

FRED FULSTONE, JR.
MARIANNE F. LEINASSAR
Phone: 775-465-2381
Fax: 775-465-1200

F.I.M. CORP.
Farming and Livestock

P.O. BOX 12
SMITH, NEVADA 89430



April 7, 2014

Governor Sandoval
State Capitol Building
101 N. Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

re: Request for a meeting regarding sage grouse in Lyon County

Dear Governor Sandoval:

The Sagebrush Ecosystem Council has failed to make a statement against the proposed listing of the Sage Hen in what is now called the Bi-State area contrary to the clear language of AB461.

Please instruct the Nevada Sagebrush Ecosystem Council to write in opposition to listing the Bi-State Distinct Population Segment of the Greater Sage Grouse.

We would like to meet with you to discuss this failure of the State to act on the Bi-State Sage Grouse and seek your help in defending our ranch and property from what seems like eminent Endangered Species Act regulation.

Since the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council was formed we have attended many of the meetings and consistently made comments with regard to the subjects discussed at each session. We look forward to explaining to you what we observed during the course of all those meeting sessions.

What is called the Bi-State Sage Grouse is exactly the same as what is called the "Greater Sage Grouse" at every other location in Nevada and separating the birds based on geographical location is a stretch of imagination at best.

Sage Hens were rarely seen in Nevada prior to 1860. After the arrival of settlers and establishment of ranches, especially sheep ranches, the sage grouse numbers increased to the highest historic numbers in about 1960. About 1980 the federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management began cutting grazing permits which put many ranches out of business and also led to cuts in predator control. These recent events combined to dramatically reduce our sage hen numbers state-wide including here in the Bi-State sage grouse habitats.

Governor Brian Sandoval
re: Request for a meeting regarding sage grouse in Lyon County
By Fred Fulstone and Marianne Leinassar
Smith, Nevada **March 18, 2014** **Page 2**

The history of sage grouse numbers and other wildlife in what is now the State of Nevada has been repeatedly presented to the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council by such expert naturalists as Elko County's Cliff Gardner, Assemblyman Ira Hansen, myself, and others but none of our statements have appeared in the published reports of the Council.

Your Sagebrush Ecosystem Council is in a unique position to lawfully claim that Nevada holds what the Endangered Species Act calls the "best available scientific and commercial data", and then insist that the federal agencies use the Nevada data. Those data must be truthful and factual even if they contradict the state and federal agency statements and the Council must not let the agency biologists intimidate or otherwise influence their products. History tells us that sage grouse populations peaked after the arrival of ranching; history clearly demonstrates the severe effects of predation; and history tells us that sage grouse numbers do not depend on some arbitrary height of grass as cover.


Since your Sagebrush Ecosystem Council is refusing to include these historic facts and other factual information about the biology of sage grouse in their analysis of the sage grouse problem, they will fail to establish that Nevada holds what the Endangered Species Act calls the "best available scientific and commercial data".

They are not representing you as Governor nor are they representing Nevada citizens who include ranchers, miners, recreationists, energy producers, casinos, etc. because they have become so compliant with the federal and state agencies.

We are available to meet with you at your convenience to discuss the shortcomings of the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council and how they can best object to the potential listing of the Bi-State Distinct Population Segment of the Greater Sage Grouse in western Nevada and proposed critical habitat.

Thank you for your attention.


Fred Fulstone
F.I.M. Corporation


Marianne F. Leinassar
F.I.M. Corporation

775-465-2381 Office

FRED FULSTONE, JR.
MARIANNE F. LEHASSAR
Phone: 775-465-2381
Fax: 775-465-1200

F.I.M. CORP.
Farming and Livestock
P.O. BOX 12
SMITH, NEVADA 89430



**Remarks prepared for the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council
April 8, 2014**

**By Fred Fulstone
FIM Corporation
Smith Nevada**

Today I am appealing to our grazing agencies meaning the Forest Service and BLM. It is time that they speak up and tell the US Fish and Wildlife Service the way it is with sage grouse. Each agency individually is responsible to base their actions on the best available scientific and commercial data and it is clear that the FS and BLM have data that is far better than what is used by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

By the same token, the federal agencies have been telling the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council what to say and what to write and the Council must stop allowing the agencies to do that. I object and I disapprove of the Sagebrush Council letting the federal and state agencies control their decisions. Nevada has a brief opportunity to clearly establish what is the best available scientific and commercial data based on the historic record starting with the journals of the earliest exploration of our area. You as a Council have been handed the historic facts about sage grouse and their habitat by Cliff Gardner, Ira Hanson, myself, and others but you have not included those facts in your written statements which means you are promoting their errors.

Here are some examples of why I object to and disapprove of what the Council is doing:

1. I have been to many of the Council's meetings and every time someone has come up with a good suggestion the US Fish and Wildlife service or other agency people would object or disapprove even when they had no solution to offer and the Council allows that to take place.
2. The permittees and the grazing services, that is the Forest Service and BLM, in the past worked together for almost 100 years in support of the orderly use, improvement, and development of the Nevada public grazing lands. We have done it!
3. Nevada has only about 8% of the land left for a tax base and for the production of crops and livestock that represent new wealth every year.

Remarks prepared for the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council
By Fred Fulstone April 8, 2014 Page 2

4. Grazing of livestock on millions of acres in the state has been the foundation of our economy and has helped all the people of the State. When you take that away, our communities have nothing left.
5. Even the Casino owners are worried. There are very few deer and other game left for the sportsmen who are also the customers of the casinos, motels, and other services.
6. Wildlife Services, which is the agency that controls predators, has been robbed of all its money by other government agencies. We now have more coyotes, ravens, hawks, and eagles that we have ever had --- and they all eat sage hens.

I am sure that if we had some of our old time BLM and FS people here today they would stand with the permittee and themselves on all the work we have done together to improve and develop the public ranges. Just to mention a few, we have built fences and cattle guards, developed springs, put in troughs, re-seeded land that burned or where brush had crowded out the grasses, built roads, put in pipe lines, controlled predators, monitored the range, and adjusted our stocking rates as the carrying capacity changed.

