

## Samish River Unit (Welts Property) FAQ Sheet

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Where is the WDFW property line?

**Survey and legal description are available upon request from Kye Iris (See attached survey), or online through Skagit County Public Records.**

Who owns the dike?

**The Diking District owns a Right of Way on which the dike is located.**

Does WDFW own the property under the dike?

**Yes.**

Does WDFW control access on the dike?

**WDFW controls access onto the property that is adjacent to the dike, with the exception of the privately owned northeastern boundary. The diking district controls access onto the dike itself.**

Is WDFW responsible for fencing the dike or putting up no trespassing signs?

**WDFW and the Dike District work cooperatively on public access issues. Generally speaking, the Dike District supports the preferences of the underlying landowner.**

Is shooting a public safety issue on WDFW property? When is it allowed?

**The site is currently part of the waterfowl quality hunt program, which is limited access hunting. This program controls the number of hunting parties on the site and directs the hunting activity to occur away from roadways and houses.**

**Prior to the quality hunt program there were safety concerns from some of the neighboring properties owners that had observed hunting activity very close to the road. WDFW responded by placing safety zone signs on these locations.**

**Target shooting is not allowed. Legal use of firearms is permitted during hunting season.**

Can there be a porta-potty and trash container on WDFW land?

**Yes, WDFW has worked with Skagit County and Skagit Conservation Education Alliance to provide a porta-potty and pet waste station on our Samish Unit property. WDFW has also funded a porta-potty in the past on the Samish River Unit during the fishing season. As part of the proposed Samish River Unit Wetland Restoration Project, there will be a parking area and another pull out that will allow a porta-potty to be on the site seasonally as needed.**

Why aren't we fully restoring the WDFW property?

**Setting back the dikes to reconnect the property to the floodplain of the Samish River was considered as an initial design concept. This concept was ruled out, however, as salmon restoration funding agencies were not likely to fund this project due to high cost and relatively low benefit to recovery of ESA-listed Chinook salmon compared to higher priority projects in the Skagit River.**

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Skagit Wildlife Area

Does WDFW plan on installing a parking lot on the property and if so where?

**Yes, WDFW will construct a parking lot as part of the proposed wetland restoration project. The parking lot will be located in the 1-acre that is excluded from NRCS easement, which is indicated on the attached map. It is located on the Northern property boundary.**

Does WDFW anticipate there will be increased use of this property by bird watchers, fishers, or hunters after the proposed wetland restoration work is completed in summer 2014?

**It is expected that there will be some increased use of the site by a variety of users because of the addition of safe off road parking. However, additional site development beyond mowed trails is restricted by the conservation easement. The site will be wetter following the project which will also limit the number of users willing to walk in wet field conditions.**

Is the sale of the property an option?

**WDFW only owns the fee title. Any transfer of the fee title ownership would trigger a conversion through the fund source (NAWCA), and would need to be replaced with equal or greater economic and conservation values. Separate funding for appraisals and acquisition costs make this very difficult to achieve.**

What role does NRCS have in the management of the property?

**NRCS owns a conservation easement on the property that requires that the property is managed consistent with its Wetland Reserve Program. In order for the property to meet these criteria, the proposed wetland restoration project is required to be implemented. The Wetland Reserve Program manual outlines program requirements at:**

**[www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements)**

Can WDFW close access to property where public access exists?

**WDFW has the authority to restrict or close properties to public access and does so for public health and safety reason, or for sensitive habitats or species. In general, public access is allowed as long as it is compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations.**