



STATE OF NEVADA

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

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Kenneth E. Mayer

MEMORANDUM

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DATE: August 1, 2008
TO: Board of Wildlife Commissioners; Governor's Office;
County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife Members;
Department of Wildlife Employees; and Director Allen
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FROM: Kenneth E. Mayer, Director
SUBJECT: Department Activities Report

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth E. Mayer".

Director's Office

Director Mayer reported that four new Commissioners were appointed to the Commission effective July 1, 2008: Gerald Lent replacing Jack Robb; Grant Wallace replaced Bevan Lister; Michael McBeath replacing Clint Bentley; and Tom Cavin replaced Jim Jeffress. Director Mayer said that "Commissioner Appreciation" for the three outgoing Commissioners will be presented at the September 6 Commission meeting in Reno. The Eureka Tag Allocation and Application Committee meeting is cancelled because the chair will need to appoint new members. Director Mayer also reminded everyone to strive for excellence in their staff work and resulting products, especially when it comes to the Commission. He also asked everyone to do what they can to help the new Commissioners through their transitions.

The Governor has approved our Federal Legislative Priorities that were submitted last summer, and the Governor's Washington, D.C. office has distributed them to the Nevada Congressional Delegation. Those priorities include: Climate change, Landowner Incentive Program, State Wildlife Grants, Habitat and Rangeland Restoration (War on Cheatgrass), addressing Human-Wildlife Conflict in the Urban Interface, Great Basin Ecosystem Health Initiative (jointly with Dept of Ag.) NDOW is featured on pages 234-252 of the Federal Priority Assessment (FPA) and can be accessed at <http://www.nevadadc.org/documents/FPA%20-%20FY09%20FINAL.pdf>.

The Director's office is monitoring the U.S. Department of Justice's proposed changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for program access of state and local government programs, and facility access. Should these changes be approved on the federal level the primary areas that might affect NDOW are the documentation, availability, and access to auxiliary aids for members of the public with hearing or vision disabilities (as defined by the feds) during NDOW programs including meetings, clinics, classes, or any function in which one might participate. Facility issues would be addressed by the State Public Works. Additionally, there is support for broadening the definition of "wheelchair" to include non-traditional mobility devices such as Segways, for use at all local and state government programs and at buildings

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open to the public (libraries, museums, etc.) Comments are due Aug 14, 2008, to the Dept of Justice.

The Green Team found that NDOW's previous understanding of the requirement for NDOW to buy "alternative fuel vehicles" which did not include hybrid electric vehicles, was misinterpreted. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection Bureau of Air Quality Planning has clarified that the provisions of this subsection do not apply to a hybrid electric vehicle as defined in 40 C.F.R. This means that if NDOW were to purchase a hybrid car, just owning the hybrid would show use of an alternative fuel (electricity). The Green Team encourages employees and others to continue providing ideas for saving the Department money and/or generating money through process efficiencies.

The Director's office is developing a procedure for how the organization updates its performance measures. Performance measurement is a method of systematically and objectively tracking the agency's progress toward achieving its mission and goals. Appropriately, these indicators are updated in conjunction with the NDOW Strategic Plan every five years, and are measured and reported on in NDOW's biennial budget every two years to the Legislature and Governor. We are researching "best practice" performance measures of state wildlife agencies and those recommended by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Additionally, we are also working an outlined procedure for updating performance measures. As author Steven Covey explains, this will help assure that we are measuring the right things, which will provide an accurate picture of how we are doing, and it will help us determine if we are doing the right things.

The Director's office has compiled all approved policies and procedures (including old ones that will need to be updated) into one, bookmarked PDF "[NDOW Internal Policy and Procedure Book 2008](#)" and uploaded to the Intranet under Director's Office. This is accessible to employees via <http://intranet.ndow-ad.state.nv.us/>. As mentioned previously, all individual Policy & Procedure files have also been copied to the NDOW ALL S drive.

Conservation Education

Chief of Conservation Education Kelly Clark said there was a problem in obtaining a complete list of hunters who drew pronghorn antelope tags. Thus, a portion of the antelope seminar letters were sent late and she will provide background and a timeline regarding the problem to Director Mayer. Five sportsmen attended the Las Vegas seminar and about 105 attended the Reno seminar and she said we have to determine where the mistake was made to prevent this in the future.