We have always considered and valued the wildlife and the numbers of animals and birds increased greatly until about 1980. In the early days we did not have much wildlife. The first buck deer killed in our area was killed in 1929 near Minden. I believe another one was killed near Bridgeport about the same time. People travelled from miles around just to see those deer.

By 1960 we had thousands of sage hens and hundreds of hunters came to Smith Valley and Bridgeport to shoot the birds. Deer, song birds, and other wildlife flourished at the same time.

We, as a ranch family, would like to see that again but the directions the Sagebrush Council has taken will not make that happen.

Thank you

Fred Fulstone
Smith Nevada

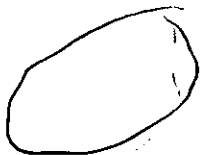
FRED FULSTONE, JR.
MARIANNE F. LEINASSAR
Phone: 775-465-2381
Fax: 775-465-1200
fimcorporation@gmail.com

F.I.M., CORP.

Farming and Livestock

P.O. BOX 12
SMITH, NEVADA 89430

EXHIBIT #19



Economic Oversight Committee Meeting
BLM Office
Reno, Nevada
March 20, 2014

1. The action plan of the Bi-State EOC meeting, note of February 28, 2014. You did not have predator control for future project. Predator control should have been at the top of the list. Exhibit #1
2. The \$800,000.00 that was spent on the study of sage grouse by the USGS, clearly states that 82% of the nesting and brood rearing mortalities was caused by predation. See Peter Coates, Virginia Hills report enclosed. Exhibit #2
3. Please look at The Federal Register August 2000 by USFWS. Notice underlined area. Most juvenile mortality occurs during nesting and the chicks flightless stage, and is due primarily to predation or severe winter conditions. Also, up to 50% of all sage grouse mortality is caused by predation from both avian and ground predators. Exhibit #3
4. Copy of document in recognition of Fred Fulstone as a Steward of the Range on the 50th anniversary of the Taylor Grazing Act. Many more of the permittees who worked with the BLM and FS were also recognized. Exhibit #4
5. Page 8 shows number of sage grouse at 205 males and 1025 females at Sonora Junction. We had very good predator control in those days. None today. The numbers were up everywhere then. Exhibit #5
6. Sage grouse needs cattle and ranches Exhibit #6
7. The MAIN reason..... Exhibit #7
8. Presentation by Fred Fulstone at the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council meeting September 12, 2013 Exhibit #8

(S)Fred Fulstone

FIM, Corp
Smith, NV 89430

**Bi-State EOC Meeting Notes
February 28, 2014**

Bi-State Action Plan Accomplishments

- Most recent project spreadsheet identifies 298 projects completed or ongoing
 - 193 projects in California
 - 86 project in Nevada
 - 19 in CA/NV
- These project include the following actions:
 - need predator control here, cost
 - Fences (removal, construction, modification, marking, etc.)
 - Fire (closure, prescribed fire, rehabilitation, suppression, etc.)
 - Horse Gatherers
 - Land exchanges, purchases
 - Livestock Management
 - Meadow Irrigation
 - Monitoring
 - Powerlines (removal)
 - Research
 - Restoration
 - Treatment (chemical, pinyon/juniper, fuels, etc.)
- The PMU sub-groups have identified 55 proposed projects for future work
 - 31 projects in California
 - 17 projects in Nevada
 - 5 across state lines

MUST LIST DO and COMPLETED

ted Kock said, completion of these will not move the bar towards not listing

Projected work needs (more immediate needs from my perspective only and for discussion purposes)

#	Project Description	Cost
1	Complete easement purchase for Desert Creek (#1)	\$4,900,000
2	Complete easement purchase for Desert Creek (#2)	\$5,700,000
3	Complete easement purchase for Burcham/Wheeler Flat	\$1,400,000
4	Conduct East Walker/Bodie Pinyon-Juniper Treatment	\$503,000
5	Conduct Huntoon Valley/Swauger Pinyon Juniper Treatment	\$666,000
6	Initiate implementation of Aurora/Gregory Flat Pinyon-Juniper Treatment	\$1,200,000
7	Implement Wheeler Creek Restoration	\$150,000
8	Implement Rosaschi Ranch Brood Habitat Improvement	\$50,000
9	Implement Bald Mountain Pinyon-Juniper Treatment (Pine Nut PMU)	\$138,000
10	Implement cheatgrass control in proximity to Desert Cr. #2 lek	\$30,000
Total:		\$14,737,000

Pinyon/juniper treatments were selected from top projects identified in draft Conservation Planning Tool model approach.

Need - exact list of projects that the 38M will be spent on.

Decision deadline Oct 28, 2014 - BiState decision.

Peter Coates - Oregon (Sally)
Report 9-2013
Exhibit #2

1 *Articles*

2

3 **Greater Sage-grouse Nest Predators in the Virginia Mountains of Northwestern Nevada**

4

5

6 **Zachary B. Lockyer, Peter S. Coates, Michael L. Casazza, Shawn Espinosa, David J.**

7 **Delehanty**

8

9 ***Z.B. Lockyer, D.J. Delehanty***

10 Department of Biological Sciences, Idaho State University, Pocatello, Idaho 83201

11 *Present address of Z.B. Lockyer:* Idaho Department of Fish and Game, 1345 Barton Rd.,

12 Pocatello, Idaho 83204

13

14 **P.S. Coates, M.L. Casazza**

15 United States Geological Survey, Western Ecological Research Center, 6924 Tremont Rd.,

16 Dixon, California 95620

17

18 ***S. Espinosa***

19 Nevada Department of Wildlife, Reno, Nevada 89512

20

21

Abstract

22 Greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*; hereafter, sage-grouse) populations have
23 declined across their range due to the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of habitat. Habitat

