

Wildlife Program – Bi-weekly Report

April 16 to April 30, 2020

DIVERSITY DIVISION

Nothing for this installment.

GAME DIVISION

Nothing for this installment.

HUNTER EDUCATION

Nothing for this installment.

LANDS DIVISION

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Nothing for this installment.

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Lands Re-opening Planning: Work was conducted by Division Manager Wilkerson with internal coordination within the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) regional offices and Executive Management Team (EMT), Washington State Parks, Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Governor's Office to develop and implement a re-opening strategy for Washington state lands following the Governor's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order. The Governor authorized staff members to prepare for the re-opening that began on April 27 in preparation for a May 5 re-opening of lands for local travel, with immediate household members only and no camping. Program Specialists Belson and Trenda worked with wildlife area managers and access area managers to develop an 850-line spreadsheet to collect data on the status of all sites. Belson and Trenda coordinated with Capital Asset Management Program (CAMP) to determine and set up project support of on-the-ground needs. Belson and Trenda also coordinated an inventory of existing personal protection equipment (PPE) and needs to and from the Lands Division personnel per the safety Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) developed by the WDFW Safety Office. Division Manager Wilkerson coordinated with Rules Coordinator Culver and Administration lead Bonagofski to update the emergency rule to vacate the lands closure and retain the camping closure. Program Specialist Trenda led a team of

Wildlife Program Science and IT website staff members to develop a place for the public to receive updates on the open status and to report any issues with our state-managed lands.

Recreation Options: Division Manager Wilkerson and Section Manager Sisolak worked with an internal WDFW team to identify options to enhance recreational opportunities in Washington in recognition of lost opportunities during the fishing, hunting, and lands closures. This led to the development of a three-phased “Return to the Wild/ Welcome to your Local Wildlife Area” campaign that is focused on:

- Appreciation of the sacrifice of our recreationists and messaging about recreating responsibly.
- Information focused on telling the stories of what recreation and educational opportunities are available at what local wildlife areas and linking that to our homeschooling content
- WDFW Lands passport program encouraging safe and responsible visitation to our lands

Recreation Partner Outreach: Division Manager Wilkerson participated in a second agency-wide Zoom meeting with dozens of statewide recreation organizations to discuss the re-opening of fishing, hunting, and lands closures and lead a breakout session specific to lands. The goal of the meeting was to communicate our re-opening approach, receive feedback on how we could improve, discuss options for how to be coordinated on messaging regarding responsible recreation.

Recreate Responsibly Coalition: Division Manager Wilkerson and Section Manager Sisolak participated in the first meeting of dozens of recreation organizations and state public lands agencies working to coordinate messaging on how to recreate responsibly in the face of COVID-19. Section Manager will be the lead point of contact for this coalition.

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Nothing for this installment.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Lands Climate Exercise: Vegetation Ecologist Merg helped Wildlife Program senior staff members assess the risk posed by climate change within their scope of work. Merg integrated feedback about the Lands Division portion of the exercise. As a member of the Climate Action Team, Merg will help write a summary of the exercise for the Wildlife Program.

Seed Packets for Pollinators: Vegetation Ecologist Merg provided extensive feedback to the Diversity Division on the costs and benefits of distributing native seed packets to the public at outreach events focused on promoting pollinators. This feedback underscored the need for an agency-wide plant materials policy to help us present a consistent message to the public and our conservation partners.

Pollinator Study: Vegetation Ecologist Merg mocked up a brief proposal that would add value to his existing forb-mortality studies. Merg proposed to assess the floral resources available to

pollinators and to gauge how much those are utilized. Together, this would enable him to measure the value of forb restoration projects to pollinators, and potentially, to assess broadly the considerable value that WDFW has already provided to pollinators by habitat restorations. These studies have been requested by a subcommittee of the Pollinator Task Force, which was convened last year by the legislature.

