

Wildlife Program

Week of March 3-9, 2014

WILDLIFE DIVERSITY DIVISION

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Invertebrate Conservation: Fish and Wildlife Biologist Ann Potter provided information on the habitat, distribution, surveys, and potential occurrence of seven state candidate or listed invertebrate species (Butterflies: Mardon Skipper, Puget Blue, Taylor's Checkerspot, Valley Silverspot, Johnson's Hairstreak; Beetle: Beller's Ground Beetle; and Mollusk: Blue-Gray Tailedropper) in response to a consultant's request for the Chehalis River Basin Feasibility Study. The study evaluates the feasibility of damming portions of the upper Chehalis River, and is being conducted by Portland-based consultants ICF International. Of the seven species, Ann recommended further habitat assessment and surveys for two (Valley Silverspot and Blue-Gray Tailedropper), further habitat assessment to determine survey need for one (Johnson's Hairstreak), and concurred with the consultant's determination that habitat did not occur within the project footprint for the other four. For future planning, Ann also explained that several additional species of conservation concern (not listed, but Species of Greatest Conservation Need), especially freshwater bivalves and other snails or slugs likely occur in this area. Ann's response was coordinated with Habitat Program and District 10 wildlife biologist.

Western gray squirrel webpage: Biologist Wiles completed making updates to the western gray squirrel webpage (http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/gray_squirrel/) and had these posted on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) website. This work was completed over the past seven months, and involved input from a number of district biologists, Wildlife Area staff, Olympia staff, and people from outside the agency. Science Biologist Lori Salzer created new maps for the webpage. Of particular interest are the revised maps for 3 non-native squirrel species (eastern gray squirrels, eastern fox squirrels, California ground squirrels), which show their continuing expansion within Washington.

REGION 1

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wolf Conservation and Management

Wolf spayed after breeding with domestic dog: On Saturday, March 8 a team of department wolf biologists re-captured a female wolf that bred with a male dog. The dog, a large unaltered livestock-type guarding dog, escaped from its owners' fenced yard near Ione when the wolf was

in the area and has been documented travelling with the Ruby Creek Pack from mid-January to late February. There are no male wolves in the Ruby Creek Pack.

Biologists examined the wolf on February 25 during a capture and collar operation, and called headquarters for directions on how to proceed after finding that the adult female wolf was in heat. Concerned about the potential implications of first-generation hybrids on the state's wolf population, wildlife managers agreed that the wolf should be spayed. The procedure was conducted during the evening of March 8 in Spokane under the direction of the department's veterinarian.

The female wolf was released the next day in the same area where she was captured.

Wildlife Management

Golden Eagle Surveys – District 1: District Wildlife Biologist (DWB) Dana Base and Assistant DWB Annemarie Prince carried out a helicopter survey of golden eagles at nest territories documented within the Colville District. Cory Peone, biological staff with the Colville Confederated Tribes, teamed with Base and Prince in this effort as nest territories were investigated on both the North and South Halves of the Colville Confederated Tribes Reservation. In all, 24 sites were surveyed and evidence of golden eagle occupancy was observed at 7 nest territories.



View from backseat of R-44 Helicopter searching cliff faces for golden eagle nests.



Golden Eagle Surveys – District 2: Biologist Ferguson attempted to conduct a ground survey for two of the accessible golden eagle nests in the Spokane district, but the fog was so thick the survey had to be called off.

Golden Eagle survey at Sterling Cliff in Lincoln County was stopped due to heavy fog.

Golden Eagle monitoring – District 3: Assistant District Biologist Vekasy checked on golden eagle Priority 1 territories along the Snake and Grande Ronde rivers. Two pairs were incubating, and third territory was occupied by adult pair but with no evidence of breeding. Vekasy also checked Priority 1 and 3 territories along the Tucannon River, and retrieved trail camera on deer bait site. All 3 territories were occupied but none had begun incubation.

Bighorn Sheep, Town of Republic: Colville District staff responded to more information recently received regarding “stray” bighorn sheep inhabiting the Town of Republic and participated in a conference call with managers to formulate a live capture strategy. Assistant District Wildlife Biologist Annemarie Prince carried out logistical ground work to help coordinate a capture operation. Prince also teamed with Wildlife Conflict Specialist Jay Shepherd in searching for the bighorn sheep along with making additional reconnaissance of the sites where they have been seen.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Areas

North Region 1 Access site repairs and maintenance – Access Manager Scott Young conducted routine maintenance at the access areas on Deer, Liberty, Silver, Rock, Waitts, Newman and Eloika lakes. He also cleaned some of the gravel and mud that washed into the Newman Lake Access Site, and filled in the eroded area around the toilet at Newman Lake.



Newman Lake toilet before (left) and after (right) filling eroded channels around the base.



Newman Lake parking lot before (left) and after (right) site repairs, March 8, 2014.

WT Wooten Wildlife Area – Lakes: Assistant Wildlife Area Manager Dingman checked the lakes and adjusted as necessary. The Tucannon River reached 1,000 cubic feet per second on Thursday and Dingman adjusted the inlets to keep the water from flowing over the fish screens.



High flows in the Tucannon River from the county road bridge at north end of WT Wooten Wildlife Area.



High flows in the Tucannon River against one of the helicopter-placed log jams near Campground 6.

REGION 2

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Black Bear Study: Biologist Gallie assisted on the Black Bear research project for a couple days, helping with locating den sites and recording data and attributes about them. This included miles of snow mobiles and snow shoes up steep terrain in the snow covered Cascades—mostly between 2,000 and 3,600 ft. Cameras were deployed at dens of females to determine reproductive success and in one case, where a sow had yearlings, we immobilized them and placed GPS collars on them to track movements and survival.



Left: Biologist Maletzke (only legs visible) checks out a bear den. Above: Radio collars being placed on black bear female and two yearling cubs. Photos by J. Gallie

Columbia River: Biologists Finger and Verhey traveled to the Wanapum Pool to observe conditions following the Grant County Public Utility District drawdown. At the time the pool was drawn down 20 feet, an additional 5 feet has been drawn down since. The drawdown exposed bed of submerged aquatic vegetation, freshwater mussels, clams, and snails and will likely impact forage availability for diving ducks on this pool as they head northward to breeding grounds. Another potential impact being considered was the possibility that Caspian terns dissuaded from Banks Lake (Goose Island) would find suitable nesting areas on the Wanapum Pool; thereby breeding closer, and having a larger impact on, endangered stocks of Columbia River salmonids. Impacts will be largely determined by the duration of the drawdown and future fluctuations in water levels within the drawdown zone; thus many questions remain at this time.