21

24 alterations can lead not only to vegetative changes, but to shifts in animal behavior and predator
25 composition that may influence population vital rates such as nest success. For example,
26 common ravens (*Corvus corax*) are sage-grouse nest predators and raven abundance is positively
27 associated with human-caused habitat alterations. Because nest success is a central component to
28 sage-grouse population persistence, research that identifies factors influencing nest success will
29 better inform conservation efforts. We used videography to unequivocally identify sage-grouse
30 nest predators within the Virginia Mountains of northwestern Nevada, USA from 2009 – 2011
31 and used maximum likelihood to calculate daily probability of nest survival. In the Virginia
32 Mountains, fires, energy exploration, and other anthropogenic activities have altered historic
33 sage-grouse habitat. We monitored 71 sage-grouse nests during the study, placing video cameras
34 at 39 nests. Cumulative nest survival for all nests was 22.4 % (95% CI, 13.0% – 33.4%), a
35 survival rate that was significantly lower than other published results for sage-grouse in the Great
36 Basin. Depredation was the primary cause for nest failure in our study (82.5%), and common
37 ravens (*Corvus corax*) were the most frequent sage-grouse nest predator accounting for 46.7% of
38 nest depredations. We also successfully documented a suite of mammalian and reptilian species
39 depredating sage-grouse nests, including some predators never previously confirmed in the
40 literature to be sage-grouse nest predators (i.e., bobcat and weasel). Our results indicate that,
41 within the high elevation, disturbed habitat of the Virginia Mountains, sage-grouse nest success
42 may limit the sage-grouse population. We recommend that management actions for the Virginia
43 Mountains be designed to restore habitat to increase sage-grouse nest success and decrease
44 anthropogenic subsidies of ravens.

45 Keywords: *Centrocercus urophasianus*, common raven, nest survival, Nevada, sage-grouse,
46 video-monitoring

and the finding is to be published promptly in the Federal Register. If we find that substantial information was presented, we are required to promptly commence a review of the status of the species involved, if one has not already been initiated under our internal candidate assessment process.

The processing of this petition conforms with our Listing Priority Guidance published in the Federal Register on October 22, 1999 (64 FR 57114). The guidance clarifies the order in which we will process rulemakings. The highest priority is processing emergency listing rules for any species determined to face a significant and imminent risk to its well-being. Second priority is processing final determinations on proposed additions to the lists of endangered and threatened wildlife and plants. Third priority is processing new proposals to add species to the lists. The processing of administrative petition findings (petitions filed under section 4 of the Act) is the fourth priority. The processing of this 90-day petition finding is a fourth priority, and is being completed in accordance with the current Listing Priority Guidance.

We have made a 90-day finding on a petition to list the western sage grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus phaeus*) in Washington. The petition, dated May 14, 1999, was submitted by the Northwest Ecosystem Alliance and the Biodiversity Legal Foundation, and was received by us on May 28, 1999. The petition requested the listing of western sage grouse in Washington as threatened or endangered. The letter clearly identified itself as a petition and contained the names, signatures, and addresses of the petitioners. Accompanying the petition was supporting information relating to the taxonomy, ecology, and past and present distribution of the species, as well as the threats faced by the western sage grouse in Washington.

The petitioners requested listing for the Washington population of western sage grouse and not the species rangewide. We consider this request appropriate because, although we do not base listing decisions on political subdivisions except international boundaries, we can consider a population of a vertebrate species or subspecies as a listable entity under the Act if the population is recognized as a distinct population segment (DPS) (61 FR 4722). We can also expand the scope of our review of petitions to the species rangewide, should expansion be appropriate based on our knowledge of the available information.

The information regarding the description and natural history of sage grouse, below, has been condensed from the following sources: Aldrich 1983, Johnsgard 1973, Connelly *et al.* 1988, Fischer *et al.* 1993, Drut 1994, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) 1995, Washington Sage and Columbian Sage Grouse Workshop (WSCSGW) 1996 and 1998, and Schroeder *et al.* 1999a.

Sage grouse, also known as sage fowl, spine-tailed grouse, fool hen, cock-of-the-plains, and sage chicken, are gallinaceous (chicken-like, ground-nesting) birds, and are the largest North American grouse species. Adult males range in size from 68 to 76 centimeters (cm) (26 to 30 inches (in)) and weigh between 2 and 3 kilograms (kg) (4 and 7 pounds (lb)); adult females range in size from 48 to 58 cm (19 to 23 in) and weigh between 1 and 2 kg (2 and 4 lb). Males and females have dark grayish-brown body plumage with many small gray and white speckles, fleshy yellow combs over the eyes, long pointed tails, and dark-green toes. Males also have blackish chin and throat feathers, conspicuous phylloplumes (specialized erectile feathers) at the back of the head and neck, and white feathers around the neck and upper belly forming a ruff. During breeding displays, males also exhibit olive-green apteria (fleshy bare patches of skin) on their breasts.

Sage grouse depend on a variety of shrub steppe habitats throughout their life cycle, and are particularly tied to several species of sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp). Adult sage grouse rely on sagebrush throughout much of the year to provide roosting cover and food, and depend almost exclusively on sagebrush for food during the winter. If shrub cover is not available, they will roost in snow burrows. While average dispersal movements are generally less than 35 kilometers (km) (21 miles (mi)), sage grouse may disperse up to 160 km (100 mi) between seasonal use areas. Sage grouse also exhibit strong site fidelity (loyalty to a particular area), and are capable of dispersing over areas of unsuitable habitat.

A wide variety of forb (any herb plant that is not a grass) species are used as forage by adult sage grouse from spring to early fall, and hens require an abundance of forbs for pre-laying and nesting periods. An assortment of forb and insect species form important nutritional components for chicks during the early stages of development. Sage grouse typically seek out more mesic (moist) habitats that provide greater amounts of succulent forbs and insects during the summer and early fall. Winter habitat use varies based

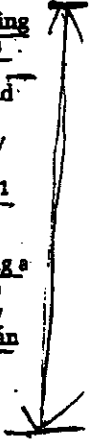
upon snow accumulations and elevational gradients, and sage grouse likely choose winter habitats based upon forage availability.