Agricultural Lease Review: Vegetation Ecologist Merg reviewed four more agricultural leases during this latest portion of what has been an extremely busy year for agricultural lease renewals. Three of these leases are on the Cowlitz Wildlife Area (WLA) and one is on the Sinlahekin WLA. Section Manager Dahmer reviewed the leases and forwarded them to Division Manager Wilkerson.

Grazing Permits: Range Ecologist Burnham assembled materials for temporary permits on the Scotch Creek and LT Murray wildlife areas and forwarded them to Section Manager Dahmer for further review. A temporary permit on the Klickitat Wildlife Area is nearly ready for further review.

Grazing Program Guidance and Tools Document Review: Lands Division Manager Wilkerson, Section Manager Dahmer, and Range Ecologist Burnham developed a public outreach strategy and the timeline for review. Burnham edited and delivered a summary of the proposed Guidance and Management Tools for the Executive Management Team (EMT). EMT members were very complimentary towards the presentation and work.

Teanaway Community Forest: Range Ecologist Burnham remotely joined the latest Advisory Committee meeting, where updates to restoration and grazing infrastructure were provided in addition to a question and answers session. WDFW and DNR continue to explore short and long-term funding opportunities for fence maintenance on the Teanaway Community Forest (TCF).

Weed Control an Essential Function: Weed Coordinator Heimer sent an email to weed staff members Holcomb and Zimmerman identifying a list of priority weed projects and a tentative list of best management practices while at work. Heimer developed tables of weeds that occur on Region 4 and 6 wildlife areas and identified the listed weeds as a priority for treatment. He contacted county weed coordinators with the wildlife areas' weed lists and asked if any weeds were missing and which species are priorities.

Vehicle & Facilities Maintenance: Weed Managers Holcomb and Nunez made a temporary repair of a vandalized gate at Bowerman Basin where some equipment is stored. Holcomb and Nunez worked on fixing gauges on the Puget Sound airboat and an oil pan leak while changing the air filter on a diesel truck. Weed Manager Morgan checked wildlife area perimeters for Manager Lowery.

Weed Management: Weed Manager Nunez assisted Mac Watson from the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and his field assistant surveying North Grays Harbor where they found one *Spartina alterniflora* plant and two *S. densiflora* plants. Heimer, Holcomb, and Nunez visited Grays Harbor Public Utility District (PUD) sites that were treated in 2019 to

determine 2020 follow-up work and sent Todd Plato (Grays Harbor PUD) a report and action plan.

North Puget Weed Crew: Weed Managers Zimmerman and Noteboom attended the two-day Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference via Zoom. Also, they contacted several WLA managers and access area managers regarding their need for help on weeds and reopening procedures. Zimmerman met Skagit WLA staff members in preparation for opening the area and developed a list of questions for the Safety Office. Zimmerman talked to Joe Shay (Skagit Weed Board) about 2020 coordination regarding *Spartina* and other weeds.

5) Providing Education and Outreach

WDFW Resources for Homeschooling: Program Specialist Trenda worked with the Public Affairs office to help develop materials for the April 22 (Earth Day and Oceans) and April 29 (Pollinators) homeschooling resources units. This year marked the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and the department provided tips on how the public can help Washington's wildlife, as well as lessons on forage fish and how to make your own reusable sandwich wrap. The pollinator materials included lessons on bats, bees, and pollinator-friendly plants. WDFW public lands play a vital role in providing habitat for these important critters.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Forest Health Restoration Pathway: A finalized version of the Restoration Pathway specific to forest thinning and prescribed burning was distributed to the regional offices. The Restoration Pathway is designed to promote cross-program consultation and coordination. Such coordination will help the agency strike the best balance when considering historic forest conditions, habitat for species of greatest conservation need, and recreational opportunity. This Forest Restoration Pathway will be piloted for a year, after which an assessment and any recommended changes will be presented to the Lands Division Manager and the EMT subcommittee on the Restoration Pathway.

