

**Klickitat Wildlife Area Advisory Committee Meeting
Final Meeting Notes**

April 28, 2015

Klickitat PUD

1313 S. Columbus Ave, Goldendale, WA 98620

5:30-8:00 pm

Attendees

WAAC Members:

JP Enderby
Marty Hudson, Klickitat Co Weed Control
Neil Kayser
Buzz Ramsey
Jim White
Sara Wu

WDFW Staff:

Sandra Jonker
Dave Howe
Amber Johnson
Susan Van Leuven
Lauri Vigue

Welcome and Introductions

Susan Van Leuven, Klickitat Wildlife Area Manager welcomed everyone and introduced WAAC members and WDFW staff. Lauri Vigue, Planning Project Manager, explained the focus of the meeting is to provide an overview of the wildlife area planning process, timeline, WAAC roles and expectations and Sue would provide a draft list of wildlife area issues.

WAAC Roles and Expectations

Lauri reviewed the WAAC charter and responsibilities for members of the WAAC. One comment was made that most of the WAAC members are local representatives and do not represent an agency or organization. This issue applied under the “identify an alternate member when and if the primary representative is unable to participate”. The point was made that this charter will be effective indefinitely and in the future the WAAC may include representatives from different agencies and organizations.

*Comments are due on the draft charter by May 12th.

Klickitat WLA Planning and Process

The primary purpose of this meeting is to introduce the wildlife area management planning process. The goal is to develop a wildlife area management plan for the Klickitat Wildlife Area. This is the second pilot in a series of wildlife areas that have been chosen to develop this process. The Lands Division has been developing the process over the course of the past 2-3 years. The process has become complex due to interagency coordination and integrating new internal initiatives.

The agency mission and strategic plan were introduced. An overview of Klickitat WAAC roles and expectations, contributions and responsibilities were provided; as well as the planning team responsibilities. A summary of the purpose of the plan, overarching document, forest planning, recreation strategy were introduced.

The Klickitat WLA planning process begun with a meeting with Sandra and Sue in July 2014; an internal scoping meeting was held in August, the public meeting was held on September 16, 2014; and the first planning meeting was held October 23rd.

Planning Timeline:

Klickitat WAAC	April- July 2015 (2-3 meetings total)
2 nd Public meeting	August 2015
Planning meetings	June/~August
Final Draft Plan	September/October 2015

Klickitat WLA Draft Issues

Fish and Wildlife

Reintroduction of bighorn sheep

First release on Soda Springs had truck issues and animals were released in the middle of the night

- Need acclimation corral to contain sheep
- Evaluate predators (cougar)
- Doubtful whether bighorns were in the Klickitat Canyon
- Habitat assessment is needed if reintroductions are considered

Concern over wild horses moving into the WLA

Wild turkeys

- Interest at the public meeting, nuisance around private residences near the KWA

Western Pond Turtle

- Coordinate with the Diversity Division on statewide recovery
- Sondino Pond, unfortunately shell rot disease is occurring and it is a statewide issue

- Upland enhancements are needed for nesting habitat
- Hydrology issue with local landowner (climate change issue/water right not strongly worded to protect WDFW water delivery to ponds)

Wolves

- As wolves expand their range potential livestock conflicts may arise in the future

Winter Deer Range

- Migratory deer maybe affected by grazing of wild horses?
- Predators are suppressing the deer populations
- Deer populations are rebounding slowly

Pronghorn

- Should we manage for this species?

Cougar

- Accurate population counts needed

Elk

- How should we manage for elk?

Western Gray Squirrel

- Management activities will include forest planning (fire management and enhancement)
- DNR is promoting heavier thinning than would seem appropriate for fuels reduction
- Learn from Columbia Land Trust Project near the KWA Soda Springs Unit
- WDFW has launched a new 3 year population and abundance study

Habitat Management – includes forest management, ag leases, grazing permits, ecological integrity monitoring, water level monitoring, weed control

Habitat restoration

- Riparian restoration will be considered for protecting salmonids
- Grasslands?
- Dead Canyon Bridge - DNR is directing WDFW to either remove or upgrade the bridge to meet. The bridge is currently used for KWA management and is important for weed control and fire control.

Rare plants

- Wildlife area wide inventory needed
- Develop a management strategy for rare plants on a species by species basis

Oak Management

- Move toward prescribed burning to maintain oak habitat
- Remove over topping conifers where conifers threaten survival of desirable oaks
- Leave oaks alone – don't encourage shrubby growth
- Denser stands provide neotropical migrant bird benefits

Forest Management

- Future scenarios to address insects and climate change
- Manage toward returning to a natural fire regime

Grazing /Agriculture

- Current grazing/Ag leases will be maintained
- Both go through District Team review

Recreation

Disabled hunting

- The public is unsure if disabled hunting allowed
- Red/Green Dot road access worth a try
- Consider disabled hunting in designated area
- We need sources of funding for land acquisitions for this activity

Soda Springs Campground Redevelopment Issue (adding another stopover for the public and for agency use mainly to address enforcement issues)

- Avoid developing an additional campground
- The inaccessibility is the value of that spot
- We should include fire patrols on the river

Target Shooting

- A 1,000 yard target shooting range was suggested
- Trees that have been subjected to shooting or nailing are bad for possible timber sales

Privatization

- Weyerhaeuser limiting access

Target shooting (lead concerns)

- Not a large issue on the wildlife area
- More of an issue on where to locate future shooting areas

Tribal hunting

- Undocumented hunting on the wildlife area
- Impacts deer distribution and population

Wildlife Area Infrastructure

Includes maintenance of facilities for staff use

Maintenance of roads, signs, to facilitate public recreation
Maintenance of structures for habitat enhancement and protections

- Add signs saying “don’t shoot the trees”

Acquisitions

Most of the public wants more recreation opportunities, however the grant category WDFW usually receives funding is for important habitat for listed species.

Public Comment

Public comments were not provided at this meeting.

Wrap-Up

- The next WAAC meeting will occur most likely in July
- The draft plan is expected in July/August