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# The FLYER

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## Summer Edition

D-Line Canal  
Wood Duck Event Results  
Lower Colorado Sandhill Cranes  
Special Species Hunts

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Walker Price

This is a photo of a wood duck egg during incubation. A cardboard tube from a toilet paper roll is used to focus sunlight through the egg so that biologists can determine what day the egg will hatch

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Cover photo by David Stimac

## The *FLYER*

The Flyer is the official newsletter publication of the Nevada Waterfowl Association and is published three times per year. Guest articles are welcome. Our classified section is available for advertising.

The articles and views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those shared by the NWA membership, its officers, or Board of Directors.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Nevada Waterfowl Association's mission is to protect, restore, and enhance Nevada's wetlands and the wildlife dependant upon them, especially waterfowl and shorebirds. Nevada Waterfowl Association works closely with organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Lahontan Wetlands Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, and other conservation organizations that share our goal of preserving Nevada's unique desert wetlands for future generations to enjoy. Nevada Waterfowl Association is a family oriented conservation organization that was created in October 1987 as a 501 ©(3) tax-exempt non-profit corporation by a group of individuals who were alarmed at the rate of loss of Nevada's unique desert wetlands. Nevada Waterfowl Association intends to become a statewide organization through the formation of local chapters throughout the state. Nevada Waterfowl Association is founded upon the principle that all monies raised by the Association in Nevada, will be spent to help Nevada's own wetlands and wetland-dependant wildlife. All donations are tax deductible.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Willie Molini

**T**hose of us who love hunting and the outdoors and who treasure wildlife know that there are very special things wildlife provide that enrich our lives and etch in our life experiences. One of those events for me is when a large flock of pintails float out of the sky from such height that they were unseen before appearing above the decoys. I have several great memories of such a spectacle. Another is to spot a special mule deer buck or to see a mountain lion. In fact there are many of these special moments that we experience with an array of species of wildlife. However, with my long and varied experience with wildlife, there is one spectacle that never ceases to amaze me and leave me in awe, and that is to watch sage grouse strut in their annual spring ritual on the strutting ground or lek. I have seen this fantastic display many times, and in my early career I even got paid to count these birds on the lek! If you have never witnessed this annual event, it is something that you definitely should put on your bucket list.

While we are a waterfowl organization, I want to share with you what is currently happening regarding sage grouse because I think it is very important to all of us as sportsmen. As the result of court order, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering the listing of the sage grouse as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). A decision to list or not list the bird must be made by USFWS in 2015. Because of this action there has been considerable activity by nearly all natural resource management agencies regarding protection and enhancement of sage grouse habitat in order to ensure a sustainable future for the bird and preclude ESA listing. The Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service have completed a draft environmental impact statement to amend their land use plans to address the needs of sage grouse, and Governor Sandoval has established the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council to address the needs of sage grouse habitat. Of course, the Nevada Department of Wildlife is squarely in the middle of all of this effort as the agency with the best data on sage grouse in Nevada.

The Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife, which is a coalition of Nevada sportsmen's organizations including the Nevada Waterfowl Association, is also working diligently on this issue. It is the feeling of

the Coalition that the listing of a state managed and hunted species would not reflect well on our collective efforts as stewards of our wildlife resources. As such, the Coalition is engaged in a significant project to craft the essential elements of proposed federal legislation to ensure a sustainable future for sage grouse while still providing for traditional multiple uses of our public lands.

The major goal of this effort is to provide long-term regulatory certainty through a new congressional land designation - "Sage Grouse Conservation Areas" which has the sage grouse and its critical habitat as the primary focus. The Coalition proposal makes a strong case for the need for such legislation and further outlines potential funding mechanisms for sage grouse habitat management and enhancement. The proposal further makes provisions which would allow for the other multiple uses of the public lands, but with some adjustments, revisions and restrictions. I believe that this is an extremely important effort, that, if successful, would be of great benefit to Nevada's sportsmen and wildlife. In order for the proposal to the successful it will take the support of all of you, and I hope that we can count on that. You will be hearing more detail on this in the near future.

Please don't forget our upcoming annual fund raising banquet to be held at the Atlantis Hotel on May 17. Come enjoy dinner and the evening with us and help raise funds to protect and enhance our special desert wetlands.

