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PRESENTATION BY FRED FULSTONE SAGEBRUSH ECOSYSTEM COUNCIL September 12, 2013

The biggest problem with the sage hen today is that we have had unproductive and unsuccessful sage hen management by the Fish and Game biologists since about 1980. Sage hen numbers started going down when agency biologist numbers started going up.

From 1950 to 1980 we had thousands and thousands of sage hen along with other wildlife. That was due to the very successful predator programs. During those years since 1980 the Fish and Game took in monstrous amounts of money from the hunters, but did not put it back to sage hen and deer management. They just kept issuing permits to make money instead of slowing the hunting permits to protect the sage hen. This was the same with the deer.

Now all of a sudden Fish and Game says there are no sage hens and we have to list the sage grouse under the ESA. They claim domestic livestock has caused the problem.

Fish and Game people don't remember that from 1950 to 1980 we had 10 times more domestic sheep and nearly twice as many cattle on the range. These were the years we had a very effective predator program. At the same time we had the greatest numbers of all wildlife, sage hens included, than at any other time in our history.

I was at the sage grouse EOC meeting in Reno on Sept 5, 2013. They have prepared a budget of about \$45 MILLION but they did not have any money posted for predator control or for wild horse control in spite of the fact that those two are the most important items for helping the sage grouse.

Senator Harry Reid has put up \$7MILLION which he stated must be used for habitat and predator control and the EOC committee did not include the money for predator control in their budget.

The most important items to help the sage grouse today, if having more sage grouse is the goal, are the following:

1. Predator Control including more trappers
2. Wild Horse control in accordance with the Wild Horses and Burros Act
3. Improve water sources
4. More grazing by sheep
5. Hope for rain
6. Don't list them

Predator control has traditionally been funded by the ranchers for the benefit of livestock production but that also benefitted the wildlife populations. In about 1926 government funded trapping programs were started using money from producers. One direct result of reduced predator populations was an abundance of sage hens, mule deer, bighorn sheep, and other wildlife all of which was funded by agricultural producers. State and Federal trappers (Wildlife Services) have been cut by over one half in the past few years. In the past month our Lyon County (Smith Valley) trapper has been laid off for one month on account of the sequestration. Loss of the government trappers has directly hurt the sage hen. Now trapping by anyone has been outlawed in California which removes the most effective control for coyotes. There has been no government trapping or aerial gunning in Mono County for about 10 years. That means that the sage hens in the Bodie Hills are only protected by the predator control that is carried out by the ranchers while we are grazing there and any private citizens who hunt coyotes. If the goal of this committee is to have more sage grouse then this committee must endorse predator control that is more systematic and that occurs throughout the year.

Wild horses protected by the Wild Horses and Burros Act have just about annihilated the vegetation in two of my allotments. There are about 500 wild horses under BLM management and they are on the allotments every month of the year. That is the equivalent of grazing 4,000 sheep for 12 months even though the BLM management only allows 2,000 sheep for two months in these areas. Horses are not kept at thriving natural ecological balance in accordance with the law and everything including wildlife suffers.

Water developments by ranchers have directly benefitted wildlife throughout the west. Recent years have included drought and about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the streams have dried up in our area. Constructed water developments are more important than ever for both livestock and wildlife.

Every indication is that the vegetative component of sage grouse habitat is more than ample, even abundant, on upland areas. Those upland areas are the winter habitats of sage hens and are mostly found on federally controlled lands. Our ranges include large areas of black sagebrush and low sagebrush that clearly are more vigorous and productive in the locations where we graze our sheep. However the summer habitats of sage hen broods depend on meadow areas, many of which are on private lands and are the product of irrigation by the owners. Drought has reduced our ability to

irrigate and water consumed by Pinyon-Juniper and Willows has made the effects of drought much worse. Control of Pinyon-Juniper on the uplands is already proposed and is a very good idea. Control of riparian species such as willows is also needed to protect the sage hen summer habitat --- the meadows.

Our allotments in the Bodie Hills provide examples of how sheep benefit the sage grouse habitat. Our sheep browse some of the sagebrush which stimulates a given bush to be more productive. Our sheep also graze the meadows each spring and more on to higher elevations in May or June which leaves the grazed meadows in ideal condition for the sage grouse broods.

Originally the ranchers built their own range improvements. When the Forest Service and BLM came into existence a system of paying grazing fees to the agencies was developed so half of the fees were placed in a trust account for range development such as water sources and one quarter was given to the states for the same purpose. These range improvement funds are a portion of the fees paid by the ranchers and specified by law for construction of range improvements but I have not seen any of the legally required range improvements in the last twenty years. That money has now accumulated in agency controlled trust funds and should be available for range development projects that will greatly help the sage hen.

Once the sage grouse are listed the US Forest Service and BLM will say they can only do those things that the US Fish and Wildlife Service and State Fish and Game give them permission to do. History of ESA regulations show us that the first thing the agencies will decide is to prohibit grazing in the name of critical habitat or some other excuse. ESA regulations will always be written in such a way that private enterprise becomes impossible even if the regulation harms the very species they claim to protect.

The agencies are predictable. First they will have consultation and that will include the livestock permittee on the basis that the ESA requires a federal applicant to be included in the consultation. The process is followed at a great cost of time and money to both the ranch and the taxpayers. Consultation will result in the Forest Service and BLM being forced by the USFWS to apply very strict regulations on grazing --- no grazing will be allowed in some areas.

Next the USFWS will hire sage grouse science experts who will work closely with the agency while they claim to be independent or even objective. They will claim to have conducted scientific experiments that prove that grazing is "problematic" for the sage grouse. Then the USFWS will be able to say that their experts have provided the best available scientific data.

At this time alleged experts funded by the US Department of Interior are conducting sage grouse studies and claiming to follow the ethical standards of scientific investigation. The problem for Nevada is that these people work for the federal agencies and the biographical statements of these experts indicate their bias against

most productive uses of rangelands including grazing. In other words the USFWS is accumulating data that gives the appearance of scientific support for their documents. They appear to be limiting reports to only that data that supports the federal agencies goals. Their work is being completed by scientists who have a vested interest in justifying their jobs in budgets far into the future by making sure the sage grouse is listed under ESA; those include both federal and Nevada employees. This Sagebrush Council, with its duty to represent the State of Nevada, has failed to obtain our own set of data that would very likely contradict the federal agency stories.

Please advise the Governor that we need independent research, independent analysis and comparison of sage grouse nuclear DNA from both the bi-state sage hens and from the greater sage grouse populations, and independent review and analysis of such material as USGS DNA analysis and agency model design. If our Governor is going to be able to defend Nevada from federal agency regulations that must start with the State having claim to the best available scientific and commercial data.