Washington ground squirrel: Biologist Finger placed traps at two locations along Sagebrush Flats road to begin sampling DNA from some nearby and easily accessible populations. The objective is to better understand genetic similarity between populations in the landscape and relate that back to resistance measures between habitat concentration areas, developed by the Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group. Populations lacking genetic similarity between Habitat Concentration Areas (HCAs) would be expected to have high resistance values in the model, and vice versa. If we can collect DNA samples from an adequate number of HCA's over time, we can determine how well the model predicts landscape resistance. This effort is essentially a pilot project of what will hopefully become a larger project in the future. The results of this work will be important to management decisions in the future, such as whether to invest in protecting connectivity between intact landscapes, and/or whether certain HCA's would benefit from enhanced genetic diversity, potentially through translocation because connectivity is not attainable.

Golden Eagles: Biologists Gallie and Volsen continued surveys for occupancy at selected Golden eagle territories in Chelan and Douglas counties. Thus far we have visited 17 territories with 12 being occupied by a pair of eagles and 5 unoccupied. This occupancy rate was similar to what we found last year. In addition, Biologist Gallie took along a Wenatchee Valley College student on job shadow to try and document new territories of golden eagles. They went to Swakane Canyon and did find a pair of sub-adults in courtship display, but unable to locate the nest site. However, we were rewarded with several close ups of the eagle pair.



Sub-adult Golden Eagle in Swakane Canyon
– Photo by J. Gallie.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Management

Recreational Opportunities (Weekender): Sandhill Cranes have arrived to the Columbia Plateau, as typically happens during the first week of March. Around mid-March long-billed curlew should begin to arrive and seek out nesting territories. Ice is breaking up in the Coulee Corridor and lots of bird activity is occurring, including loons, swans, eagles, and a great diversity of duck species (e.g., Tundra swan, Canada goose, ring-necked duck, lesser scaup, bufflehead, canvasback, barrow's and common goldeneye, mallard, pintail, ruddy duck, green-winged teal, and American wigeon).

Wild Turkey Counts – Citizen Science: Biologist Gallie organized data from Wenatchee Sportsman's Association on their annual winter turkey counts. Volunteers make three visits to 30

wintering sites in Chelan County to collect data on overall numbers and sex/age composition of the population. This was the sixth year of data collection. Counts were productive as a three-year decreasing trend was reversed. The overall count of birds increased 24%, and more impressively the count of adult toms was up 60% from counts last year. These data suggest a more productive spring turkey hunt in the coming months compared to last year.

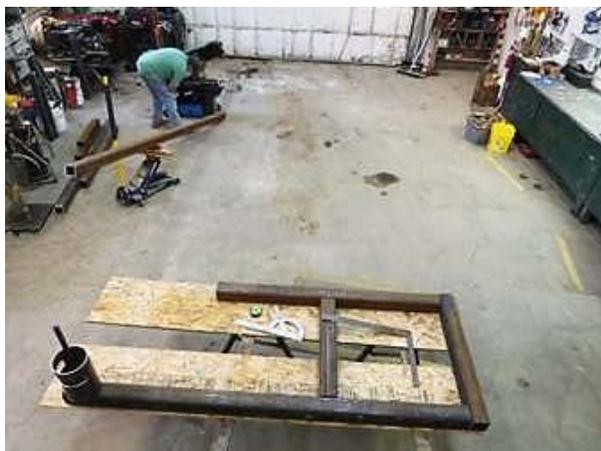
GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wildlife Management

Sage and Sharp-tailed Grouse: Biologist Gallie with the assistance of Customer Service Specialist Johanson sent out letters to landowners (adjacent to leks) in Douglas County notifying them about the upcoming Washington Department of Fish Wildlife's (WDFW's) annual lek counts, which occur mostly on private land. The letter not only informs the community on why we are out there, but also allows dialogue with the landowners on grouse issues as many of them call back with questions and several being interested in getting updates on the results of the surveys.

Wildlife Areas

Gate Fabrication and Installation: The Wells and Chelan Wildlife Area teams worked together to construct a new gate that will be placed on the Knowles Unit of the Chelan Wildlife Area. Working closely with Chelan Wildlife Area staff, Manager Ron Fox and Natural Resource Technician 2 Brad Zabreznik, our Maintenance Mechanic Ed Pierson designed and fabricated in the Wells shop the two section 16-foot wide monstrosity. Built entirely out of 4-inch by 1/4-inch square tubing, it has a padlock system recessed within a section of 3-inch tube to prevent access by bolt cutters. Once the gate was completed, Ed, Brad and Ron then spent one day at the Knowles cementing into the ground two six-foot long sections of eight-inch well casing to which the gate will be welded. Wildlife Area managers Fox and Peterson frequently collaborate and share resources to accomplish projects such as this on their respective areas. Good job to all, particularly Ed and Brad.



Ed Pierson begins gate construction. Photos by Dan Peterson

Private Lands/Access



Sunland Estates Boat Launch – Photo by Greg Fitzgerald.

Wanapum Pool: Grant Public Utility District (PUD) lowered the water level in the Wanapum Pool by approximately 26 feet in response to finding a crack in the concrete in one of the spillway piers. Boat launches were left high and dry, and were closed and vehicle access restricted. Grant PUD restricted all access to the shorelines under their ownership and requested WDFW restrict access to the shorelines under WDFW management. The emergency closure went into effect late Friday and access points were posted. Access and Wildlife Area staff took the opportunity to inspect boat launches and shorelines for problems or maintenance needs.

Lower Crab Creek Access: Access staff revamped the Jerico Access Site in the Lower Crab Creek Wildlife Area. The crew moved barrier rock, Russian olive trees were cut and removed, and a large truck load of garbage was acquired. The barrier rocks were moved to block off unauthorized vehicle access onto the wildlife area and to provide a more defined parking area.



Revamped Jerico Access Site (Lower Crab Creek) – Photo by Joe Graves.

Other

Wildlife Damage: Biologist Heinlen received a request for funding assistance for fencing from a local orchardist who recently purchased a parcel of land used by the Mt. Hull Bighorn sheep herd for foraging. This parcel used to be an orchard and this orchardist wishes to plant it back into orchard, but knows a “deer fence” is needed to protect the new trees. However, Bighorn sheep are not covered under the law for damage. Biologist Heinlen passed on the name and number of the Washington State president of the Wild Sheep Foundation for the orchardist to elicit funds. Biologist Heinlen informed Conflict Specialist Heilhecker of this request.



Bighorn sheep in the proposed orchard – Photo by J. Heinlen.

