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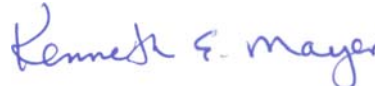
KENNETH E.  
MAYER  
*Director*

DOUG HUNT  
*Deputy Director*

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** January 30, 2008

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

**FROM:** Kenneth E. Mayer, Director 

**SUBJECT:** Department Activities Report  
Leadership Team Meetings – January 2009

Director's Office

Director Mayer reported that he attended the Quagga/Zebra Summit which preceded the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) mid-winter conference with agency staff where they discussed a regional accord on dealing with aquatic nuisance species. Director Mayer said that meeting went well and was one of the best run meetings he has attended. He said the states will work together to come up with a uniform management direction which will result in a western cooperative agreement. The consensus of the group is for WAFWA to establish a standing committee for quagga/zebra mussels management. Mr. Larry Voyles the director of Arizona Game and Fish will be the sponsor and Dr. Larry Riley from Arizona will be the chairman. WAFWA agreed to establish a standing committee. In addition, WAFWA will ask the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) to request that the new administration make this part of their budget considerations.

WAFWA issues at the conference: Only 14 of the 23 WAFWA member states attended because of budget shortfalls; six of 23 directors were fired in a matter of three weeks; the federal Farm Bill needs to be followed and tracked, and NDOW staff needs to meet regularly with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to ensure that they do not turn money back meant for Nevada wild lands. Director Mayer said the National Conservation Training Center is seeking nominees from each state for their leadership training.

Director Mayer asked Deputy Director Richard Haskins to put together a one page "National Conservation Need" paper on quagga/zebra mussels to be submitted from WAFWA to AFWA.

A meeting with Director Mayer, former Wildlife Chairman Bill Bradley and Attorney at Law John Mulligan is scheduled for Feb. 5, 2009, to discuss the creation of the Nevada Wildlife Foundation.

Director Mayer said the Intermountain West Joint Venture, of which is on the board of directors of has several upcoming conference calls, and if he is not available to participate, that Waterfowl Staff Biologist Craig Mortimore will serve in his place.

Deputy Director Rich Haskins and Habitat Chief Dave Pulliam attended a Walker River meeting with Director Allen Biaggi, Deputy Attorney General Marta Adams and Tracy Toon; Director Mayer has appointed Habitat Chief Dave Pulliam as the Nevada representative for the WAFWA Wild Horse Committee that is getting underway; and Director Mayer and Habitat Staff Biologist Steve Siegel will attend a solar wind energy meeting.

Deputy Director Haskins said almost everyone on the Leadership Team has returned their feedback on the fiscal year 2010 and 2011 budget. The text of the narrative needs to be completed and the power point presentation finalized. Administrative Services Officer III Dave Prather said he will have the budgets done in all the decision units.

Administrative Services Officer (ASO) III Dave Prather said he sent an email from State Purchasing regarding the switch of agency credit cards from Diner's Club to another bank and the applications are due Jan. 23, 2009. Purchasing asked that the Diner's Club cards be destroyed.

ASO III Prather said a fiscal note is due tomorrow due on the apprentice hunter legislation and the Operations Division is working on it as well as Conservation Education staff. The Interim Finance Committee agenda posted for Feb. 3, 2009: Climate change, cheatgrass coalition for \$60,000, carry forward for two new boats, and the SNMPLA grant for razor back and pupfish,

Director Mayer met with former Wildlife Commissioner Tina Nappe and local conservation organizations as they want to help the agency with our fiscal situation, and they may seek legislative change to Question 1 to assist the Department with salary costs. The group told him that they are watching the Wildlife Commission very closely to insure that they are covering all species of wildlife in the state.

Director Mayer said he met with Senator Raggio and Attorney at Law John Sandy to have a general discussion about the Department and what we should expect from the upcoming session. Additionally, Director Mayer had an opportunity to talk about the future needs of NDOW. They also discussed the possibility of alternative energy paying mitigation fees to the Department in a similar arrangement with Nevada Mining Association.

Director Mayer said the Department is still drafting the mountain lion proposal for the Commission and will be available and presented at the Commission meeting.