Annual Firefighter Training for WLA Staff Members: COVID-19 precautions precluded training and the work capacity test for many WLA staff. Lands staff members worked with the safety office, looking at how other firefighting agencies are managing the situation and guidance from the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, and in consultation with the Office of Attorney General, have drafted steps to get folks certified. The proposal will go to the Union for comment.

Draft Cultural Resource Management Policy: The subcommittee on policy has not received any feedback on the current policy draft. The idea is to get input on the draft by implementing a series of short personal interviews on the topic with individuals we've been working directly with on program development like Sasha Medlen (Real Estate), Rod Pfeifle (Forest Health), Justin Haug (Okanogan Complex), Rich Finger (Region 2), Ciera Strickland (Habitat- Private Lands), Celina Abercrombie, Doris Small (Habitat-Restoration), and Theresa Mitchell as a start. We will ask CAMP to do the same thing with representatives from CAMP by following up with others.

Spending Plan for BPA WLAs: Vegetation Ecologist Merg collected approval from each of the regional wildlife program managers regarding the spending plan for Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) funded Wildlife Areas. This plan allocates \$216,000 additional Operations and Management (O&M) funding that we will receive this year as part of a five-year, a million-dollar increase that began in 2018.

Rx Fire Personnel Working: Since the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order, Rx fire staff members have continued online training for required classes to advance in the fire program. In addition to fire training, the fire program staff members have continued practicing and producing presentations to become familiar and comfortable with group instruction. These presentations on fire and other environmental topics have helped personnel become comfortable teaching in group settings using presentation technology. The fire team also finalized the Rx Fire program Standard Operating Procedures. This has been a big project and will help all staff members with clear directions and expectations to program functions.

Chehalis Basin Work Group: Archaeologist Major attended the April 28 meeting of the Cultural Resources Working Group, which focused on a presentation by the Flood Authority on the types of projects it supports, a new project tracking document, and a discussion led by Carol Schultz about the processes for federal and state review and consultation. As a follow-up, Major will provide Carol with criteria for hiring consultants that she will include in a document intended to guide grantees through the cultural resource compliance process.

Bureau of Land Management Rock Creek Elk Project Meeting: Archaeologist Major met with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Washington State Parks regarding a proposed restoration project on the Revere Unit of Swanson Lakes WLA. The discussion covered how to cover cultural resource consultation on this project, especially the roles of each agency. Many potential impacts will occur on WDFW land, and the best solution appears to be to do a cultural resource survey in cooperation with Washington State Parks, producing a report for use by BLM in Section 106 consultation.

Contract Management: Archaeologist Kelly is the Cultural Resources Services Contract Manager. Her role for all non-CAMP use of the contract includes drafting or reviewing scopes of work, approving bid estimates, issuing notices to proceed, reviewing deliverables, coordination between internal project proponents, and the consultants, and she is on the approval chain for invoices and payment. Adam performs the same functions for CAMP projects.

Cultural Resource Project Review: Project review and consultation was completed for the Columbia Basin Rx fire project, several small projects on the Chelan WLA, and the Big Bend DNR inholding acquisition project.

7) Other

Division Manager Wilkerson was a guest speaker for an undergraduate Conservation Biology course taught by Professor Jennifer Lipton at Central Washington University. She spoke to her background, career path, and recent decisions surrounding managing public lands in the face of COVID-19.

SCIENCE DIVISION

Nothing for this installment.

REGION 1

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Sage Grouse Translocation: Biologists Atamian, Lowe, Schroeder, Robb, Jeffreys, and Comstock captured three yearling males in Douglas County and translocated them to the lek in Lincoln County. This was not meant to be an augmentation of the population, but rather a bandage to keep the lek from blinking out before next year when we hope to translocate 40 birds from out of state. We were targeting yearling males because they have not typically established themselves on a lek yet and thus have a higher probability of remaining once translocated. We had hoped to move six yearlings but were only able to find and capture three because the breeding season is coming to an end making captures much more difficult. Due to fewer males strutting, males not roosting on the lek, and males forming small flocks off lek, which are extremely difficult to capture since there is always at least one that spooks and warns the rest.