During the spring breeding season, male sage grouse gather together and perform courtship displays on areas called leks, primarily during the morning hours just after dawn. Leks consist of patches of bare soil, short grass steppe, windswept ridges, exposed knolls, or other relatively open sites, and they are often surrounded by more dense shrub steppe cover, which is used for roosting or predator evasion during the breeding season. Leks range in size from less than 0.4 hectare (ha) (1 acre (ac)) to over 40 ha (100 ac), contain several to hundreds of males, and are usually situated in areas of high female use. Leks used over many consecutive years (historic leks) are typically larger than, and often surrounded by, smaller and less stable satellite leks. Males defend individual territories within leks and perform elaborate displays with their specialized plumage and vocalizations to attract females for mating. Relatively few, dominant males account for the majority of breeding on a given lek.

After mating, females may move a maximum distance of 36 km (22 mi) depending on the availability of suitable nesting habitat, and typically select nest sites under sagebrush cover. Nests are relatively simple and consist of scrapes on the ground, which are sometimes lined with feathers and vegetation. Clutch sizes range from 6 to 13 eggs, and nest success ranges from 10 to 63 percent. Chicks begin to fly at 2 to 3 weeks of age, and broods remain together for up to 12 weeks. Most juvenile mortality occurs during nesting and the chicks' flightless stage, and is due primarily to predation or severe weather conditions. Shrub canopy and grass cover provide concealment for sage grouse nests and young, and may be critical for reproductive success.

Sage grouse typically live between 1 and 4 years and have an annual mortality rate of roughly 50 to 55 percent, with females generally having a higher survival rate than males. Up to 50 percent of all sage grouse mortality is caused by predation, from both avian (e.g., hawks, eagles, and ravens) and ground (e.g., coyotes, badgers, and ground squirrels) predators.

Prior to European expansion into western North America, sage grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) were believed to occur in 16 States and 3 Canadian provinces (Schroeder *et al.* 1999a), although their historic status in Kansas and Arizona is unclear (Colorado Sage Grouse Working Group



C O M M E M O R A T I O N

On the 50th Anniversary of the
TAYLOR GRAZING ACT

the United States Department of the Interior and the
Bureau of Land Management recognize the contribution of

FRED M. FULSTONE, JR.

for assisting and supporting the orderly use, improvement
and development of the Nevada public lands

JULY 26, 1984

DATE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



STATE DIRECTOR



DISTRICT MANAGER

Exhibit #4

JUNE 28, 1934 JUNE 28, 1984

seemingly been abandoned.

Other known leks within the Nevada portion of this PMU exhibit intermittent activity. These leks are monitored during each breeding season, however, data for many of these leks are sparse. The potential that there are other undiscovered leks within this PMU is fairly high, especially within the upper elevations of the Pine Grove Hills. More intensive helicopter survey work scheduled in 2012 may lead to the discovery of these leks.

Desert Creek – Fales PMU Population Trend - California Portion. The Fales portion of the Desert Creek-Fales PMU is located in northern Mono County in the general vicinity of Sonora Junction near the intersection of Highways 395 and 108. The Fales breeding complex includes two active and two inactive trend leks located on Burcham and Wheeler Flats. In addition, one lek occurs on Jackass Flat located in the extreme northeast corner of Mono County near the CA-NV state line. Due to the remoteness and inaccessibility of the area, this lek was only monitored in 2003 and 2004.

Initial population monitoring efforts in the Fales area began in 1953 with the counting of Lek 1. Leks 2 and 3 were added to the survey in 1957 and Lek 4 in 1961. From 1953-1980, the average number of males counted on all four leks was 78 males (Figure 4).

The high peak count during this same period was 205 males in 1963. Of these 205 males, nearly 50 percent were counted on Lek 1, located within 50 meters west of Highway 395. Annual male attendance on Lek 1 averaged 36 birds from 1957-1970; however, from 1971-1980, that use declined to an average of just 9 males. By 1981, grouse use of Lek 1 had ceased entirely and no birds have been observed on this lek since that time. From 1981-2011, after the disappearance of Lek 1, the average number of males counted within the Fales breeding complex was 27 birds. Lek 4 was last active in 2003 when one strutting male and 3 hens were observed. This lek became permanently inactive in 2006 when a home was built within 50 meters west of the lek. Recent peak male count data from the last decade suggests that although the Fales population is very small compared to historic levels, it has remained relatively stable.

5 females
= 1 male
Their model.
5 x 205
= 1025
Total
Sogethen
at
Sonora
Junction
in 1963

Bodie PMU Population Trend. To date, a total of eight dependable long-term leks as well as numerous associated satellite grounds, have been identified in the Bodie PMU. The majority of these leks are located in the Bodie Hills east of Hwy 395;

Sage grouse need cattle and ranchers

By KENNY BENTZ
For the Capital Press

The ongoing debate concerning the possible Endangered Species Act listing of sage grouse brings to mind the issue of how do we, as a community, influence the decision so as to retain our property rights and the ability to continue in business?

We can argue that the drive to have an endangered species listing for the sage grouse has nothing to do with the bird but is only a method to place millions of western acres, both public and private, under nonresident control. This is not just an agricultural industry problem. If successful, this listing will completely change the way that those of us indigenous to the sagebrush desert will be able to conduct our lives. Make no mistake, to many in the opposition this is another battle in a war to once again remove the humans making their home in the open spaces of the western United States.

I believe that we should stick together, those creatures that actually live here. That means all of us, including the sage grouse. We, indigenous humans, are the native environmentalists. Who better to know the land and the creatures? Who would have more affinity for the high desert landscape? Why have we allowed the debate to frame those of us who have lived here for generations, as people who pillage and plunder nature? Why would the opinion of someone who has chosen to live elsewhere carry more weight than the facts presented by those of us that the decision actually affects?