I was involved with the listed Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep and this same process was applied under ESA. My ranch lost the use of five grazing allotments and no longer can graze over 5,000 sheep which harms my family greatly. This SNBS program has cost the taxpayers hundreds of Millions of Dollars so far and the federal government will probably spend over one Billion dollars soon. Mono County lost the revenues and prosperity produced by some 25,000 sheep in the Mono Basin.

I lost my ranges that provided forage from 100,000 acres. Over the past 70 years I have constructed the range improvements and infrastructure that has benefitted livestock, wildlife, and recreation alike at a personal cost of over \$1Million. As of now, due to the ESA regulation my business and my Million Dollar investment have both been taken away by the government.

ESA regulation has cost everyone a lot of money and caused problems throughout several communities but did not result in more bighorn sheep. Today there is only a fraction of the number of bighorn sheep that have been transplanted into the Sierras near Lee Vining California that are still alive.

Scientist and agency people can say anything they want to say and everybody is supposed to believe them.

There is a lot of faulty science put forth by agencies that is selected to justify the end results that they want.

I would hope that this Sagebrush Council would study this sage grouse situation and recommend a solution that is fair to grazing, mining, and all concerned.

Wacko environmentalists and other special interests are using the ESA to get control of our land, water, and minerals; there is no evidence that they care one bit about

the sage grouse. Our local agencies are getting their directions from Washington D.C.

The livestock industry is a dominant component in this whole sage grouse issue that has now taken on the characteristics of a crisis. I think that livestock producers should be included in all the plans at this time and all the plans should include safe guards to keep our livestock operations intact.

As producers we should be aware of what is happening every day and be able to respond. Agency biologists have said that facts can only come from their style of scientific investigation as driven by the policies of their employers. As a producer I have been told by agency officials that my direct observations of sage hens are not factual because the very things I have seen are not a product of a government experiment. In other words they quickly call ranchers liars when our observations contradict an agency position. Even in the face of this type of hostility every rancher, miner, and federal lands user must continue to speak up for the truth about sage hens.

My family owns a large ranch and livestock operation that is wholly dependent on forage from the adjoining BLM and US Forest Service allotments (see the enclosed map). Loss of a single portion of any allotment causes losses throughout our entire operation.

Please tell Governor Sandoval that the facts about sage grouse include the eye witness accounts of ranchers, sheep herders, and sportsmen who spend their time and live in the sage grouse habitats. What a citizen is willing to testify to under oath is just as factual as any form of data from scientific experiments. As discussed above, the reputation of ESA is one of faulty and often fraudulent statements that are called science because they justify the regulatory actions of the agencies. Only factual information based on dependable testimony and ethical scientific investigation should be allowed within the boundaries of the state of Nevada.

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ATTACHMENTS

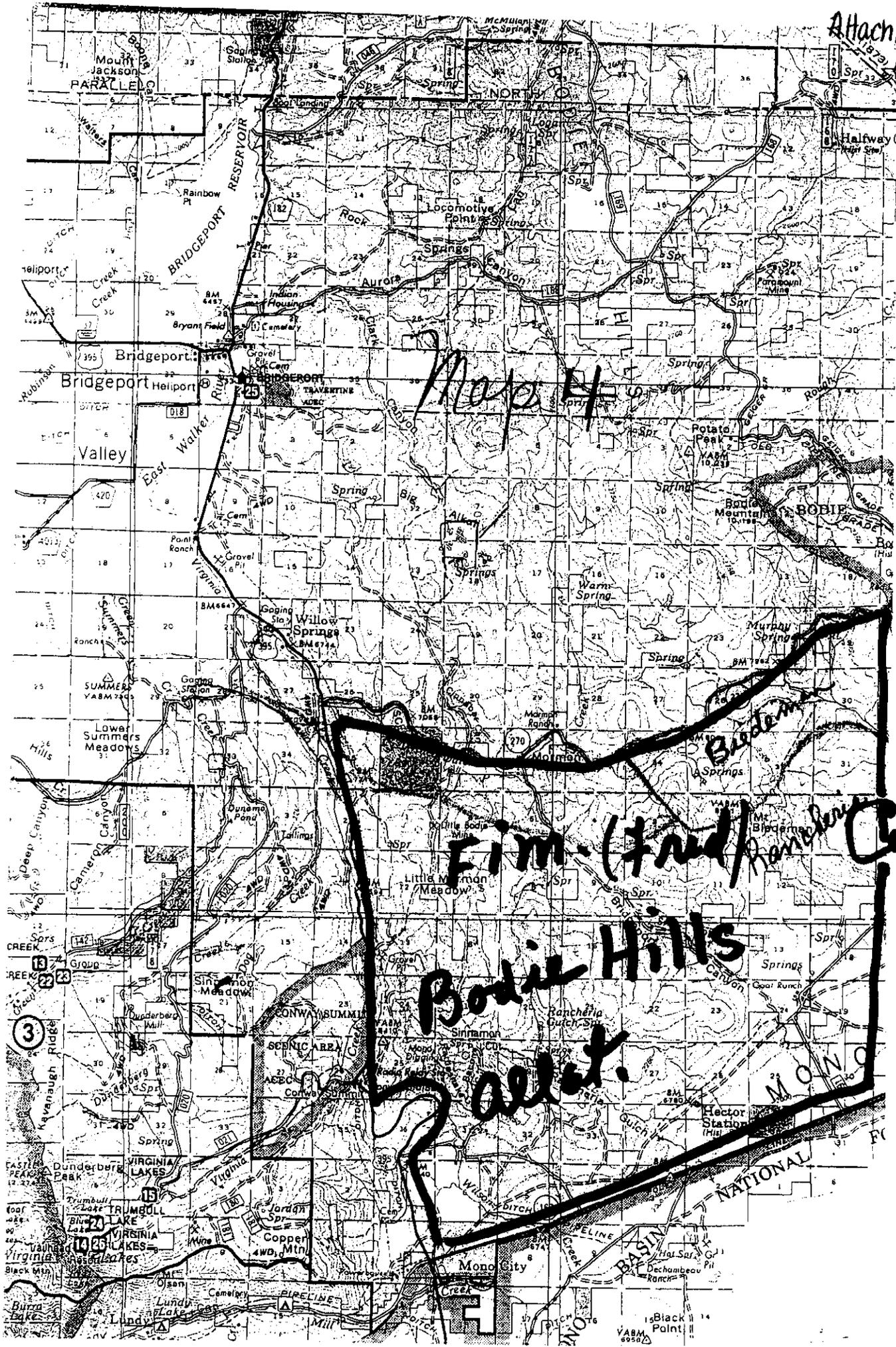
- 1. FIM Allotments with sage grouse habitat (Map)**
- 2. FIM Bodie Hills Allotment (Map)**
- 3. Drawing --- F.I.M. against the government**
- 4. Capital Press article on fire management**
- 5. Rangeland Scientist article about sagebrush**
- 6. Muley Crazy article about predation**
- 7. Wildlife Services (APHIS) newsletter May 2012**

FIM Allotments and Sage Grouse Habitat

Attachment #1

-  FIM Allotments
-  BiState Habitat
-  District Boundary





Map H

Eim. (Fred) Ranch
Bodie
Basin
Bobie Hills
allot.