William A Molini, President, NWA





# BELOW THE SURFACE

by Darren Hamrey



**D**uck hunting culture has its ins and outs. There is a hierarchy, it seems, in most duck hunter's minds about the importance or prestige of each species, or the process by which it was harvested. Some hunters pick their ducks, while others breast theirs. As far as table fare is concerned, some hunters will swear that certain species taste, well, less than satisfying...usually referring to them as tasting like "mud." Now, I am not an expert in the field of mud tasting but would venture to guess that NO duck actually tastes like mud.

Some "unethical" types will shoot ducks off the water, while others would not lower themselves to do the same. There are those who are "Mallard Purists", and those who aren't. Certain species in the duck world are frowned upon within duck hunting culture. Let's see, the word "spoonie" comes to mind, not to mention bufflehead and ruddy, and please don't mention that M-word, "MERGANSER."

Mallards are generally considered "King" and all other puddlers find their rank somewhere below that. Why this is, I do not know. I suppose it has something to do with old traditions handed down to us from those places considered to be the "Meccas" of duck hunting. Who knows, maybe it is because mallards are the most plentiful duck, the one we see at the park, or the one we most identify with. Whatever the case may be, waterfowlers have their opinions and are completely entitled to them, whatever the reasoning behind them may be.

Though I love shooting mallards in backwater potholes, or slamming big bunches of teal in the marsh, I tend to be a bit partial to what lies below the surface. What I mean by that is, the ducks that lie below the surface. I'm talking about "Divers", those ducks that spend a good portion of their lives sifting through the underwater goodies. And since I've already established that waterfowlers are

entitled to their opinions, please allow me to share mine.

Though I realize that most hunters would pass on diver ducks or simply shoot them as a last resort, I prefer them. I don't know why I get just a little more excited when I know divers are approaching, but I do. Maybe it's that vision of bluebills bent into the wind, like the painting so many of us have seen before, or the speed of an approaching flock of redheads that gets me. Whatever the case, I get torqued up when it's "Diver Time."

From here on out, I'm going to do my "ranking" of divers. Nothing besides my personal preference, either out of excitement, beauty, or rarity, has determined where the following divers are ranked.

8<sup>th</sup> - Last Place Award – Goes to the Ruddy Duck. The Ruddy is pretty bland looking (in the Winter), almost never flies, and doesn't provide much meat on the table. However, on rare occasions, flocks of Rudds will take flight and can make for some pretty exciting gunning opportunities. Rudds can be found in marshes, backwater, and open water. I choose the Ruddy as my last choice of diver to shoot.

7<sup>th</sup> Place – The Merganser. Now, I'm generalizing here by lumping all three merganser species into one, however, as separate species they might rank differently. I would rank the three sub-species as follows: 1 – Red-breasted, simply because they are very rare in this part of the country, 2 – Hooded, because they are absolutely beautiful, almost wood duck like, and 3 – Common, for just that, they are fairly common. Mergansers tend to congregate around river systems, but are occasional visitors to larger bodies of water.

6<sup>th</sup> Place – I'm going to go with the Redhead. Although I figure most hunters would rank the Redhead a bit higher than 6<sup>th</sup>, I've had the opportunity to harvest many Redheads over the years. So, placing them 6<sup>th</sup> is purely statistical. Redheads are big, fast, and beautiful and readily

decoy under the right conditions. Redheads tend to be found over big water and are found in large numbers in marshes on occasion.

5<sup>th</sup> Place – Bluebill (Scaup). My experience with Bluebills is that it's very seldom that I get into a big flock like they do in the movies, usually just a single or a small group. In addition, it seems that shooting one in full plumage is something of a rarity. I rank them higher than Redheads because they are much more rare in my experience, not because they are any more exciting. Bluebills seem to be more of a marsh type diver.

4<sup>th</sup> Place – The Ole Ring-neck! The Ring-necked Duck is a unique diver. He is more often times found in backwater, where you'd be more likely to find Mallards or Wood Ducks. Although the Ring-neck and the Bluebill are often mistaken for one another, I find that the Ring-neck has a sleekness to him that makes him rank a bit higher. Coupled with the maroon ring around his neck, and his defined bill coloration, I find that the Ring-neck trumps the bluebill in beauty.

