



Jim Gibbons

STATE OF NEVADA

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

1100 Valley Road

Reno, Nevada 89512



Kenneth E. Mayer
Director

(775) 688-1500 • Fax (775) 688-1207

MEMORANDUM

#11 B

DATE: April 18, 2008

TO: Board of Wildlife Commissioners; Governor's Office; County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife Members; Department of Wildlife Employees; and Director Allen Biaggi

FROM: Kenneth E. Mayer, Director

SUBJECT: Department Activities Report – April 14 -18, 2008

Director's Office

Director Mayer was in Washington, D.C. this week to meet with Senator Reid and others on behalf of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to discuss the Greater Sage Grouse's federal listing status.

Deputy Director Hunt attended the Cabinet meeting at the Governor's Office on Director's Mayer's behalf on Monday. The Cabinet was told that the Governor's Office appreciated the budget cuts made by the agencies. Revised budget instructions for fiscal years 10 – 11 biennium should be out.

Snowpack is melting earlier due to wind and a calculation due to global warming and a very active fire year is predicted this year.

At & T is the new contractor for the state phone system. Agencies are also being asked to submit written summaries of regularly scheduled press releases to the Governor's new press secretary Ben Kieckhefer.

The Department's Chief Pilot Mike King attended the meeting to explain the Department's Air Operations Program including the analysis of funding available, and needs assessment for the Division.

The draft Commission agenda went out Friday, and the final agenda will be mailed out April 25, 2008.

April 14, 2008

Conservation Education Division

No report submitted.

Fisheries Division

No report submitted.

Game Division

After interviewing eight candidates, the Division selected NDOW Fisheries Biologist Jeremy Lutz of Winnemucca for the wildlife biologist position in Battle Mountain.

Division personnel participated in a meeting/conference call with the Department of Transportation (NDOT) personnel to discuss the construction of a wildlife overpass on Highway 93, north of Wells. The overall estimate for the cost of this project is \$3.74 million. NDOT has committed \$1.5 million to the project as a line item in their 2009 budget. NDOW has pledged \$500,000 of Question 1 funds to the project as well. Other sources of funding are likely to include Highway Safety dollars and contributions from sportsmen's groups and other organizations.

Elk aging data from tooth sampling are now available. Although hunter success was lower than average last year, the average age of the animals harvested was six years.

The Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) has asked both the Department and the Attorney General's office about the eligibility of SNWA ranches for deer and antelope compensation tags and elk incentive tags. Based on guidance provided by the Deputy Attorney General assigned to NDOW, the Division considers properties owned by SNWA to be ineligible for tags because the Authority is a quasi-governmental agency.

Law Enforcement

A Winnemucca man has been missing since April 5 at Rye Patch Reservoir. He left in his 12-foot aluminum boat at 4 p.m. to troll in the Pit Taylor Arm of the Reservoir. His boat was found grounded across the reservoir the next day with the engine stalled but still in gear and the fishing pole and line still in the water. An extensive search, headed by the Pershing County Sheriff, included NDOW personnel, Pershing County Search and Rescue, Humboldt County Search and Rescue, Washoe County Search and Rescue. Specialized water search dogs failed to turn up and sign of the man as of April 13 and search efforts have been scaled back to a monitoring situation until the man is located.

A Western Region game warden assisted at the Tune into Kids fishing derby at Idlewild Park in Reno. He assisted Conservation Education and Boating Education at the event by helping kids learn how to fish and be safe around water.

April 14, 2008

Wardens in two NDOW boats assisted the Elko County Sheriff's Office in the search for a man missing and presumed drowned at Rawhide Reservoir which is a private impoundment on the Petan Ranch in northern Elko County. The victim and a friend were fishing from a canoe which capsized in extremely cold water. Preliminary reports indicate the men elected to swim for the shore and only one made it to shore. The Washoe County HASTY team is en route to assist. There were no life jackets in the canoe or worn.

An Eastern Region Warden made an arrest on outstanding warrants at South Fork Reservoir. The discovery of the outstanding warrants was the result of a routine records check when the man was stopped for attempting to kill waterfowl by throwing rocks at coots on the water.

Southern Region Wardens checked turkey hunters who were having moderate success.

Game Wardens in the Southern Region noted that angler activity soared during the past week due to nice weather. Compliance was high although there was a moderate level of citations written.

A warden participated in a cold water survival experiment with travel costs covered by the national safe boating group, and wardens attended OUI training this past week sponsored by National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. The class is a national course which is held several times a year around the country.

A 2005 deer case involving killing a deer in area 13 with an area 18 tag was plead out in Nye County. Final details will be worked out in sentencing on May 6.

Operations

Computer purchases are pending for FY08. Pat Wlodarczyk anticipates completing all administrative actions for FY08 computer purchases by the end of this week. Once ordered, we anticipate delivery time to be about two to three weeks. Delivery will be coordinated with regional points of contact. Improvements to NDOW's data backup are underway and staff is examining processes to improve data system backup procedures for several of our key servers. While we have not had any critical data losses staff would like to introduce improvements to our existing procedures.

Refinement of the new refund process continues and licensing staff will meet with the State Controller's office this week to address issues regarding the recent internal controls we have set for the process of providing refunds to customers from game draws. Spring turkey was the first draw that involved the new process of the State rather than Systems Consultants mailing out refund checks. However, a recent interest by the Controller's office regarding department controls to prevent manipulation of the refund file has resulted in further discussions and may result in further refinement of our internal controls. We're hoping to resolve this matter this week in order to support the mailing of refund checks for the recent guided draw.

April 14, 2008

As of midnight April 13 Wildlife Administrative Services has received a total of 61,677 applications for the big game draw. Last year at this time we had received 45,992 applications. We are 15,685 applications ahead of last year's total relative to the deadline.

The human resources staff attended a meeting last week to address the upcoming open enrollment which will run during the month of May and an email this week announcing the open enrollment along with some new changes will be sent out. One noteworthy change is that the HMO is transitioning from Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield to Home Town Health.

Wildlife Diversity Division

Wildlife Diversity staff from the Reno and Las Vegas offices attended a Climate and Deserts Workshop held in Laughlin last week. The workshop focused on the potential impacts of climate change on habitats and wildlife of the Great Basin and Mojave and also on ways natural resource managers can implement adaptive management strategies to benefit desert ecosystems in a changing climate.

The Wildlife Diversity Division Chief and the Administrator of the Nevada Natural Heritage Program gave a presentation on Nevada's Wildlife Action Plan at the Western Regional Conference of State Natural Heritage Program Managers, which was held at Lake Tahoe this week. The talk focused on several implementation projects being completed across Nevada under the umbrella of Nevada's Wildlife Action Plan and also climate change issues related to the Plan.

Wildlife Diversity staff are finalizing FY 10-11 budget requests and Level B project proposals for the upcoming biennium. Wildlife Diversity Division supervisors and Headquarters staff will be meeting April 24 - 25 in Reno to review the submissions and to prioritize project proposals.

The Wildlife Diversity Chief and the Wildlife Diversity Supervisor from the Las Vegas office attended a meeting in Las Vegas with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, representatives from the Smithsonian Institution and the San Diego Zoo, and Senator Reid's Las Vegas staff advisor to discuss desert tortoise issues and pet tortoise concerns in southern Nevada.

A full-color Wildlife Diversity Division Annual Report has been published recently and is being distributed to agencies, partners, conservation organizations and the public. Thanks go to Wildlife Diversity biologists for developing the success stories highlighted in the report and to the Reno administrative staff and the Western Region supervisor for completing the exceptional layout and editing efforts that went into the report.

