

LAKE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Updated July, 2010 – C. Jackson

Water(s): North Teal, South Teal, Herman, and Lyle

Location: Seep Lakes Wildlife Area, Sec 32, T17N R29E Grant County, and Sec 4, 5, 8, 9, 17, T16N R29E Adams County, WA; approximately 7 miles north of Othello and 6 miles southeast of the southeast corner of Potholes Reservoir,

	Size:	Max Depth:
North Teal	20.7 acres	40 feet
South Teal	29.5 acres	30 feet
Herman	35.4 acres	40 feet
Lyle	11.7 acres	15 feet

Water Source: 3-5 cfs from Canal Lake

Outflow: 3-5 cfs to Owl Lake

Management History:

The North Teal, South Teal, Herman, and Lyle chain of lakes lie southeast of O'Sullivan Dam and Potholes Reservoir. These waters have been popular trout fisheries since the 1960's when opening day-type seasons were in effect. North Teal, South Teal, Herman, and Lyle lakes are isolated from downstream waters by a five foot concrete fish barrier at the outlet of Lyle Lake. The two upper lakes, North and South Teal, are semi-protected from upstream migration by two foot high gabians built at each lakes' outlet.

Contamination by warmwater fish species is the largest obstacle to managing these waters as trout fisheries. Undesirable species have encroached via Potholes Canal early in management history and also due upstream migrations from Owl Lake. At other times these species have apparently appeared with a little help from hobby biologists. The earliest rehabilitation targeted carp and pumpkinseed sunfish, originally thought to have come from near-by Potholes Canal. While carp were finally eradicated in 1975, sunfish have been found in large numbers in every rehabilitation done in these waters. Crappie were illegally introduced for the first time after the 1971 rehab and have also persisted since. Most recently, bluegill, perch, and largemouth bass have been illegally introduced into these lakes. Carp were most likely the progeny of survivors of the last rehabilitation. All these species have at times depressed trout fry survival in North Teal, South Teal, Herman, and Lyle.

Seven rehabilitations (1959, '63, '69, '71, '75, '82, and '90) have been done on North and South Teal lakes, the uppermost and semi-isolated waters in this drainage. Herman and Lyle lakes have been treated five times (1959, '69, '75, '82, and '90). An outlet barrier on Lyle Lake isolates the upper portion of the drainage from Thread Lake. Lake rehabilitation has provided 4-

6 years of good trout fishing after each treatment.

Since the late 1980's, a relatively new management issue for this water has been the increasing number of piscivorous birds frequenting the area. Cormorants and mergansers have become spring breeders and summertime residents. While no uncontested proof of damage to the fishery exists, these species are primarily fish eaters. It is suspected that many of the unpredictable and unexplainable failures of the fisheries which occur periodically in most of the smaller lakes in the area could be attributable to these avian species.

Stocking levels for North Teal, South Teal, Herman, and Lyle lakes have hovered around 33,000 rainbow trout spring fingerlings. In early years these waters were very productive and yielded 4-10 trout per trip. Fingerling to yearling trout survival is estimated at 50-80 percent of the stocking rate when these waters are free of competing species, and yearlings are usually about 12 inches long. However, due to declining trout suitability, Herman and Lyle lakes have been stocked irregularly the past 10 years.

T&E Flora and Fauna: Professionals from many resource fields have visited this site countless times during the last 40 years. No known report exists of any threatened or endangered species habitually found in or near these lakes. Occasional visits from both bald and golden eagles occur, although no nests of these two species are known in the area. Protected species of waterfowl and other birds frequently are found here at times, as well.

North Teal, South Teal, Herman, and Lyle lakes are currently open to angling year-round reducing the opening day crowds in favor of prolonged and steady angling pressure. The catch limit is five fish, and bait is allowed. Boating access is available at North Teal, South Teal, and Lyle lakes, and drive-in access to Herman Lake is possible by agreement with a private landowner.

Current Management Objectives:

Statewide Regulations - Year around, low-key, production type fishery. Five fish limit, no size or gear restrictions. Provide 3 yearling rainbow trout per angler trip for 1-5,000 anglers per season.

1. Fishery Objectives:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>No/hour</u>	<u>No/Angler</u>	<u>Avg.Size</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Exploit.</u>
Rainbow	Prod	Year Around	2	3	12in	90%	1-yr-olds

2. Angler use objective (# angler days): Season - 1,000-5,000

3. Stocking Objectives:

<u>Lake</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Number of Fish Stocked</u>			<u>Planting Month</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>/Acre</u>	<u>/pound</u>	
North Teal	Rainbow	6,300	300	<80	April-May
South Teal	Rainbow	9,000	300	<80	April-May
Herman	Rainbow	10,600	300	<80	April-May
Lyle	Rainbow	3,000	260	<80	April-May

E. Management Strategy:

- Plant rainbow fry in spring.
- Check yearling growth; should be about 12 inches, adjust stocking rate as necessary.
- Harvest 90% of yearling fish by end of season.
- Monitor all fish species periodically by electrofishing or netting.
- Substitute fall fingerlings for at least a portion of the spring fry when competing species begin to impact trout fry survival.
- Control spiny-ray species with rotenone when trout survival is inadequate to produce an acceptable fishery.