Biologist processing male sage grouse after capture



Male sage grouse flying east after being released on the lek in Lincoln County

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Re-opening Northeast Washington Lands: With assistance from several other staff members in Region 1, Daniel Dziekan, Daro Palmer, Mike Finch, and Jerry Christensen prepared wildlife areas and access sites for reopening. After taking the required training, they cleaned restrooms and grounds, changed signs, and prepared to unlock gates for the May 5 opening.



Fish Biologist Randall Osborne (L) and Habitat Biologist Leslie King (R), hard at work backpack blowing the parking lot at Newman Lake



Reardan Audubon WLA ready to open

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Nothing for this installment.

4) Conserving Natural Areas

Revere WLA Habitat and Cultural Clearance: On April 29, Northeast Wildlife Area and Access Complex Manager Juli Anderson attended a conference call with WDFW archaeologist Mo Majors, two State Parks archaeologists, and two United States BLM staff members from Spokane. They discussed cultural clearance requirements for planned prescription burning at BLM's Escure Recreation Area, which will also encompass 90 acres at the Revere Wildlife Area (WLA) and five acres of State Parks land along a railroad bed. The group agreed on monitoring the scraping of a fire safety line before burning and inspecting the site immediately after vegetation is burned off. A firm date has yet to be set for the burning and reseeded.

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Nothing for this installment.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Gravel Use Permit: An agreement has been finalized between WDFW and Pend Oreille County, for use of a gravel pit at LeClerc Creek WLA to repair county roads on and near the WLA. The county's repairs will reduce washouts, making it easier for visitors to safely access the WLA, and keeping residents from being trapped at home. Work will commence once cultural clearance is obtained from WDFW's archaeology staff members.

7) Other

Nothing for this installment.

REGION 2

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) Managing Wildlife Populations

Greater Sage Grouse Translocation: Biologists Emily Jeffreys and Devon Comstock assisted other WDFW biologists to trap six yearling male greater sage-grouse from Douglas County leks for translocation to the one remaining lek in Lincoln County. This last lek is at high risk of disappearing with only four male sage-grouse observed there in 2020. Douglas County has the largest population of greater sage-grouse in Washington, with an estimated 266 males in 2020, a 15% increase from 2019, so the loss of six young males would likely be a negligible impact on this population. In addition to posing a smaller loss in breeding activity in Douglas County than would the removal of older males, yearling males have a higher likelihood of remaining on the lek to which they are translocated whereas older males may try to return to their previous breeding locations. To further minimize any impact, biologists decided to focus trapping efforts on the largest leks in Douglas County, those with 20-30 males.



Biologist Emily Jeffreys holds a male greater sage-grouse

Biologist Devon Comstock joined the sage-grouse trapping team for a second and final night of trapping on April 28 and went to four Douglas County leks: Mary Jane Hill, Mansfield, Glessner, and Kester Draw. Seven males were caught overall that night, but only one (captured at the

Mansfield lek) was a yearling. All older males were released onsite, and the lone yearling was taken to the Lincoln County lek and released there on the morning of April 29.

On the night of April 23 through the early morning of April 24, Biologist Emily Jeffreys traveled with several other biologists to the three largest lek sites in Douglas County, known as Badger Mountain, Kester Draw, and Mary Jane Hill. Although 30 males had been observed at Badger Mountain earlier in the week, only one male was found roosting there on the capture night and flushed before it could be netted. At Kester Draw, biologists trapped five male grouse, two of which were identified to be yearling males. The older males were released on site. Further trapping was attempted at Mary Jane Hill, but of the few birds observed, only two were trapped and both were identified to be adult males and subsequently released. The two yearling males were taken to the lek on Lincoln County on the morning of April 24 and released.

