



DRISCOLL ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA 2007 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife



A common sight on Driscoll Island - a "Goose tub" - a washtub installed in a cottonwood tree for Canada geese to nest in. (Photo: Caitlin LaBar)

Land Management

Summary

This is an update to the 2006 Driscoll Island Wildlife Area Management Plan http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/driscoll/index.htm that provides management direction for the Driscoll Island Wildlife Area, a part of the Sinlahekin, Driscoll Island and Chiliwist Wildlife Area Complex, located about a mile south of Oroville in Okanogan County. 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.

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Updates/Changes

In 2006 core samples were taken in an effort to locate the best site for a bridge, funded during the 2005-07 biennium, for access to Driscoll Island and avoid having to use the Okanogan River channel forde. With a bridge, 90% of the traffic through the forde can be avoided.



A view of the Okanogan River channel forde to Driscoll Island during high water (Photo: D. Swedberg)

New Issues

No new issues have been identified.



An old log cabin on Driscoll Island. (Photo: D. Swedberg)

Major Stewardship Accomplishments

A tour was arranged with the Okanogan County Historical Society to tour the old buildings and structures on Driscoll Island. In discussion with them it was determined that a barn and the old cabin would not be destroyed. Additionally the structures were surveyed for wildlife use and it was found that owls and bats were using them for day roosts.

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.

2006 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2007 Related Activity/ Comments
GPS and GIS map of all Dalmatian Toadflax, Plumeless Thistle, Russian knapweed and Common Tansy infestations and Russian Olive trees	Completed	
Continue weed control efforts using chemicals, hand pulling and biological control methods	Completed	
Remove all old scrap iron and metal	Inadequate time to accomplish	
Maintain shrub planting irrigation system	Completed	
Assess survival of shrubs and replace shrubs that died	Inadequate time to complete	Attempt to get this completed in 2007
GPS and GIS map all fences, bird feeders, structures, watering troughs, irrigation lines and wells	Mostly completed	Remaining features will be GPSed and mapped in 2007
Monitor sharecropping to assure compliance with sharecropping lease	Completed	
Prepare a trails grant application for DIWA	The bridge has not been installed as anticipated therefore without access a trail is of limited value	Prepare trails grant after installation of the bridge
Provide encouragement and assistance to keep Driscoll Island Bridge project with a bridge capable of holding a load consisting of a minimum of 15,000 lbs on track and moving	Encouragement provided but to no avail. Bridge was not installed.	
Complete and/or review and update plans including WA plan, weed plan, and fire management plan	Completed	

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.

No new strategies were or have been identified.

2007 Performance Measures

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

- 1) Grid for weeds on 100 acres
- 2) Complete GPSing features not GPSed in 2006
- 3) Assess shrub survival planted for WHIP project and replace shrubs that died
- 4) Check and maintain shrub watering system
- 5) Complete sharecropper agricultural lease renewal before expiration
- 6) Remove all old scrap iron and metal



Turkey vultures perched in dead cottonwoods on Driscoll Island (Photo: D. Swedberg)

Citizens Advisory Group Input

An East Okanogan County Citizens Advisory Group meeting was held on January 18, 2007 to review Sinlahekin, Driscoll Island and Chiliwist Management Plans and management progress and address any new issues or input on existing issues. Those in attendance included representatives from The Back Country Horsemen, Okanogan Wildlife Council, Okanogan Valley Land Council, 2 neighbors of the Sinlahekin – 1 sharecropper & 1 grazing permittee, Conservation Northwest, 2 Forest Contractors, Wenatchee Valley College – Omak, Okanogan Cattlemen's Association, Okanogan County Noxious Weed Office, USFS and a private citizen interested in the management of the Sinlahekin, Driscoll Island and Chiliwist Wildlife Areas.

The following new input/issues were addressed at the meeting.

Issue: Weed management plan implementation is not realistic to try to get all vehicles coming on to the wildlife areas washed and other weed control techniques implemented.

Response: This concern is valid and recognized. However, by having these techniques listed as a means to try to minimize spread of weeds, it is hoped that awareness is elevated regarding the seriousness of weeds and the need for weed control.

Issue: Management plans need a stronger commitment to grazing and goals and objectives of grazing.

Response: Commitment to grazing is as strong as can be. Grazing has inadvertently helped protect a population of state candidate butterflies – the silver-bordered fritillary butterfly by keeping down the reed canary grass that will crowd out the butterfly larval plant host – the marsh violet. A grant proposal is being developed to try to do some research on benefits of grazing for the violets and the silver-bordered butterflies that depend on them.

Issue: Great weed management plan.

Response: Thank you.

Issue: Weed wash is available 1 day of hunting season and 1 day of fishing season.

Response: This will definitely help increase awareness about weeds and weed control of people out for opening day of fishing season.

Issue: Controlled burning efforts are good.

Response: Efforts will continue to try to accomplish more. The North Central Washington Prescribed Fire Council was formed recently to help increase public awareness of the need and benefits of prescribed burning.

Issue: Take adaptive management approach in treating riparian areas with fire

Response: An adaptive management approach is being taken with all management activities to maximize opportunities to learn the affects of management techniques and how to adjust techniques to better achieve desired outcomes.

At the conclusion of the meeting those present were advised that another meeting would be scheduled in February to review the Scotch Creek Management Plan and for a presentation on the wildlife area Habitat Conservation Plan.



Spring 2006 panorama view of the south and eastern part of Driscoll Island across the Okanogan River channel. Note dead cottonwoods from a wildfire in April of 2003. (Photo: D. Swedberg)

Want to see the full plan?

Go to -

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

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