

Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area

2019 Management Plan Update



Figure 1: Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area.

This document is intended to highlight accomplishments as they relate to goals and objectives identified within the [Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area Management Plan](#). The plan addresses the status of wildlife species and their habitat, ongoing restoration efforts and public recreation opportunities at the Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area Complex. Every 10 years, WDFW revises management plans for each wildlife area to identify new management priorities and actions. In between plan revisions, the update focuses on recent accomplishments over the last two years.

Management Highlights

Swanson Lakes – Shrubsteppe grassland habitat restoration (*Goal/Objective 3.B*)

Staff members continue to restore old farm fields to shrubsteppe grassland habitat to provide high-quality nesting/brood-rearing and forage habitat for upland game birds, including sharp-tailed grouse and sage grouse. This additional habitat also benefits other shrubsteppe-dependent species. Over the last three years, four fields totaling 190 acres have been restored on and around Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area. Partners in this work include the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the Lincoln County

Conservation District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Upcoming work on these sites includes weed control for the first few years after seeding. Most large fields have now been restored at the wildlife area and nearby BLM property, so smaller fields and weedy areas of native habitat will be a future focus for restoration and enhancement.



Figure 2: Bird watchers on the wildlife area.

Swanson Lakes – Powerline Burial: Recent issue, not listed in Management Plan

Wildlife area staff members worked with BLM’s Spokane employees to replace three miles of aerial telephone, electrical poles, and lines with 1.75 miles of buried lines. The routes are located near sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse mating, nesting, and foraging areas. Removing aboveground lines improved the aesthetics of the area and, more importantly, removed perching spots on power poles for avian predators. The project was completed in fall 2019. Future utility line burial will require additional coordination and funding.



Figure 3: Crew burying power lines on the wildlife area.

Reardan Audubon Lake – Parking lot for new acquisition (Goal/Objective 1.E)

Wildlife area staff members completed a parking area (six car) at the new addition to the Reardan Audubon Wildlife Area. The project was identified under Acquire Reardan Audubon Lake Phase 2 property acquisition from the Inland Northwest Land Trust. Partners and supporters include RCO, the Spokane Chapter of the Audubon Society, and the Inland Northwest Land Conservancy. Reardan High School students constructed an informational kiosk on the lot’s northeast corner in 2020.



Figure 4: New, completed parking lot.

Revere – Revive old food plots (Goal/Objective 3.A.)

Wildlife area staff members worked with the Spokane Chapter of Pheasants Forever to clean up and replant several old food plots throughout Revere Wildlife Area. Since this restoration started in 2017, eight fields have been restored for a total of 25 acres. Crops planted for wildlife include wheat, sunflowers, millet, and peas. These annual crops provide high-quality forage for upland birds, deer, and elk. WDFW expects to continue collaborating with Pheasants Forever for ongoing work.

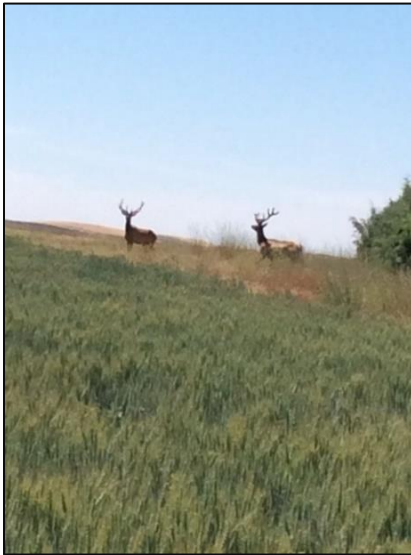


Figure 5: Elk at Revere. Photo by Mike Gruenke of Pheasants Forever.

New Issues

Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area Headquarters – relocation

The vacant manager's residence was converted into an office in 2019, and staff members relocated in December. The old Headquarters office will be demolished, and the site developed into a picnic area.

Revere Wildlife Area – habitat enhancement on newly acquired parcel

In 2019, the Puget Sound Chapter of Pheasants Forever donated a 94-acre parcel along the former west boundary of the wildlife area. The addition connects Revere to BLM's Escure Recreation Area. With assistance from the Puget Sound and Spokane Chapters of Pheasants

Forever, shrubs and trees will be planted within the next two years for deer, elk, and upland birds. Habitat improvements may also include grassland enhancement.