



CHELAN WILDLIFE AREA 2007 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife



they apply to local conditions. (Photo by Ed Schaplow – bighorn sheep on the Chelan Butte Unit).

Land Management Summary

This is an update to the 2006 Chelan Wildlife Area Management Plan (http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/pdfs/draft_chelan_plan.pdf) that provides management direction for the Chelan Wildlife Area Complex including the Swakane, Entiat, Chelan Butte, White River and Pateros Units. 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

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, updates, new issues, new land management strategies and performance measures for 2007.

Updates/Changes

The Chelan County PUD constructed the Rocky Reach to Andrew York/ Monitor Transmission Line. This 230kV line is 8.8 miles long, 4.6 miles of which is located on the Swakane Unit of the Chelan Wildlife Area. Beginning in January of 2006, the PUD agreed to provide \$30,000 annually to the WDFW for O&M “to mitigate for the habitat impact associated with the transmission line, until such time as the transmission line is removed.”

Inside

Land Management Summary	1
Updates/Changes	1
New Issues	2
Major Stewardship Accomplishments	2
Status Report of 2006 Performance Measures	2
New Strategies	4
2007 Performance Measures	5
Citizens Advisory Group Input	5

The Chelan PUD and WDFW are currently writing a wildlife habitat development plan associated with the Rocky Reach Project re-licensing. This plan will include funding for the wildlife area to develop facilities, purchase equipment and restore up to 1,400 acres of shrubsteppe habitat. It would supplement the existing state and federal funding and allow for a well staffed and equipped wildlife area at least through the development stage. Information on relicensing is available on the Chelan County PUD web site: <http://www.chelanpud.org/licensing-compliance.html>



Monitor transmission line on the Swakane Unit

New Issues

None

Major Stewardship Accomplishments

None

Status Report of 2006 Performance Measures

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

2006 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2007 Related Activity/ Comments
Maintain up to 100 acres of food plots annually as funding allows.	Planted 38 acres of spring grain for wildlife primarily in strips on the Swakane and Chelan Butte Units. Seeding was limited by funding and time constraints.	Continue activity in 2007.
Coordinate the maintenance of 30+ winter wildlife feeders, 35+ water structures (guzzlers and springs) and 25+ nest boxes.	The Wenatchee Sportsmen’s Association (WSA) maintained and repaired most of the spring developments and assisted in filling 32 feeders. Volunteers continue to monitor and maintain nest boxes. The WSA installed two guzzlers on Chelan Butte	Continue activity in 2007.
Inspect and maintain about 90	Routinely inspected road	In 2007, meet with DNR

miles of road to include routine inspection, weed control and repairs to road surface as necessary.	system.	regarding "Forest Road" maintenance and reporting requirements. Maintain roads as needed and as funding allows.
75 signs, as needed based on routine inspections.	Replaced about 50 signs. Refurbished two vandalized signs.	Continue in 2007.
Maintain Swakane irrigation system (including pond and outlet), shop, residence and office. Maintain three informational kiosks as funding allows. Service, repair and maintain equipment and vehicles (estimated 5 pieces).	Completed. Replaced about one mile of old irrigation pipe with new PVC pipe and installed a new intake valve and two mainline valves.	Continue in 2007.
Control weedy species mechanically, and with chemical and bioagents. Extent of weed control will be based on funding but will at least include roadside spraying, control of perennial weeds in the Chelan Butte fields and yellowstar thistle spraying and hand pulling in the Knowles area.	Sprayed about 15 miles of road. Spot sprayed infestations of yellowstar thistle, Russian knapweed, diffuse knapweed, Russian thistle, morning glory and Dalmatian toadflax scattered on about 500 acres. Hand-pulled yellowstar thistle.	Continue in 2007.
Inspect, maintain and repair about 20 miles of fence.	Repaired ½ mile of fence. Replaced two wire gates and posts. Removed about ½ mile of dilapidated fence. Fence did not need much maintenance partially due to mild winter.	Continue fence maintenance as needed. Remove about 5 miles of unneeded fence.
Maintain (apply herbicide and/or mow) 100 acres of newly seeded shrubsteppe and steppe habitat. Reseed where seeding failed.	Mowed about 40 acres of a fall 2004 perennial seeding. Disked ~15 acres of seeding which had failed and disked another 60 acres for a 2007 shrub-steppe seeding project. Spring seeded about 8 acres of perennial cover in the Swakane bottom.	Continue summer fallowing and seed about 75 acres of shrubsteppe. Continue monitoring of older seeding and reseeding as needed.

Place brush piles in areas needing wildlife escape cover when material is available.	The Wenatchee Sportsmen’s Association and Chelan County PUD constructed brush piles (6+) on the Chelan Butte Unit. The PUD also hauled several truckloads of apple trees for additional brush-piles to be built on the Chelan Butte Unit. Wildlife area personnel assisted in loading the material and identifying location for brush-piles.	Cooperate with volunteers to move apple “brush” to the area to build brush piles.
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New Strategies

The wildlife area plan identifies many strategies or activities to address the agencies strategic plan goals and objectives, why the area was purchased, habitat conditions, species present, and public issues and concerns. The following updated strategies have been added to respond to



Installation of irrigation mainline in Swakane Canyon - 2006

previously unaddressed or new issues or changes on the wildlife area. New strategies may also be in response to adaptive management as staff evaluate the impacts of past management activities.

The Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) provided issues that are identified in italics. These public comments are captured at the end of this document. Although underlined strategies have no current funding source, identifying these needs is the first step to securing additional funds.

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

1) Protect and Enhance Priority Habitats.

The WDFW defines a Priority Habitat as: A habitat type with unique of significant value to many species. An area identified and mapped as priority habitat has one of more of the following attributes:

- Comparatively high fish and wildlife density
- Comparatively high fish and wildlife species diversity
- Important fish and wildlife breeding habitat

- Important fish and wildlife seasonal ranges
- Important fish and wildlife movement corridors
- Limited availability
- High vulnerability to habitat alteration
- Includes unique or dependent species

The Chelan Wildlife Area supports a wide variety of Priority Habitats including shrubsteppe, riparian, steppe, cliffs, talus, snags and logs, freshwater wetlands and aspen stands. Management of these habitats will include protection from disturbance and degradation caused by weed encroachment, fire, vehicular traffic, livestock grazing and other factors.

Strategy: Follow WDFW management guidelines for these habitats. Habitat descriptions and management guidelines can be found at:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/phspage.htm>, Timeframe: Annually

2007 Performance Measures

1. Maintain up to 50 acres of food plots as funding allows including 10 acres on the Swakane and 40 acres on Chelan Butte.
2. Coordinate the maintenance of 30+ winter wildlife feeders, 35+ guzzlers and springs and 25+ nest boxes throughout the wildlife area.
3. Inspect and maintain about 90 miles of road to include routine inspection, weed control and repairs to road surface as necessary. Meet with DNR regarding "Forest Road" maintenance and reporting requirements. Replace 50 to 75 signs, as needed based on routine inspections.
4. Maintain Swakane irrigation system (including pond and outlet), shop, residence and office. Maintain three informational kiosks. Service, repair and maintain equipment and vehicles (estimated 5 pieces).
5. Control weedy species mechanically and with chemical and bioagents. Extent of weed control will be based on funding but will at least include roadside spraying, control of perennial weeds in the Chelan Butte fields and yellowstar thistle spraying and hand pulling in the Knowles area.
6. Inspect, maintain and repair about 20 miles of fence as needed. Remove about 5 miles of old fence.
7. Maintain (apply herbicide and/or mow) 50 acres of seeded shrubsteppe and steppe habitat in Chelan Butte, Knowles, Deppner and Roundy. Reseed where seeding failed. Continue summer fallowing and seed about 75 acres of shrubsteppe on Chelan Butte. Continue monitoring older seeding and reseeding as needed. Control weeds in 8 acres of perennial cover planted in the fall of 2006 in the Swakane bottom.
8. Place brush piles on Chelan Butte in areas needing wildlife escape cover when material is available.
9. Inspect and maintain about 20 miles of fence as needed. Remove about 5 miles of fence on Chelan Butte.

Citizens Advisory Group Input

A Citizens Advisory Group meeting was held on June 14, 2006 to review management progress and address any new issues or input on existing issues.

Mike Schroeder, WDFW scientist and grouse biologist, gave a presentation on the status of Washington's prairie grouse.

Jim McGee (Douglas PUD) and Paul Fielder (Chelan PUD) gave a short presentation on the Wells and Rocky Reach Dams and the wildlife mitigation role of their respective agency.

We reviewed the maps and posters of the three wildlife areas and discussed the individual management plans and distributed a "final" draft of the three management plans along with a list of "performance measures" or accomplishments for the period January 2005 to June 2006. The following new input/issues were addressed at the meeting.

Issues brought up during the meetings:

Issue: *More quality hunting areas are needed. An area between the Chelan Butte North South County Road and Chelan Falls located on the Chelan Butte Unit needs to be designated as a quality hunting area (perhaps juvenile hunting only) and that the road leading into that area be gated and physically closed to vehicles. He expressed his concern about vehicles driving beyond the no vehicle signs.*

We agree that the area should be closed to vehicles but it is impossible to make the area vehicle proof. Gates can easily be circumvented. WDFW does not have the resources to set up and manage such an area.

Issue: *Due to their remote and isolated location, the WDFW should consider trading its White River properties for lands adjacent to the major Units of the Chelan Wildlife Area.*

WDFW will consider this land trade but are presently working on other land trades with the Forest Service and DNR, which will be taking up much of our real estate shop's time for the next couple of years. We will resume attempts to resolve this issue as soon as possible.

Issue: *The Chelan County PUD or the Douglas County PUD should not fund the Pateros Unit.*

We do not plan to manage the Pateros unit with either Chelan or Douglas PUD derived funds. We can continue to use matching federal funds to manage this area.

The CAG reviewed the update in early May of 2007. No input was received.

Want to see the full plan?

Go to -

http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/index.htm

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