


Wenas
Wildlife
Area Target
Shooting
Advisory
Committee



FIFTH MEETING
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

ROSS
STRATEGIC

Agenda Review

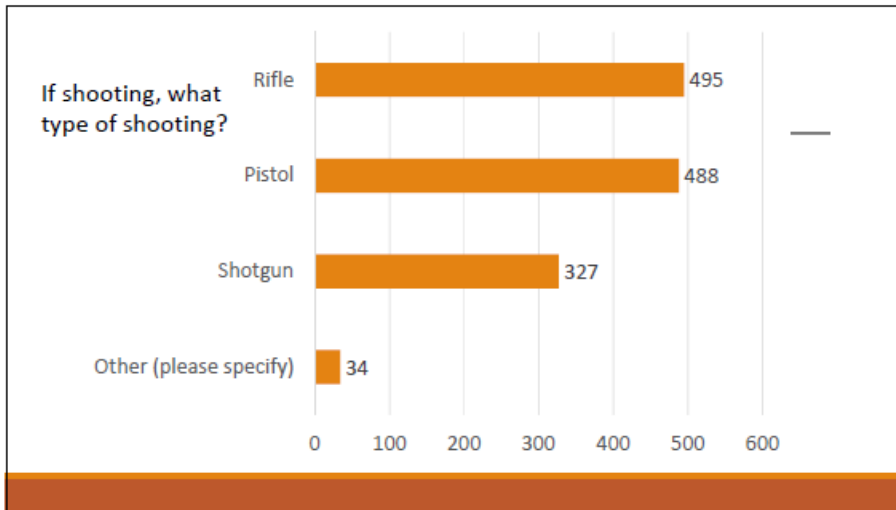
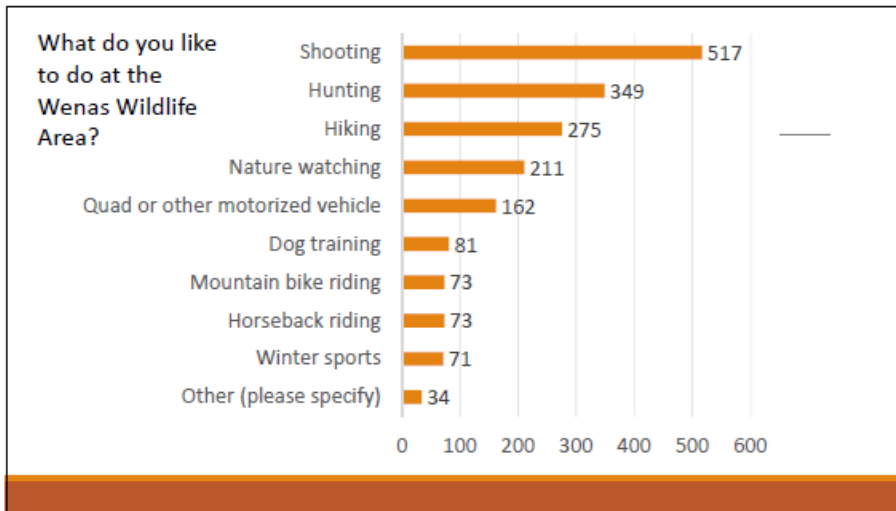
6:00 pm	Get settled, introductions (10 min)
6:10 pm	Information Gathering (10 min)
6:20 pm	Draft Committee Recommendations (1 hour 40 min)
8:00 pm	Next Steps for Draft Recommendations (15 min)
8:15 pm	Public Comment (10 min scheduled, may need to adjust)
8:25 pm	Final Wrap Up (5 minutes)
8:30 pm	Adjourn