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Mr. Big Buff! The Bufflehead is "hands down" one of my favorite ducks to shoot. But once again, I ranked him 3<sup>rd</sup> strictly over statistics. I have harvested many Buffs throughout my time in the duck blind, and plan to harvest many more, but cannot say the same for the next two ducks in the ranking. The Bufflehead boasts the prettiest head among North American waterfowl in my opinion. He is fast, acrobatic, and is ready to decoy at a moments notice. The first duck I ever shot and the first duck I ever mounted were both Buffleheads.

2<sup>nd</sup> Place – The 2<sup>nd</sup> place buckle has to go to the Common Goldeneye. I'd rank the Barrow's but it does not occur in this region enough to make the ranking. There is something about a white bird that gets me excited. Whether it's a Snow Goose, a Pintail, a Bufflehead, a Spoonie, a Widge-





eon, or a Goldeneye, when I see that white approaching I just get all fired up inside. The Goldeneye is a gorgeous bird. His white body, shadowed by a deep black, and accented with a deep green head, makes him almost as if an artist created him. Though the Buff and the Goldie could be ranked about evenly, I have to give the Goldie a higher ranking out of rarity.

Numero Uno, The Big Cheese, The Head Honcho, The King – 1st Place Award – I was a strange little kid. Instead of playing video games, I would've rather sat at the library and study books about ducks. I re-

member the first time I saw a picture of a Canvasback. It was like I had fallen in love! I have had a love affair with Canvasbacks since I was 8 years old and still do. I remember my Old Man telling me about the Can he shot, and about the other one he missed when his gun misfired. I just thought they were the coolest ducks. Fortunately, after 21 long years of hunting I finally shot my first. Unfortunately, It was not a mature drake, however, I have shot a couple since then that were. The Canvasback takes me back to the market days, and back to the Native Americans that built Tule decoys. He is big, beau-

tiful, fast, and seems to carry an almost "royal" sense about him. I choose the Can as number 1 because that 8 year old kid still lives inside of me.

So there you have it. One man's quest to determine a hierarchy of diver ducks among a sea of those who would rather not shoot them. So, the next time that flock of divers passes over your decoys and into the decoys of the hunter in the distance, if you hear shooting, it might be me!





# HISTORY—D-LINE CANAL

by Norm Saake

**F**or the first thirty years following the creation of the Stillwater Wildlife Management Area/Refuge (WMA) in 1948, most of the water coming down the Lower Carson River to the location of Sagouspi Dam, flowed out onto the Carson Sink and evaporated. A small portion of this water was used by a few downstream water users and did create some wetlands on the old Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, also known as the Battleground wetlands. Over-time, the dikes on this refuge were broken and most water was just wasted on the dry sink bed. For a number of years, there had been a small earthen canal that could deliver water to Stillwater WMA via Indian Lakes, but the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District (TCID) was reluctant to use the canal during the non-irrigation season because doing so would cause too many weeds to grow in the canal the following year making water deliveries difficult. In addition this old ditch had very small limited water delivery capacity.

Because water reaching the lower Carson River at Sagouspi Dam was some of the highest quality available to Stillwater and

because of the sheer volume of water being wasted, a proposal was submitted to the TCID that would construct the largest concrete lined ditch on the Newlands Project from Sagouspi Dam to Indian Lakes. In 1983, a grant of over \$500,000.00 was provided by the Max Fleishmann Foundation for the construction of the concrete lining of the existing D-Line canal and a new earthen canal that bypassed most of Indian Lakes and delivered water more efficiently directly to the west boundary of the main Stillwater Marsh. Through negotiations, a formal agreement was signed in 1984 between the Board of Directors of TCID and the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) for the enlarging and concrete lining of the D-Line canal. TCID agreed that any excess water reaching Sagouspi Dam, that was not needed to meet downstream water rights, would be delivered to Stillwater through the new concrete delivery system.

