

Okanogan Valley Wildlife Area Advisory Committee  
Scoping Meeting  
February 11, 2015

**Purpose of the meeting:** To review the planning process with WAAC members and identify priority topics the plan should address. Jeanne, Justin and Jim presented information about the planning process and next steps for the plan. They confirmed the Public Scoping meeting:

- Public Scoping meeting
  - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
  - Okanogan PUD conference room

**Attendees:** See list on page 5

The following are the items discussed during the meeting related to the Okanogan Valley Wildlife Areas plan. The first section includes topics that apply to the overall plan. This is followed by topics that apply to individual units and finally a section with suggestions for implementing the plan.

### **Issues That Apply To the Overall Plan**

#### General

- Build flexibility into the plan for new legislative mandates
- Look at ways to generate revenue for the county
- Need better communication/coordination between agencies for matters such as weed control
- Need to have a robust, sustainable Rx burn program
- Access (5)
  - Would like to see more Motorized/non-motorized access
- Include public access when purchasing conservation easements

#### Funding

- Funding for post-fire restoration
- Funding to provide feed for upland birds to private citizens
- Increased funding for complex management
- Identify opportunities for funding to benefit wildlife

#### Grazing

- Management of grazing/timing (3)

#### Forest Management

- Continued forest restoration/habitat improvements

### Weed control & prevention (6)

- Noxious weeds and invasive species prevention
- Better communication on agency weed control efforts to inform the public
- Continue puncture vine control work

### Agriculture

- Increase sharecropping/agriculture activities
- Make sharecropping more attractive for lessees
- Grow specific grains for specific birds
- Use cover crops for sharecropping
- Better flexibility on crop harvest (realistic), i.e., taking first cutting of alfalfa after July 1, to avoid sharp-tailed grouse in alfalfa field, results in lower quality hay.
- Incentivize agricultural production

### Wildlife

- Issue more White-tail permits to reduce population, because they are expanding their range into mule deer habitat.
- Increase upland bird opportunities/increase populations
- Wildlife protection during logging/burning

### Habitat

- Manage for habitat mosaics
- Increase better vegetative structure – reference to minimizing sod forming grasses in favor of bunchgrasses to increase mobility of upland bird chicks

## **Issues That Apply to Individual Areas**

### Eder

- Rx Burning big sage/shrub steppe areas for restoration
- Access – look into ways to improve access points

### Chesaw

- More share-cropping
- Pursue FSA programs
- Hoary alyssum, it is now a Class B-designate with mandatory control required now, need to watch for it

### Pogue Mountain

- Look into access via BLM ownership to the south

### McLoughlin Falls

- Needs access only legal/authorized public access is by boat

### Buzzard Lake

- Forest health – need pre-commercial thinning and Rx burning

### Sinlahekin

- Continue with Sinlahekin Ecosystem Restoration Projects

### CWA

- Post-Carlton re-seeding effort

### Horse Spring Coulee

- Check on thistle – species unknown

### Carter Mountain

- North Pine Creek Access - enlarge

### Driscoll-Eyhott

- Access - bridge

## **Suggestions for Implementation**

- Include weed identification module in Master Hunter training
- Put weed ID posters at kiosks
- Sinlahekin/Carter Mountain
  - BCH trail signs
- Education
  - Field trips for school children
  - Senior Projects
    - Fire history
  - QR Scan
    - Weed ID
- Weed Control
  - Volunteers & school kids – weed pulls

The following were suggested as potential additions to the WAAC:

- Okanogan Highlands Alliance (OHA)
- Wild Turkey Federation
- Ruffed Grouse Society
- FNAWS or Wild Sheep Foundation or both– Bighorn sheep
- Oroville Chamber of Commerce
- Okanogan Tourism Council
- Pheasants for Ever

### Attendees

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