Guest
comment
Kenny Bentz

To this end, we must come to the rescue of one of our own, the sage grouse. A listing of this bird and the actions that are proposed will only serve to increase the major threats. We must continue to bring the debate back to what is actually best for the sage grouse and force the opposition to prove how their proposed actions will increase the number of birds by limiting the major threats. These threats are wildfire, predation and loss of habitat. We have, in the range cow, an ally that unknowingly fosters an environment conducive to sage grouse.

Cattle and sage grouse do not compete for the resources. Rather, the cow provides a positive benefit for the grouse each time she takes a bite of grass. She is (1) Reducing the threat of wildfire by removing the fine fuel that carries the fires; (2) Providing cow dung that fosters insects; (3) The primary herbivore removing the coarse grasses which allows the delicate regrowth; and (4) She continues to provide the economic base that keeps the rancher on the land, both private and public. If indeed the goal is to increase the number of sage grouse, the cow is the best tool available.

Wildfire is the number one threat to the condition of the range and specifically the sage grouse. Not only does fire kill the birds, it destroys the habitat by removing the sage brush and opens up thousands of

acres to invasive plants.

Well-managed grazing on these lands can go a long way toward controlling wildfire. There are thousands of acres in the West that have no cattle on them and many millions of acres that have a 50 percent or more reduction in the amount of grazing over the last 40 years. That being said, the sage grouse numbers have declined in conjunction with the reduction of cattle allowed on public land.

The production of manure, while sounding like what we often get from Washington, D.C., is important to provide a needed food source for the sage grouse. The cattle and the grouse end up using the same sources of water, which places the grouse in contact with what the cow has left behind. Actual entomology aside, a cow pie attracts insects which attract grouse. This is a plentiful food source during the dry times of the year.

All animals that eat grass prefer the young short grass in the spring or the regrowth later in the year. This includes cattle, deer, elk and sage grouse. In listening to the current debate, many people assume that grouse only eat sagebrush leaves. This is not the case. They also eat tiny forbs and regrowth. The cow is a primary grazer, meaning she can and will eat mature grass plants leaving them the regrowth that season. This is a benefit to the rest of the system.

Perhaps the most important benefit the cow provides is an economic reason for a human to manage the land. This manager not only works to maintain and improve the land, he or she limits non-agricultural land development because the private ranch lands remain open working landscapes. With a rancher involved, Bureau of Land Management lands are managed by a businessman paying for the privilege to be on continuous fire watch, build and maintain water systems and control predators among the many other management duties that have a positive impact. The change to the land both private and public would be dramatic without an active, competent manager. What must also be understood is that the indigenous human is not an intruder to our high desert environment, but has been an intricate part of the environment for thousands of years.

An ESA listing of the sage grouse, while creating havoc in the rural West, will result in less sage grouse. Active management of the high desert by knowledgeable, competent, motivated, "native environmentalists" will provide an economic base for our rural communities and ensure that we can keep our beautiful, diverse, open West intact (and thriving?)

Kenny Bentz owns and operates ranches near Crane, Ore. He is passionate about increasing local control and preserving property rights.

33 of the January 30 issue of the paper) the comments I wrote on behalf of the Beaverhead Outdoors Association on the state sage-grouse plan. I have sent them to Senator Brenden and Rep. Schwaserer but was unable to find an e-mail address for Mr. Stoneberg. All three have great points. Thank you for a great paper and all you do!

Steve Jennings
Email

anyone can say something positive, he should not say anything at all. As far as his subscription renewal, I think your paper would be better off without his.
Have a good week.

Exhibit #7

Darrel Kisler
Warden, WA

Five sons... what riches!

Linda, I have five sons. Three are helping run our ranch. We also have a grandson working here, which is good!

When I was listening to our President, I didn't hear anything about agriculture. I wonder why? Maybe because they want cheap food as usual. So be it!

We sold our calves yesterday. They brought a real good price, but not in line with what we have to pay for tractors and trucks.

You folks are doing a good job out there! Keep up the good work. I read Pat's "As I See It" and "Bill's Warbag" first. Then I let my sons read it.

Ed Miller
Spearfish, SD

Sage hen letter

VERY IMPORTANT NEWS
NILE 1984
Stock Commission

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014 • 350 Head Sold

Cows and bulls very strong. Very few feeders on the market. Good attention here on the 20th. Thank you for your business!

112.50	Robert Stevenson	Hobson	9 Bk	1,331	100.00
109.50	Brad Dorvall	Bridger	4 Bk	1,312	99.00
108.50	Thompson Cattle Co	Billings	1 Bk	1,571	98.50
102.00	Mike Wiggs	Columbus	1 Red	1,366	97.00
HEIFERS					
104.50	Mike Grewell	Joliet	14 Bk	504	190.00
104.00	Randy Brusett	Jordan	18 Bk	570	188.00
101.00	Victor Small	Lame Deer	11 Bkbwf	570	181.00
101.00	Melvyn Wambeke	Deaver	4 Bk	607	173.00
100.00	Randy Brusett	Jordan	15 Bk	644	166.50
100.00	Roberta Stevenson	Hobson	6 Bk	1,083	134.00

D - BRING 'EM TO BLS!

LES THIS WEEK
's Pioneer Market

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20

FEEDER SPECIAL
with All Class Cattle Sale
and Northern Livestock
Internet Auction
Expecting 1,800 Head



FRI.-SAT.-SUN., FEB. 21-22-23

BIG FEBRUARY HORSE SALE

Expecting 900 Head
LOOSE HORSES SELL AT
9 A.M. SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23
Bring your loose horses anytime
throughout the week and weekend
to sell to our large
loose horse buying crowd.



For information or to consign, call:
Dan (406) 698-4783 Dan (406) 671-7715

SALE SCHEDULE

Sale &	Sat/Sun, Mar 22/23	March Horse Sale
Sale &	Thurs, Mar 27	All Class Cattle Sale (8:00 am Start)
Sale &	Thurs, Apr 3	Annual Spring NILE Cattle Special
Sale &	Thurs, Apr 10	All Class Cattle Sale
Sale &	Thurs, Apr 17	Early Grass Feeder & Stock Cow/Pair Special w/All Class Cattle Sale & Northern Internet Auction
Sale &	Thurs, Apr 24	All Class Cattle Sale
Sale &	Sat/Sun, Apr 26/27	April Horse Sale

clip & save

The MAIN reason...