The concrete-lined canal was designed to be able to deliver a maximum of 180 cubic feet per second of prime water directly to the Indian Lakes bypass canal where it would then flow to the existing primary de-

livery east-west Lead Lake Bypass canal system, and Navy Cabin Drain through the historic Stillwater Marsh. This existing Lead Lake Bypass canal had been constructed in 1977 by NDOW with funds provided by federal drought relief grant and the Navy Cabin Drain had been constructed in the 1950's as a joint project between NDOW and the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The combination of the D-Line and two other existing canal systems provided a means of delivering very high quality water from the Carson River directly to each individual wetland unit in the historic north marsh without having to fill almost any other upstream unit. Pintail Bay was the only wetland unit that didn't have its own individual delivery point. This system allowed wetland managers provide large volumes of fresh water to which ever unit they desired when excess water was available down the Carson River.

The D-Line Canal system and the agreement worked well until the late 1990's when the agreement failed to be adhered to completely and much of the of the water reaching Sagouspi Dam was again being







released to the Carson Sink. Since 1995, water flowing downstream has averaged 30,000 acre-feet per year and has ranged between 4,700 AF in 2001 to 123,000 AF in 1997 (see figure). The canal has a capacity of well over 6,000 acre-feet per month, and in all but 16 of the 204 months during this period, the D-Line could have handled all excess water reaching Sagouspi Dam.

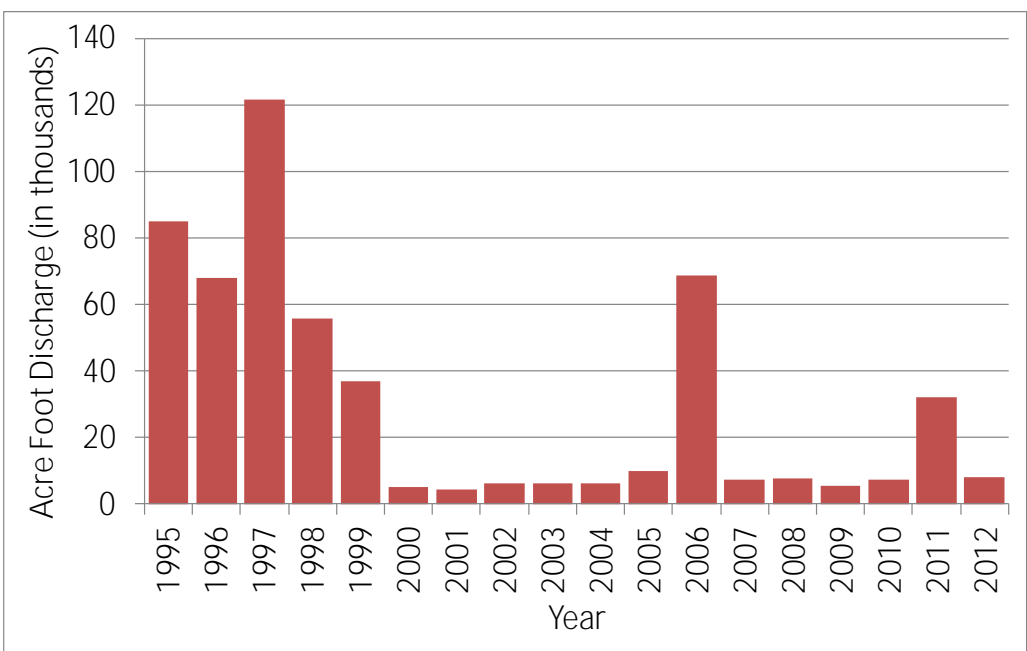
Currently the Fish and Wildlife Service is paying \$17.00 per acre-foot annually for the water rights it has purchased in Lahontan Valley for the Stillwater NWR. This fee is based upon that amount charged to all water right holders in the Newlands Project and covers the operation and maintenance of the running irrigation project. During the period between 1995 and 2012, had the D-Line Canal been operated to maximize the water delivery to the Refuge of excess water in the Lower Carson River, Stillwater could have potentially received an annual average of about 13,800 ac-feet of water valued at over \$200,000.00 per year. Additionally, if this amount were to be made available to Stillwater on a reliable basis, it would mean that the Federal Government would not have to purchase over 4,600 additional water-righted acres of agricultural land to maintain the refuge.

This would save the federal government, just in purchase costs alone, well over 23 million dollars and leave more acres in agriculture production in Lahontan Valley.

As a sideline, during this period of record, the three highest delivery months in the Lower Carson River for potential delivering into the D-Line Canal to Stillwater were in May, June, and July.

These are three of the four highest wetland water demand months.

Based upon these numbers, it appears that it would be beneficial to the FWS, TCID, and local farmers to work diligently together to maximize the use of the water delivery capability of the D-Line Canal to Stillwater instead of letting most of this water go to waste on the Carson Sink.



**This graph shows the acre foot discharge by year at Sagouspi Dam**

# NEVADA SANDHILL CRANES

by Dan Collins—US Fish and Wildlife Service

As the smallest population of migratory sandhill cranes, the Lower Colorado River Valley Population (LCRV) has uncertainty associated with its breeding origins due to intermingling and close proximity to other western sandhill crane populations. Currently, Pacific Flyway population management of the LCRV population is driven by abundance on the wintering grounds (i.e., Cibola National Wildlife Refuge and Imperial Valley of California). However, only ~30% of the wintering population can be accounted for on its known breeding range in northeast Nevada.

A group of biologists wrote a proposal titled “Lower Colorado River Valley Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*) Winter and Summer Distribution” and submitted it to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Webless Migratory Game Bird Program in 2012. The primary purpose of this study is to determine the breeding and wintering distribution of LCRV sandhill cranes in order to establish the geographic area within which conservation measures can be applied. Specific objectives to be addressed are: (1) Delineate and identify use areas outside of northeast Nevada, (2) Describe winter movements and habitat needs, (3) Determine habitat selection during spring migration, (4) Provide valuable information on the extent to which the LCRVP intermixes on the breeding grounds with Central Valley Population and Rocky Mountain Population of sandhill cranes, (5) Identify future wintering habitat needs, given climate change. We were fortunate enough to receive funding for the project which went into effect in 2013. Supplies were ordered, a graduate student was hired, and the capture of birds was scheduled for January 2014 when the birds arrived in mass to the wintering grounds.

On January 5<sup>th</sup> I began driving west from Albuquerque, NM to my first stop, Cibola National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Along the way, I stopped in Phoenix to pick up Courtenay from the airport. Courtenay is the master’s student on this project under Dr. Blake Grisham at Texas Tech University. Also making the trip west was John Vradenburg, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist from Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. John heads the banding efforts on the refuge and is working on a similar sandhill crane project with me on Bosque. After picking up Courtenay, we finished the drive and met John at Cibola NWR in SW Arizona where we coordinated trapping efforts with Steven Rimer, Cibola’s refuge biologist. We had enough time to set up two



rocket nets in fields off the refuge tour loop and with our nets in place, we drove to visit Gary Ivey with the International Crane Foundation and Tom Anderson refuge biologist at Sonny Bono Salton Sea NWR in the Imperial Valley of California. We gave them their share of GPS Satellite Transmitters (herein PTTs) and rocket net equipment and discussed our capture strategy with Tom and Gary. After we discussed our plans, we made our trip back to Cibola. There was an air of nervousness and excitement on the return drive to Cibola. We had given ourselves two weeks to capture 10 cranes per refuge, a feat deemed unlikely for mere mortals.

January 8<sup>th</sup> 6:15 a.m. it’s go time! We all met at the Cibola NWR headquarters for a short capture/safety briefing and then headed out to stage and get in our specified scouting and capture locations. Courtenay and I had the honor of cramming ourselves against a ditch bank so we could watch the cranes in the field and report back to HQ to fire the net. Once we were settled we all were in “hurry up and wait” mode. In my experience, capturing sandhill cranes you “wait” around for hours on end for it only to be interrupted by 10 minutes of excitement, but nonetheless it’s an exciting 10 minutes. Courtenay and I hunkered down in our cozy ditch, and around 7:00 a.m. the birds lifted off the roost and began flying north towards us in the field. Cranes were trickling into the alfalfa fields just south of the corn fields where we put the nets. Typically, cranes will land outside of the area they want to feed and get comfortable with their surroundings before they make what we call the “march” towards the feeding line/area. After about an hour, the cranes began the “march” towards the cut corn field and right towards our net. Courtenay and I were in constant communication with the rest of the capture crew, so

they knew when to fire the nets. As the cranes approached our nets Courtenay and I had to remind ourselves of the angle we set rockets (the rockets propel the net with the approximate force of 40 muzzleloaders firing off at once!). We didn’t want any birds too close to the net to avoid harming individuals or having to make a “Hail Mary” attempt at catching birds. There is an optimal area of the net we call the “sweet spot” and is where we will capture the majority of birds. The cranes are now in the corn field and getting really close to the “sweet spot.” I get on the horn with John and the ignition point and tell them to “charge.” However, when I told them to “charge” they also fired the nets with birds just on the periphery, resulting in the birds flying away. We chalked that up to a head scratcher, regrouped, and reset the nets for another day.

The next day was similar, up and meet at 6:15 am, Courtenay and I tucked into the ditch side, birds flying at 7 am and making the “march” by 8 am. However, this time communications went flawlessly: “Charge, Charged, ok we have about 10 in the “sweet spot”, Fire, boom!” After the nets were fired it was a mad dash to the corn. As we ran towards the net it was boiling so to speak with cranes, 13 in all. After John and I ensured the rockets fired properly and it was safe, we all started working cranes out from under the net. As you can imagine, you have to be very mindful of their bills and legs. We placed the birds in burlap bags, identified 5 adult cranes to receive a PTT and band, with the rest receiving just a band. We decided to only put out 5 of the 10 PTTs for Cibola NWR to get a broader sample of birds that use the refuge. However, the following 4.5 days had us second guessing why we decided to not put all 10 out at once. Over the course of these 4.5 days we learned that it takes patience, a lot of sun flower



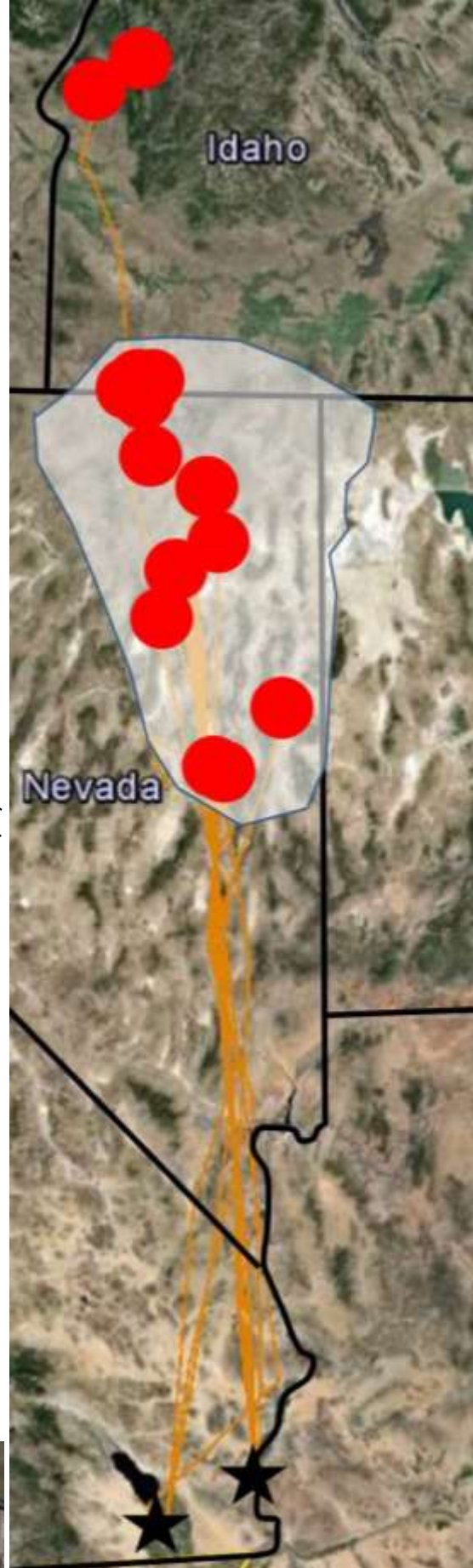
seeds (me), and not forgetting snacks and water while sitting in a blind for over 8 hours a day while in the Sonoran desert (cough.....Courtenay). I learned the term “hangry” because of this. I felt guilty for putting Courtenay in that situation, so the day following I took her into town and bought her a fancy Starbucks Coffee (in the meantime, Dr. Grisham was enjoying the luxuries of city life while he taught class at TTU). That afternoon Courtenay and I watched 2 separate fields, and low and behold the cranes were making the “march” towards Courtenay, and, I for one, was happy she wasn’t “hangry.” Courtenay was now patient after enjoying a “frappe mocha latte cappuccino espresso” (or similar drink) and was willing to watch nets for 4.5 days. Her patience was rewarded, and she made the call and fired the net at the exact moment. She captured 15 birds, allowing us to put out the remaining 5 PTTs on adult cranes. It was a job well done by Courtenay, who came a long way from the start of trapping. Her new skill set would serve her well while over in the Imperial Valley of California.

With all 10 PTTs deployed at Cibola NWR and equipment out of the fields it was time to head over and help out Gary and Tom in the Imperial Valley. We met Gary south of Brawley, CA, at a nearby granary. After watching how the birds were using the granary, Courtenay and I had a similar mindset and made a pitch to Gary to change the net setup. The next morning we arrived before the birds were off the roost and got ourselves situated (ensuring that no person was “hangry”). The birds came into the granary and made the “march” towards the net. However, something was making them nervous. They walked all around the sweet spot, and they ultimately were too nervous and left the area. We made adjustments to the area, deployed another net to give us power with numbers. We got a quick bite to eat (avoiding “hangry” pangs was the theme of the trip) and returned to the granary before the birds came back for their afternoon feed. The birds started trickling into the granary around 3pm and began their “march” towards our nets around 3:30 pm. The adjustments worked. We had birds all around the “sweet spot” and ready to commit. Courtenay and Tom were going to call the shot but couldn’t quite see the back end of the “sweet spot” so there was some hesitation in making the call. Eventually Courtenay, Tom and I decided it was time to fire the net, Boom! Off to the races and much like that second rocket net shot at Cibola NWR the net was boiling with cranes, another great call by Courtenay. Within 24 hours of watching the birds in this area we had 11 under the net. Again we decided to put out 5 PTTs from this group of birds and let Tom and his crew catch

the remaining birds on Sonny Bono Salton Sea NWR. Tom was successful catching 1 bird using noose snares and we will deploy the other 4 PTTs next year.

You might be wondering, now that you have 16 PTTs out collecting data, what is next? Well the short version is we sit back and monitor the PTTs and download the satellite data on a weekly basis so we can run formal analysis for each objective.

To date 15 of the 16 deployed PTTs are collecting data on a daily basis. We have received > 3000 usable GPS locations. On average 160 locations per bird from Cibola and 126 locations per bird from the Imperial Valley. Areas of use on the wintering grounds are agroecosystems around trapping locations, the NWRs, and CRIT (Colorado River Indian Tribes) lands to the north of Blythe, CA. Per the last download (17 April 2014), all birds had migrated off of the wintering areas and are either currently in NE Nevada or Idaho. Once moving north many birds flew over the bright lights of Vegas (in this instance, what happened in Vegas did not stay in Vegas), followed by a brief flight over the eastern boundary of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge to stage in and around the Wayne E Kirch WMA. Many of the birds have settled into the Ruby Valley as expected, others are east of Humboldt National Forest and north of Swamp Cedar Natural Area, as well as in and around Lund, NV, and currently 6 cranes are in Idaho. While all the crane movement and location data is important, the 4 cranes in Duck Valley of south-central Idaho, and 2 cranes north of Boise, Idaho are extremely important due to them being on the fringe or in unknown areas of distribution. The 2 northern cranes are currently using the area around Cambridge – Midvale-Indian Valley, Idaho while the other bird has settled down on the north end of Lake Cascade south of McCall, Idaho. The movement and location data collected on these 2 birds in Idaho will begin to help answer many of the questions we have about LCRV birds and how we can better monitor and assess the population. It also has generated many new questions and brought new conservation partners to the table in order to work towards greater conservation efforts for LCRV Cranes as well as sandhill cranes in the western landscape.