Winter finally arrived: After a couple of months of handwringing over the lack of snow, Mother Nature finally came through with over two feet of fresh snow during the previous week. The Methow Wildlife Area (MWA) staff spent a considerable amount of time throughout the week managing snow around the office and at our more winter-accessible properties. The snow shifted to snow/rain this week making “snow” management even more challenging, but our man Rob Wottlin is up to the task.



Despite all of the snow that we have received lately, spring has apparently sprung according to some of the early migratory birds. Male red-winged blackbirds have arrived and are actively singing and displaying as they vie for territories in the marsh adjacent to the MWA headquarters; American robins and varied thrushes have been seen foraging within the brushy thickets associated with nearby aspen groves; and pairs of golden eagles, bald eagles, and red-tailed hawks have been seen around the valley soaring in a synchronized display suggesting that their chosen territory is nearby.

REGION 3

None.

REGION 4

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management

Elk Clover Trapping: Biologist DeBruyn continued working with a cooperative of members from the Point Elliot Tribes to establish and operate large live traps to collar elk. The effort is part of ongoing work to monitor population levels of the North Cascades (Nooksack) elk herd.

Citizen Science – Woodland Park Zoo and WDFW Amphibian Monitoring Project 2014:

Biologist Anderson has sent materials requested to cities of Shoreline and Renton to assist in their needs to meet their city attorney requests for contract and stipulations. This is to provide for state volunteers to conduct official state amphibian surveys in these municipalities. It is also to reiterate WDFW covers liability of official volunteers, per volunteer agreement, and that data collected is available to municipalities per WDFW policy for data sharing and requests for WDFW data via the Priority Habitat and Species Program. Anderson looks forward to finalizing these items so as to place the final few volunteers in the field on these local public lands.

Anderson also worked with Wildlife Data Management Section Leader Duff and Biologist Salzer to update the “General Wildlife Observations” web and phone application to meet the needs of project users currently. Hopefully the tweaks will also provide for the general user and other future project data field needs.

Swan Mortality and Morbidity Study: Natural Resource Technician Anderson documented five new swan mortalities in Skagit and Whatcom counties this week. Four were trumpeter swans and one was a tundra swan. Surveys for swans in roosting and feeding areas were conducted this week in addition to responding to reports of sick, dead and injured swans on the swan and nutria hotline. This decline in mortalities coincides with the seasonal migration of swans for the upcoming breeding season. A noticed change in distribution and habitat use by swans is also noted in Skagit and Whatcom counties. Anderson worked with Biologist Danilson to develop a schedule for the final wind down of the remaining few weeks of Anderson's term on this project, which will include data entry, transport of tissue samples to Canada, and return of the field vehicle.

San Juan Islands Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN): Biologist Milner had conversations with two mammalogists who have information about small mammal occurrences in the San Juan Islands. We are slowly building a picture of distributions and introductions.

University of Washington Rainier Vista, Burke Gilman, and University Triangle Major Projects Consultation: Biologist Anderson met with members of University of Washington (UW) project management staff, UW environmental and land use officers, contract private consulting environmental planning staff and Horticultural project management staff regarding ongoing work in relation to the campus heron colony. Anderson suggested that UW contract with an appropriate entity to formulate a campus heron colony management plan that addresses basic operational needs during sensitive periods as well as scope of procedure with Seattle and WDFW for larger permit need projects. Dialog with UW, Seattle and WDFW will continue. In interim all are in discussion to meet Seattle code and avoid any state take.

University of Washington Graduate Work – Urban Duwamish Restoration and Habitat Considerations: Biologist Anderson spoke with a University of Washington graduate student that is working with the city of Tukwila to plan and implement shoreline restoration along the Duwamish, as well as provide for habitat connectivity to the upland areas adjacent, given a major city road splits that transitional habitat area. The area is planned for upland, wetland and shoreline improvements. Anderson provided both state and academic references regarding planning for attraction and connection of such habitats, storm water consideration needs, providing alternate areas so prey species are not concentrated, utilizing enhancements to help connect habitats but also handle runoff and storm-water, as well as contacts of other biologist and out of state municipalities that specifically deal with this subject and have implemented similar efforts. It is great to see both local graduate study efforts in this, as well as a local municipality supporting, planning and moving towards implementation of such urban wildlife management and habitat considerations.

Wildlife General Permitting Assistance: Biologist Anderson continues to provide guidance for wildlife management planning per Growth Management Act to area municipalities for specific projects such as Puget Sound Energy work in Kenmore near the Park and Ride heronry; Seattle construction near urban heronries. Multiple osprey nest removal requests and explanation of process. Eagle information requests where Anderson has emphasized internally that our websites outlining these processes for information are the best starting point for specific requests for

general wildlife data in project planning. Specific questions can be followed-up with direct contact with the local assigned biological management staff.

Wildlife Areas

Intalco Unit Beavers: Natural Resource Tech Deyo worked to clear the water controls on the Intalco Unit that had been plugged up by beavers. He adjusted the metal cage around one control to better keep the beavers away from it. In checking one of the leaking water controls on the unit, it was found that the leak was in one of the wooden riser boards, and not in the metal stand pipe. It appeared that a beaver may have gotten trapped in the control and chewed its way out.

Rainbow Pond Water Control: Early in the week a small leak was seen at the base of the stand pipe on the water control that makes Rainbow Pond. A hole in this controls' stand pipe had been patched last summer. As the week went on the leak got bigger and bigger until the horizontal pipe that went through the dike had a huge hole in it. Rainbow Pond quickly emptied out. Rainbow Pond will remain dry until this control can be replaced.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Management

Spring Bear Hunt: Biologist Danilson coordinated with WDFW staff and representatives from Sierra Pacific in preparation for the upcoming spring bear hunt. Danilson prepared an informational letter which will be sent out to hunters once the drawing is completed to inform them of an upcoming coordination meeting. Additionally, Danilson and Private Lands Biologist Caldwell met with a representative from Sierra-Pacific Industries (SPI) to address various aspects of this hunt and the annual landowner agreement between WDFW and SPI.

North Cascades Elk Her Population Surveys: Biologist Danilson coordinated with landowners and other project partners in preparation for upcoming population survey flights. Two rounds of flights are scheduled to occur the weeks of March 17 and March 31. Danilson contacted landowners to let them know that these flights would be occurring and requested permission for helicopter landing zones as necessary.

Ebey Island Acquisition Grant: Biologist Milner met with Biologist Bails to discuss species occurrence on the WDFW property and proposed acquisition and to strategize on how to present material for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program grant.

Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) grant review and scoring: Biologist Milner reviewed and scored 12 of the 46 grant applications submitted for ALEA funding so far.