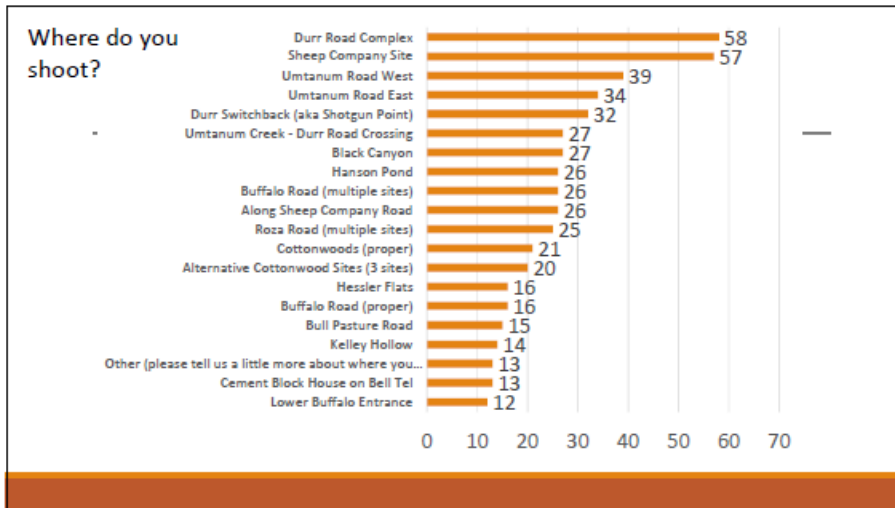
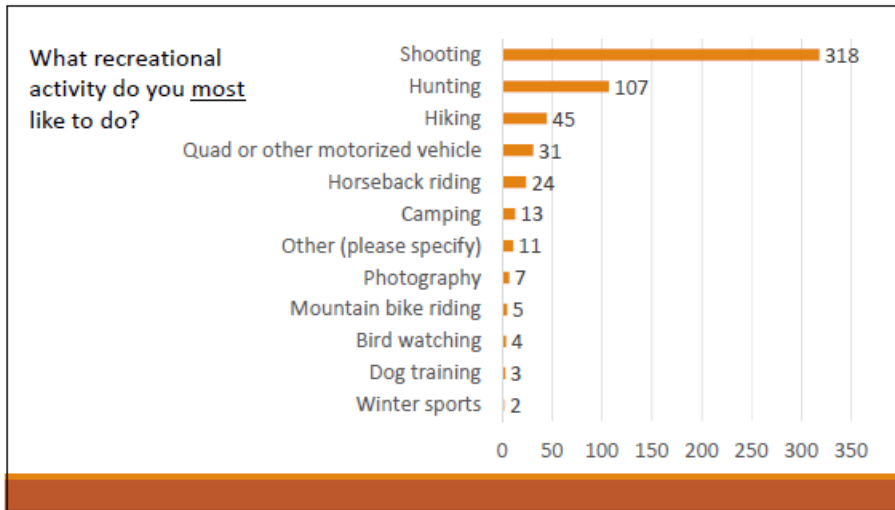
Options for Public Comment

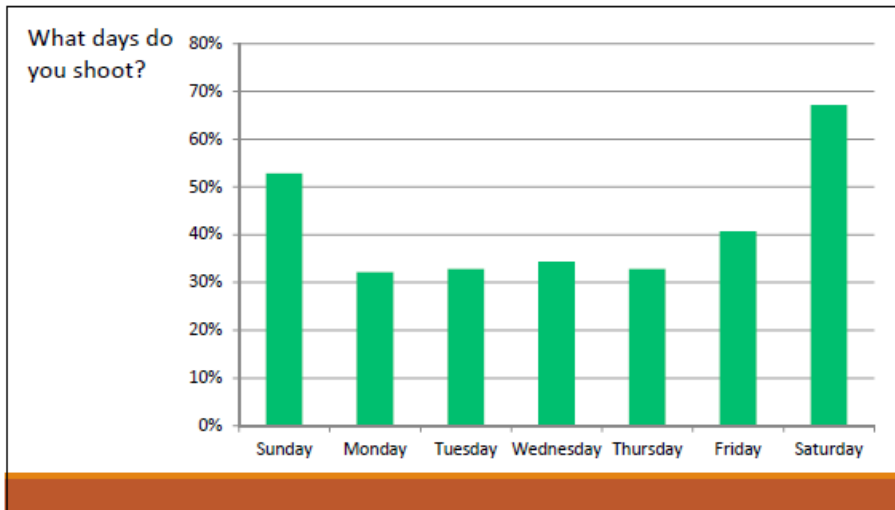
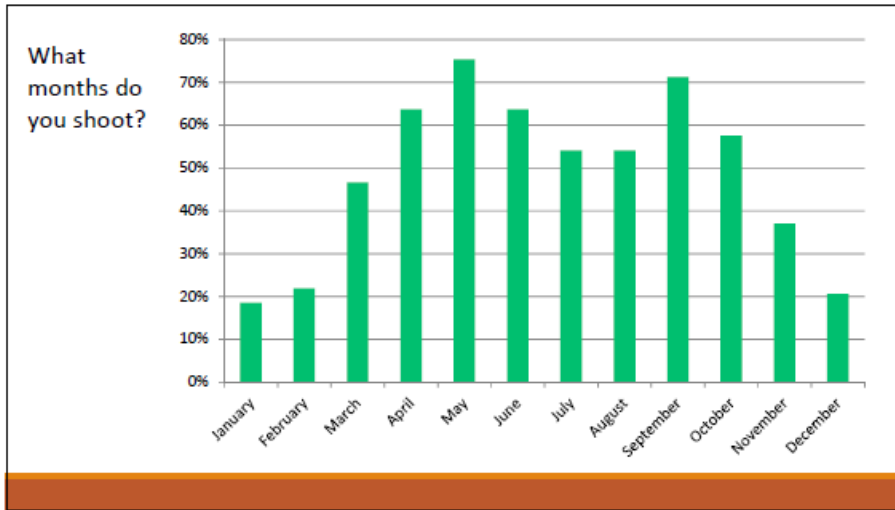
- At Committee meetings
 - *Please stick to 2 minutes or less, because*
 - *Time may be limited by Committee work*
- Through web form
- Through paper form
- At dedicated listening sessions
 - October 2 (Selah) and October 4 (Ellensburg)

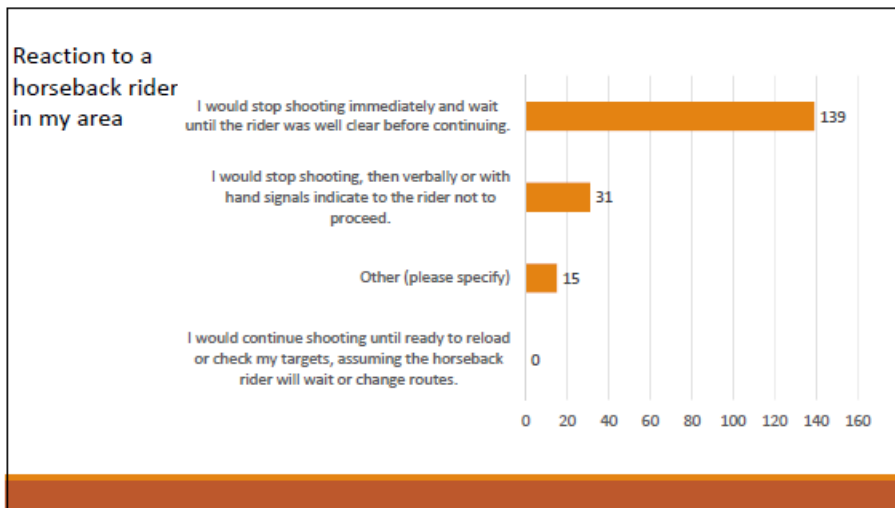
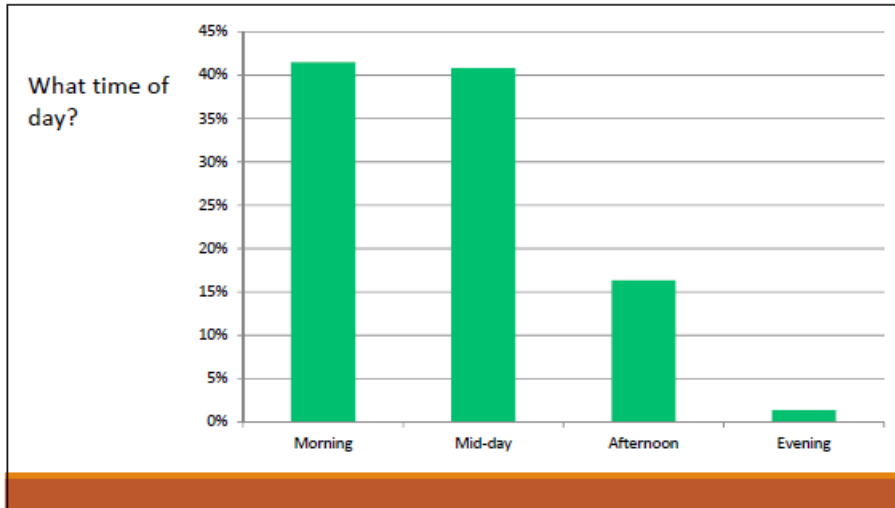
Information Gathering – Use Survey

- 580 responses (as of 9/13) and 45% completion rate
- Survey will be open until Friday 9/15
- Sample results on following slides...









Background Information

- Updated summary of fire information
- Updated enforcement data (Kittitas County)

Draft Recommendations 1 – 3

Draft Recommendations	Phase I	Phase II
1. WDFW should not prohibit or discourage dispersed shooting in compliance with applicable rules and regulations in the Wenas Wildlife Area.	X	X
2. WDFW should take a phased approach to making improvements at the Wenas Wildlife Area.	X	X
3. The WTS Advisory Committee should continue to meet to offer WDFW advice and support as recommendations are implemented. Meetings should be quarterly for the first year and semi-annually after that until the Department and the Committee determine that further support is not needed.	X	x

Draft Recommendations 4- 7

Draft Recommendations	Phase I	Phase II
4. WDFW should develop and install clearer and increased signage at the Wildlife Area including at access points, at the four areas recommended for management for concentrated shooting, and at three identified sites of known likely overlap between shooting and other types of uses at the Wenas.	X	
5. WDFW should develop simple and clear educational materials for all users of the Wenas Wildlife Area, with a particular emphasis on clear materials addressing regulations and best practices for shooting on public lands.	X	
6. WDFW should develop maps to describe all primary locations of roads and trails, indicate areas of concentrated shooting, and indicate areas of high use areas for other types of recreation (hiking trails, dog training areas, etc.).	X	
7. WDFW should ensure broad distribution of educational materials and maps via multiple distribution methods.	X	