The Nevada Board of Wildlife Commission agenda and support material for the February meeting was completed, mailed and uploaded to the NDOW website. Upcoming committee meetings prior to the NBWC meeting are the Heritage Committee on Feb. 5, 2009, and Finance Oversight Committee at 9:30 a.m. on Feb. 6, 2009.

Director Mayer attended the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee meeting in Sacramento. The Plan Committee is reviewing the work of the Joint Venture in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan will be updated. Over the next two years and the Plan Committee is directing that update. State directors across the west are voicing their concern that the Obama stimulus package is welcome but it may outstrip the state's ability to oversee the projects. Director Mayer said sage grouse west wide did receive stimulus money. However, we do not how much Nevada will get.

The Senate Natural Resources Committee agency presentation is scheduled for Feb. 10, 2009, and Assembly Natural and Ways Committee, presentation is on Feb. 11, 2009. Director Mayer said he would like the entire Leadership Team to attend both.

### **Conservation Education**

Chief of Conservation Kelly Clark reported that the legislative breakfast's location has been secured and the date for the breakfast is April 9, 2009. Eastern Region staff is preparing a video presentation for use during the upcoming legislative meeting. Southern Region staff provided still photos of desert bighorn sheep and sheep captures and a video of sheep captures was also provided.

Staff is working with the Game Division to support promotion of Partners in Wildlife and Heritage tags at upcoming Mule Deer Federation and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation conventions with updated write-ups for the programs, updated video presentations during the auctions and at the agency booths. The goal is to promote Nevada's auction and heritage tags and the recreational hunting opportunity the Silver State has to offer.

The Conservation Education chief made a presentation to the Special Commission on License Plates at the Nevada State Legislature on Jan. 15 regarding the Wildlife Conservation License Plate. The Wildlife Conservation plate was supported by 1,400 petitioners in 2002, and has since waited for other special plates to drop out of production, as the state only has 25 special license plates at any one time. Currently

the Wildlife Conservation plate is second or third in line, and will probably come up for consideration again in January 2010.

The Division held its initial 10-year communications plan meeting. The goal of the meeting was to initiate a 10-year Communications Plan for the agency with input from a broad diversity of staff. The group identified the five key activities the agency is focused on, and through a SWOT analysis (strengths, weakness, opportunities, threats) determined that initial messaging would be focused on two core areas – NDOW identification/branding and funding. Conservation Education staff will work to finalize messaging for use by all staff.

Staff presented an overview of plans for the Overton Wildlife Education Center to the Moapa Valley Town Advisory Board with a standing-room only audience. The story was printed on the front page of the Moapa Valley Progress.

The Clark County Shooting Park was the subject of a legal hearing in federal court. Judge Lloyd George told the plaintiffs they could not hide behind a corporation because it has no standing. To move forward, the plaintiffs – residents of Carmel Canyon – will have to identify themselves on the complaint and narrow the focus of their complaint.

The “Color Nevada Wild” coloring book, which is being sponsored by Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn, Nevada Wildlife Federation, the Mule Deer Federation, Wildlife Habitat in Nevada and Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, Reno, is in its final stages.

The website coordinator is doing a page by page check of information, links and content on the website and is preparing for eventual redesign. The coordinator created a special section of website dedicated to fish passage in Nevada. The web coordinator is settling into his new duties well and is also working with domain registrar, Network Solutions, to ensure that ndow.org was prepared for the DOIT DNS Server IP Address Change.

The bird-strike and crash of an airliner outside of LaGuardia Airport in New York on the Hudson River led to media questions in Reno. Staff provided background on the issue and credited the Airport Authority and USDA on their aggressive bird control program.

Carson City’s Fuji Park Fishing Pond has received the construction money needed to complete the project. There should be an update on ground breaking and a completion date soon.

The Clark County Health District is trying to get trappers to help with Hantavirus and plague monitoring by collecting samples from animals trapped.

The Outdoor Education Coordinator (OEC) met with Eastern Region staff in Elko to discuss Hunter Access program in Ruby and East Humboldt ranges. Critical access areas, landowners and potential barriers were identified. The OEC and Connie Lee will contact landowners and other key players (USFWS, BLM, former wildlife commissioners Riordan and Spratling, etc.) to determine program acceptance and formulate a strategy on how to best proceed.