Wildlife Areas

Crescent Lake Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with two volunteers to continue spreading mulch on the access roads within the unit. The mulch was

donated by Snohomish County and a tractor and loader was donated by one of the volunteers for the task.

Ebey Island Unit: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm completed negotiations with Sno-Valley Farms on the agricultural lease for Ebey Island. Manager Boehm continued installing t-posts and wood braces for a livestock exclusion fence on the west lobe of the unit. Fencing is required to keep livestock off of Homeacres Road and neighboring private property.

Skagit Headquarters: Natural Resources Technician Curran Cosgrove met with local bird enthusiast Richard Stewart to coordinate tree swallow nest box installation and maintenance. Mr. Stewart delivered six new boxes to be installed and cleaned out those installed in past years. Tree swallows have been in the area for the last week or two.

Other: Skagit Wildlife Area staff monitored drainage/water levels and conditions on the Island Unit. High river levels have greatly increased water levels. Water birds observed using the area include wigeon, mallards, green-wing teal and yellowlegs. A small flock of 12 wood ducks were also observed. Staff monitored water levels and field conditions at the Samish Unit. Ducks continue to utilize areas planted in barley. Staff observed a nice mix of waterfowl including mallards, wigeon, shovelers, green-wing teal, pintail and gadwall.

Lindsay Road Access: Whatcom Wildlife Area Manager Kessler and Natural Resource Tech Deyo checked and assessed how to create a pedestrian access onto our Lindsay Road property near Lynden. This work will be performed in the next month.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wildlife Management

Wildlife Carcass Disposition: Biologist DeBruyn transported a variety of frozen dead birds to the Burke Museum and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Specimens included bald eagles, a cooper's hawk, a peregrine falcon, a snowy owl and an emperor goose.

Skagit County Elk Conflict: Conflict Specialist Griffith worked with a landowner in the Birdsview area to deliver an elk carcass to one of the Point Elliot Treaty Tribes. The elk was killed by the landowner on a damage permit.

Manager Link, Biologist Danilson and Specialist Griffith attended a meeting of the North Cascades Elk Herd Plan Steering Committee. The main purpose of the meeting was to begin preparations for the upcoming North Cascades Elk Management Workgroup meeting on April 10.

Griffith and Conflict Technician Pinjuv began installing a seven wire elk exclusion fence on a property along Highway 20 near Concrete. Materials have been staged and volunteers organized

to assist with the remainder of construction for this and other upcoming fencing projects in this area.



Natural Resource Technician Kyle Pinjuv installs fence posts on a private property near Birdsview with the goal of excluding elk.

Coordination with Federal Agencies: Biologist Danilson made contact with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) biologist for Baker District to resolve issues related to inclusion of the Mount Baker Wilderness Area in the high buck hunt, which has been recommended for the 2014 hunting season. Danilson also worked on developing a response to a request from the superintendent of the North Cascades National Park to have Game Management Units (GMUs) that contain the Ross Lake and Chelan National Recreation Areas broken out so that Park Service staff can better understand harvest levels in these areas.

Wildlife Conflict Reduction: Biologist Anderson provided follow-up and information to a complainant that was in touch with city of Bellevue, WDFW Olympia and Region 4 regarding mountain beaver issues. Anderson requested that a template response be used by front-end customer service staff. The complainant called Anderson and received more specific advice on how to work with neighbors and city property managers having issues.

Anderson also provided similar assistance and suggestion internally regarding a complainant in Bellevue having ongoing deer issues, which, as with all of these situations, will not go away and must be managed ongoing given the built/natural/rural/wildland interface we have in Western Washington.

Finally, Anderson followed-up on a Wildlife Conflict Section/Legislative request to respond to a request to contact a landowner with elk damage in District 12. Anderson contacted the landowner and relayed WDFW is working in their area and will be examining their situation to move forward appropriately.

Wildlife Health Testing: Biologist Anderson worked with Customer Service Specialist Wilson to send off 12 passerine birds for testing, per instruction by Wildlife Health.

Wildlife Areas

Skagit Headquarters: Staff repaired the broken shear logs and reconnected it to the west side at the tidegates on Wiley Slough at the Headquarters Unit. With the broken shear logs the winter high tides have brought in logs and plant debris around the tide gates that could affect the operation of the gates. Staff removed small alders growing in the bio-swale and boarder around the Headquarters' boat launch parking lot. Staff performed general site maintenance to include pressure washing the pheasant loading area, maintenance shop, office, and chemical storage building and cleaned gutters on the shop. Staff monitored fissures developing on the Spur dike on along Wiley Slough. Signage was placed on the site to notify area users of the potential walking hazard.



Skagit Headquarters: Fissures and sloughing developing on the Spur dike.

DeBay's Slough: Staff removed hazard trees and pruned trees to improve viewing area.

Leque Island: Staff removed the regulation signs in the Davis Slough parking area in preparation for the Highway 532 and Davis Slough bridge project scheduled to begin later this year.

Wiley Slough Restoration: Manager Rotton and Habitat Biologist Brian Williams met with Dike District (DD) #22 Representatives to discuss the pump station agreement. Updated draft was forwarded to DD #22 for review and comments.

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area: Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm attended the monthly meeting of the Monroe Rod and Gun Club. Members of the club want to donate their time for a work party at the Cherry Valley barn facility.

Private Lands/Access

Waterfowl Quality Hunt Site Breakdown Update: Technician Otto continued performing quality hunt site breakdowns in Skagit County. These sites have been difficult to remove due to heavy rain water and muddy conditions.

Spring Bear Hunt Landowner Contacts: Biologist Caldwell contacted all private land owners involved in the Spring Bear Hunt regarding time-lines, management agendas and contact information.

Volunteer Coordination for Hunter Harvest/Success Monitoring: Biologist Caldwell coordinated with Hunter Education & Volunteer Coordinator Steve Dazey to discuss volunteer efforts on a Private Lands Access Program (PLAP) project. It was decided that a master hunter and possibly boy scouts would assist the PLAP in developing a Harvest/Hunter Success survey box for future use in the Waterfowl and Snow Goose Quality Hunt Programs.

2013 Private Lands Access Program Contract Agreement QA/QC: Biologist Caldwell and Biologist Milner performed quality assurance and control on particular contract agreements within Region 4.

Sierra Pacific Industries Meeting: Biologist Caldwell and Biologist Danilson met with the Sierra Pacific staff regarding the 2014 Spring Bear Hunt. Hunt season logistics were discussed. In conclusion of this meeting consensus was met regarding hunter access location and modes, property boundaries, and focus on damage related to bears on Sierra Pacific lands.

