved in clean up. Another issue is “down time” to aircraft due to expensive aircraft parts having to be cleaned before they can be installed on the aircraft. WB Bowers’ main concern is that the pigeons fly between the weapons area and the hangars in a flight pattern that takes them across active runways. WB Bowers has been limited in the past by a contract issue with pest control. Because Wildlife Services (WS) does not compete with the private industry, these struggles sometimes arise. Communication between all parties involved has led to a multifaceted plan in which all entities would work together to resolve the problem. WB Bowers is hopeful that the plan will be signed off on by those who are in charge. WB Bowers will continue to assist within his capacity.

Also during the month at the above mentioned facility, there was one strike reported and two incidents of remains found on the runway. The remains found on the runway have been identified by WB Bowers as horned larks. As required by instruction, they will be mailed to the Smithsonian Institute for confirmation. A sample was collected from the reported bird strike, which will also be sent to the Smithsonian for identification.

During the month of November, WB Dean Pyzik reported four bird strikes at a military installation in southern Nevada, species confirmation of three strikes came back from the Smithsonian Institute as American kestrel, Ring-necked duck and a bat.

Also during the reporting period, WB Pyzik removed 16 mammals (mainly black-tailed jack rabbits) from the installation while dispersing 2,954 birds with his truck, firearms and pyrotechnics. Of those 2,954 birds dispersed, starlings accounted for 43% of the birds dispersed while patrolling and conducting perimeter checks. Removal of 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 November, the presence of migratory birds continued to increase in the Truckee Meadows. The Reno Wildlife Services airport staff worked together on a joint-use facility to contend with the hazard. There were 1,926 birds and mammals dispersed from

the airfield, particularly several waterfowl species that pass from one side of aircraft flight paths to another repeatedly. The most notable is the return of Canada geese, prompting the lethal removal of 14 to disperse 771. Other species included mallards with 20 to reinforce the hazing of 546.

There has also been a significant influx of migrating Red-tailed hawks (including one that was struck by an aircraft) and Cooper's hawks moving through the area which are competing for airspace with arriving/departing aircraft while hunting. The situation prompted Wildlife Services' airport staff to capture and translocate eight Red-tailed hawks and five Cooper's hawks, all of which were banded for return-rate data. To reduce nocturnal threats to the flying public, a Great-horned owl was also translocated during the month.



DS Spencer and WB Carl Frey responded to a public safety concern involving coyotes, in eastern Washoe County, at the request of NDOW. Unfortunately some employees at an industrial center had been feeding the coyotes which resulted in several people bitten as well as coyotes stealing food, stalking vehicles and jumping into the vehicles when the doors open (one episode resulted in the theft of a purse). WB Frey removed four coyotes and there have been no further reported problems. With the threat removed, NDOW and WS were able to provide considerable technical assistance to reduce the chance that this situation recurs.

During the month of November, WS Rick Laffins began wildlife surveys at an aviation facility in Washoe County to determine wildlife abundance, occurrence and behavior. After a year of structured surveys and general observations, the data will be analyzed to develop a Wildlife Hazard Assessment (WHA) to assist the facility in understanding what wildlife threats exist and how to mitigate them. Of interest, WB Bowers conducted the first WHA ten years ago and was kind enough to come over and cross train the RNO staff with methods and survey points used. WS Laffins' first month of surveys around RNO detected an estimated 15,000 birds and mammals of which were represented by approximately: 33% Canada geese, 33% gull species (mainly California gulls), and the remainder primarily other waterfowl.

During the reporting period, WB Frey provided wildlife dispersal and wildlife strike sweeps for a multi-day joint exercise in central California. One wildlife strike (Black-tailed jack rabbit) was discovered during a night operation. There was no reported damage.





WB Frey continued day and night Wildlife Hazard Surveys at several military installation (Nevada and California) during the month of November. To that end, 677 birds and mammals were surveyed.

### **New and Developing Methods**

Nothing to Report

### **Valuing and Investing in Employees**

During the reporting period, WS Cameron Green received a Certificate of Merit for improving WS' firearms training and providing so much guidance and help in testing and matching firearms and suppressors for optimal effectiveness for specific applications. We thank WS Green for his help and assistance in finding us economical solutions without sacrificing quality.



### **Information and Communication**

Throughout the reporting period, WB Frey 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. NDOW had previously live-sampled 90 ducks during the late summer (Greatly Appreciated). The sampling goal of 140 samples for Fall was completed during the reporting period; and 170 samples remain to be sampled during December-January. As the work typically is conducted on the weekends or other off-days, the extra effort is greatly appreciated.

On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen and all the NDA FA's attended the NDA Meeting in Reno.

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, SD Jensen attended the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meeting in Carson City.

### **Emerging Trends/Issues**

Nothing to Report

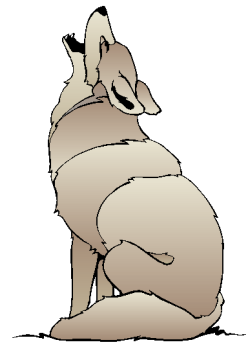
### **Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)**

Nothing to Report

### **Future Meeting and Events**

NV Cattlemen's Association and Woolgrower's Convention in Elko, NV. December 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. SD Jensen and DS Bennett to attend.

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# USDA APHIS Wildlife Services

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