New hunter education instructor training sessions were attended by six instructor candidates in the Southern region and five candidates in the Western Region.

The Clark County School District has obtained a grant to produce a three to five minute video about the Trout in the Classroom Program and will begin production later this month. Seven school teachers attended training for the Trout in the Classroom program and the Western Region is currently scheduling Trout in the Classroom teacher trainings and tank set up as is the Eastern Region staff.

Western Region and headquarters Wildlife Education staff working with the city of Reno on the ongoing Oxbow Nature Study Area rehabilitation effort.

The Kirch Award deadline has passed and the seven nominees' paperwork has been submitted to this year's judges.

The volunteer Hunter and Angler Education instructor recognition events were held statewide this month. A total of nearly 200 volunteer instructors attended the events in Winnemucca, Tonopah, Las Vegas, Ely, Elko, and Reno.

Gun registrations increased 24 percent in 2008. Excise taxes on firearms will correspond with upcoming increases in the Pittman Robertson grant.

The 2009 – 10 Nevada Duck Stamps, featuring a Canada goose, were delivered to the Operations Division in preparation for upcoming sales.

The marketing coordinator graduated from the Nevada Certified Public Manager Program on Jan. 23, 2009, after six months of training.

### **Game Division**

Game Chief, Upland Game Specialist and Predator/furbearer Specialist attended and participated in Wildlife Damage Committee meeting in Fallon. The current predation management plan was discussed in detail and potential improvements and modifications were presented for consideration. NDOW recognizes the need to update the plan and is committed to using the best available science to develop a workable and useful predation management strategy for the state.

Game Division season-setting development meetings are currently underway. Recommendations generated from this meeting will be presented to the Commission in February for its consideration. Game Division season-setting development meetings concluded with a discussion involving Director and Deputy Director. Recommendations generated from this meeting have been based on input from multiple sources from both within and without the agency. To accommodate concurrent and adjacent seasons, big game herd surveys and harvest data collection, big game captures and transplants, herd ecology and rut timing and to achieve maximum efficiency, recommendations remain based upon fixed-date openers. These recommendations and a discussion of the decision-making process will be presented to the Commission in February for consideration.

Interviews for the Wildlife Health Specialist position commenced with five well-qualified candidates interviewed for this position, and due to budget restrictions all interviews took place by telephone.

A shipment of wild turkeys arrived Jan. 14 from California (captured Sunday and Monday in the Davis, CA area) and they were released onto private agricultural land in the Yerington area. A cooperative agreement to manage these turkeys exists between the landowner and NDOW. All Department of Agriculture disease testing import requirements will have been met prior to release. Ten percent of all birds transported are tested for an exhaustive panel of poultry diseases by the UC Davis veterinary diagnostic laboratory. An additional 30 birds are expected.

Following an update of the mountain lion harvest objective calculation process, new harvest objectives are being recalculated for the state. Based upon data gathered over the past 10 years, actual sport harvest routinely falls short of the regional objectives set.

- The biological implications of harvest (to date) are currently being analyzed.
- Potential enhancements to mountain lion management in Nevada such as additional, area-specific, focused hunting opportunities for successful hunters are being discussed. In addition, based upon recommendations from members of the Wildlife Commission, a review of tag limits is underway.

Game Division has been coordinating with the State Printer and the State Mailroom to revise the Sportsman's Journal into a new 3¼" x 8" format which can be mailed out with the Small Game Questionnaire. It is expected that the existing approved funding (\$2,500 each for Waterfowl & UG Stamps + \$500 from Nevada Bighorns Unlimited) should cover these costs. Additional new

format changes are under development. The Game Division will not be printing a large volume of these booklets as was done in the initial year.

A cooperative venture between NDOW Game Division and the Great Basin National Park is underway to gather information on habitat use and distribution patterns of resident bighorn sheep.

Ground surveys of antelope have been undertaken in the Eastern Region. In certain areas, record numbers of animals have been reported.