Draft Recommendations 8 – 10

Draft Recommendations	Phase I	Phase II
8. WDFW should increase staff presence at the Wildlife Area to offer information to users.	X	
9. WDFW should create and fill the position of Outreach Liaison for WDFW Region 3.		X
10. WDFW should support and expand the use of volunteers at the Wenas Wildlife Area to help distribute information.	X	
	X	

Draft Recommendations 11 – 15

Draft Recommendation	Phase I	Phase II
11. WDFW should revise its regulations on shooting on public lands (WAC 220-500-140 and WAC 220-500-220) to match DNR's regulations on shooting on public lands (WAC 332-52-145) so the regulations are consistent. If there are improvements or clarifications to be made to the regulations for shooting on public lands they should be made at the same time to both the WDFW and the DNR regulations.	X	
12. WDFW should enhance coordination with local law enforcement, non-enforcement WDFW programs, and volunteer groups (as appropriate) to focus their available patrols and on-site presence for the Wenas at sites of concentrated shooting during anticipated high-use periods and should create and fill at least one additional enforcement officer position for Region 3.	X	X
13. WDFW should offer an Eyes in the Woods course and support for the Wenas Wildlife Area, preferably in early spring 2018.		X
14. WDFW should develop a mobile application to make it simpler for people to document and report illegal behavior.		X
15. WDFW should develop and/or adopt a records management system capable of producing analysis-ready reports specific to public safety.		X

Draft Recommendations 16 – 17

Draft Recommendation	Phase I	Phase II
16. WDFW should actively manage locations for concentrated shooting.	X	
17. WDFW should make limited improvements to the locations managed for shooting. Limited improvements should be designed to increase the likelihood of safe and predictable behavior and encourage compliance with requirements and expectations.		X

Public Comments

Wrap, Next Steps

Upcoming Meeting Dates and Locations

- Thursday, October 19 – Ellensburg
- Tuesday, November 14 – Selah
- Wednesday, December 13 - Ellensburg

Wenas Advisory Committee Meeting 5 – Attachment 2 (of 3)

9/5: WTS Advisory Committee – this is a preliminary, first draft of your report. It compiles the draft recommendations that emerged from the three small group efforts, and adds a brief introduction and a summary of information provided to the Committee.

The purpose of compiling this draft and sending it to you is to test where we are in terms of convergence (or consensus) on the draft recommendations. There are 17 draft recommendations. Please take a few minutes to read each of them and think about your level of support. I generally divide reactions to draft recommendations into 5 categories: (1) enthusiastically support; (2) can live with as part of the package; (3) not wild about but will not oppose if part of the package; (4) could probably live with the idea but wording needs to change; (5) can't live with. Think about where you fall on that scale, please for each of the draft recommendations here. ***Draft recommendations start on page 8.***

Know that I've done my best to try to incorporate comments. This can be a tricky business because sometimes in incorporating one person's comment you end up running on the rocks with another person's preferences. If I've run up on the rocks with your preferences in this draft please know that it was not on purpose; Andy and I are committed to continuing to work with each of you to get clear on these ideas and find the words that reflect your common ground. Over the next few meetings, I think we'll find that there are lots of areas where you all agree. We may also find that there are some areas where you don't agree. If that's the case, we will carefully describe the differences in perspective and include them in the final report.

Thank you all for your continuing work on this!

Table of Contents

[To be added]

I. Background and Introduction

This report provides the recommendations of the Wenas Wildlife Area Target Shooting Advisory Committee ("WTS Advisory Committee" or "Committee"). The 105,000-acre Wenas Wildlife Area spans Yakima and Kittitas counties, and includes Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and federal Bureau of Land Management BLM lands managed primarily by WDFW. Dispersed shooting has long occurred on the Wildlife Area and is expected to continue. Use of Wenas Wildlife Area by other recreation users (motorized, nature watching, hunting, etc.) also is expected to continue. WDFW convened the Wenas Target Shooting (WTS) Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for how WDFW can best provide for dispersed shooting on the Wenas Wildlife Area.

The WTS Advisory Committee represents broad recreational and neighbor interests in the Wenas Wildlife Area, and is comprised of 20 members representing: neighbors and affected landowners, hunters, target shooters, horseback riders, mountain bike riders, hikers, wildlife watchers, bird dog trainers, motorized users, and others. WDFW sent a broad invitation asking stakeholders to apply to

participate in the WTS Committee. WDFW selected Advisory Committee members from among the applicants based on the following:

- Active user of the Wenas Wildlife Area
- Acceptance of the basic problem statement and Committee purpose and objectives
- Interest in developing a sustainable solution to recreational target shooting management at Wenas Wildlife Area
- Past experience with collaborative processes
- Ability to represent a broader user group constituency
- Willingness to participate in regular Committee meetings

The Committee met *[number]* times between May 2017 and December 2017. Government agencies including WDFW and the WDNR participated in the Committee as Ex Officio participants. Local elected officials also (at their discretion) participated as Ex Officio participants. Ex Officio participants served as resources to the Committee.

