



# SHERMAN CREEK WILDLIFE AREA 2007 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife



## Land Management Summary

This is an update to the 2006 Sherman Creek Wildlife Area Management Plan ([http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife/areas/management\\_plans/pdfs/draft\\_sherman\\_creek\\_plan.pdf](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife/areas/management_plans/pdfs/draft_sherman_creek_plan.pdf)) that provides management direction for the Sherman Creek Wildlife Area located along the west side of Lake Roosevelt in the eastern foothills of the Kettle River Range. There are five parcels totaling 8,782 acres. The plan identifies needs and guides activities on the area based on the Washington Department of Fish and

Wildlife (WDFW) Mission of “Sound Stewardship of Fish and Wildlife” and its underlying statewide goals and objectives as they apply to local conditions.

Plans are updated annually as habitat and species conditions change, as new regulations and scientific knowledge develop, as public issues and concerns evolve, and as administration of wildlife areas change. This management plan update also includes 2006 accomplishments, new issues, new land management strategies and performance measures for 2007.

## Updates/Changes

In 2006 one significant land based change occurred on the wildlife area. A human caused wildfire burned approximately 500 acres on Bisbee Mountain. Steep terrain and windy conditions made initial control difficult; but the persistent efforts of fire crews and logistical support from WDFW staff prevented potentially catastrophic habitat losses.

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*Bisbee Mountain Fire at Sherman Creek Wildlife Area September 2006*

Changes to 2006 strategies:

**Agency Objective: Protect, restore and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitats.**

**1. Maintain big game populations:** Change the timeframe under strategy F to “Maintain existing developments annually; develop one new site every 2 years starting in 2008.”

**6. Protect and Manage Other Species:** Add “Timeframe: Ongoing” to strategies A and C. Change strategy B to “Protect the Golden Eagle nest site on Bisbee Mountain.” The current strategy is not compatible with agency management recommendations for Golden Eagles.

#### New Issues

The two upcoming timber sales have drawn some attention from the local public. Comments received thus far indicate a positive opinion that WDFW staff will be closely monitoring the progress of these activities to ensure the highest possible benefit to wildlife in accordance with objectives outlined in the management plan.

#### Major Stewardship Accomplishments

The WDFW state forester in cooperation with wildlife area and other program staff completed timber harvest prescriptions and other required documents for the Bisbee Mountain Fire Salvage sale and the Sherman Creek/Oak Creek PTR Exchange timber sale. Upon approval from

USFWS, harvest activities will likely begin some time in 2008. RMAP inventory and implementation was completed and roads were brought back to RMAP standards after the Bisbee Mountain fire. Weed management goals for control of Diffuse Knapweed and Dalmatian Toadflax were met in 2006.

**Status Report of 2006 Performance Measures**

Key performance measures are identified each year to monitor progress and identify any issues that might interfere with planned priority activities. This information will be used to delete, add or alter priority strategies for 2007.

<b>2006 Performance Measure</b>	<b>Status of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Explanation of Progress/ 2007 Related Activity/ Comments</b>
Work with WDFW forester and wildlife program staff in 2006 to ensure timely development of a plan for the upcoming timber sale.	Harvest prescriptions and other required documents prepared for 2 sales and sent to USFWS for approval.	Bisbee Mountain fire resulted in an additional timber salvage sale. Harvest activities for both sales to begin some time in 2008.
Improve at least one aspen stand in 2006.	Performance measures identified too late in the year to accomplish this in 2006.	Continue in 2007.
Mow 2 acres of forest openings to increase succulent forage.	Accomplished in 2006.	Identify new areas and continue in 2007.
Implement and monitor projects to show annual improvements to deer winter range.	Maintaining food plots and grass plantings improved forage availability for wintering deer.	Continue in 2007. Consider using seeding & spot burning to promote sprouting of ceanothus on the uplands.
Develop or improve 1 nesting/perching site or feeding area for Bald eagles annually.	Existing nest sites protected in 2006. Protection measures will be implemented during timber harvest.	Continue protection of existing sites but delete as an annual performance measure. See also "Updates/Changes" below.
Maintain/develop one spring or other water source annually	Existing developments maintained.	Continue in 2007. Change strategy to "develop one site every 2 years".
Expand open meadows by 2 acres and install 10 nest boxes for bluebirds each year	Not accomplished. Staff on other projects.	Continue in 2007.
Inventory and re-seed old farm fields with perennial vegetation to benefit game and non-game species.	Identified fields to be seeded.	Time did not allow further work, but will continue in 2007.