### **Law Enforcement**

The late deer seasons have ended and patrol focus has shifted to checking trapper, waterfowl and upland game hunters. In some northern areas the snow pack and related muddy conditions have made for difficult travel and access issues.

In the Winnemucca area, the Union Pacific Railroad train has killed and injured several deer that are wintering along the railroad tracks. Several carcasses have been donated to the Safe Haven Rescue and Rehabilitation Center located in Unionville. In the Reno area, a few deer carcasses have been donated to the Animal Ark Rescue Center.

Cases being worked include trap visitation issues. Unlawful tampering with traps, a headless road killed deer carcass, pet dogs being caught in traps near urban areas, injured animals in urban areas, and deer and elk winter range patrols.

Work is being done on Assembly Bill 77 and defining edible portions per the request of the Legislative Committee.

Game wardens have been busy with trapline and trapping related duties. Two lions have been released from bobcat traps or snares, one by wardens and the other by the trapper.

Looking ahead, shed antler gathering is just around the corner. Wardens in Ely report that larger bull elk are already being "patterned" by people hoping to eventually collect the shed antlers. Deer could start antler drop any time.

Boating Law Administrator (BLA) attended and made presentation to the Colorado River Law Enforcement Association meeting in Laughlin. The BLA submitted the required boat registration numbers report to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) which showed about a 3 percent decline from 2007. NDOW also submitted the boat registration numbers to the Department of Motor Vehicles for purposes of calculating our state motor boat fuel tax proceeds. Also submitted the required boating education, nav-aids and law enforcement performance report to the USCG.

Now that 2007 has been reported out we will begin the application for next year's Coast Guard grant.

The boat access staff is pursuing possible projects to put into the scheduling pipeline as well as matching funds for the \$683,000 that is left to obligate by Sept. 15, 2009. Working with Habitat Division to put together projects to build and repair roads.

Two hunters that trespassed on private property to kill a deer were convicted in the Western Region.

A Gardnerville man was cited for killing two California Bighorn Sheep with one shot. The citation was issued with a mandatory appearance in court. The Judge ordered the man to pay a \$250 criminal fine and a \$250 civil penalty. The Judge commended the man on his hunter ethics because he reported the mistake to NDOW and was prepared to take any penalty as a result of his actions.

Human/wildlife conflicts calls are being received in the Western Region. Reports of coyotes in urban areas, bears causing issues, deer dying in residential areas and mountain lion sightings in urban areas have resulted in a fair amount of response time.

Wildlife Services has reported that the Governor has cut the state funding for their program. This directly affects their response to coyote and mountain lion issues in the urban areas since they are set up with the equipment (traps, snares, suppressed rifles, etc) to deal with these issues in an urban setting.

A Eureka man had charges of hunting wrong area dismissed in Judge Ron Niman's Ely Justice Court. The charge was a result of a misdemeanor citation filed in September alleging the man hunted a cow elk in Unit 108 under authority of a cow elk tag issued for Units 101-103. Judge Niman stated that the elements of the offense had not been proven by the State since an elk had not been killed. The man and his attorney stated they would be seeking a replacement elk tag for the tag seized as evidence.

Bobcat trapping effort may increase over the remainder of the season given the interest by several buyers in attendance at the Elko cat sealing. Less than 100 cats were sealed however prices offered were still high given economic predictions of a downturn in the luxury fur markets. A short harvest may add to demand.

Southern Region Game Wardens attended the Colorado River Law Enforcement Association meeting on Wednesday, January 21 and Thursday, January 22. During the meeting NDOW's Law Enforcement discussed common issues and concerns with other surrounding agencies.

## **Operations**

Efforts continue to relocate Battle Mountain staff to new office – Several weeks ago the Department was presented with an opportunity to relocate three staff members from the current office in Battle Mountain to another facility more conducive to current needs. Dottie Hansen, our real estate specialist, is exploring options to help make this move. We should know of our success no later than the end of January.

NDOW Engineer to attend Ely's "Fire and Ice" event – Lisa Schettler will accompany State Parks employees to the upcoming Fire and Ice event in White Pine County next week to address public inquiries regarding proposed work on Cave Lake Dam.