Chief Clark participated in a volunteer project near Deeth, Nevada, where an aspen enclosure was erected to exclude cattle to allow the aspen back to regenerate. She told the group that volunteering for an NDOW project is a great experience.

Conservation Education and Wildlife Diversity Division staff is working together on a hunter access pilot program, that is grants based, to benefit to landowners who provide hunter access.

Chief Clark said she will attend a upcoming Climate Change Report briefing in Carson City and will report back to the group.

In the Southern Region, KLAS-TV investigative reporter George Knapp has taken an activist position in favor of wild horses. In addition to his TV work, which includes a significant presence

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on the station's website, Knapp has written a rather pointed article attacking NDOW in relation to this topic. It was published in the July 24-30 issue of City Life.

The publication coordinator finished the layouts of the Upland Game and Fall Turkey brochures which are currently at the State Printers, finishing up edits and layout of Furbearer and Youth Upland Game brochures and also finishing layout of NDOW coloring book.

The Western Region Fishable Waters reprinted maps are now available for distribution.

The WR staff produced three TV segments on the following topics: Hunter Education; Camping in Nevada; and Robins Leave the Nest.

WR staff produced five radio segments on the following topics: Summer Fish '08; Bear Aware – Bears '08; Hunter Education '08 – Summer; Mule Deer '08 – Bucks in Velvet; and Water Holes '08 – Antelope Hunt.

ER staff did weekly TV with a 5 minute piece on Angel Lake Fishing Derby and also produced the monthly ½ hour radio show on KELK covering such topics as hunting seasons, fishing conditions, wildlife viewing, upland game forecast, outdoor and fire safety.

ER Angler Education staff went to the local Girl Scout camp and took approximately 80 girls and 20 adult leaders fishing.

Volunteer Coordinator worked on “connecting with wildlife grant”, finalized plans with UNR on upcoming WILD workshops and coordinated with WR WE on the Oxbow Nature Study Area (NSA) rehabilitation effort.

In the western region, work continues on the Management Plan for the Oxbow NSA; set up an on-site meeting with Suzie Holling from the Summit Ridge Home Depot for possible donations to be used at the Oxbow NSA; worked with volunteer Coordinator on ordering trees and shrubs trees and shrubs will be planted this fall/winter at the Oxbow from the Nevada Division of Forestry nursery in Washoe Valley; and set up a follow-up meeting with Jerry Keir (Executive Director of the Great Basin Institute) to discuss trail materials, deck construction and possible funding/partnership with GBI for the Oxbow.

Invasive weeds are still an issue at the Oxbow, spraying continues but it has become quite a battle and any advice on this subject would be greatly appreciated.

At the Verdi Nature Center, possible routes were scouted for a new trail that would run from the Verdi Nature Center and Trail to Crystal Peak Park using the power company easement. This project is still in the early stages, but would be a great way to connect the two points of interest, especially with the new urban pond being built soon. Also worked on edits for the Verdi Nature Center trail signs.

WR WE started organizing new check-out boxes (skulls, furs and hides) that will be ready for the next school year. Staff is looking for donations to Wildlife Education.

In the Eastern Region, approximately 18 volunteers, in addition to Conservation Education and Wildlife Diversity staff, were involved with a Liberty pipe rail fencing project to protect riparian

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areas and aspen groves in the Stag Mountain area. Nearly 1300 feet of fence was constructed over the two-day project.

The SR wildlife educator attended a meeting of the Las Vegas Wash Outreach committee, which has expressed a desire for NDOW participation in interpretive and wildlife education programs.

Fiscal Financial Services

Administrative Services Officer III Dave Prather reported that they have processed 36 work programs and that number shows him that we need to do better job budgeting.

Staff are working on the closing of Fiscal Year 2008. He said we need to develop a new tool for the Division chiefs to track their budgets better. Director Mayer said we need to craft a solution since all Divisions are experiencing the same problem with the DAWN system not being current. In mid-September chiefs are to meet with Administrative Officer III Dave Prather and his staff and determine the most effective means of tracking expenditures.

The next Board of Examiner's (BOE) deadline is Aug. 12, 2008. At this point the BOE and w BOE and Interim Finance Committee (IFC) is scheduled to meet the same day. We assume that one meeting will be shifted.