Whidbey Island Black-tailed Deer Research Meeting: Biologist Caldwell and Biologist Milner met with University of Montana Professor P. Krausman to discuss Black-tailed Deer research project on Whidbey Island. Research designs, time-lines and logistics were discussed. As a result, follow-up action will be conducted by the researchers regarding landowner opinion and access issues.

Private Landowner Questions and Concerns: Biologist Caldwell followed up on landowner questions and concerns regarding snow goose related damage on private lands. Biologist Caldwell forwarded this damage issue on to conflict staff. Follow up will be conducted with individual landowners in two weeks to assure his needs were addressed.

GOAL 4: BUILD AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION BY SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY



Falconry Training: Biologist DeBruyn and Officer Jeff Lee provided a half day training session for enforcement officers and regional staff about falconry and associated regulations. The presentation included an overview all falconry regulations, seasons, bag limits, species identification, facilities, and equipment involved.

Regional Falconry Rep. Erica Thomas poses with Peregrine Falcon “Karma.”

Personnel & Vehicle Issues: Biologist Danilson coordinated with staff from Human Resources and Wildlife Program Management to facilitate a term extension for Technician Anderson and made arrangement for return of his seasonal field vehicle to fleet management.

REGION 5

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

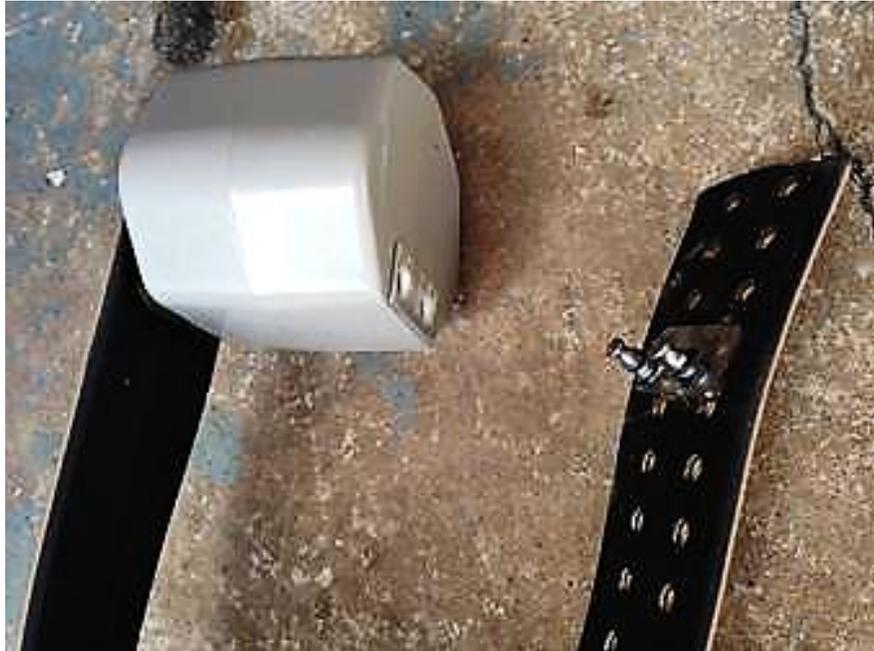
Wildlife Management

Mt. St. Helens Wildlife Area Elk Survey: Biologists Miller and Bergh conducted the monthly winter elk count. A total of 131 elk were seen on the valley floor and no mortalities were observed. Weather at the Forest Learning Center was quite windy with some rain and low clouds. Snow level was approximately 3,500 ft. and green up had not yet started on the valley floor. These are average winter conditions and elk numbers.

Oregon Spotted Frogs: Biologist Anderson conducted the first of the season Oregon Spotted Frog egg mass count at the Trout Lake Natural Area Preserve (TLNAP). This annual survey is conducted during the months of March and early April to document the number of egg masses

found at several locations at TLNAP. These egg masses are used as an index to the population trend of this endangered species. There were no egg masses located this week, but water temperatures appear to be warming gradually as we are still in the very early part of the breeding season. Overall habitat conditions are very good as recent heavy rains have caused seasonal flooding of traditional breeding areas.

Black-tailed deer study collar releases: Biologists Holman and Bergh started the task of retrieving the satellite GPS collars from does collared in 2012. These collars have a mechanism (see photo) that causes them to release two years after deployment. This technology is very helpful as the battery only lasts two years and no recapture of the does is needed to remove the collar.



Doe collar release

Wolf Database: Biologist Anderson reviewed wolf sightings on the WDFW public reporting website for the south Cascades area. Recent phone calls from two different sources indicated that several of the mapped wolf locations on the website were wrong and needed to be corrected. Two of the locations mapped around Mt Adams were in the wrong county. Those wolf sightings were edited and mapped in their proper location.

Columbian White-tailed Deer Relocation Project: Biologist Holman and Volunteer Williams assisted U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff from the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge and Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge with deer relocations. The federally endangered white-tails are being captured from private property near Cathlamet and re-located to Ridgefield Refuge. Two adult does and one fawn were captured and relocated during the most recent effort. These 3 deer bring the total to 11 white-tails moved so far during 2014.

Wildlife Areas

Hoffstadt Unit Old Growth Survey: Wildlife Area Manager Hauswald and Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) Biologist Fornes spent a day surveying the Hoffstadt Unit of the Mt. St. Helens Wildlife Area for old growth timber. The surveys were conducted to determine if any old growth would be impacted from proposed work anticipated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on raising the spillway of the Sediment Retention Structure on the North Fork Toutle River. PHS maps did not indicate any old growth timber in the area, but from some previous

visits in the area, Manager Hauswald had noticed three forest stands that contained very large trees that would qualify as old growth. All three areas appear to meet the PHS definition of an old growth forest stand and will be added to the database. Two of the stands could possibly be severely impacted by a spillway raise, as several trees are already at the water's edge. Trees ranged in size from 32-102 inch diameter at breast height, which could represent a minimum age of 160-500 years old. Tree species included Douglas fir, Western red cedar, Western hemlock and Sitka spruce.



Left: Douglas fir 102 inch diameter. Right: Sitka spruce 86 inch diameter.



Left: Western red cedar. Right: Western hemlock

Mt. St. Helens Wildlife Area – Jenny Creek Unit: Technician Sample spent some time at the Jenny Creek Unit parking area removing Scotch broom plants. Some of the plants were small enough to be pulled by hand, others needed to be removed with a weed wrench. There are several large patches of Himalayan blackberry close to the creek that will be removed in the future.



The Jenny Creek Unit parking area-before (left) and after (right) weed pulling.

Hall Road Unit Tree Planting: Technician Sample planted 15 young western hemlock trees at the Hall Road Unit to replace dead trees from last year's planting. Tree mats were installed on the new plantings to increase tree survival and reduce canary grass, which will compete with the young trees. Cages were also placed around each tree to deter browse damage. The very wet conditions while planting allowed for a good observation of a pacific treefrog.