**DON'T
EVER
GIVE UP**



Capital Press

The West's **A**g Weekly

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Fires call for more management

Editorial

This year's Western wildfires have burned thousands of acres of national forest and Bureau of Land Management grazing allotments, leaving cattle and sheep ranchers scrambling to save herds on summer ranges and find alternative feed.

While wildfires are a fact of life in the West, many ranchers blame the intensity of this year's blazes on federal land management policies and environmental lawsuits that have allowed large fuel loads to build up more quickly, fueling fires that burn larger and hotter.

"It's not rocket science," Steve Damele, and Idaho rancher who has lost as much as half of his grazing land to fire this year, said. "We all knew it was going to happen

sooner or later."

Hardly rocket science.

Since the fire that burned 794,000 acres of Yellowstone National Park in 1988, even the most casual observers have been aware of the dangers of the accumulated fuel load in our forests' understory.

Fire is a natural and important component in forest ecology. Before European settlement, natural fires would regularly clear out the fuel load — the dead wood and the scrub — and make room for new growth.

Throughout much of the last century it became federal policy to fight fires in order to preserve the national forests for their intended purpose — to provide the nation with lumber. With regular logging, thinning and grazing, the fuel load was

kept at bay.

In recent years, human activity on a great deal of federal land has been restricted to keep habitat of endangered species intact. Environmentalists have filed numerous lawsuits in an attempt to prevent logging and grazing on thousands of acres not already set aside.

Without active management, fuel loads have grown and fires have become larger and more destructive. Last month the Forest Service ran out of money to fight the 50 active fires burning on federal lands.

The intensity of this year's fires prompted U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Idaho Republican Sens. Jim Risch and Mike Crapo to promise an effort this fall to pass a forest management plan that includes more

thinning of overgrown forest stands and proper grazing.

In the House of Representatives, Rep. Doc Hastings, R-Wash., is advancing the Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act, which aims to re-establish a priority for actively managing federal lands through timber production and other measures.

These efforts have been tried before by legislators eager to combat the staggering unemployment caused in many rural Western regions when the timber harvests stopped.

We hope fresh images of the destruction, and the memory of the firefighters killed this summer in Arizona, will sway Congress to adopt a more active management plan.

Rangeland scientist at home in sagebrush

Acclaimed researcher works to improve sage brush habitat

By MITCH LIES
Capital Press

BURNS, Ore. — Agricultural Research Service rangeland scientist Kirk Davies is at home in the sagebrush steppe of southeastern Oregon.

Other than the years he spent at Oregon State University in Corvallis, the 32-year-old adjunct professor has spent his entire life in the remote desert.

Davies was raised about an hour's drive from the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center in Burns, where he now works.

In 1999, while an undergraduate, he started working at the center as a summer technician. Today he is a celebrated rangeland scientist.

Davies this year won the Society for Range Management's Outstanding Young Range Professional Award. The award is given annually to a scientist under the age of 40 who exhibits superior performance and leadership in rangeland science.

Davies also previously received the Outstanding Paper Award from the Weed Science Society of America for work on weed prevention. A research paper on the interaction between managed and natural disturbance in plant communities was accepted for publication in *Ecological Applications*, an international journal on applied ecology.



Mitch Lies/Capital Press
USDA Agricultural Research Service scientist Kirk Davies has become a recognized leader in the study of sage grouse habitat from his post at the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center in Burns, Ore.

Davies' work in sagebrush steppe has become increasingly important in recent years as state and federal agencies and private landowners work to protect habitat for the sage grouse.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in March of this year determined the sage grouse warranted protection under the Endangered Species Act, but didn't list the bird because other species were deemed in greater need of protection.

Environmental groups in June filed a complaint in U.S. District Court in Idaho, seeking to force a listing.

Research conducted by Davies often finds its way into management techniques used by federal land managers, who manage the sagebrush steppe that the sage grouse depends on for its habitat.

The research typically starts with a theory, he said. For example, scientists have theorized that grazing is beneficial to sagebrush that falls prey to fire.

Initial findings show the theory is correct.

“Our research showed that over the long term, excluding grazing could be very devastating to the plant community,” Davies said. “We saw that when it burned, where it had been grazed versus where it had seven years without grazing, the ungrazed burned area went to cheatgrass and the other one really didn't have that problem.”

Davies subsequently “dove into it deeper and really looked at the numbers.”

“There is about threefold more amount of fuel sitting

on top of the perennial bunch grasses when they haven't been grazed,” he said.

Davies in the near future plans to vary the experiment: in one case, going four years without grazing before burning; in another, going two years.

“We're trying to see what kind of window we're looking at,” Davies said. “Does it matter if you just don't graze one year? Probably not. But what happens two, three, four years down the road if you really start building up the dry fuel on the crown of the plant?”

Davies also is looking into planting protective barriers for weed control to slow infestations of perennial bunch grasses.

He is trying to determine if there are benefits in burning conifers that encroach on sage brush plant communities.

“If you burn them, you are bound to burn some sagebrush and reduce some sage grouse habitat in the short term,” he said. “But in the long term, by burning the conifers out of the sagebrush, you can have that habitat back in the future in a much larger area.”

Davies said he hopes the federal government doesn't list the sage grouse, primarily because doing so would limit his ability to improve its habitat.

“My concern with listing it would be that it would limit stuff we could do to save them,” he said. “There are a lot of things we can do that in the short term will reduce some of their habitat but in the long term will improve it.”

Emily awards, and she was named one of the most influential people of the year by Time magazine.

For more information about the event, call the OCA at 503-361-8941.

—Mateusz Perkowski

OAN show set to expand

The annual Yard, Garden & Patio Show is expanding.

“In terms of sheer garden space alone, this will be the biggest show we've held to date,” said Allan Niemi, events director for the Oregon Association of Nurseries.

The 2011 show, scheduled Feb. 18-20 at the Oregon Convention Center, will include seven display gardens covering 18,000 square feet, a 20 percent increase over last year, and 11 garden vignettes.

In all, the show will include more than 250 exhibitors and 23,000 square feet of gardens.