In total, three yearling male greater sage-grouse were caught in Douglas County and brought to Lincoln County throughout the capture effort. Despite not reaching the goal of six yearling males, biologists decided to forgo any further trapping attempts because the sage-grouse breeding season appears to be ending, with fewer males observed displaying in the mornings and roosting on leks at night. Males are beginning to scatter and form small flocks off lek sites, which further reduces the likelihood of trapping success.



Biologist Mike Schroeder measures the tarsus of a male greater sage-grouse

Pygmy Rabbit Recovery Efforts: Biologist Hughes assisted with releasing a pygmy rabbit kit into the Beezley Hills enclosure.



Northern Leopard Frogs: Biologist Grabowsky is in the process of developing an updated Northern leopard frog (NLF) status report to provide the public with current information about our recovery program and remaining frog population. This report should appear on the WDFW website within a few weeks. An expanded edition of this report will contain a compilation of standard operating procedures that will allow WDFW to follow proven methodology between field seasons. All biologists working on the NLF reintroduction project are preparing to continue fieldwork as soon as wildlife field surveys are reinstated. Though pausing fieldwork has caused significant setbacks for this project, we are hopeful that we will still be able to raise frogs to release this fall.

Bumblebees: Biologist Rowan watched a bumblebee training video in preparation for potential survey work in the future. Bumblebee and other pollinator species have experienced declines over the past few decades with several factors causing the declines. WDFW surveys will collect data on several species to gain a better understanding of the current distribution and species composition in eastern Washington.

2) Providing Recreation Opportunities

Re-Opening Wildlife Areas and Access Sites: Local staff members have been sweeping through wildlife area access sites and water access sites preparing for the state lands reopening scheduled for May 5. Sites throughout the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area and Okanogan Valley have been in pretty good shape. Access Manager Dehart has been suited up in personal protection equipment (PPE) and getting vault toilets sanitized and ready for use. Wildlife area staff members have gone through most of their WLA units and look for garbage dumps, gate concerns and sign damage in preparation for public use.





Water access manager Dehart sanitizing and maintaining the vault toilet at Conners Lake on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area - Photos by Justin Haug

Closure Resource Damage: Certain sites around the Okanogan have sustained damage during the Covid-19 closure. This damage occurs off and on throughout the year but was perhaps at a higher risk due to fewer personnel in the field.



'Mudding' damage during closure on the Blue Lake water access site - Photos by Justin Haug

Return of Outdoor Recreation: The Scotch Creek units require very little to be ready for the public returning on May 5. We will be removing “State Lands Closed” signs and replacing those with current information starting on Tuesday, May 5.



Signs of spring on the Scotch Creek Wildlife Area: Arrow-leaf Balsamroot – Photo by Olson



Fog over Highway 20 and Bonaparte Creek valley east of Tonasket – Photo by Haug

Voluntary Public Access Grant: Biologist Hughes and Braaten developed ranking criteria for Voluntary Public Access (VPA) funds in Region 2 to retain and enhance the private lands Hunter Access Program (HAP). The Hunter Access Program type, hunting opportunity available, species huntable, and current habitat condition will be assessed in the ranking criteria. Messaging for this approach will be critical. An alternative idea was developed, awarding existing HAP contract holders with an “appreciation award” that was proposed to Access Manager Strickland. If Strickland can find additional funds for appreciation awards for existing HAP contract holders, then Region 2 will focus on using the VPA funds for adding new acres into the HAP. If additional funds are not found, Region 2 will focus on using the funds for appreciation awards for existing landowners and will enroll new properties with any remaining funding. The details regarding this project are still being developed.

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Wolf Data Sharing: Specialist Heilhecker contacted United States Forest Service (USFS) personnel and a livestock producer regarding wolf den locations. She also discussed the upcoming grazing season with a contracted range rider.

Bear in Beehives: Heilhecker also received a call regarding a bear in beehives. The landowner was requesting permission to remove the bear given the proximity to the house. He believes it is the same bear that was living in the orchard last year. They discussed beehives as an attractant and bears will likely continue to appear and damage hives if electric fencing is not installed around the hives.