Left: Western Hemlock planted with black mat and tree cage. Right: Pacific treefrog (Pseudacris regilla).

GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Wildlife Management

Southwest Washington Management Area 2A Special Late Season Goose Hunt: The Southwest Washington late season goose hunt concluded last Wednesday March 5. Throughout the season, 57 master hunters assisted up to eight farms in mitigating agricultural goose damage in Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. Master Hunters subsequently harvested 248 geese from these properties with a success rate of 23%. As with the regular season, Cackling geese



made up the majority of the harvest. However, 48% of the harvest from farms in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties consisted of Western and Vancouver geese. Two duskys were harvested during the late season. WDFW is appreciative of Master Hunters for their assistance and flexibility on hunt days and of landowners for their continued cooperation and willingness to adhere to the additional requirements in place for this season.

Youth hunter Cole Sheretz poses with Master Hunter Dave Freund after a successful harvest on Fazio's Farm during the late goose season.

Private Lands/Access

Langsdorf Landing: Access staff Spangler and Rhodes worked with the WDFW engineering crew dealing with erosion control. The heavy rains caused dirt and mud to start washing away. The crew plans on working one more week at the site with the remaining work scheduled for October 2014.



ADA ramp work at Langsdorf Landing.

Sportsman Club: Access staff Spangler and Rhodes removed logs that had washed up on the shore where boaters load and unload their boats



Sportsman Club before (left) and after (right) log removal work.

Silver Lake: Access staff Spangler and Rhodes used flat shovels to remove the moss along the paved path. The moist, shaded area seems to be perfect growing conditions for moss.



Silver Lake before (left) and after (right) moss removal

GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wildlife Management

Customer Service: Conflict Specialist McDonald sealed several bobcat pelts for a Klickitat County resident and tagged a bobcat for a Lewis County resident.

Wildlife Conflict – District 9: Conflict Specialist McDonald and a Klickitat County farmer signed a Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement (DPCA). The farmer has experienced damage from 100–200 elk for the past several years. The landowner agreed to try new non-lethal techniques to discourage the elk from browsing. Landowner damage access permits were issued.

Wildlife Conflict – District 10: Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a call regarding a bobcat depredating on chickens and that had been seen on resident's porches. Conflict Specialist Conklin also issued a noise device to the Curtis airstrip to deter deer from the runway. Conklin continues to work with a landowner in the South Rainier Game Management Unit (GMU) to enter into a Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement (DPCA) in response to elk damage. Master Hunters are often used to assist with damage response and would be beneficial in this situation. However, the landowner has not had a positive experience with Master Hunters and is currently not willing to have Master Hunters assist. Conklin is working with the landowner to come to an agreement to relieve this damage situation.

Range Rider Contracts: Conflict Specialist McDonald and a Klickitat County cattleman signed a DPCA with ranger rider tasks included. The range rider contracts are a proactive measure to try and reduce potential conflicts between wolves and the cattle ranching community. McDonald emphasized the importance of monitoring cattle behavior while on grazing allotments, maintaining a human presence when possible, and alerting WDFW immediately to potential wolf sign or depredations.

District 10 and Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area Winter Conditions

Past Weather: December and January temperatures and precipitation were below normal, with little snowfall below 2,000 feet. February started off cold with snow accumulating to the valley floor. The lower elevations in the region received 5-10 inches of snow February 6-9, with light freezing rain. Rainfall for the month of February was above average and temperatures were below average.

Short-Term Forecast: Snow levels will fluctuate between 3,500 to 8,000 feet for the upcoming week. The 6-10 day forecast is for above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation and 8-14 day forecast is for above normal temperatures and normal precipitation.

Long-Term Forecast: The March forecast is for an equal chance for either above average, below average, or normal temperatures precipitation. The three month forecast predicts above normal temperatures and an equal chance for above average, below average, or normal precipitation.

Habitat: Forage is available in lower and mid elevations, with green up starting to show signs in the lower elevations.

Snow Depths: Lower elevations are snow-free. Snowpack has increased significantly in the past two weeks, but is still slightly below average.

Animal Concentrations: No unusual concentrations noted to date. The monthly winter elk survey was conducted on March 4 with 131 elk observed on the Mt. St. Helens Wildlife Area.

Animal Condition: Most animals observed to date appear to be in good to fair condition, with a few in poor conditions and with rough pelage.

Mortality: Wildlife Area staff has observed four mortalities so far this winter on the Mudflow Unit while conducting other work.

Public Contacts: None to report regarding winter conditions.

The Public is reminded the portion of the Mt. St. Helens Wildlife Area lying east of a line defined by Hoffstadt Creek, The North Fork Toutle, and Deer Creek is closed to public access through April 30, 2014, to minimize disturbance and associated energy demands on elk wintering there.

District 9 Winter Conditions

Past Weather: Conditions this week changed with heavy snowfall down to 500 ft. in the south Cascades. Winter snowpack/water conditions for the basin continue to improve and are between 85-90% of normal. Snow conditions lingered through all elevations in the Columbia River Gorge during the week but warm wet weather late in the week melted a lot of snow below 2,500 ft. Local streams and rivers were near flood level by the end of the week.

Winter Severity: Winter conditions overall are still moderate and more typical of a normal year. Snowpack is primarily above 2,500 ft. and there is currently no concern for big game populations in Skamania County and the western portion of Klickitat County. Those portions of Klickitat County east of Rock Creek have little snow accumulation and deer are reported in good condition.

Habitat: Habitat was compromised throughout all elevations down to 500 ft. during the early part of the week. Habitat improved as of Wednesday and is mostly available below 2,000 ft. in the south Cascades. Habitat in eastern Klickitat County is more favorable with little snow pack.

Animal Concentrations: Deer are bunched in normal concentrations in good habitat at mid and lower elevations east of Highway 97.

Animal Condition: Deer and elk appear to be in good condition and little winter stress/mortality has been reported.

Mortality: No deer or elk mortalities have been reported this week.

Public Contacts: One landowner reported two deer in the Klickitat River drainage with hair loss, but there have been no other concerns raised by the public this week.