The 2011 show also will feature 45 hours of free seminars. The show's guest speaker is award-winning horticulture and gardening author Amy Stewart. Stewart has several books on the New York Times nonfiction best-sellers list.

The Oregon Convention Center is at 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., in Portland.

—Mitch Lies

Commodity panels seek help

Seven Oregon agricultural commodity commissions are seeking nominations for

Attachment #5

MuleyCrazy Magazine



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And just that quick, another hunting season has already begun. Although only taken a few days before printing this issue, I couldn't resist placing friend, Garth Jenson, on the cover of this September/October issue! Talk about doing it right. Garth's diligence in scouting was awesome, but his execution was even better! In fact, it was so good that his hunt was over just a few minutes into opening day. Garth...you look sharp all decked out in Max-1 camo, a little war paint, and a million dollar smile. I sure appreciate you writing your story on short, (one day), notice!

Are you as tired as I am with the political bureaucrats and messed up agencies that continue to squander and mismanage our resources? Take a look at page 23. Cecil Fredi, like many of us today, is also sick and tired of the way our state agencies are becoming more crooked each day. My rage about all of this has been going for a while now, but when a good friend sent in a copy of the Sacramento newspaper with a multiple page read about predators in Nevada, I was blown away! The contents of the article claimed that despite killing predators in Nevada for many years the mule deer populations are still dwindling. So, those dumb brainiacs came to the conclusion that predators are not the reason for the decline. In fact, the article stated that all those cute little critters were killed in vain. Oh yes they did! They said that millions of coyotes should have never been killed as "coyotes do not eat mule deer." What the hell is this world coming to.

I will tell you one funny story on the coyote subject before I quit. A story that will further explain the sheer ludicrousness of who and what is man-

aging our wildlife. Recently, we had an incredible trail camera photo submitted showing a coyote walking by the camera with a dead fawn in its mouth. The gentleman that got the photo was excited to show his local biologist this great shot. As he commented on it's rarity, he was shocked when the biologist replied, "Yeah, you're right, that is rare.....it's rare that a coyote will eat a fawn!" As is becoming more and more common from all of these dingbat biologists, he then went on to tell the gentleman who had gotten the photo, that predators have nothing to do with low fawn survival; "in fact," he said, "poor survival rates are related to poor habitat conditions." This comment literally makes my blood boil! At what point are these guys going to wake up and smell the rotting flesh of ungulates killed by lions, wolves, and coyotes!

In this issue I see a bunch of familiar faces, in fact several of these guys are good friends of mine. Without going through the entire list of names, I simply want to say thanks to each of you for sharing your stories with MuleyCrazy. I do, however, want to give a great shout out to page 43; a story written by Ron Hulse. Many of you may remember Ron's name as he worked with MuleyCrazy as the Advertising Director for several years. Ron and his wife, Cheryl, are dear friends of mine that have both worked hard to help with the success of MuleyCrazy Magazine. Still to this day, Ron is a great ambassador for us and I'm very glad I left that trail camera unlocked so Ron could sneak a peek of his buck...after all, that's what MuleyCrazy friends are for!

Nevada's Deer Herds...

The definition of fraud is to misrepresent the truth, to take money away from a person or persons. With that being said, that is exactly what it appears that the Nevada Department of Wildlife has been doing for decades to the deer hunters of the Silver State!

BY CECIL FREDI

Using statistics provided by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), in 1988 there were 250,000 mule deer in Nevada. Today, NDOW's estimates are 105,000 deer, (although many qualified individuals believe that the real number is much lower). While one might be curious to know what has, or hasn't happened during the past 23 years to cause such a drastic decline in deer numbers...the more important question is what exactly is being done to fix the problem?



Currently, a reputable outside independent agency, (with two PH.Ds on staff), is doing a study on the overwhelming decline of deer in Nevada. This project has had many setbacks; among them, NDOW refused to provide them with the deer data they needed to do their study. In fact, it took the Wildlife Commission, (Jim Gibbons' good appointees), using the freedom of information act, on two separate occasions, to obtain the needed information. Why was this necessary? What are they hiding? What is NDOW afraid of? If they were doing their jobs, and not cooking the books on deer numbers, they should have nothing to hide, right? In fact, one

would think that they would welcome and help this review so that they can put all of the speculation to rest.

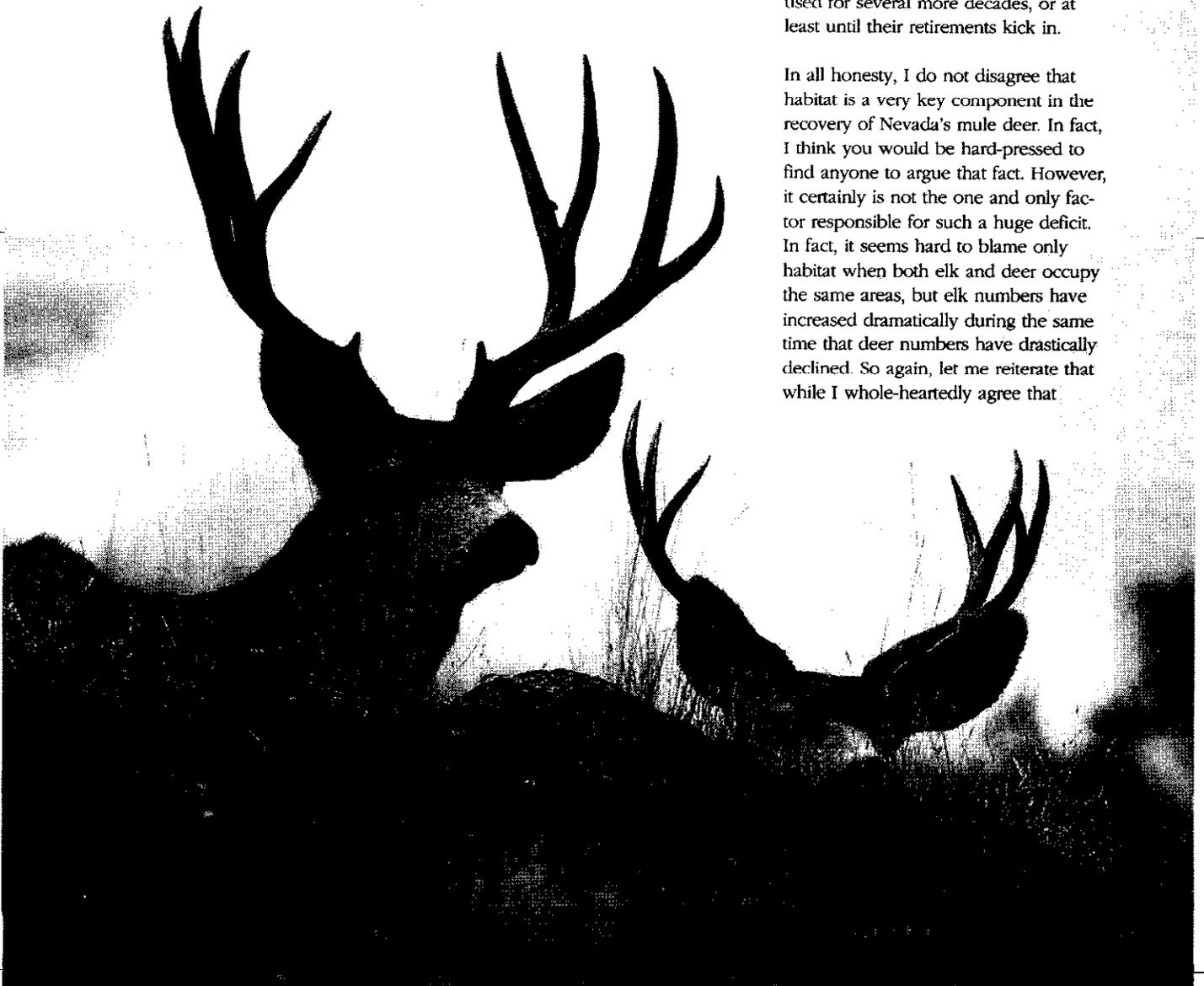
But NDOW, and specifically director Ken Mayer, have been anything but helpful. Truth be told, because of their stonewalling, the project has been set back over a year. And as if that wasn't bad enough, being uncooperative isn't the only tactic that NDOW and their associates are opposed to playing. At a recent Wildlife Commission meeting, Paul Dixon—Chairman of Clark County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife, threatened to sue the independent contractor if there was anything negative