Fisheries Division

The Chief attended the recent WAFWA meeting in South Dakota. Several meetings were attended with western state fish chiefs. Topics discussed ranged from, quagga mussels, changing Forest Service rules governing the use of fish toxicants, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service policy on the use of Significant Portion of the Range determinations as it applies to bull trout, to the recognition of additional fish habitat initiatives by the National Fish Habitat Board. The Inland and Marine Fisheries Committee voted to support the recognition of the Desert Fish Habitat Initiative and to support further development of a National Reservoir Habitat Initiative.

The Western Native Trout Initiative, which Nevada was one of the original founders, has now transitioned from its interim management structure to a more formal committee structure identified in the strategic plan.

The fishery at Lahontan Reservoir will more than likely be lost this year due to demands for irrigation water and ongoing issues with the Truckee Canal.

We continue to receive requests for the development of urban ponds. Urban ponds/fisheries provide an opportunity to expose potential anglers to fishing in a park like setting, "to get them hooked on fishing". They also provide opportunity for urban youth, who may not otherwise be exposed to this potentially lifelong recreational activity. Each request is evaluated on its own merits, including need, start up costs and long term commitments in terms of maintenance and fish stocking.

The vacant Sport Fish/Native Fish position in Fallon and the vacant Native Fish/LCT position in Winnemucca were offered to Kris Urquhart and Travis Hawks, respectively. Kris is currently working as the Biologist II for the Habitat Division in Fallon and Travis is a Fish Hatchery Technician II at Mason Valley Hatchery.

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The East Walker River Natural Resource Trustees Council released its revised Draft Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment to the public (based on the December 2000 oil spill in the East Walker River). It will go through public review until September 15. Projects vary from in-stream/riparian restoration projects to recreational fishing/human use improvements. Trustees will be available for an open house discussing these projects on August 20 at Walker Community Center in Walker, CA.

Game Division

On July 28-29, Game Division personnel are meeting with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife personnel to discuss interstate management concerns regarding mule deer and pronghorn antelope.

On Aug. 5 Game Division personnel are meeting with Idaho Fish and Game personnel to discuss elk and sage grouse management issues along the border in northeastern Nevada.

On July 23 the Game Division sent a letter to the Goshute Tribe requesting a meeting on the tribe's plans to introduce Russian Boar, Ibex, Mouflon Sheep, and Black Hawaiian (Mouflon x Boghorn Cross) sheep onto their reservation straddling the border between Nevada and Utah. NDOW, the Nevada Department of Agriculture, Utah Division of Wildlife, and Utah Department of Food and Agriculture are all concerned about the possibility of significant negative effects on livestock and wildlife as a result of this proposed introduction.

Habitat Division

Interviews have been conducted and a selection has been made to fill the vacant Habitat Staff Biologist position. Steve Siegel has been selected and will report Aug. 11. Steve will bring a wealth of experience to the Division with considerable experience in energy developments and transmission, land use planning and NEPA processes, as well as experience in habitat enhancement project work.

Review and assessment of the properties adjacent to the Overton WMA owned by Alex Peer have resulted in communications with Alex identifying that the Department is not interested in following up on the acquisition of these properties. The properties would require significant operation and maintenance efforts that exceed the Department's fiscal and staffing abilities. Overton WMA is experiencing some significant improvements and the focus will remain on continuing to improve habitat conditions on the area.

Meetings have been conducted with John Estill in an effort to address his application for domestic sheep use in Northern Washoe County. Negotiations are based on trying to work out favorable alternatives to improve the bighorn sheep situation while providing a workable domestic sheep operation. The Department objectives are to establish separation of use to minimize the chances for contact between domestics and bighorn.

Reno staff continues to finalize Divisional work programs and budgets.

Operations Division

Updated Saleable Lists Now Available—the License Office for years has provided a “for fee” service for the public in the form of saleable lists. These lists have provided various forms of public information related to our hunting, fishing, trapping and boat-owning clients. Over the past year this service was temporarily suspended due to our transition from the old LISA system to our Nevada Wildlife Data System

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(NWDS). The transition is now complete and this service is available again. The director approved a new pricing structure last week and we are now up and running using the new NWDS process, having communicated to ten requesters last week. Over the past few years we've responded to 10 – 15 requests annually.