Coyote Concerns: Heilhecker received a call from a landowner about a coyote causing his cows to break through electric fencing. The landowner recently experienced a house fire, which resulted in meat, once stored in a freezer, rotting next to the pasture. The landowner wanted to remove the coyote as a last resort. Specialist Heilhecker suggested Foxlights in an attempt to deter the coyote. However, food is a strong attractant and the coyote won't likely leave until the spoiled food is gone.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Private Lands Habitat: Biologist Hughes developed a habitat plan for a landowner in northern Grant County. The landowner has property enrolled as Feel Free to Hunt and Hunting by Written Permission in WDFW's Hunter Access Program. Hughes and the landowner are planning to plant 450 trees and shrubs in a draw to enhance mule deer and upland bird habitat. Much of the draw has established basin wild rye, with little to no noxious weeds present. Additional plug plantings of basin wild rye in small areas of the draw are also planned. Hughes would like to do this planting in Fall 2020, but this is dependent on Covid-19 restrictions.

Recreation and Conservation Office Project Proposal Developments: Okanogan Lands Operations Manager Haug and Sinlahekin WLA assistant manager Klehm have been working on multiple Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) project proposals throughout Okanogan County. Work includes expanded project descriptions, public need states, maps, species info, etc.

Projects range from sagebrush steppe restoration, access improvements, and critical habitat acquisitions.



Arrow-leaf balsamroot at sunset from the Hunter Mountain Critical Habitat acquisition area –

Photo by Justin Haug

Safe Harbor Agreement: Biologist Hughes contacted the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding their Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) and provided a map showing the property enrolled in SHA as well as additional information. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is planning to mow right of the way two tracks and conduct maintenance on powerlines in pygmy rabbit recovery areas, some of the potential mowing falls on DNR and WDFW property. The mowing is for fire prevention for when the BPA needs to access powerlines for maintenance purposes. Hughes discussed this effort with United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to determine who the responsible party is and if the mowing would fall under any SHA or recovery permits. BPA will do its own consultation with USFWS and it will be independent of Endangered Species Act (ESA) tools such as SHP. Hughes provided this update to the DNR, Biologist Gallie, and Wildlife Area Manager Peterson.

Farm Bill: Private Lands Biologist Braaten spent several hours this week discussing Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) contract work that currently exists and proposed additional workload with Olympia, Regional and statewide private lands biologists. Previously, Private Lands Biologist Braaten discussed these issues and explained that it was not possible to

complete additional work due to existing obligations for the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) which postponed private lands habitat work. State staff members were considering the possibility of hiring seasonal personnel to work on CRP status reviews if funding from NRCS is accepted. If seasonal staff members are hired it will create additional work (supervision of the employees).



Osprey over Forde Lake on the Sinlahekin WLA - Photo by Justin Haug



Hooded Mergansers on Forde Lake on the Sinlahekin WLA - Photo by Justin Haug

5) **Providing Education and Outreach**

Nothing for this installment.

6) **Conducting Business Operations and Policy**

Nothing for this installment.

7) **Other**

Meetings: Biologist Rowan attended several web-based meetings. A WDFW Re-opening meeting, which discussed phases of operation to re-open WDFW lands to the public beginning May 5. A WDFW Strategic Planning meeting, where staff member's questions were addressed. Also, a webinar on Rangeland Conservation titled, "Moving beyond inventories: a new era for rangeland monitoring" which discussed modeling results using Landsat data, and tools for western land managers.

Scientific Literature: Biologist Dougherty spent time reviewing literature about lead ammunition impacts on wildlife and deer and elk ecology and biology.

REGION 3

Nothing for this installment.

REGION 4

Nothing for this installment.

REGION 5

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

1) **Managing Wildlife Populations**

Nothing for this installment.

