

# **Mt St Helens Wildlife Area**

## **Final Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC) Charter**

**November 15, 2017**

### **Introduction**

Mt St Helens Wildlife Area is one of 33 wildlife areas (WLA) owned and/or managed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Each of these areas is guided by a Wildlife Area Management Plan. Over the next 10 years, these plans will be revised to reflect current conditions and updated objectives to support the agency's mission: *To preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.*

The plans will be developed with input from the public and interested stakeholders, including a Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC). This charter includes the purpose and responsibilities of the Mt St Helens WAAC, and agency staff in the development of the Wildlife Area Management Plan.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the advisory committee is to provide input for the development of the new Mt St Helens Wildlife Area Management Plan including Nellie Corser, Duck Lake, Two Forks, Cedar Creek and Jenny Creek, Eagle Island, Nelson, Fisher Island, Abernathy Creek, White Island, Altoona, Carnine, Hall Road, Canal Road, Gardner, Hoffstadt, Mt St Helens (Mud Flow), and Merrill Lake.

### **Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC) Membership**

WAAC members represent a range of user and stakeholder groups who have interests in activities on the wildlife area. Represented groups include hunters, birders, fish and wildlife conservationists, land and water managers, local governments, mountain bikers, and wildlife-related recreationists.

A roster of current members is attached.

### **WAAC Role & Responsibilities**

The role of the advisory committee is to provide public and other stakeholders' perspectives in WDFW wildlife area planning and management activities.

Responsibilities include:

- Review information, discuss issues with staff and other committee members, and provide input during the development of the wildlife area plan and biannual updates
- Share information and collect feedback from the larger groups they represent, to share with the rest of the committee
- Attending all WAAC meetings (Note: the staff will work with the committee to identify times/dates that work best for committee members)
- Be able to communicate about agency goals and wildlife area activities outside of WAAC meetings

- Act in an advisory capacity, providing input to staff that will be considered in the department's decision-making process
- Acknowledge and accept that the process will provide only limited time to delve into all wildlife area issues
- Participate in other WLA planning public outreach opportunities such as public meetings about this process
- Register on the WDFW Volunteer website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/volunteer/>

### **WDFW Wildlife Area Planning Team Role & Responsibilities**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Wildlife Area (WLA) Planning Team consists of staff from WDFW headquarters in Olympia, the Mt St Helens Wildlife Area, from the regional office in Ridgefield.

The role of WDFW staff relative to the advisory committee is to facilitate effective WAAC input in wildlife area planning and management activities. WDFW will develop the new Mt St Helens Wildlife Area Management Plan, and will seek the committee's advice and guidance about plan objectives, proposed actions and planned management activities.

Responsibilities include:

- Develop productive agendas that clearly outline the desired outcomes of each meeting
- Facilitate effective meetings and dialogue with advisory committee members
- Develop materials and work products for WAAC review
- Distribute materials one week in advance of WAAC meetings
- Develop and distribute WAAC meeting summaries
- Engage in discussion, answer questions and be transparent about department processes, policies and decision-making, as appropriate
- Post agendas and meeting materials on the Mt St Helens Wildlife Area Advisory webpage
- Consider and utilize WAAC input in making sound and informed decisions

### **WAAC Operating Guidelines**

The following guidelines are recommended for productive discussion and forward progress. Committee members are expected to:

- Attend all WAAC meetings
- In addition to local views, bring a regional perspective to the table
- Outside of WAAC meetings, represent your personal views and/or views of your respective agency or organization, not views of entire WAAC
- As necessary, coordinate the participation of WAAC alternate members when not able to attend meetings, briefing and prep alternates in advance
- At WAAC meetings, discuss issues and concerns in a productive manner
  - All members are expected and encouraged to participate
  - Everyone's perspective is valuable

- One person talks at a time
- Refrain from side conversations
- Stay focused on meeting purpose
- Keep comments short – 30 second big ideas
- Keep an open mind
- Turn off cell phones

**Public Comment**

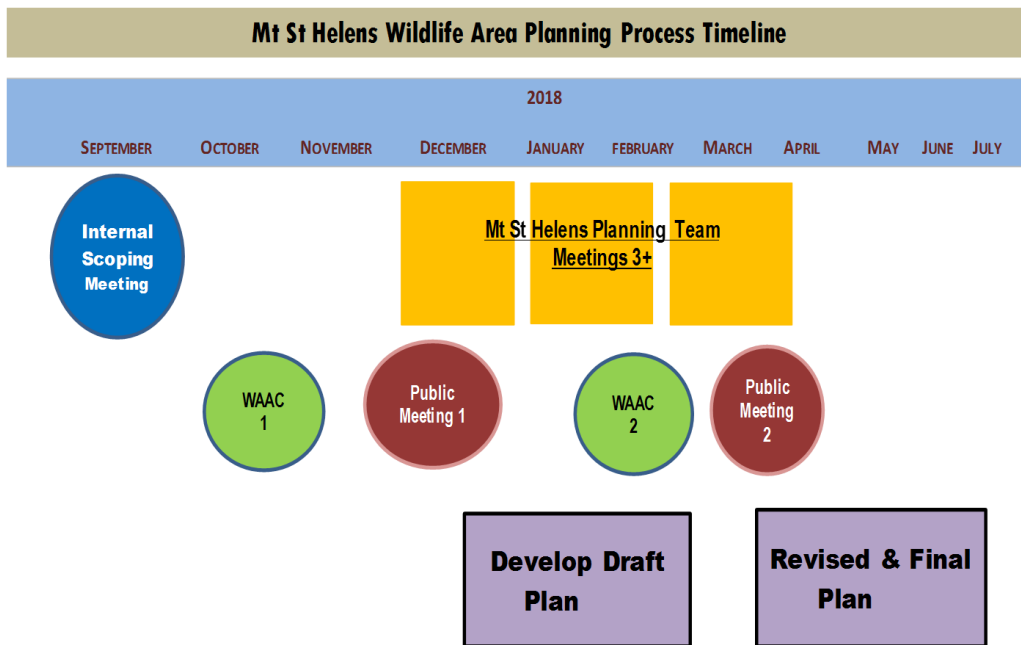
The purpose of WAAC meetings is primarily for committee discussion. This can be supplemented and enhanced with input from other members of the public and interested parties. WAAC meetings open to the public and an opportunity for brief public input will be provided at each meeting.

**WAAC Decision-Making**

While not a voting group, the WAAC will provide valuable input to the process. Through facilitation, the project team will solicit and listen to input, identify and understand the root of divergent opinions, and work towards group agreement. While consensus is not required, the group will have more impact on shaping the plan if they are able to reach agreement.

**Meeting Schedule**

The advisory committee is expected to meet at least two times to complete the new plan. See estimated timeline below.



Mt St Helens Wildlife Area Advisory Committee Member List 2017

USFS - Mt St Helens Monument	Carol Chandler
Rocky Mt Elk Foundation, Chapter President	Dan Howell
Community member	Darcy Michem
Back Country Horsemen	Jim Andersen
Community/ volunteer coordinator	Roger Wallis
Audubon	Russ Kastberg
Cowlitz County Weed Board	Angelica Velazquez
Landowner, neighbor	Mark Smith