Public input was important to the Committee process. All Committee meetings were open to the public and opportunities for public comment were provided at each meeting. In addition, WDFW hosted four listening sessions to facilitate the Committee receiving public input. Finally, the Committee maintained an on-line public comment form. Summaries of Committee meetings, the listening sessions, and online comments are available at the [Committee website](#).

The Committee considered a variety of information in its deliberations including information on WDFW management history and priorities for the Wenas; existing rules and regulations applicable to shooting on public lands; complaints, concerns, and enforcement at the Wenas; and, fires, littering and trash. Information considered by the Committee is summarized in Section II.

The Committee operated by consensus. For purposes of the Committee's deliberations "consensus" means that all members of the Committee can at least "live with" a recommendation, even if it is not their first (or even their preferred) choice. Consensus was evaluated through a variety of techniques, including one-on-one conversations with Advisory Committee members, straw polling during meetings, and documented review of Committee materials.

Ultimately the Committee reached consensus on recommendations addressing: *[summarize consensus here]*.

The Committee discussed but did not reach consensus on *[summarize non-consensus issues here if needed]*. For these issues, the report describes the full range of Committee Member perspectives and opinions.

Recommendations *[and non-consensus issues if any]* are described in Section III.

II. Information Considered During Committee Deliberations

During early discussions, Committee members identified several types of information as important to informing Committee development of recommendations. In particular, Committee members were

interested in gaining insight into the actual scope of the safety and fire issues at the Wenas Wildlife Area. Committee members sought information in the following areas:

- Wenas Wildlife Area management history & WDFW management priorities
- Existing rules and regulations related to Wildlife Area use
- Number of users, types of users, and when people use the Wildlife Area
- Safety concerns and complaints submitted to WDFW
- Enforcement by WDFW and other agencies
- Number of fires at the Wildlife Area and likely cause

The Committee facilitators and WDFW worked with Committee members and member organizations to compile existing data in these areas and provide summaries and complete data sets to the Committee. A high-level summary of available data is provided in the following sections. Full data are available on the Committee's [website](#).

Overall, Committee members expressed frustration with the lack of detailed information available and noted that improved information collection will be needed to determine the impact of Committee recommendations, and to refine and adaptively manage actions at the Wenas over time.

A. Management History and Priorities at the Wenas Wildlife Area

The Wenas Wildlife Area was created in 1997 by combining portions of the L.T. Murray and Oak Creek Wildlife Areas. WDFW is the land manager for the Wenas Wildlife Area, which includes lands owned by WDNR and BLM. WDFW's management of the Wenas Wildlife Area is consistent with the Agency's mission "To preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities." Since the Wenas Wildlife Area's inception, dispersed shooting has been available to the public; however, during the early 2000's WDFW began considering how to better manage dispersed shooting at the Wildlife Area due to increasing public use not only from shooters but also from other users.

WDFW's priority is to continue offering shooting opportunities at the Wildlife Area while conserving habitat and providing safe recreational opportunities for all Wildlife Area users. To that end, the Department requested that the Committee provide recommendations which strike a balance between seven interrelated goals: (1) support by the local communities; (2) reduction in risk to Wildlife Area users and neighbors; (3) improved habitat protection; (4) reduction in fire risks; (5) financially attainable and manageable; (6) provide predictability for all users; and (7) adhere to clear and concise standards.

B. Existing Rules and Regulations for Shooting on Public Lands

The three agencies (WDFW, WDNR, and BLM) that own land within the Wenas Wildlife Area each have their own rules and regulations governing shooting. In theory, the rules and regulations for each agency apply based on land ownership. However, the complexity of the checkerboard agency ownership within the Wenas Wildlife Area makes it impractical to try to enforce three different sets of rules and regulations. Because of this, WDFW's enforcement approach is to apply WDFW rules and regulations across the entire Wenas Wildlife Area. WDFW's regulations for shooting on public lands (WAC 220-500-140 and WAC 220-500-220) were put in place before WDNR's (WAC 332-52-145) and are less detailed and less specific than the WDNR regulations. The lack of specificity in the WDFW regulations can present

a challenge for enforcement. In addition, given the checker-board nature of the lands, the difference between existing regulations can sometimes cause confusion.

Other law enforcement agencies, primarily Kittitas and Yakima County Sheriff's offices and the Washington State Patrol, apply the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) when responding to safety concerns at the Wildlife Area.

C. Use and User Groups at the Wenas Wildlife Area

[To be added; will summarize development of use survey and results]

D. Safety Concerns and Complaints

WDFW tracks written complaints/concerns on an ad hoc basis. These complaints/concerns are received by various Department staff and through several other channels such as e-mail messages to WDFW staff, comments cards at public meetings, and letters. There is no formal tracking mechanism for written concerns or complaints – tracking relies on Department staff to save complaints and concerns in their working files.