stated in their study about NDOW's science. Apparently, Mr. Dixon doesn't care about the truth and he isn't opposed to using scare tactics to prevent it from coming about!

~ You Can't Handle The Truth ~

For over two decades, NDOW has used 15 different excuses for Nevada's mule deer decline. Although some of them have shown merit, others have been nearly laughable. But currently, the number one excuse that NDOW is using is habitat. And why wouldn't they choose such a broad spectrum to blame for the plight of mule deer...it can be used for several more decades, or at least until their retirements kick in.

In all honesty, I do not disagree that habitat is a very key component in the recovery of Nevada's mule deer. In fact, I think you would be hard-pressed to find anyone to argue that fact. However, it certainly is not the one and only factor responsible for such a huge deficit. In fact, it seems hard to blame only habitat when both elk and deer occupy the same areas, but elk numbers have increased dramatically during the same time that deer numbers have drastically declined. So again, let me reiterate that while I whole-heartedly agree that



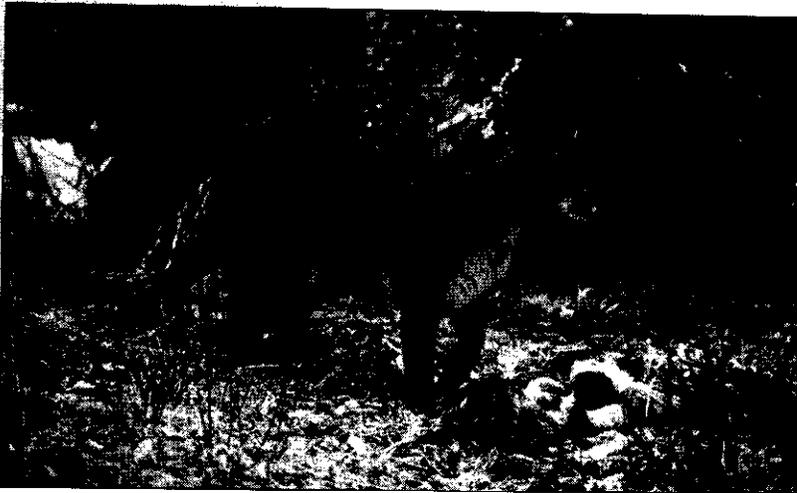


Photo - ImagesOnTheWeb

So just how bad is the lion problem in Nevada? In hunt unit 014, which is one of the smallest units in the state, Wildlife Services removed 40 mountain lions in three years; roughly equating to 480 deer and/or bighorn sheep still alive and kicking because of this action!

habitat is extremely crucial in sustaining and growing a strong and healthy number of deer...the loss of habitat is a far cry from the real reason why Nevada's deer herds continue to plummet in number. The truth of the matter is that this decline stems more from the fact that the icon of the West—mule deer, are the main food source for the predator of the West—the mountain lion.

Most biologists believe, (but not NDOWs), that a lion will eat a deer a week. However, NDOW refuses to acknowledge that Nevada even has a predator problem! You might be shocked to learn that it took two sportsmen's organizations—Hunters Alert and Nevada Hunters Association—to get a bill passed in 2001 in order to fund predator control. But that is not the only news flash...you will be further shocked to learn that this work was done by Wildlife Services, as NDOW has stated that they are not going to, and never has done, any predator control work!

Heritage Funds are generated from the auctioning of big game tags. This amounts to about \$400,000 a year. This money is to be used for enhancement of game birds, game animals, and game fish. One provision of this statute is that the money can be used "for the man-

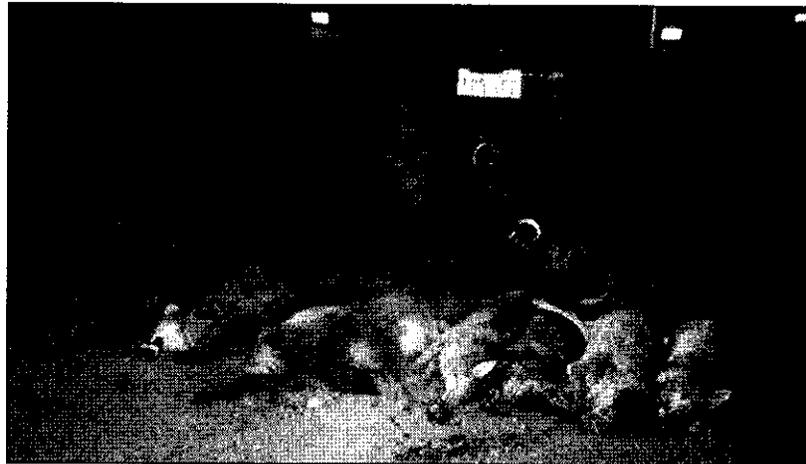
agement and control of predatory wildlife in the state of Nevada". The Wildlife commissioners, not NDOW, select the projects to be funded. For years, NDOW's top request, (i.e. spending the most money), was for transplanting bighorn sheep. NDOW believes it is more important to focus on the 280 people who hunt sheep than on the 51,011 hunters who used to hunt deer. The use of Heritage Funds for predator control work was never considered until

Jim Gibbons appointed commissioners who recognized its importance in saving the deer herds as well as other species.