MOUNT SAINT HELENS ELK HERD
 2013/2014 WINTER CONDITIONS - SNO-PARK SNOW DEPTH,
 NRCS SNOTEL DATA, AND SNOWPACK

From web page <http://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/giffordpinchot/recreation/wintersports/?recid=31178&actid=91>
http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/cgi-bin/sno_narr3_pl
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/snotel/Washington/washington.html>

SNOWPARKS:									
Name	Elevation		12/6/2013	12/13/2013	12/20/2013	12/27/2013	1/3/2014	1/10/2014	1/17/2014
MARBLE MT	2,700'		No report	4" new snow	No new report	No new report	No new report	No new snow, 2" base	Slush. No new snow.
WAKEPISH	2,800'		No report		1-2" snow	1-2" snow	2" snow	2" base	No new report

SNOWTEL STATIONS:

Name	Elevation	Stats	11/30-12/6	12/7-12/13	12/14-12/20	12/21-12/27	12/28-1/3	1/4-1/10	1/11-1/17
		Avg Snow							
JUNE LAKE	3,340'	Depth (inches)	0.66	5	5.3	7	6.7	7.9	22
		Min Temp (F)	14	19	23	29	31	26	31
		Max Temp (F)	45	27	50	54	51	47	55
		Avg Temp (F)	30	22	36.2	38.3	39.5	36.7	39.8
		Year to date precipitation (inches)	27	27	27.7	30.9	31.3	36.6	43.5

Name	Elevation	Stats	11/30-12/6	12/7-12/13	12/14-12/20	12/21-12/27	12/28-1/3	1/4-1/10	1/11-1/17
		Avg Snow							
SPIRIT LAKE	3,520'	Depth (inches)	2.43	3	0.86	0.86	0	1.3	3.5
		Min Temp (F)	11	18	21	29	30	20	31
		Max Temp (F)	46	27	52	51	52	46	54
		Avg Temp (F)	29	25	36.8	36.8	39.2	36.8	38.5
		Year to date precipitation (inches)	17.5	17.9	18.3	22.1	22.7	25.5	30.5

Name	Elevation	Stats	11/30-12/6	12/7-12/13	12/14-12/20	12/21-12/27	12/28-1/3	1/4-1/10	1/11-1/17
		Avg Snow							
PEPPER CREEK	2,140'	Depth (inches)	0.31	2	0.3	0.42	0	0	0
		Min Temp (F)	14	16	24	28	29	25	29
		Max Temp (F)	48	26	46	46	51	46	51

Avg Temp (F)	31.5	22	34.5	34.8	36	35.2	37.3
Year to date precipitation (inches)	13.1	13.5	13.6	15.3	15.6	17.9	21

Name	Elevation	Stats	11/30-12/6	12/7-12/13	12/14-12/20	12/21-12/27	12/28-1/3	1/4-1/10	1/11-1/17
SHEEP CANYON	3,990'	Avg Snow							
		Depth (inches)	4		7	8.6	7.9	11.7	25.5
		Min Temp (F)	12		20	28	29	23	30
		Max Temp (F)	43		50	51	50	50	59
		Avg Temp (F)	26		35.3	36.8	38.8	35.8	39.3
		Year to date precipitation (inches)	23.1		24.4	27.8	28.4	32.5	38.5

Name	Elevation	Stats	11/30-12/6	12/7-12/13	12/14-12/20	12/21-12/27	12/28-1/3	1/4-1/10	1/11-1/17
CALAMITY	2500'	Avg Snow							
		Depth (inches)	1	5.5	0.1	0	0	0	0
		Min Temp (F)	16	18	27	32	33	30	34
		Max Temp (F)	47	27	55	52	53	48	56
		Avg Temp (F)	31	23	39.2	41.2	42.3	39.8	43.3
		Year to date precipitation (inches)	18.8	22	20.3	23.2	23.6	27.4	32.7

Snowpack % of Avg Snow Water Equivalent	12/6/2013	12/13/2013	12/20/2013	12/27/2013	1/3/2014	1/10/2014	1/17/2014
JUNE LAKE	5%		13%	21%	14%	23%	33%
SPIRIT LAKE	122%		100%	48%	33%	73%	77%
SHEEP CANYON	20%		20%	27%	22%	38%	55%

1/24/2014	1/31/2014	2/7/2014	2/14/2014	2/21/2014	2/28/2014	3/6/2014
No new report	No new report	6" new snow	14" new snow	No new report	No new report	No new report
No new report	No new report	5" new snow	No new report	12" snow	No new report	24" snow

1/18-1/24	1/25-1/31	2/1-2/7	2/8-2/14	2/15-2/21	2/22-2/28	3/1-3/6
19.7	18.7	30.3	37.3	52.3	65.3	57.6
32	31	5	16	28	27	27
57	60	37	41	42	41	46
43	40.2	21.2	32.2	33	33.7	37

1/18-1/24	1/25-1/31	2/1-2/7	2/8-2/14	2/15-2/21	2/22-2/28	3/1-3/6
43.6	48.6	51.4	58.1	71.4	72.8	86.6

1/18-1/24	1/25-1/31	2/1-2/7	2/8-2/14	2/15-2/21	2/22-2/28	3/1-3/6
0.1	2.5	7.6	3.8	12.2	15.9	5.1
34	31	7	18	28	24	28
54	60	45	48	48	42	50
42.3	39.7	21.5	34.3	33.5	35.2	39.2

1/18-1/24	1/25-1/31	2/1-2/7	2/8-2/14	2/15-2/21	2/22-2/28	3/1-3/6
30.6	33	33.4	36.8	44.6	45.4	51.6

1/18-1/24	1/25-1/31	2/1-2/7	2/8-2/14	2/15-2/21	2/22-2/28	3/1-3/6
0	0	2.1	7.7	2.8	12	11.1
30	28	11	17	32	30	28
56	55	38	45	44	47	48

35.8 35.5 25.5 33 34.8 36 37.5

21 22.9 23.2 27.8 35 35.4 41.1

1/18-1/24 1/25-1/31 2/1-2/7 2/8-2/14 2/15-2/21 2/22-2/28 3/1-3/6

24.1 22.8 32.2 37.6 53.4 67.4 56.6

33 30 3 18 26 21 30

54 56 37 40 41 45 46

43 40.2 20 32.8 31.5 34.5 37

38.6 42.3 43.4 49.4 60.7 62.3 73.8

1/18-1/24 1/25-1/31 2/1-2/7 2/8-2/14 2/15-2/21 2/22-2/28 3/1-3/6

0 0 1.1 1.7 2.1 2.7 0.5

32 34 9 17 32 28 28

54 54 37 39 46 46 51

43.3 42.2 24.2 26.5 35.8 35.5 41.2

32.7 36.2 36.7 37.3 51.2 52.1 58.5

1/24/2014 1/31/2014 2/7/2014 2/14/2014 2/21/2014 2/28/2014 3/6/2014

27% 29% 30% 34% 57% 55% 53%

42% 29% 44% 6% 107% 79% no data

47% 44% 48% 56% 87% 78% 71%

REGION 6

GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management



Swans: Biologists Hoenes and Sundstrom responded to a call from a landowner that said he had a dead swan on his property that had died because it hit a power line early in the morning, which caused everyone down the road from that location to lose power. Hoenes and Sundstrom confirmed the report when they arrived and examined the swan. In addition, the swan in question was a trumpeter swan. Unfortunately, it is not that uncommon for swans to collide with power lines, although this had been the first report of this type of incident in Grays Harbor during this winter.

