



# DRISCOLL ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA 2012 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

## **Land Management Summary**

This is an update to the Driscoll Island Wildlife Area Management Plan

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

that provides management direction for the Driscoll Island Wildlife Area, a part of the Sinlahekin, Driscoll Island and Chiliwist Wildlife Area Complex, located about 1 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.



A view of the Van Poole Homestead on the northeast end of Driscoll Island.

Plans are updated every two years 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 2010-11 accomplishments, new issues, new land management strategies and performance measures for 2012-13.

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## **Updates/Changes**

### **Driscoll Island North Channel Weir**

WDFW collaborated with Colville Confederated Tribes on a project to install a cross channel weir on the north channel of Driscoll Island. The objective of the project was to maintain a higher flow of water down the east channel. During low flow periods of the Similkameen River, water from the Okanogan River flowed westward through the north channel, leaving little to no water flowing down the east channel which is perched higher than the north channel at their confluence. Installation of the weir would force water to flow down the east channel during

Similkameen River low flow periods, thus providing about two miles of habitat that otherwise may not exist during periods of Similkameen River low flows. Another benefit of restricting flows from the Okanogan system into the Similkameen system was to keep warmer waters of the Okanogan system from degrading the cooler Similkameen waters.



Additionally part of the project entailed renovation of the Driscoll Island ford for vehicle access. The ford was reconfigured with boulders capped with quarry spalls. The final depth of the ford was somewhat lower than the original ford causing some consternation on the part of the sharecropper. Additionally some of the quarry spalls failed to stay in place creating holes and increasing the roughness of the ford. The ford needs annual maintenance and the understanding was that the Colville Confederated Tribe would provide this maintenance.

The cross channel weir was installed with recommendations for WDFW staff to address potential erosion concerns. The weir was successful in maintaining a flow down the east channel during Similkameen River low flows, however the increased flow down the east channel only went as far as the south as the channel between Driscoll and Eyhott Islands where the water left the east channel and flowed westward into the Similkameen Channel, thus effectively failing to water the east channel of Eyhott Island as had been planned.

A grant from the Community Salmon Fund was awarded to the partnership of the Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group (CCFEG) and WDFW to install an irrigation system and plant shrub rows on an eroding section of Similkameen River bank on the west side of the wildlife area. Funding paid for irrigation system materials, planting fabric and native shrubs. The WDFW and CCFEG provided a 1:1 match for the project scheduled for completion in the spring of 2012.

### **New Issues**

Efforts to increase water efficiency on Driscoll & Eyhott Islands are ongoing with collaboration between WDFW and Okanogan Conservation District. Use of pivot irrigation is being considered to replace wheel-lines.

### **Major Stewardship Accomplishments**

Present since 1997, the plumeless thistle on the NW corner of Driscoll was treated with herbicide. An herbicide treatment on rosettes in the spring of 2012 will be conducted.

**Status Report of 2010-11 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 2012-13.

<b>2010-11 Performance Measure</b>	<b>Status of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Explanation of Progress/ 2012-13 Related Activity/ Comments</b>
Grid for weeds on 100 acres	Grid not formally done; significant area surveyed	Try to get done during field review of weeds
Map via GPS not completed in 2010, and produce comprehensive GIS map	Completed	
Assess shrub survival planted for Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program and replace shrubs that died	Inadequate time to accomplish	Shrubs need to be planting next spring – late March/early April 2013
Check and maintain shrub watering system	Completed	Ongoing O&M of irrigation system
Continue to seek funding for bridge and trail system on Driscoll Island	Partnerships and funding sought, but nothing of substance	Continue to seek state funding sources and county support.
Remove all old scrap iron and metal	Inadequate time to accomplish	Old steel pipe will be removed this summer as well as other debris on the island
Spray all known Russian knapweed infestations	Majority completed	Will target outlying infestations in 2012

**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.

Agency Objective: Provide Sustainable Fish and Wildlife-Related Recreational and Commercial Opportunities Compatible With Maintaining Healthy Fish and Wildlife Populations and Habitats. Improve the Economic Well-Being of Washington by Providing Diverse, High Quality Recreational and Commercial Opportunities.