Employee Tenure Awards – NDOW employees have been acknowledged for their years of great service by the director or deputy director during Commission meetings, however, this has not happened for the last year because the current process needed technical improvements. NDOW's Human Resources office will soon be working with a new Access data base and are hoping that by the September 2008 Commission meeting. The next Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee has been cancelled. A revised meeting date will be announced in the near future. We will be able to re-start the recognition program.

After experiencing some hiccups in the Personnel world, we are now recruiting for the newly established IT position within the Operations Division. The plan for new computers is that they are being configured and will also get the inventory tag put on prior to release to new owner. One of the first duties of this new person will be to accompany Pat Wlodarczyk state-wide to install the newly purchased desktop computers.

The white paper on the draw breach will be presented by the Director at the September Commission meeting.

Law Enforcement

One of our Game Warden Captains appeared on the Poachers Chronicles Radio show to promote Nevada's Operation Game Thief (OGT) Program and the International Association of Natural Resource Crime Stoppers (IANRC).

Several investigations are ongoing involving non residents applying for tags as residents.

Several new companies and groups have donated towards the Operation Game Thief (OGT) educational trailer.

A fatal boat accident occurred at Lake Tahoe on Monday, July 21. A New York firefighter drowned while attempting to provide assistance to his 10 year old son who was having difficulty while swimming off the family boat.

Fuel prices have had a noticeable effect on participation in outdoor recreation as wardens report low use in all but the closest areas to towns. Pre-season scouting, fishing and boating at remote locations and "just out driving around" contacts are way down from previous years.

A major topic of discussion at both WAFWA and the Sheriff's and Police Chief's meeting was how to deal with the high fuel cost. It was interesting to note that cutting mileage was discounted as an option among Wildlife agencies but was a potential option with some members of the Sheriffs and Chiefs Association. Going to smaller vehicles for enforcement has been tried by several only to find the vehicles did not hold to the stress of Law Enforcement use. Several other good ideas were discussed.

Wildlife Diversity

Several staff visited the Sheldon and conducted reptile and pygmy rabbit surveys and found no pygmy rabbits. Wildlife Diversity Division staff met with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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(USFWS), the Nevada Natural Heritage Program, the Bureau of Land Management, and researchers from the University of Nevada, Reno during a recent Nevada Biodiversity Initiative (NBI) meeting. The USFWS committed significant funds this year for NDOW's NBI program which will support the Wildlife Diversity Division's Geographical Information System (GIS) shop.

Staff attended the Nongame Technical Section of the Pacific Flyway meeting this week in Spokane, Washington. One of the issues to be discussed at the meeting was the take of first-year fall migrant peregrine falcons for use in falconry in the western states. The USFWS expects to complete the Environmental Assessment on take of passage peregrines in the near future.

Wildlife Diversity Division staff recently published the 2007 Job Performance Report for the State Wildlife Grants Program. The document highlights the numerous species investigations being conducted across Nevada by Division biologists. The report describes various research and monitoring projects on raptors, shorebirds and waterbirds, passerines, and threatened and endangered birds. Mammal investigations include bat surveys, small mammal surveys, and species specific work on American pika, montane voles, Hidden Forest Chipmunk, Sonoran Mountain kingsnake, Gila monsters, as well as others. The report also describes habitat restoration projects undertaken this year from the Lake Tahoe/Carson Range area to Eastern Nevada. Numerous habitat review projects as well as watchable wildlife activities that were conducted during the year are also included. The 200-page report will be made available to conservation partners and will also be available on NDOW's website.

The USDA National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is hosting a series of public meetings in July to discuss Farm Bill programs with farmers and ranchers. The Chief of Wildlife Diversity will attend the Reno meeting tomorrow to determine opportunities for collaborating with farmers and ranchers under the new Farm Bill.

Over the past week, staff from the Winnemucca, Reno and Las Vegas offices traveled to Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge to undertake a week of field surveys. Diurnal reptile surveys were extremely successful with staff collecting 13 samples from pygmy short-horned lizards for genetic analysis. Other reptiles recorded included sagebrush lizard, Great Basin rattlesnake and gopher snake. Pygmy rabbit surveys were less productive with little evidence of rabbit presence being recorded. Sandhill crane surveillance was also undertaken in preparation for an upcoming capture operation to fit transmitters.

Leadership Team Meeting

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