To the Five-Star Editor! I missed the meeting on the sage chickens on the 29th. But I do have an opinion on what has happened to the numbers. Of course we have the farming, livestock, loss of sagebrush, drilling for oil and gas, plus human movement into subdivisions, all of which I think plays only a MINOR cause of the decrease in numbers.

I think the main reason is the increase of predators, both on the ground (four-legged ones) and of course the birds. We have all of the eagles, falcons, and more crows and ravens than I have ever seen before. They eat the eggs, and I am sure this has been discussed and debated somewhat.

Going back in history in Powder River and Carter counties when Montana had a great number of sheep, we had a high rate of predator control. With 1080 poison, trapping, and aerial control, sage chickens were most everywhere. In fact, I know in those two counties that it was a hunter's paradise for all the birds and game animals. Now that the sheep numbers are just over 200,000 in the whole state, we have not been controlling the predators like we used to, and we now have what we have. Eggs are easy to find, and of course, live sage chickens are quite tasty to the predators.

I have thoughts on the wolf situation also. First of all, it was illegal because the Canada wolf was not what we had. Secondly, it was an idiot idea put together by a bunch of idiots. Look at the cost and damage it has done to the state they brought them into. It scattered the elk carrying brucellosis to the cattle all over several states.

Buffalo, one sentence on this subject: Have the Livestock Commission, FWP, and Park Service check with the Custer Park in South Dakota on how they handle their buffalo as it really works.

I hope this will in some way open eyes on the above subjects.

ASAP (Always Say A Prayer!)

Willard L. Moore
Columbus, MT

Editor's note: Whoop whoop! Five-star editor? Oh that's the nicest thing anybody has called me in a long time! Maybe I'll get a name tag saying "Linda Grosskopf, Five-Star Editor of WAR, Five-Star Paper" ... how would that be? LG

NO FARMS-NO FOOD

Linda, I thought you might be interested in the letter and bumper sticker we received in the mail from the American Farmland Trust. The bumper sticker is like the NO FARMS-NO FOOD sticker mention in the January 16 issue of WAR. The address for American Farmland Trust

WESS / EKN ...
Thursday Feb. 13, 2014

FRED FULSTONE, JR.
MARIANNE F. LEINASSAR
Phone: 775-485-2381
Fax: 775-485-1200

F.I.M., CORP.

Farming and Livestock

P.O. BOX 12
SMITH, NEVADA 89430



**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 ¾ 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.

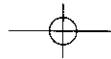
The livestock industry is a dominant component in this whole sage grouse issue that has now taken on the characteristics of a crisis. I think that livestock producers should be included in all the plans at this time and all the plans should include safe guards to keep our livestock operations intact.

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.

Fred Fulstone
F.I.M. Corporation
Smith, Nevada



MuleyCrazy Magazine



www.muleycrazy.com
ryanhatch@muleycrazy.com

Send Photos to:
MULEYCRAZY MAGAZINE
1431 South Hwy 87A
Kanab, UT 84701
(435) 644-2486

FOUNDER PUBLISHERS
Ryan & Alicia Hatch

GRAPHICS DEPARTMENT
Ryan Hatch

MANAGING EDITOR
David Virostko

SALES AND MARKETING
Alicia Hatch
Tia Benton

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY
Inaugur On The Wildside

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Copyright © 2012 MuleyCrazy Magazine. All rights reserved. This publication is intended for personal use only. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher. All subscriptions to MuleyCrazy Magazine are processed through the publisher. Back issues are available for purchase. MuleyCrazy Magazine is published twice a year in July and January. Please contact the publisher for more information. (435) 644-2486. Website: www.muleycrazy.com

2012 MuleyCrazy Magazine is published by MuleyCrazy Magazine, Inc., 1431 South Hwy 87A, Kanab, UT 84701.

MuleyCrazy Sept / Oct 2012
Volume 12 Issue 5

Order MuleyCrazy online or call
(435) 644-2486 www.muleycrazy.com

The annual subscription rate for MuleyCrazy
Mule Deer Hoop is \$29.95 (US), Canada and
Mexico add \$5.

Advertisers call George Klaybourne
(435) 865-5885 for rates, availability
and placement deadlines.

COPYRIGHT © 2012 BY MULEYCRAZY, INC.



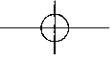
And just that quick, another hunting season has already begun. Although only taken a few days before printing this issue, I couldn't resist placing friend, Garth Jenson, on the cover of this September/October issue! Talk about doing it right. Garth's diligence in scouting was awesome, but his execution 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.

