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STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

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KENNETH E.
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Director

DOUG HUNT
Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: Oct. 3, 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
September 29, 2008, Leadership Team Meeting

Attendees: Deputy Director Doug Hunt, Executive Assistant Suzanne Scourby, Management Analyst III Kim Jolly, Chief of Habitat Dave Pulliam, Chief of Conservation Kelly Clark, Chief of Wildlife Diversity Laura Richards, Administrative Services Officer III Dave Prather, Chief of Law Enforcement Rob Buonamici, Chief of Fisheries Rich Haskins, Acting Chief of Game Mike Dobel, and Chief of Operations Bob Haughian.

Director's Office

Deputy Director said there is a NDOW Lands Committee meeting tomorrow and the deadline for minor changes to the Department budget has passed. Deputy Director Hunt said the Department's budget is in NEBS if people want to check it out, and to not be surprised that there is nothing in the equipment category at this point.

Commission agenda items are due this Friday, the draft agenda will be mailed on Oct. 17, 2008.

White House Conference on Policy is this Wednesday through Friday, and Deputy Director Hunt asked each chief to send him a list of who is going from their Division.

Deputy Director Hunt asked the group to discuss climate change and impending legislation, and give their strategic needs to Chief of Habitat Dave Pulliam before the end of the month.

Conservation Education

The publications coordinator is working on the 2009 Fishing Seasons and Regulations publication; Nevada Water Development Atlases have been ordered with the initial shipment expected Oct. 15, with a second order to arrive December 1; working to develop new upland game and migratory bird web pages; and continued work on fixing problems with the Trout in the Classroom database email function.

Staff with a local Ducks Unlimited volunteer conducted upland game and waterfowl hunting workshops at the new Sportsman's Warehouse in Henderson. This was part of the National Shooting Sports Foundation grant aimed at hunter retention. Attendance numbered 41 and the presentation was well-received by the audience

The Volunteer Coordinator is currently developing work programs for two new Grants: Connecting Children with Wildlife and Schoolyard Habitats; gave a presentation at the State Museum docents on sage-grouse and loss of habitats primarily due to fire.

Fisheries Division

The situation at Walker Lake continues to deteriorate with total dissolved water levels over 16,000 parts per million. If adequate flows are not received this next spring, fish life in the reservoir will probably cease to exist.

Staff reviewed the latest whitewater park on the Truckee River being constructed by the City of Sparks. This project has been contentious since its original designs were unacceptable to regulating agencies, as the proposed structures would have been a barrier to fish movement in the river. Modified designs should have addressed those issues; however, field review of the site revealed deviations from permitted design features. Corrections were made where possible, remaining deficiencies should not affect fish passage. Long term monitoring will determine if engineering projections regarding water velocities through the structures allow for the necessary movement of all fish species native to the Truckee River. Long term, the agency will face the challenge of continued demands for additional artificial whitewater parks on the river, demands for flood control measures which depend on restoring some of the natural river processes and efforts to restore native fish populations to the Truckee River.

A meeting with proponents of Fuji Park Pond in Carson City was attended. Carson City officials are attempting to secure the additional funding to proceed with bidding of the project one more time. An additional \$100,000 in Question 1 funding is being requested from the Department. We agreed contingent on engineering estimates of total project cost and Carson City's ability to secure the additional funding necessary.

Population surveys at Wildhorse Reservoir found high numbers of yellow perch young of the year. If good water conditions persist, yellow perch fishing should be great again in a year or two.

Habitat Division

The Habitat Division Chief attended the national Public Lands Council meeting. Issues included: Grazing to reduce fuel loading, bighorn/domestic sheep, prairie dogs, wolves and sage grouse, carbon credits and rangelands, and various state reports. Nevada's report included the Bureau of Land Management's efforts statewide to initiate landowner fire fighting agreements and qualifications.

Staff continue to participate and provide information to the governor's committee on renewable energy transmission access.

The Wildlife Management Area managers, staff biologist and chief held their annual coordination meeting Sept. 9 - 11. A summary report from this meeting is available from the Division.

Law Enforcement

The boating access program manager attended the federal coordinator's conference. The conference discussed the reapportionment of the Sportfish Restoration Act. The boating access 15 percent is currently being looked at by the Sportfishing and Boating Partnership Council as to how much is being used and will make their recommendations to Congress.

Game wardens are currently investigating 21 big game poaching and three illegal cases around the state.

Operations Division

Nevada Wildlife Data System (NWDS) point of sales (POS) roll out continues, presently we have set up 22 License agents with the POS systems and license sales via these units have exceeded \$150,000 to date. We've previously mentioned the challenges in getting Wal-Mart's installed due to their personnel change over and communications issues. These issues have resulted in delays in setting up these stores with the POS units. It appears now that those Wal-Mart's will be ready for our POS installations by the end of October. For our remaining 25 Wal-Marts, of these 25 Wal-Mart License agents, 20 are among the top 30 license agents revenue-wise statewide.

NWDS quarterly legislative report deadline approaching, and NWDS contract amendment underway. Staff is finalizing the proposed contract amendment which will extend the projected contract-deliverable schedule to January 2009. No cost adjustments are included in this amendment.

NDOW and Missouri will co-host the 2010 WAWFA-CBMA Administrative Officers' Workshop. Several Operations and Fiscal Services Section staff members recently attended this annual workshop.

Wildlife Diversity

Wildlife Diversity staff continued greater sandhill crane trapping efforts in the western part of the state. Attempts were unsuccessful in August, but a greater working knowledge was gained regarding possible techniques and methods for future use. It is hoped that trapping the birds and attaching satellite transmitters to adults scattered throughout Humboldt and Washoe Counties, will provide us a better understanding of their migratory route and wintering grounds.

Nocturnal bat surveys on mines and water sources continued throughout the month as did nocturnal and diurnal reptile surveys. During bat surveys, a number of mines were found to provide significant roost sites for bats. This information will be furnished to Nevada Division of Minerals; it is likely some will be placed on a list to receive bat friendly closures. Camera equipment and Infra red lights were also setup to attempt recording the out flight of Mexican free-tailed bats from the McCarran Bridge in Reno.

Staff continued to oversee Nevada Conservation Crews working in the Tahoe Region this month. As part of the Riparian Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Project, crews finished off work laid out for the season. This included stream bank stabilization efforts where 125 feet of stream bank was stabilized using downed dead aspen. Removal of encroaching fir, decadent willow and alder were also completed.