Trumpeter swan that died from electrocution after it collided with a power line in Grays Harbor, WA.

Snowy Plovers: Biologists Hoenes and Sundstrom met with a landowner at Midway Beach that had questions regarding WDFW's request to access his property while implementing predator management activities to benefit the recovery of western snowy plovers in Washington. His concerns were mostly associated with the techniques that would be employed and how they would be regulated. The landowner's concerns were adequately addressed and he agreed to allow WDFW and Wildlife Services access to implement predator management.

Spotted Frog Surveys: Biologist Michaelis with assistance from Officer Mark James conducted two surveys for Oregon Spotted Frogs along lower portions of the Black River. Search techniques involved finding remnant river channels with shallow water and adjacent to agricultural lands. They discovered and marked locations for future surveying. They also observed 12 wood ducks.

Taylor's checkerspot reintroduction: Biologists Linders, Randolph and Johnson together with 10 volunteers from USFWS, Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM), Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), Department of Corrections (DOC), and The Evergreen State College (TESC) conducted the 9th annual release of postdiapause Taylor's checkerspot larvae at two sites in the Puget lowlands. Weather conditions were excellent with temperatures reaching 63 °F, winds calm and sunshine most of the day. A total of 2,582 larvae were released between the two sites, including a new site on JBLM (1,518) and an existing site owned by WDFW and Thurston

County (1,064). Larvae were reared at the Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women, which began rearing the species in 2012. Source stock originated from an extant site on JBLM.



Captive propagation of Taylor’s checkerspot: Due to ongoing and unexplained mortality at the Oregon Zoo, the decision was made to withhold from the 2014 release of all Zoo-reared Taylor’s checkerspot larvae. We began to observe symptoms in some larvae early last summer (e.g., blotchy skin, vomiting and diarrhea) that were consistent with a virus or other disease. Those symptoms were first noticed in one of the wild female lines, which experienced 30% survival between 3rd instar and diapause, rather than the 98% survival that is typical. A virus can travel via a wild adult or be present on a plant or in the soil, so the exact origin is uncertain. While that issue appeared to be contained, there were other symptoms that arose about the same time, which included incomplete molt and “failure to thrive,” which could be related to toxicology, nutrition or other environmental issues. In spite of extensive testing by Dr. Amanda Lawrence at the Insect Pathology Lab at Mississippi State University and others, all tests have come back negative and no diagnosis has been made.

Because we cannot guarantee a clean bill of health (regardless of whether we can confirm a diagnosis or not) and because there is the potential to infect a site with a virus that could create ongoing problems in the field, all larvae at the Oregon Zoo will be culled. In an effort to learn as much from the experience as we can, we will be sending additional specimens out to test for

toxicological, nutritional and other potential issues. We will also be rearing a subset of the remaining larvae to the adult stage to obtain meconium smears, which can be used to screen for other diseases that cannot be observed via other methods. Afterwards, all checkerspots remaining at the Oregon Zoo will be destroyed and the lab thoroughly sterilized prior to bringing any new stock.

Dungeness Elk – Collaring: District 16 is working with Point No Point Tribal Biologist Tim Cullinan on a ground capture and collaring of two Dungeness cow elk. Biologist McMillan worked with Biologist Cullinan and Biologist Murphie on ground darting attempts on March 3 and March 5. Biologist Ament assisted Biologist Cullinan March 6-7, successfully collaring a cow. The plans are to put out one GPS collar and one VHF collar in the herd. Biologist Ament joined Tim for a darting attempt on March 6, but the elk were located in areas with dense trees or too many houses. They returned early on the morning of March 7 to find the elk in a suitable darting location in Happy Valley. The two were successful at their plan to actually target an elk that was already wearing a GPS collar. The collar had been placed on the elk in April of 2011, but the collar became dis-functional in July of 2011. The transmitter box at the top of the collar was completely gone from the collar (see photo). The darting and processing of the elk went very well. A total of 11 ticks were collected from the elk to be submitted to Department of Health (DOH) for testing. The landowner of the property was very understanding and appreciated the efforts to have working collars on the herd. Biologist Ament did return to check on the newly collared elk on March 8. She got a live signal for the elk but did not get a visual. The elk had not yet joined back up with the group of other cows and calves. Her movements can now be monitored on the Vectronic website. Capture attempts will proceed this week to deploy the VHF collar on another cow elk in the herd.



Left and Center: Cow elk after administering reversal. Right: Damaged collar removed and replaced on cow elk.

Bull Count – While searching for the cow/calf herd of Dungeness elk on March 7, Biologist Ament observed the group of bulls in a pasture off Palo Alto Road. The group contained a total of 10 mature bulls. All bulls still had their antlers with the exception of one. They were not present in the same location on March 8.

Great Blue Heron Colony: Biologist Skriletz, working with local residents, was able to document 94 nests in the Seabeck area of Kitsap County. This heronry was first entered in the database last year during the nesting season so no entry was made to count nests at that time.



A few of the heron nests in the Seabeck colony.

Private Lands/Access

Waterfowl Hunting

Access: Biologist Skriletz worked with the landowners to secure the entire Short Farm near Chimacum in E. Jefferson County for public waterfowl hunting in the upcoming season. Six blinds will be available three days a week, on a first come, first served basis. Providing this opportunity was critical for waterfowlers in Jefferson,



Pintail, wigeon and mallards spotted on the Short Farm.

Clallam and Kitsap counties due to the recent closure of hunting by Jefferson County and Washington Department of Natural Resources at other popular sites in the area.



A portion of the waterfowl hunting area on the Short Farm.

Wildlife Conflict: Wildlife Conflict Specialist Novack coordinated with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to conduct a field visit to Sequim to evaluate a site for potential construction of a highway elk crossing structure.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wildlife Management

Grays Harbor Sportsman's Show: Biologists Hoenes, Michaelis and Harris participated in the Grays Harbor Sportsman's Show by manning the WDFW wildlife booth on Saturday and Sunday.

Wildlife Conflict: Damage Specialists Harris and Novack have been dealing with many elk damage issues across the entire region. Both biologists have been working closely with Master Hunters and landowners to resolve the conflicts.