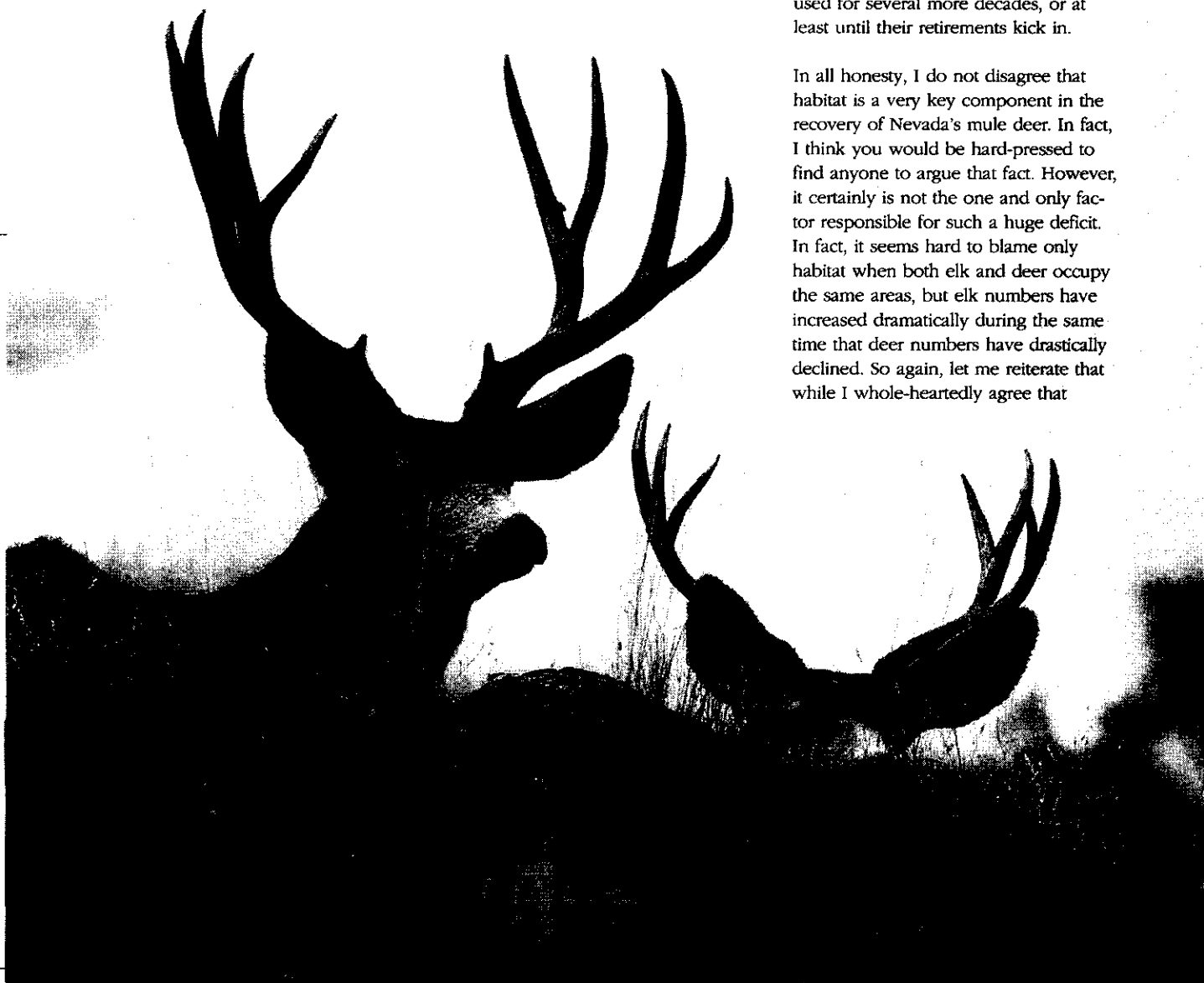
But NDOW, and specifically director Ken Mayer, have been anything but helpful. Truth be told, because of their stonewalling, the project has been set back over a year. And as if that wasn't bad enough, being uncooperative isn't the only tactic that NDOW and their associates are opposed to playing. At 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



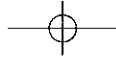


Photo - ImagesOnTheWildside

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.

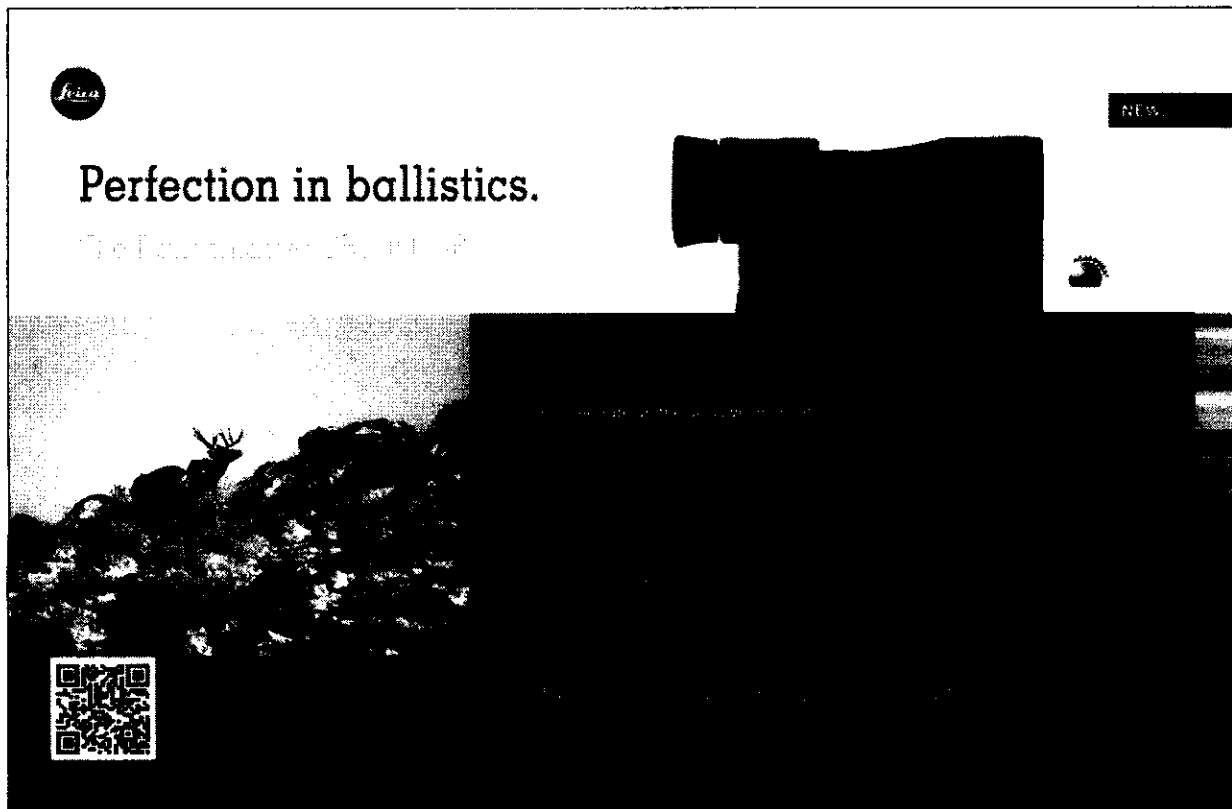
- The Root of All Evil -

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



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 - imagesOnTheWeb.com/Roby 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.