Information Technology improvements coming soon to regional offices with plans to install two new servers at the Elko and Las Vegas offices by the end of February, with these servers staff will have access to Active Directory, which will allow access to all NDOW drives. Additionally, sometime after these servers are installed, Virtual Private Networks (VPN) at the Fallon, Ely, Winnemucca, Henderson and Boulder City offices will be installed. VPN connectivity will allow staff similar access to the same drives, the internet, DAWN, NEATS, etc.

Rollout of Nevada Wildlife Data System (NWDS) Point of Sales (POS) devices continues. Next week staff is scheduled to install POS devices at 10 license agents in the Las Vegas area. Seven Wal-Marts, two Sportsmen's Warehouse, and a Bass Pro Shop will receive the new automated license sales devices. This will bring our total of automated license agents to 47, or approximately 45 percent of the agents who will eventually operate with the POS systems. To date, our POS license sales are approaching \$250,000...not bad considering we are in the slow time of the year.

Department vehicle distribution process is under review as a number of recent challenges associated with the distribution of new and turned-in vehicles is prompting a process review by the division chiefs and the deputy director. Improved written guidance is anticipated for all vehicle and process owners.

## **Wildlife Diversity**

The draft Bat Exclusion protocol has been prepared and circulated to staff for comments. This is a joint effort between the Bureau of Land Management and the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

The bat cave in Grand Canyon was surveyed for access with Southern Region and National Park Service personnel. This cave will be part of the ongoing Mexican free-tailed bat telemetry study initiated in the summer of 2008.

Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Counts were conducted in association with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Audubon Society with volunteer and staff support.

The Eastern Region is gearing up to conduct winter raptor surveys. Volunteers and Department personnel will be assisting with these surveys. Bald and golden eagle surveys will be conducted along with the winter raptor surveys. Eastern Region personnel assisted the National Park Service (NPS) in conducting the annual Lake Mead Bald Eagle survey.

Requests for additional funding under two Question 1 Grants were prepared and submitted to Reno staff for action. One request is to provide additional funding to the wildlife gating project. The second amendment is to provide additional funding for aspen restoration in northeastern Nevada.

Two Question 1 Project amendments were submitted to Department contract managers for approval. One contract amendment is with the U.S. Forest Service to conduct aspen restoration work in the Ely District. The other contract amendment is with the U.S. Forest Service bat gating crew. Both amendments will allow the contracts to be extended for one year.

Abandoned mine land surveys were conducted at the Red Devil and Safford Canyon historic mine sites. Department personnel identified both sites as important maternity roosts for the Townsend's big-eared bat, a Nevada sensitive species.

Staff attended a Rio Tinto Mine working group progress meeting. The Department representative is the chairman of the Mill Creek Valley Restoration Subcommittee. A plan to restore Mill Creek to functionality following the final remediation of the contaminants removal is under development by this subcommittee.

Staff is also conducting peregrine falcon territory reconnaissance with the National Park Service to gather data for the upcoming joint peregrine falcon habitat modeling project.

Staff attended meetings to look at restoration opportunities at the Warm Spring Natural Area in the upper Muddy River drainage. Staff also attended a desert tortoise monitoring seminar and provided reptile insights for the Sagebrush Indicator Workshop.

Field personnel attended the Nevada Bat Working Group Meeting in Reno and discussed several topics including mines and bat gates, wind energy, a bat survey of the Jarbidge area, and implementation of the Bat Conservation Plan.

Staff conducted spring reconnaissance with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in the Searchlight area to evaluate potential springs for rehabilitation/restoration projects. Summit Spring and Boat Tank Spring both afford different opportunities for restoration and appear to be important waters for native wildlife including Gambel's quail, Phainopepla and a myriad of other game and nongame wildlife. The BLM has some spring restoration funds available for the projects. We continue to coordinate with Department of Defense, Nellis Test and Training Range (TTR), and the BLM

related to efforts to restore springs impacted by horses in the Cactus Range of the TTR.

Staff commented on the Ash Springs Recreation Area Management Plan near Alamo and assisted with the development of an Inventory and Monitoring Handbook for Herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians).