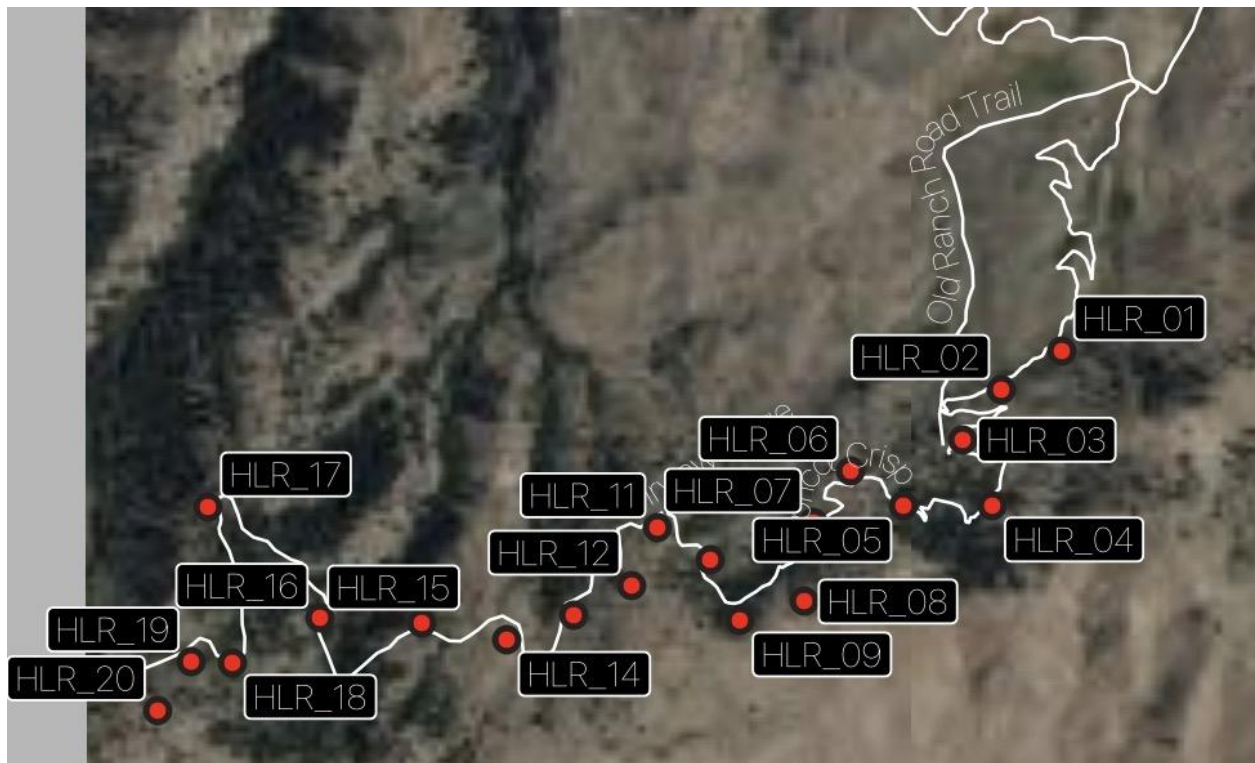


NCWAS Bluebird Trail Summary 2025

By Joe Veverka

During the 2025 breeding season NCWAS had 5 volunteers monitoring 2 of 3 Bluebird trails. The Moses Coulee and Horse Lake Trails were monitored from mid-April and early May respectively, through the end of July when breeding activity ceased. The Cashmere Canyons Trail was not monitored in 2025.

The Horse Lake Trail is comprised of 20 nestboxes on the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust's Horse Lake Reserve beginning in the Apricot Orchard area and primarily following the Old Ranch Rd from 2700ft-3500ft elevation ending near the western boundary of Horse Lake Reserve. Boxes are space about 200meters apart.



Nineteen of the 20 Horse Lake boxes experienced some kind of use in 2025. Six boxes fledged at least 20 Western Bluebirds. Another box fledged 6 Mountain Bluebirds. Two boxes fledged 10 House Wrens, and 2 others fledged 11 Mountain Chickadees. Box 5 fledged 3 Western Bluebirds and later 5 mountain chickadees! In total 10 boxes fledged 47 young birds. Only 1 box went completely unused while others had initiated nests or house wren dummy nests. House Wrens will often fill boxes with sticks to prevent other cavity nesters from using them. There were only 2 active House Wren nests but 8 dummy nests. Western Bluebirds, the primary target species for this trail, mostly used boxes 10-20, the exception being Box 5. This use of higher elevation boxes was expected as Western Bluebirds like open ponderosa forest like the forest at the higher reaches of Horse Lake Reserve. See table below for summary box success.

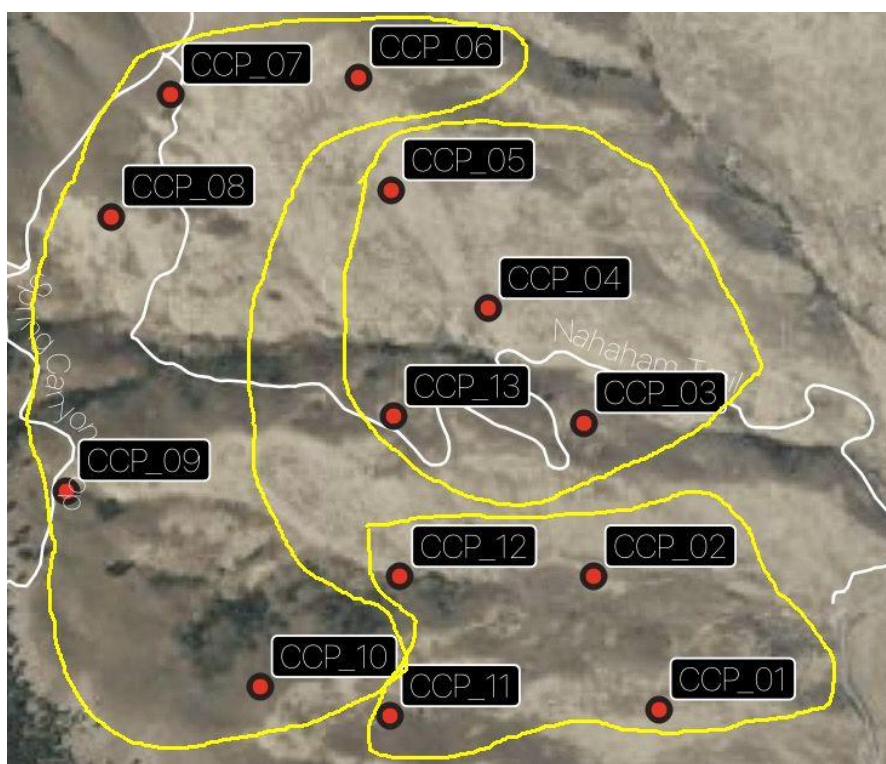
The Moses Coulee Trail consists of 16 boxes spaced approximately 200 meters apart along Olson Rd through The Nature Conservancy's Moses Coulee Preserve in Douglas County. Boxes are situated in shrub-steppe and grassland habitats between 1600ft and 2200ft elevation suitable for Mountain Bluebirds.



Five boxes were used successfully by Mountain Bluebirds fledging 21 young. Mountain Bluebirds are the primary target species for this trail as Western Bluebirds tend to like the aforementioned open ponderosa habitats, not sagebrush. Throughout 2025 9 boxes experienced some kind of use. Tree Swallows attempted to use 2 boxes, but the nests failed. Tree Swallows were most interested in the eastern boxes along this route. I suspect

this is in part due to the proximity to irrigated agricultural fields approximately 200meters east of MC01. Irrigated fields likely provide great foraging opportunities for Tree Swallows during the rearing season. Unlike the Horse Lake Trail, House Wrens do not plug up boxes along this route. They are only found in riparian corridors at Moses Coulee and don't nest in open sagebrush. See table below for summary box success.

Finally, I would like to mention the Cashmere Canyons Trail on Chelan-Douglas Land Trust's Cashmere Canyons Preserve a few miles north of the Cashmere. This trail was the first trail established but is the most challenging to monitor. We are looking for volunteers in 2026 to help monitor all three bluebird trails, particularly Cashmere Canyons. It will be divided into 3 routes, see below. If you are interested in helping, please email Joe Veverka at joe_veverka@yahoo.com.



Summary Table

	Horse Lake Trail-20 boxes	Moses Coulee Trail-16 boxes
Boxes Used	19	7
Boxes Fledging Western Bluebirds	6 boxes - 20 fledglings	
Boxes Fledging Mountain Bluebirds	1 box - 6 fledglings	5 boxes - 21 fledglings
Mountain Chickadees	2 boxes - 11 fledglings	
House Wrens	2 boxes - 10 fledglings	
Total Successful Boxes	10 boxes - 47 fledglings	5 boxes - 21 fledglings