

MINUTES
Waterfowl Advisory Group Meeting
March 28, 2015
USFS North Bend Ranger Station

1. Welcome and introductions - Ben Welton (Chair)
Members present: Ted Blade, Roy Christopherson (vice-chair), Dave Drewry, Ralph Engle, Scott Fink, Art Kendall, Michael Miller, Dick Price, Daniel Morris, Dave Sievers, Rodney Vandersypen, Ben Welton (chair). Others present: John Tierney, Matt Wilson, Don Kraege
2. Approval of minutes – Welton
Minutes from July 2014 meeting approved.
3. Migratory bird stamp and print program update - Kraege and Wilson
 - a. Washington legislature update (Kraege)
Comparison of two bills that affect the state duck stamp program. Both are mostly cleanup bills that are moving through the state legislature and are currently in rules committees awaiting votes. SB5380 would add an audit requirement every 4 years.
 - b. Federal stamp / e-stamp update (Kraege)
Federal stamp price will increase from \$15 to \$25 in 2015-16. Discussion about past WAG recommendation to tie the state stamp price to the federal stamp price. WDFW applied for Federal e-stamp option, which may be in place in WA in 2016, pending USFWS approval.
 - c. 2013-15 project highlights (Wilson)
Brief summary of past duck stamp projects.
 - d. Input on 2015-17 project proposals (Wilson)
Discussion about process and format of proposals. Concerns about proposals being too long, inconsistent project names, difficulty in identifying project proponents, lack of summary or abstract on first page. **WDFW will revise proposal forms to require summary abstract on first page, improve references to project name and proponents (agency, position), and make sure project names match spreadsheets.**

Capital Projects

- i. Chimaicum Creek Farm
Concern about cost, would like to see long-term lease pursued first.
 - **Motion (Price): Provide \$10,000 for lease. Seconded, passed.**
- ii. Crab Creek Headwaters - Reardon Lakes
Discussion about hunting access. WDFW ownership using duck stamp funds would provide hunting access.

- **Motion (Vandersypen): Provide full funding for acquisition. Seconded, passed.**
 - **Motion (Miller): Revisit funding level. Seconded, defeated.**
- iii. WB-10 Wasteway and Ponds
Discussion about difficult access.
 - iv. Desert Unit Ponds
Concern about creation of another Regulated Access Area on north side of Winchester Reserve.
 - v. Intalco Water Control
Discussion that design has been completed and construction should occur.
 - vi. Skagit Wildlife Area, Island Unit Tidegate
Discussion about restoration proposal for Island Unit. Despite past approval of current configuration by Commission, the Island Unit is currently on a restoration list and there is a long-term possibility that tidegate and culvert would be removed.
 - **Motion (Price): Move project to number 2 on list. Seconded, passed.**
 - vii. McDonald Acquisition
Concern about proximity to I-82.
 - viii. Skagit Wildlife Area, Island Unit Culverts
Discussion about value of Island Unit to waterfowl hunters and past improvements by volunteers.
 - **Motion (Kendall): Move Island Unit Culverts project to same ranking as Island Unit Tidegate. Seconded, passed.**
 - ix. Grow Acquisition
 - x. Kroll Acquisition
 - xi. Artesian and Black Lakes Pipeline

Operating Projects

- i. Frenchman RAA Rx Burning
- ii. Marsh Master
- iii. Skagit Wildlife Area Farming
- iv. Shillapoo Moist Soil Management
- v. Chehalis Vegetation Control
- vi. Wrangel Island Snow Geese – PTTs
- vii. Boe Road Snow Goose Reserve
Discussion about value of reserve to snow geese.
- viii. Molting Scoter Surveys
- ix. CBWA Fish Control
- x. WB-10 Wasteway and Ponds
- xi. Ebey Island Unit Alternatives
Concern about access, urban setting.
- xii. Channeled Scablands Waterfowl Surveys
Will be redesigned.

- xiii. CB Cropland Hunting Access Initiative
Concern about value to waterfowl hunters. Will be part of QHA agenda item at next meeting.
- xiv. Desert Unit Ponds
Concern about reservation system. WDFW will schedule agenda item at next meeting to discuss QHAs.
- xv. Chinook/Willapa Moist Soil Mgmt
- xvi. Bridgeport Bar Dove Nesting
Questions about value of project to dove nesting and success of first phase.
 - **Motion (Kendall): Move project to 3rd from bottom (above Whitman County wetlands).**
- xvii. John's River Moist Soil Mgmt
- xviii. Washburn Island Unit Farming
- xix. WQHP Private Lands Access Farming
- xx. Wahkiakum Private Lands Access Farming
- xxi. Davis Cr. Vegetation Control
- xxii. CBWA - Excel Boat
- xxiii. Whatcom WA, Lake Terrell Farming
- xxiv. Skagit Wildlife Area, Island Unit Farming
- xxv. Whatcom WA, Lake Terrell Eurasian Milfoil
Concern about value to waterfowl.
 - **Motion (Vandersypen): Remove milfoil project from list. Seconded, passed.**
- xxvi. Port of Whitman County Wetland
- xxvii. Whatcom WA, Lake Terrell Island Planting

4. Update on 2015-16 regulations (Kraege)

- a. Input on game reserves / closures / hunting restriction areas
Discussion about removal of Yakima River Game Reserve. WDFW surveys indicated low use during winter and development around reserve, so recommended to remove reserve. WWA – Yakima requested it to remain in place because surveys may not be measuring all use, and it may have value for surrounding hunting areas. WWA could do additional surveys to document use.
 - **Motion (Price): Remove Yakima River Game Reserve. Seconded, passed.**

Belfair, Hood Canal Hunting Restriction Area amendment. All landowners should have been consulted within area, and there may be some impact to private hunting areas.

- **Motion (Sievers): Include roads in boundary description to make it clearer. Seconded, passed.**
- b. 2015-16 season proposal preview
 - i. SW Washington goose season

Season on dusky Canada geese will likely be closed and check stations eliminated, pending Pacific Flyway review. Concerns about monitoring of illegal dusky harvest.

ii. Brant season

Unlikely that Clallam County can be opened because of low winter count. Questions about why Whatcom County is closed. When Whatcom was open many years ago it did not hold brant during winter counts. Currently it serves as a reserve for Skagit County season.

c. Future seasons: regulations and WAG schedule

USFWS is changing the annual regulations cycle. In 2016, waterfowl regulations will be set in March / April rather than August. Concerns about setting seasons ahead of data collection. WAG meeting could be in late March / early April to consider all 2016 topics.

5. Next meeting date and location

Based on regulations schedule, next meeting would be August 1. Members favored the Cle Elum area.

6. Other topics

Christopherson: Can DFW sell mitigation credits? Has the Navy had contact with department about money for Puget Sound second ordinance pier, enhancement of Hood Canal?

Vandersypen: Does DFW purchases easement/access rights along the shorelines?

7. Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.