

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area

2021-2022 Management Plan Update



Spencer Island Unit with Snoqualmie watershed in the background.

This document is intended to highlight accomplishments as they relate to goals and objectives identified within the [2018 Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Management Plan](#). The plan addresses the status of wildlife species and their habitat, ongoing restoration efforts and public recreation opportunities at the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area. Every 10 years, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (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

Maintain Safe and Operational Facilities (Goal/Objective 3B, 3C, 3D, 3L, 8B, 9C Support and maintain appropriate recreation opportunities. Improve safety for visitors and compliance with rules. Assess needs, seek funds, and implement facility improvements.) Maintaining and improving WDFW facilities, infrastructure, and safety is a statewide goal detailed in the 2018 Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Management Plan. Addressing poor interior access roads and high numbers of hazard trees were key management priorities during the 2021-2022 timeframe. Unexpected funding through Budget Review Committee distributions, a one-

time funding distribution of \$79,000 and an additional \$80,000 biennium allotment provided much-needed resources to address both issues during the update period. Approximately 100 hazard trees were removed from Cherry Valley and Crescent Lake Units during the 2021-2022 timeframe, improving public and staff safety. Approximately 6 miles of degraded interior roads were improved on the Stillwater, Cherry Valley, Crescent Lake, Ebey Island, and Corson units, providing improved public access and access for ongoing management.



Cherry Valley hazard tree removal.



Resurfacing degraded interior roads.

Provide Recreational Opportunities – Habitat and Access Improvements (*Goal/Objective 1C, 3A, 3B, 3D, 3N 30* Support and maintain appropriate recreation opportunities.

Maintain or improve the ecological integrity of priority systems and sites.) Many areas of the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area have extensive noxious weed infestations, limiting public access and wildlife habitat. Noxious weed control is a statewide goal and a key priority in the 2018 Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Management Plan. Issues were also discussed with the Snoqualmie Advisory Committee, regional management, and with King and Snohomish County district teams. It was also included as a “New Issues” topic in the 2019-2020 Management Plan Update.

The Spencer Island dike trail was targeted for removal of blackberry encroachment along the entire length of the trail. Community and Master Hunter volunteers could not keep up with rapid regrowth, so mechanical and herbicide controls were used to clear the trail to the original dike footprint.



Spencer Island trail before / after clearing.

Wildlife area staff controlled 90 acres of noxious weeds on the Stillwater Unit, improving conditions for wildlife habitat and existing fallow fields resulting in improved public recreation opportunities. Blackberry, teasel, yellow tansy, and thistle were treated using repeat mechanical and herbicidal treatments over two years. Noxious weed levels are now at a controlled state, allowing for more beneficial vegetation to be planted and maintained.



Stillwater field pre-project.



Stillwater field after two years of control efforts.

Public Engagement Opportunities – (Goal/objective 1G, 3F, 3G, 5A, 5B Offer multiple and varied opportunities for stakeholder participation and engagement. Support and maintain appropriate recreation opportunities.)

Improving access and management options at the Ebey Island Unit were another key component in the 2018 Snoqualmie Management Plan. Funding received in 2020 from federal and state grant sources initiated two projects addressing Snoqualmie Wildlife Area priorities. One project was to develop salmon recovery options for Spencer Island and the second to produce a 10-year management plan for the Ebey Island Unit. This plan would produce a working list of potential projects that would improve public access, recreation, agriculture, and wildlife habitat. Working with Duck's Unlimited and Triangle Consulting, a multi-year planning process was conducted. Public engagement was a key component of this planning strategy. Open public meetings with conservation partners, local landowners, and numerous Advisory Committee meetings and site visits provided the opportunity for a host of professional and public engagement. This two-year effort produced the Draft Ebey Island Unit 10-year Management Plan.



Public engagement meeting for the Ebey Island Unit 10-Year Management Plan process.

New Issues

Two major projects with funding have been postponed. The Cherry Valley shop is awaiting final permit approval to advance to construction. The Ebey Island Access Project (parking lot improvements) is also delayed with final permit requirements. Both projects need to be completed this biennium before funding periods expire.

Funding will be required to continue to improve habitat for wildlife and public recreation at Ebey Island, Cherry Valley, and Stillwater Units.

Implementing the Ebey Island 10-Year Management Plan with likely require additional dedicated funding to develop, permit, and construct various projects outlined in the plan.

The Snoqualmie Wildlife Area is a busy place, with improvements moving forward on all units. Much appreciation is warranted for continued support from regional and Headquarters management teams, Wildlife Program management for funding support, and the Lands Division budget team. Many thanks to all involved with improving the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area.