2) **Providing Recreation Opportunities**

Access Sites and Wildlife Areas Reopening: Region 5 Wildlife Area and Access Site staff members worked diligently preparing WDFW lands to re-open on May 5 per the Governor's order. Most wildlife areas were in pretty good shape with some hot spots of use and garbage dumping. Unfortunately, many of the access sites were heavily used and abused during the "Stay at Home and Healthy" order, which has resulted in a heavy cleanup effort by staff members to prepare them for opening.

3) Providing Conflict Prevention and Education

Fencing Delivery: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Jacobsen and Biologist Holman teamed up to deliver and unload fence posts to three properties in Clark County that have been experiencing damage to crops from deer and elk. Unfortunately, the posts which weighed approximately 46,000 pounds were delivered to the properties on a full-sized semi-truck and no assistance was available in the way of forklifts or cranes. This was made worse by the smaller nature of the farms in question, none of which had suitable parking or turn-around location for a semi-truck. Instead, the WDFW staff members joined forces with the landowners to use a combination of muscle power, engineering, gravity, teamwork, luck, and determination to get the posts unloaded. All posts were unloaded and stacked at the appropriate farms whereupon the team dispersed to the kale farm and telework stations.

Backyard Wildlife: Jacobsen fielded several issues from landowners regarding backyard wildlife concerns. One Klickitat County resident was concerned about a raccoon that had been frequenting her yard, while another Klickitat County resident was concerned about coyotes denning on her property and causing her fenced-in dogs to continuously bark at the coyotes. The advice was given in both situations.

Injured Eagle: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Aubrey responded to a call regarding an injured bald eagle near an active logging operation on industrial timberland. Aubrey met with a biologist from the timber company and located the injured eagle in an area with many downed trees. After many attempts and different approaches to capturing the eagle, Aubrey and the assisting biologist were able to corner the eagle against a stump and capture it. Aubrey transported the eagle to a rehabilitator for further care. Many thanks to the company biologist for her help with the capture!

Black Bear Timber Damage: Wildlife Conflict Specialists Aubrey and Jacobsen met with a forester to verify and discuss damage to stands of timber from black bears. Fresh, current year damage was verified in a stand that has historically seen a large amount of damage from bears. Aubrey and Jacobsen and the forester discussed damage issues at length during the visit and discussed the best ways to operate moving forward. Aubrey verified additional damage to multiple stands of timber from black bears. Fresh, current year damage was verified in the stands.

Injured Deer: Aubrey spoke with a concerned citizen who has a deer with an injury to its rear leg. The deer was still mobile and was no longer in the same location when Aubrey contacted the individual. The agency's response to these situations was discussed and the individual was asked to let us know if the deer's condition worsened.

Lone Elk: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Aubrey spoke to a landowner concerned that a young bull elk was hanging out on the property alone and has tendencies to try to associate with deer when they cross the property. The elk appeared to be healthy, so the landowner was advised that the elk would be ok and will likely link up with a herd of elk in the area in the future.

4) Conserving Natural Landscapes

Cowlitz Wildlife Area Kosmos and Dogpatch Parking Area Improvements: Tacoma Power and their contractors impacted the camping and parking areas last year as they were performing environmental cleanup activities near Rainey Creek. Assistant Manager Steveson, having developed a relationship and the respect of the Tacoma Crew, worked with them to install some large rip rap material to upgrade the parking area making it less attractive to individuals wanting to turn “cookies” in the gravel. The parking area now functions as intended. The Tacoma Crew also moved and added additional larger rip rap around the vault toilet making it much harder for RVs to dump their waste tanks into the holding vault through the toilet. There is an RV dump at Tacoma’s Taidnapam Park that RV campers can use.



Tacoma Crews repairing and upgrading the Kosmos and Dogpatch parking area

5) Providing Education and Outreach

Nothing for this installment.

6) Conducting Business Operations and Policy

Nothing for this installment.

7) Other

Nothing for this installment.

REGION 6

Nothing for this installment.