Appropriate weed control as outlined in the weed management plan.	Priority weed management goals met. Diffuse knapweed and Dalmatian Toadflax populations controlled or reduced.	Continue aggressive control measures of highest priority weed species. Examine practicality of goat weed control related to weed distribution and cost.
Work with the sharecropper to re-seed a portion of the alfalfa field each year over 6- year period.	Re-seeded 35 of 100 acres in 2006.	Continue in 2007.
5 acres of snag inventory and/or recruitment for Pileated Woodpecker habitat each year.	Not accomplished in 2006	Change strategy to “ongoing”. Prescription in the PTR timber sale will accomplish this over the next several years.
Conduct at least 1 project using volunteer or school groups for outreach and education.	Participated in the annual Water Festival outdoor education program for 4 <sup>th</sup> grade students.	Continue in 2007. Involve students in “hands on” habitat development project if time allows.



*Corn food plot next to the alfalfa field at Sherman Creek Wildlife Area  
2006*

### **New Strategies**

No new strategies were identified for 2007.

### **2007 Performance Measures**

Performance measures for the Sherman Creek Wildlife Area are listed below. Accomplishments and progress toward desired outcomes will be monitored and evaluated annually.

- 1) Monitor the progress of the upcoming timber sales to accomplish PHS and other management objectives specific to the Sherman Creek Wildlife Area. Explore the possibility of using timber sale receipts to fund unfunded strategies within this management plan.
- 2) Improve one aspen stand in 2007.

- 3) Mow 2 acres of forest openings to increase succulent forage.
- 4) Start ceanothus seeding and burning program in cooperation with other agencies to improve deer winter range.
- 5) Negotiate with the sharecropper to trade the agency share of the hay lease for a late (July 1<sup>st</sup>) first cutting of the alfalfa to reduce fawn mortality.
- 6) Document options for moose and elk management projects.
- 7) Maintain existing water developments including the upland developments, the hayfield pond and the irrigation diversion system.
- 8) Expand open meadows by 2 acres and install 10 nest boxes for bluebirds.
- 9) Re-seed one old agricultural field to beneficial perennial vegetation.
- 10) Appropriate weed control on the wildlife area, with focus on areas adjacent to roads. Meet the goals for 2007 outlined in the weed management plan. Concentrate control efforts on Diffuse Knapweed and Dalmatian Toadflax. Evaluate practicality of goat weed control. Review the year's weed control work, using reports generated, and compare effort and success to previous years' weed control activities.
- 11) Seed and maintain 5 acres of food plots.
- 12) Work with the sharecropper to cultivate and re-seed a portion of the alfalfa fields each year so the entire hay lease is on a maximum of a 6-year rotation.
- 13) Implement 5 acres of snag inventory and/or recruitment for Pileated woodpecker habitat each year.
- 14) Maintain current road closures and close additional roads that are unsafe for public use or negatively impact wildlife.
- 15) Continue pheasant and quail releases in 2007.
- 16) As habitat surveys are conducted and analyzed, determine general trend of habitat quality. If quality is declining, attempt to determine cause of decline and develop/implement strategies to improve habitat quality.
- 17) Conduct at least 1 project using volunteer or school groups for outreach and education.
- 18) Update plans as appropriate, including WA plan and all listed appendices.
- 19) Maintain all signs, parking areas and access sites.
- 20) Maintain current licenses and certifications required for staff.
- 21) Identify any capital project needs for the wildlife area.
- 22) Maintain current fire protection contracts.

### **Citizens Advisory Group Input**

A Citizens Advisory Group meeting was not held between the publishing of the draft plan and the plan update. A CAG meeting is scheduled for April or May of 2007.

#### **Want to see the full plan?**

Go to -

[http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas/management\\_plans/index.htm](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/index.htm)

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