Similarly, WDFW has no mechanism to track or record complaints or concerns that come from phone calls to the Department or are transmitted in one-on-one conversations between Department staff and the public (for example, if someone meets a WDFW employee on the Wenas and complains about trash or a locked gate or a shooting incident, these complaints are not tracked unless they are subsequently submitted in writing).

WDFW provided the Committee with all written complaints/concerns related to the Wenas Wildlife Area since 2004. During that time, 15 individuals described a first-hand experience where they felt unsafe due to shooting activities. (See Attachment 1.) The Committee attempted to cross-walk the first-hand shooting experiences with WDFW enforcement data and was not able to document that any of the experiences were reported to or investigated by WDFW enforcement in real time. For the most part, complaints/concerns were sent in well after the fact, making an investigation impossible. In some cases, the dates are vague or not provided and therefore cannot be matched with certainty to enforcement data. WDFW enforcement staff told the Committee anecdotally, that, in most cases, by the time an officer arrives on scene of a reported shooting-related complaint at the Wildlife Area, the party that is shooting has already left the scene and it is practically impossible to assess what occurred.

E. Enforcement

The WTS Advisory Committee received enforcement data from the Kittitas County Sheriff's Office and from WDFW Region 3 Enforcement staff.

Kittitas County Sheriff's Office

The Kittitas County Sheriff's Office reviewed their records of calls/contacts on the Wenas Wildlife Area from 2010 to present. During that timeframe, there were 13 target shooting-related calls logged as occurring on the Wenas Wildlife Area. On further investigation, 12 of these calls were on state land and 1 was on private property.

Of the 12 target-shooting related calls on state land, 2 were confirmed as illegal shooting that represented either public risk or a criminal violation, and for which citations were issued. Of the other

10 calls, 5 were from members of the public requesting information on where to shoot legally, 4 were investigated and confirmed to be legal shooting activity, and 3 were reported as fire hazards.

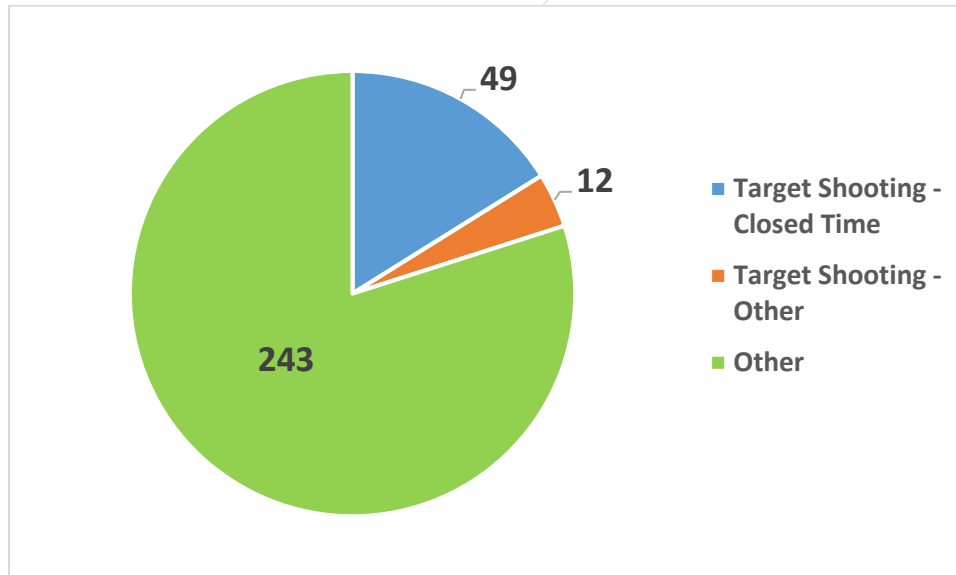
Yakima County Sheriff's Office

According to information drawn from a public disclosure request, from 2010 to March 2017 Yakima County Sheriff's Office recorded 15 total shooting-related responses on the Wenas Wildlife Area. Of these 15 responses, 10 were confirmed as shooting outside of allowed hours, 2 were investigated and found to be legal shooting activity, 2 were investigated and found to be unsafe shooting and education/information was provided, and the reasons of the remaining response could not be determined. There are no records of citations issued.