These Wildlife Commissioners then approved three predator control projects. One of which was submitted by 'Hunter's Alert' for mule deer restoration. Pat Laughlin, of 'Nevada Alliance 4 Wildlife', submitted a proposal for mule deer enhancement and sage grouse recovery. Mike Stremler, a rancher and lion hunter, submitted a proposal for deer enhancement by removing lions in a particular area. The only way NDOW would approve Stremler's proposal was if it was done as a research project.

During Stremler's initial presentation, director Ken Mayer, stated that his biologists told him there were no lions in the Stillwater Mountain area. Well, it didn't take long at all for Stremler to take one lion and he was even quicker to report that there were six others. Stremler's total in a little over a one-year period, was the removal of eleven lions and there are at least three more in that area...all of this in a 12 mile radius!

In the course of one week, 139 coyotes were removed in unit 031 on the Hunter's Alert project with this money. Pat Laughlin's project was



In the course of one week, 139 coyotes were removed in unit 031 on a project that Hunter's Alert submitted. Even more amazing was the Nevada Alliance 4 Wildlife project which killed 239 coyotes in less than three days in Elko County! All the coyotes removed were in wintering deer areas and many were shot off freshly killed deer. Amazingly, NDOW stands firm in it's belief that the Silver State does not have a predator problem!

responsible for removing 239 coyotes in less than three days in Elko County. All the coyotes removed were in wintering deer areas and many were shot off a freshly killed deer. Director Mayer fought against all of these proposals. Now I ask you...does this sound like someone who wants to enhance game birds and animals? These initial predator control programs with Heritage Fund money were extremely effective! Sadly, however, it has been made very clear that with Governor Sandoval's Wildlife Commissioners, this money will never again be used for predator control.

~ The Root of All Evil ~

Okay, so let's prove why NDOW Director, Ken Mayer, and Governor Sandoval's appointments to the Wildlife Commission led by Chairman, Mike McBeath, will not do anything about not only deer, but all big game of the Silver State.

In August of 2008, the wolf was declared a big game animal in the state of Nevada. This was done by Governor Kenny Guinn's appointees led by Wildlife Commission chairman, Clint Bentley, and NDOW director, Ken Mayer. Now, most everyone knows that the re-introduction of wolves in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, has nearly decimated their big game herds. In fact, one area in Idaho has lost 90% of its elk because of wolves. Having said that, it is safe to say that most sportsmen view wolves as anything but healthy to our western big game populations. Feeling the same way, Jim Gibbons' good Wildlife Commissioners, (6 of 9), instructed Ken Mayer that if there was never any evidence of wolf packs in Nevada, the wolf was to be deleted from the big game animal classification. Ken Mayer refused to do this and at the December 3rd, 2011 Wildlife Commission meeting, led by Chairman, Mike McBeath, the Commission voted to keep the wolf as a big game animal.

Currently, the wolf is a federally protected species. However, at some point, the control of wolves will be the right of each state. If proven that there were no wolves in Nevada, it could then be classified as an unprotected predator.

As an example to how detrimental Director Mayer's and the Commission's action have the potential to being, let me give you a little history about the black bear in Nevada. In 1929, the black bear in Nevada was classified as a big game animal. But it was not until 2011, 82 years later, that a season and quota was set. All of this, of course, was under the objection of Director Mayer. Judging from this past history, it is apparent that there will never be a season set on wolves...that is until all species of big game have been depleted in Nevada. With leadership like this, not only will the deer never return, but like other states, all big game will be decimated. When this occurs, be sure to thank Clint Bentley, Ken Mayer, Mike McBeath, and

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the rest of Governor Sandoval's appointees to the commission.

Wildlife Commissioner, Scott Raine, worked long and hard on a new Mule Deer Management Guidelines, (Policy 28). It was a 13-point program necessary to preserve, protect, manage, and restore wildlife and its habitat. The committee was composed of people like Cliff Gardner and John Carpenter who had witnessed the Ruby Valley deer migration which numbered in the thousands in the 1950s and 1960s. (Sadly, today the migrations are all but gone because there are no deer.) At the December 2011 meeting, led by Chairman McBeath and Director Mayer, the complete policy was deleted. So much for deer restoration in the Silver State.

When former governor, Jim Gibbons, hired Ken Mayer, he instructed the new director to implement one of his major objectives, to bring back Nevada's mule deer. After doing nothing for four years about this serious problem, Gibbons fired him. Mayer obviously had no intention of doing anything about the mule deer problem. For decades, NDOW has been a bighorn sheep oriented agency. With the reappointment of Mayer and the newly appointed commissioners by Governor Sandoval, it will return to a sheep only wildlife agency. Deer enhancement will never be considered.

~ Doomed For Failure ~

In summary, I feel that there are three reasons why Nevada's deer will never return. 1) Director Ken Mayer has no interest in doing anything about the mule deer. This has been proven by his first four years of doing nothing; 2) It will take some serious predator control to reduce lions and coyotes. This is not going to happen with Governor Sandoval's Wildlife Commission appointees and Ken Mayer's past performance on predator control; 3) NDOW has over-inflated deer numbers so badly that the deer really have no legitimate chance at recovery. How can you manage anything in the right direc-



Photo - ImagesOnTheWildside/Tony Bynum

The sad reality is that it doesn't matter how big of a predator problem Nevada has, it doesn't matter how poor the habitat is, in fact, it doesn't really matter what the negative factors are. In the end, it comes down to a deep-rooted corruption within the ranks of NDOW, that will continue to suppress one of Nevada's most precious and valued big game resources...the mule deer!

tion, when it is made up of speculative and bogus data?

When the initial findings from the independent study are released, a peer review should be initiated. The collected data should be sent to many specialists for their findings, akin to a doctor's second or third opinion. Rest assured that Ken Mayer will fight all of this. However, if by the grace of God, there happens to be a peer review, and the results prove that NDOW has inflated deer numbers, then heads should definitely start to roll. Start at the top with Director Mayer and go right on down to all of the biologists who have been providing the bogus information for decades. Fraud is a serious charge and when it is a multi-million dollar fraud, it deserves serious attention. But when it goes on for decades it is shameful and inexcusable. Someone needs to be held accountable.

At the February 2007 Wildlife Commission meeting, I was there to testify about another audit that NDOW had

failed. During this time, then Chairman, Chris McKenzie, asked me what I wanted. I answered him direct by stating that I wanted two things...keep the corruption out of NDOW and bring back our deer. Five years later, NDOW has proven they can't do either.