1. Provide public access compatible with fish, wildlife and habitat protection.

**2012-13 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) Renew agricultural lease by December 2012
- 2) Continue weed control efforts using chemicals, hand pulling and biological control methods
- 3) Field review known weed locations on Driscoll-Eyhott and note status of infestations, e.g., Dalmatian toadflax, Russian knapweed, plumeless thistle, common tansy, Russian olive, Siberian elm, diffuse knapweed, purple loosestrife and treat accordingly.
- 4) Maintain shrub plantings and irrigation systems
- 5) Assess survival of shrubs and replace shrubs that died
- 6) Grid for weeds on 100 acres; and map via GPS all new weed infestations
- 7) Complete and/or review and update plans including WA plan, weed plan and fire management plan.
- 8) Remove all old iron, fencing and watering troughs from the island
- 9) Seek interest in retaining homestead sites and improve historical buildings as needed



**Citizens Advisory Group Input**

The Sinlahekin Wildlife Area Citizens Advisory Group meeting was held on January 25, 2012 to review Sinlahekin, Driscoll Island, Chiliwist and Scotch Creek Management Plans, management progress and address any new issues or input on existing issues. The following participants attended the CAG meeting:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Dale Swedberg	WDFW
Larry Hudson	OCNWCB
Greg Bennett	Okanogan County Fly Club
Russell Reed	Okanogan County Fly Club
Nathan Wehmeyer	BLM
Garry Schalla	Okanogan Land Trust
John Williams	Loomis Community Club
Kirsten Williams	Loomis Community Club
Trygve Culp	OVCBCH
Peggy Swanberg	OVCBCH



Dave Swanberg	OVCBCH
Rick Lind	Citizen
Matt Marsh	USFS
Dan Whitley	Gebbers Cattle Company
Clay Gebbers	Gebbers Cattle Company
Jerry Barnes	Citizen
Troy McCormick	WDFW
Jen Croft	Republic
Hugh Jensen	Tonasket
Justin Haug	WDFW

**WDFW** – Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife  
**OCNWCB** – Okanogan County Noxious Weed Control Board  
**BLM** – Bureau of Land Management  
**OVCBCH** – Okanogan Valley Chapter Backcountry Horsemen  
**USFS** – United States Forest Service

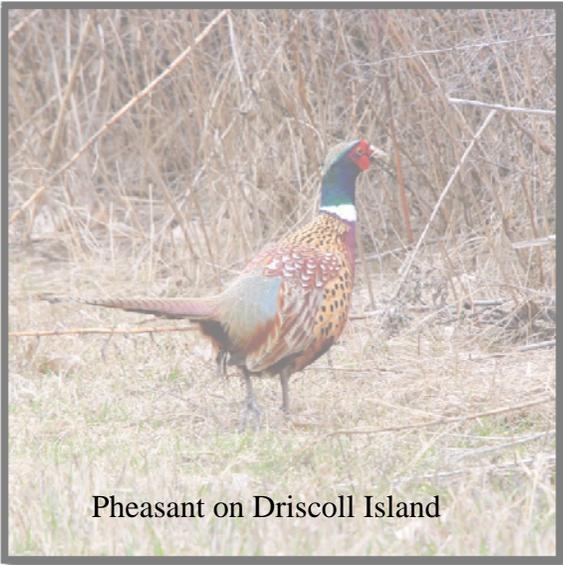
**Issue 1:** Is there any type of bridge planned for spanning the Okanogan River onto Driscoll Island? Answer: Funding for a vehicle bridge has been sought in the past but has been and continues to be cost prohibitive. Perhaps it is time to seek funding for a footbridge. We are continually looking for new funding sources.

**Other comments/issues received specific to the Driscoll Island Wildlife Area**

There were no other comments/issues received.

**Contacts:**  
Dale Swedberg, Wildlife Area  
Manager  
509.223.3358  
WDFW Ephrata Office  
509.754.4624

**Want to see the full plan?**  
Go to -  
[http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas/management\\_plans/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/)



Pheasant on Driscoll Island