WDFW Region 3 Enforcement

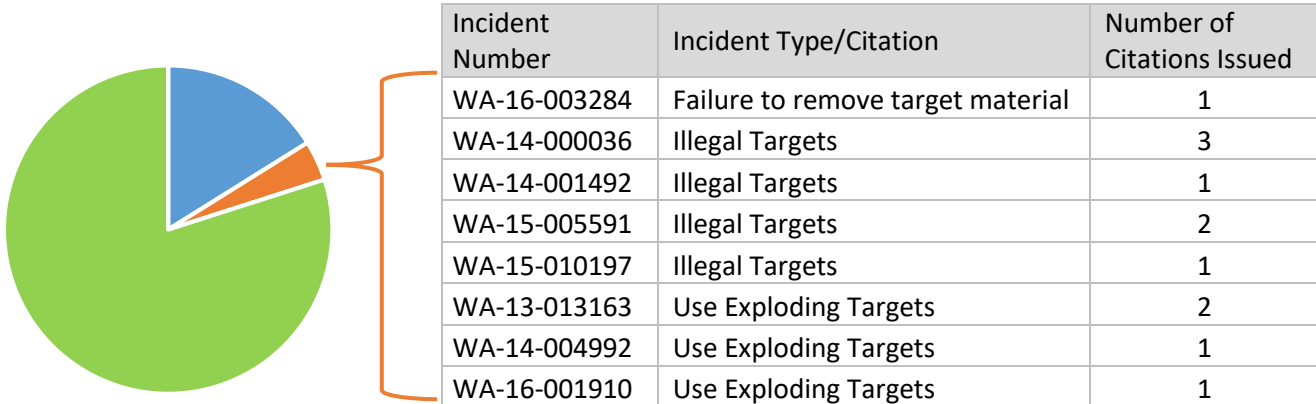
WDFW Region 3 enforcement does not have data to summarize or evaluate contacts/calls that did not result in enforcement action, only summary data on citations issued (i.e., they do not track incidents of public contact or verbal warnings issued; only citations). Between July 2013 and July 20, 2017 there were 61 target-shooting-related citations issued on the Wenas Wildlife Area; 49 were for "Target Shooting - Closed Time" and 12 were for "Target Shooting - Other." During the time period examined, target-shooting-related complaints represented 20% of citations issued on the Wenas (see Figure 1 below). WDFW is not able to further break down citations by geography (i.e., in their tracking they do not distinguish between the north and south ends of the Wenas).

Figure 1: WDFW Citations at Wenas Wildlife Area (7/2013 to 7/20/2017)



The 12 enforcement actions for "Target Shooting - Other" included failure to remove target material, illegal targets, and use of exploding targets; details are provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Shooting-Related Fire Data by Incident Type/Citation



F. Fire

Between 2003 and 2014 there were 30 fires at the Wenas Wildlife Area which burned a total approximately 11,699 acres and cost nearly \$3 million in suppression and restoration. WDFW and the Advisory Committee had extensive discussion of fire data for the Wenas to try to determine with some certainty how many fires could be attributed to target shooting. WDFW originally attributed the cause of 15 of these fires to shooting activity, but after discussions with the Committee acknowledged that for most of these fires the cause cannot be confirmed with 100% certainty.

For 6 fires the individuals responsible for starting the fire called 911 and reported that the fire started as a result of target shooting. For the remaining 9 fires that were discussed WDFW is confident that they were human caused but acknowledges that they cannot be attributed to target shooting with 100% certainty.

While the exact number of fires that can be attributed to target shooting in addition to the six self-reported fires is not known, given that there is *some* fire risk from shooting activity, the Committee recommendations include steps to mitigate fire risk at concentrated shooting sites.

In 2012 WDFW began implementing time-of-use restrictions on shooting at the Wenas. Although the exact dates of these restrictions vary, they generally begin in late May or early June and remain in effect through the end of September. In 2012-2014 shooting was prohibited after 11:00 am; from 2015-2016 shooting was prohibited after 10:00 am. During parts of 2014 and 2015 shooting was completely prohibited due to high fire risk. Since the time-of-use restrictions have been in place, there have been 6 fires attributed by WDFW to shooting activities. Five of the 6 fires WDFW attributed to target shooting occurred when target shooting was allowed; only one occurred during prohibited shooting times. In 2015 and 2016 there were no shooting-related fires on the Wenas Wildlife Area.

III. [DRAFT] Recommendations

The Committee is making four types of interrelated recommendations to WDFW.

- A. Overall recommendations which describe a phased approach to improving the experience for shooters and all other users at the Wenas.

B. Recommendations describing much needed education and outreach for all user groups and calling for increased enforcement resources.

C. Recommendations describing the role of enforcement and calling for increased enforcement resources.

D. Recommendations for limited improvements at four sites that historically and currently have been locations of concentrated shooting activities to increase safety.

Consistent with WDFW's request to the Committee, the Committee believes that these recommendations, taken as a package, represent an appropriate balance between the seven goals WDFW expressed for this effort.

A. Overall Recommendations

Overall recommendations set the tone for the Committee's more specific recommendations on education and outreach, enforcement, and management of sites for concentrated shooting.

1. WDFW should not prohibit or discourage dispersed shooting in compliance with applicable rules and regulations in the Wenas Wildlife Area.

The Committee believes strongly that all uses, including dispersed shooting, should continue to be supported and managed at the Wenas Wildlife Area. WDFW should take actions to improve user experiences across all user groups, in particular, through education and outreach, targeted enforcement, and better management of select sites for concentrated shooting as described in this report. These recommendations do not affect hunting. The Committee recommends no change or limitations on legal hunting within the Wenas.

