

LAKE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Updated April, 2019 – M. Schmuck

Water(s): East and West Sage Lakes

Location: Seep Lakes Wildlife Area, T17N R29E, S28 approximately 7 miles north of Othello and 6 miles southeast of the southeast corner of Potholes Reservoir, Grant County, WA

Size:	Mean Depth:	Volume:
15 acres combined	6.6 feet	100 Acre-Feet

Water Source: subsurface seepage springs

Outflow: None

Management History:

The Sage Lakes are two small ponds separated from one another, except during high water events, by a narrow spit of land. Both lakes are the result of the development of the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project and its influence on groundwater tables.

Sage Lakes have been managed as trout waters since their formation. Rehabilitation with rotenone has been needed only once (1996) as these waters have remained relatively free of non-trout species. Both lakes have exhibited high productivity with yearling trout averaging 11 inches in spring and a relatively high carryover rate of better than 10% on age-2 fish. Historically, the Sage Lakes have received stockings of rainbow, brown and tiger trout (in 1984); however, currently, these lakes received only fall-stocked rainbow trout fingerlings (10-250 fish/pound) from Columbia Basin Hatchery in Moses Lake, WA.

The fishing season on the Sage Lakes was changed to year-round in 1980. Prior to this the opening day was April 1. This change was made to provide off-season opportunity and to reduce congestion and early April fish-out of the many small lakes in the area.

Currently, each of the Sage Lakes receive 1,500 fall fingerling rainbow trout (200 fish/acre). This stocking rate is down somewhat from previous years in order to provide anglers with larger average size fish.

Carp have been introduced into the Sage Lakes within the past 3 years which has reduced water clarity and productivity. Consequently, fingerling growth and survival has been reduced and angler usage has declined.

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.

Current Management Objectives

- Trout-only production fisheries.
- Statewide general rules apply.
- Stocking rates of 200 fall fingerling rainbow trout.
- Retain present year-round fishing opportunity with a daily catch limit of five fish.
- Yearling trout should represent 90% of angler catch and growth should be 10-11 inches by spring after stocking.
- Carry over trout should represent 10% of angler catch and growth should be 12-14 inches by second spring after stocking.
- Adjust stocking rate based on trout growth, if necessary.
- Spot check angler participation and catch rates.
- Consider the use of remote cameras to gain better insight into angler usage patterns.
- Periodic surveys (gill, fyke-nets) to determine presence of nuisance fish species.