Editor's Notes:

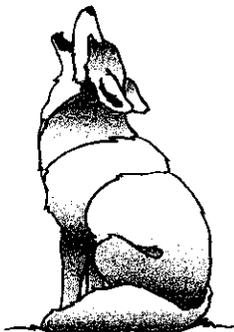
Cecil Fredi is president of HUNTER'S ALERT and has lived in Las Vegas for 69 years. He created HUNTER'S ALERT 23 years ago with the intent to aware hunters and sportsmen of the corruption and misuse of the public's resources and funding by the Nevada Department of Wildlife. From exposing fraudulent and abusive actions on how NDOW has conducted their tag draws, to sponsoring bills to audit NDOW funding, HUNTER'S ALERT has been, and will continue to be, dedicated to keeping the sportsman informed of factual information regarding unjust management of wildlife and money trails from organizations. For more info, go to www.huntersalert.org.

USDA APHIS

Attachment
#7



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The Trapline

United States Department of
Agriculture

Animal & Plant Health
Inspection Service

Wildlife Services



Cooperating with:

Nevada

Department of Agriculture

Division of Resource Protection



Mission Statement

The Nevada Wildlife Services Program (WS) is a collaborative program involving the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Division of Resource Protection (State) and the USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services Program (federal), whose mission is to protect agriculture, natural resources, property, and the human health and safety of the citizens of Nevada from the threat of injury, damage, or resource loss due to wildlife.

Introduction

During May, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated 5.1 million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over \$51 million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over \$48 million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted 201 persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported \$6,250 in damage and WS Specialists verified another \$3,600 in damage to other agricultural resources. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During May, coyotes accounted for \$13,600 in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and 286 coyotes were taken with a variety of management methods to resolve these and other ongoing complaints. WS routinely collects blood samples or oral swabs from species taken or handled during normal control activities for monitoring the presence of plague, avian influenza, and other diseases. In May, 118 samples were processed.

The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the month of May, 2012.

Resource Protection

State Office

During May, 2012, the State Office trap loaning program checked out 9 cage traps. The species distribution for the traps loaned out were: raccoons (2), ground squirrels (3), striped skunks (1), wood rats (1) and marmots (2). Information regarding baits to use, trap placement tactics, handling of trapped animals and safety precautions to take when working with the wildlife species were provided for all equipment loaned.

East District



On May 1st, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Nathan Fowler confirmed the loss of two adult ewes and three yearling sheep to coyote predation. The value of the five sheep was placed at \$1,250. After providing technical assistance in the form of non lethal recommendations, WS Fowler set several pieces of equipment in an effort to stop the predation. WS Fowler also requested the assistance of the Elko plane. On May 2nd, the Elko plane responded to the location in northern Elko County. Two adult coyotes were removed as they fed on a yearling sheep they had just killed. Three additional coyotes were also removed near the kill site. WS Fowler removed two other coyotes utilizing ground equipment, bringing the damage to an end. The sheep producer was very pleased with the help provided by Wildlife Services.



On May 1st, WS Matt Spires confirmed the loss of four lambs to coyote predation. The lambs were valued at \$800. WS Spires and his well trained decoy dog were able to locate and remove two adult coyotes near the kill site. A necropsy of both coyotes revealed that they had lamb in their stomachs. Knowing that several other coyotes were involved in the predation, WS Spires requested the assistance of the Ely plane. On May 2nd, the Ely plane responded to the location in northern White Pine County, removing three additional adult coyotes near the kill site. WS Spires provided technical assistance in the form of non lethal recommendation to help prevent future predation issues. Many of the recommendation were already in place including: guard dogs, carcass removal and night penning. The sheep producer expressed his appreciation to the East District Supervisor for all the help provided by WS Spires and the Ely plane.



On May 4th, District Supervisor (DS) Joe Bennett received a call concerning a problem with ravens. A sheep producer west of Ely, NV reported that ravens had pecked the eyes out of four newborn lambs and injured several others. The value of the four dead lambs was placed at \$800. The producer reported that he had already exhausted several non lethal methods including carcass removal and harassment/hazing but was still experiencing damage. The sheep producer reported that he had just observed ten ravens kill a baby lamb before he could frighten the birds away. On Saturday, May 5th, DS Bennett traveled to the ranch and confirmed the damage. DS Bennett observed more than twenty ravens in the area. DS Bennett placed out eggs treated with DRC 1339. On Monday, May 7th, DS Bennett confirmed that all the treated eggs were gone and only observed two ravens in the area. The sheep producer was very pleased with the assistance provided by Wildlife Services. DS Bennett will continue to monitor the area for possible predation. Technical assistance in the form of more non lethal recommendations was also provided to the sheep producer.

On May 5th, Mountain Lion Specialist (MLS) Jim Buhler was contacted by a sheep producer in White Pine County concerning a problem with a

mountain lion. The producer reported that a lion had killed two ewe sheep and seven lambs, valued at \$1,900. MLS Buhler traveled to the location and confirmed that a lion had indeed killed the sheep. MLS Buhler utilized his well trained tracking hounds to remove an adult female lion that weighed about 90 pounds. MLS Buhler noted that the sheep producer was currently using more than a dozen guard dogs, night penning the sheep and utilizing six sheep herders but the lion still killed the sheep.

On May 10th, WS Mac Crome confirmed the loss of one lamb valued at \$200 to raven predation. WS Crome reported seeing several ravens attacking and harassing newborn lambs over the course of several days. On May 15th, WS Crome treated the location with hard boiled chicken eggs treated with DRC-1339. After conducting a pre and post treatment inspection, WS Crome estimated that 24 ravens had been removed, bringing an end to the damage. Before treating the area, WS Crome also provided technical assistance in the form of nonlethal recommendations. Many nonlethal techniques were already in place during the depredation including: carcass removal, herding and hazing of the ravens. No further losses have been reported.

On May 23rd, WS Scott Little was checking in with sheep herders in his assigned area when he was informed about a problem with coyotes. The herder reported that coyotes had killed several lambs on a remote mountain nearby. WS Little rode his horse into the location and confirmed the loss of the lambs, valued at \$800. WS Little used calling and his well trained coyote decoy dogs to remove two large adult coyotes. A necropsy of the coyotes confirmed that they both had lamb in their stomachs. No further losses have been reported from this band of sheep and the sheep producer was very pleased with the prompt response. WS Little's fast action no doubt saved the lives of many more lambs that would have been lost to these coyotes. Technical assistance in the form of nonlethal recommendations was also provided. Many of these non lethal recommendations including night penning and guard dogs, were already in use at the time of the losses.