This map shows marking location with stars, lines are trails, dots are current locations, and the shaded area is where Lower Colorado River Cranes have been believed to nest. Photo on left is a satellite transmitter on a cranes legs.

# WOOD DUCK EVENT— March 29 Fallon Convention Center

by Chris Nicolai

**T**he fifth annual wood duck dinner was held on Saturday, March 29; the next event will be March 21, 2015. The committee was made up of Kent Burroughs, Bob and Mary Joseph, Chris Nicolai, Walker Price, Joe Sabini, and Ben Sedinger. Undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Nevada's student chapter of the wildlife society helped set up and lead field trips. This event has always been different is that primarily, this has been an event to share information about the 12 year project. This has been important for the harvest experiment where bag limits have been changed. We changed the date for this event from the late summer to the spring as we are not looking to reduce daily bag limits any longer and figured the springtime would allow for field trips. Another key part of discussions has been why we band ducks in the winter and why reporting bands is so much more than just making maps. One key message we send about making maps from banding data is that if that was the goal, we could have stopped banding years ago. Instead, we need band reporting to let us know which birds were shot. Were they big fat birds? Were they nest parasitizing hens? Were they breeding ducks? Were they ducks passing through Fallon from northern breeding areas, locals, or northward moving ducks from southern breeding areas? For this event, we had 7 goals: 1) Continue sharing information about the event, 2) raise money for the project, 3) see how many people could band a duck, 4) see how many nests attendees could help collect data on, 5) have kids help build nesting boxes, 6) encourage wildlife art to kids, and 7) encourage local hunters to report their bands at higher rates.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 2014 WOOD DUCK EVENT



1) Continue sharing information—157 people attended including 43 kids.



2) Raise money for project—\$9000 profit will help provide gas money, utilities, tracking devices, and genetic and mercury sampling to the project.



3) Fifty people helped to catch 25 wood ducks and 2 mallards in 2 rocket net captures. Everyone got to hold a duck.



4) 32 nesting boxes were checked by 70 people in which 5 new nests were found.



5) The 45 kids helped build 15 new nesting boxes to be installed in the Fallon area.



6) Almost all of the kids got to paint wood duck cut-outs.

7) A special band raffle was announced after the close of the 2013/14 waterfowl season. A total of 342 wood duck bands were brought to the raffle. About 50 of these bands had not been reported previously. This was a lot of missing data which will be very beneficial to the project so that human caused versus natural mortality can be differentiated. \$1000 cash was the prize, distributed among 6 pulls. We will be doing this raffle one more time at next year's dinner on March 21, 2015. None of the bands entered in the 2014 dinner can be entered in the 2015 raffle. Hunters are super important to this project and we'd like to say thanks to the hunters who came in with bands!





# THANK YOU TO ALL THE SPONSORS OF THE WOOD DUCK EVENT!

Amy's Photography  
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# NEVADA WATERFOWL ASSOCIATION

**27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FUNDRAISER BANQUET**  
**Atlantis Hotel Casino      Saturday    May 17, 2014**

**FEATURE EVENT OF THE EVENING --SPECIAL AUCTION ITEM--**  
**2014 NEVADA HERITAGE ANTELOPE TAG**

**Auction and raffle prizes include rifles, shotguns, Golden retriever puppy, IGT poker machine, decoys and many more.**

**No Host Cocktails @ 5:30 p.m. Dinner @ 7 p.m.**  
**Custom Buffet featuring : BBQ Ribs, Chicken Garni & Prime Ribs**

**Games -- Raffle -- Silent Auction -- Auction**

**Advanced Raffle Tickets packets includes extra tickets ( \$100, \$300 & \$500 Packets)**  
**are available from Dave Rice, NWA Business Manager—(775) 853-8331 Until noon,**  
**Wednesday, May 14, 2014**

**BANQUET TICKETS --\$80 ADULTS    \$40 YOUTH (under 16)**

**Tables seating 10 are available for \$800.**

**Banquet Tickets & Tables are available from Dave Rice, NWA Business Manager or**  
**from any Committee Member**

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