May 2012

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

Wildlife Training Page 5 of 8

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.

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.

New and Developing Methods

Nothing to Report.

Valuing and Investing in Employees

Nothing to Report.

Information and Communication

On May 1st, SD Jensen attended the Nevada Board of Agriculture meeting in Reno.

On May 16th, SD Jensen joined the FSA Administrator, as well as other USDA agency representative in Fallon, to present program overviews for various Tribal Chairs and Council members as well as local producers.

Emerging Trends/Issues

Nothing to Report.

Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR)

Nothing to Report.

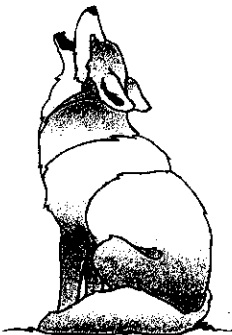
Future Meetings and Events

June 19th, N-1 Grazing Board Meeting in Elko. SD Jensen and DS Bennett to attend.

USDA APHIS



USDA-APHIS-WS
8775 Technology Way
Reno, NV 89521

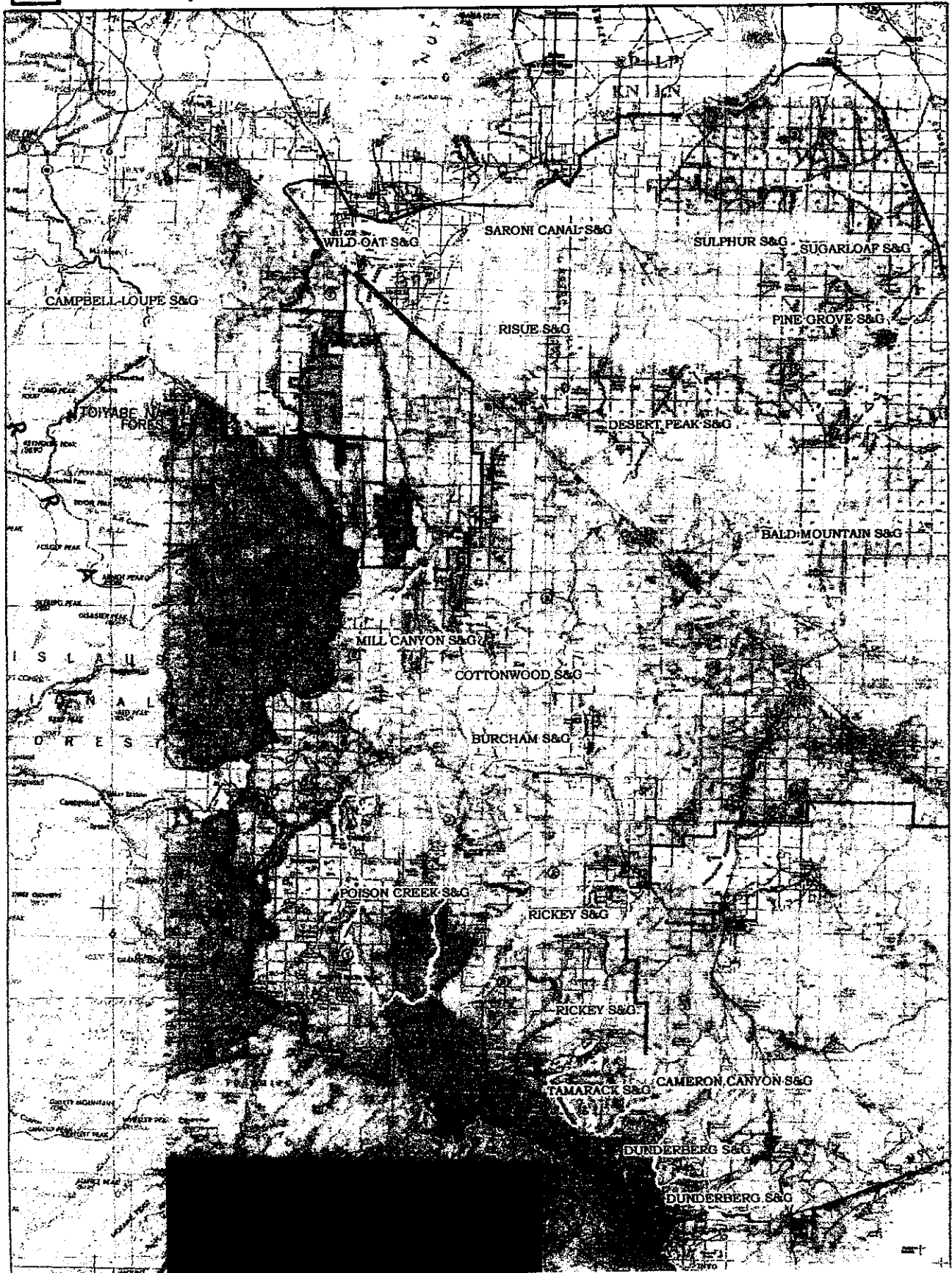


FIM Allotments and Sage Grouse Habitat

FIM Allotments

 BiState Habitat

 District Boundary



grass and no livestock. The sage hen will starve to death in high grass. They can't even eat the seeds if they fall off on the ground.

— Some Biologists say the Birds can hide in the high grass. The hawks raven and eagles are flying up there about 1000 ft and they see everything haven't you had eagle & hawk eye, The Coyote don't have to see the Bird — They can smell them and know where they are. Same for baby deer

— The next thing we need is water lots of Cisterns and Wells. We have had a water drought here for the last 20 years — all our Springs have dried up. 20 years ago I did not have one water truck on our ranch, to day we have several.

We have been getting along with the grass Forks and brush pretty well. Some places we have taken some Non use & possibly cut some numbers.