WS Derril Fry had a very busy month of May. WS Fry received reports concerning the loss of 13 lambs valued at \$2,600, during the month. WS Fry was able to remove three adult coyotes and three dens near the location of the losses. WS Fry also assisted the Elko plane in the removal of several other coyotes near the kills, bringing the damage under control. WS Fry provided technical assistance in the form of non lethal recommendations to help prevent future predation issues from occurring.



During May, WS Virgil Fullerton was busy protecting several bands of sheep in his assigned area. Although no losses were reported, during the month, WS Fullerton was busy checking in with sheep herders and providing technical assistance in an effort to prevent predation from taking place. WS Fullerton's cooperators are very pleased with his hard work and dedication, which greatly reduce the losses in his assigned area.

May was a very busy month for both the Ely and the Elko planes. Both planes were instrumental in solving several predation issues on sheep that were lambing in their assigned areas. Without an ef-

fective aerial program, many producers have commented that they could not stay in the sheep business in eastern Nevada.

West District

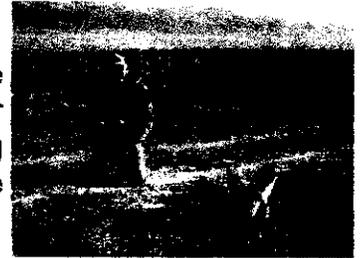
On May 2nd, Pilot Wes Gossard and Crew Member (CM) Brandon VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several sheep producers in Washoe County. During the flight, a total of three coyotes were removed. WS Doug Koepke provided ground support during the aerial work.



On Saturday May 5th, WS Koepke received a call about a calf kill (valued at \$500) in Lyon County. WS Koepke inspected the ranch and removed three coyotes and placed equipment in the vicinity of the livestock damage. Upon equipment re-inspection, WS Koepke removed 10 coyotes with trail snares and shooting. No further livestock losses have occurred.

On May 8th, Pilot Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several sheep bands in Lyon County. During the flight, a total of four coyotes were removed, including a pair that was taken in one pass. WS Nick Smith provided ground support.

During the week of May 7th thru May 11th, WS George Hansen spent the week trapping on eight sheep lamb bands and one goat band in Lander County. During the week, WS Hansen removed nine coyotes by utilizing leghold traps and also removed two coyote dens. WS Hansen will continue to provide livestock protection efforts in this area.



On May 14th, WS John Peter removed a 140 pound lion from hunt unit 031, with the use of a call box assisted snare. The lion was removed to protect mule deer; however the area was going to have two bands of domestic sheep in the same area, so the lion removal effort had dual benefits. WS Peter will continue to protect both mule deer and livestock in hunt unit 031.

On May 15th, Pilot Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations around several sheep producers in Washoe County. During the flight, a total of six coyotes were removed. The aerial crew also located one coyote den and reported its location to WS Koepke.

On May 24th, Pilot Gossard and CM VanderMay conducted aerial operations on two lamb bands, in Humboldt County. During the flight, a total of eight coyotes were removed. The aerial crew also located two coyote dens for WS Peter who was providing ground support during the operation.

During the month of May, WS Smith was busy placing equipment around several different sheep producers, in Lyon County. WS Smith has been running his equipment by horseback into remote country. During the month, WS Smith removed 28 coyotes with a variety of methods. WS Smith has also assisted a rancher with a damming beaver complaint. WS Smith utilized snares and promptly removed seven beavers. WS Smith will continue to protect livestock in Lyon and Douglas County.



The West District has been busy throughout May, placing out DRC-1339 treated egg baits to target ravens around several sage grouse leks in Washoe and Humboldt Counties, as requested by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW). Nevada boasts a high population of ravens and the West District annually removes ravens to help with isolated sage grouse nesting locations. Sage grouse

chicks usually hatch out between the middle and end of May. In a mere two weeks after hatching, sage grouse chicks can fly.

During the week of May 21st thru May 25th, DS Jack Spencer received numerous calls about coyotes killing pets and acting aggressive toward citizens in the Reno/Sparks area. An NDOW game warden also recently reported problem coyotes. On Saturday May 26th, DS Spencer visited a location near a school where a pair of coyotes was starting to act aggressively around young school kids. DS Spencer released his decoy dog in the area and let out two voice howls and in five minutes removed a pair of coyotes utilizing shooting.

During the month of May, Staff Biologist (SB) Jack Sengl completed the NDOW Mason Valley project 23. The intent of the project was to protect wild pheasants, turkeys and their nests from being raided by nest predators: mainly ravens, coyotes, raccoons and skunks. To that end, SB Sengl removed an additional 12 coyotes, two striped skunks, one raccoon and one badger from the management area, with ground equipment.



On May 22nd, State Director (SD) Mark Jensen conducted a field inspection on SB Sengl while he was closing out NDOW project 23. Field inspections are a great way for Directors to stay in tune with their employees as well as what is happening out in the field. The assistance was greatly appreciated by SB Sengl.

During the month of May, Wildlife Biologist (WB) Bowers continued conducting a Wildlife Hazard Assessment (WHA) at a military installation in Northern NV. The WHA involves conducting structured surveys on the airfield and the surrounding area, as well as general observations. This data is collected for a 12 month period in order to determine seasonal and spatial trends of wildlife usage on the airfield and surrounding area. Once this is complete, recommendations can be made regarding species management, habitat alterations, and agricultural management practices. While conducting the assessment WB Bowers also participates in direct control of wildlife when necessary to minimize direct threats to aviation safety. During the reporting period, WB Bowers noticed sign of badgers on and around the airfield. As a result, one badger was removed from the area to reduce the threat of a badger versus aircraft incident. WB Bowers hopes to conduct some black-tail jackrabbit projects in the near future in order to reduce the attractiveness of the airfield to coyotes, badgers and red-tailed hawks.

Also during the month of May, a positive ID was received from the Smithsonian for a bird strike that occurred on a helicopter night op. WB Bowers had previously entered the strike into the safety system database and submitted a feather to the Smithsonian for possible identification. The feather was positively identified as a Vesper sparrow. This is very interesting information, as WB Bowers had not considered, or seen evidence of sparrows being a nocturnal group in the area.

During the month of May, WB Luke Barto continued protection efforts at a local airport, which included: trapping and translocation of a Red-tailed hawk; gull egg oiling at two different gull colonies that were impeding aviation safety; and predator prey base removal.

On May 29th, WB Barto assisted DS Bennett with sage-grouse protection between Austin and Fallon. DS Bennett has been conducting the work in the past, but he offered to hand the project over to WB Barto, providing him with excellent development and experience in the process. During the day, DRC-1339 treated egg baits were placed outside of the leks for the ravens, and WB Barto sight shot one badger that was on its way to the lek. WB Barto will close out this project the second week of June.