2. WDFW should take a phased approach to making improvements at the Wenas Wildlife Area.

The Committee acknowledges that implementing these recommendations will take time and effort and that the resources needed, in particular, to make limited improvements at sites managed for concentrated shooting will take time – and probably legislative action -- to obtain. The Committee recommends beginning with actions that are quicker and less expensive to implement, followed by monitoring, and then moving towards more intensive management and investment if and where warranted.

Phase 1 is comprised of the majority of the recommendations on education and outreach, including development of new education and outreach materials, distribution of these materials, increased staff and volunteer presence on the Wildlife Area to provide information, and signs including signs at areas managed for concentrated shooting. It also includes revisions to the WDFW regulations on shooting on public lands to improve clarity and predictability, improved information collection, and management of areas for concentrated shooting (see Recommendations 4-8, 10, 11, 15, and 16). Phase 1 should begin as soon as possible.

Phase 2 includes hiring an education and outreach liaison, increased enforcement emphasis and resources, and limited improvements to sites managed for concentrated shooting. (See recommendations 9, 12-14, and 17.)

Phase 1 and 2 are not intended to be strictly sequential, they can overlap. For example, if resources are available, priority improvements to sites managed for concentrated shooting might begin immediately and overlap with development and distribution of education and outreach materials. One of the intentions of the phased approach is to ensure that WDFW begins implementation of recommendations that can be accomplished quickly immediately and makes real progress, rather than waiting until resources enough for everything are available to start. Overall, the Committee anticipates the phased approach will take four or more years to complete, with the first phase being completed in the first year if not sooner.

Table 3 lists the Committee's recommendations by phase. Detailed discussion of education and outreach recommendations begins on page [number], enforcement recommendations begin on page [number], and recommendations on managing a limited number of sites for concentrated shooting begin on page [number].

3. The WTS Advisory Committee should continue to meet to offer WDFW advice and support as recommendations are implemented. Meetings should be quarterly for the first year and semi-annually after that until the Department and the Committee determine that further support is not needed.

The WTS Advisory Committee is willing to continue to be engaged as recommendations are implemented. Committee roles include: support and assistance for WDFW as it works with user groups, and local and elected officials to implement recommendations, ongoing advice and adaptive management as more information emerges over time, and direct assistance through volunteering. The Committee acknowledges that some members may not be willing or able to commit to continuing involvement; in those cases, members should be replaced by a representative of a similar constituency/user group.

Draft: Not reviewed by full WTS Advisory Committee/Subject to revision/Do not cite

Table 2: Committee Recommendations by Phase

Draft Recommendation	Phase I	Phase II
1. WDFW should not prohibit or discourage dispersed shooting in compliance with applicable rules and regulations in the Wenas Wildlife Area.	X	X
2. WDFW should take a phased approach to making improvements at the Wenas Wildlife Area.	X	X
3. The WTS Advisory Committee should continue to meet to offer WDFW advice and support as recommendations are implemented. Meetings should be quarterly for the first year and semi-annually after that until the Department and the Committee determine that further support is not needed.	X	x
4. WDFW should develop and install clearer and increased signage at the Wildlife Area including at access points, at the four areas recommended for management for concentrated shooting, and at three identified sites of known likely overlap between shooting and other types of uses at the Wenas.	X	
5. WDFW should develop simple and clear educational materials for all users of the Wenas Wildlife Area, with a particular emphasis on clear materials addressing regulations and best practices for shooting on public lands.	X	
6. WDFW should develop maps to describe all primary locations of roads and trails, indicate areas of concentrated shooting, and indicate areas of high use areas for other types of recreation (hiking trails, dog training areas, etc.)	X	
7. WDFW should ensure broad distribution of educational materials and maps via multiple distribution methods.	X	
8. WDFW should increase staff presence at the Wildlife Area to offer information to users	X	
9. WDFW should create and fill the position of Outreach Liaison for WDFW Region 3.		X
10. WDFW should support and expand the use of volunteers at the Wenas Wildlife Area to help distribute information.	X	
11. WDFW should revise its regulations on shooting on public lands (WAC 220-500-140 and WAC 220-500-220) to match DNR's regulations on shooting on public lands (WAC 332-52-145) so the regulations are consistent. If there are improvements or clarifications to be made to the regulations for shooting on public lands they should be made at the same time to both the WDFW and the DNR regulations.	X	
12. WDFW should enhance coordination with local law enforcement, non-enforcement WDFW programs, and volunteer groups (as appropriate) to focus their available patrols and on-site presence for the Wenas at sites of concentrated shooting during anticipated high-use periods and should create and fill at least one additional enforcement officer position for Region 3.		X
13. WDFW should offer an Eyes in the Woods course and support for the Wenas Wildlife Area, preferably in early spring 2018.		X
14. WDFW should develop a mobile application to make it simpler for people to document and report illegal behavior.		X
15. WDFW should develop and/or adopt a records management system capable of producing analysis-ready reports specific to public safety.		X
16. WDFW should actively manage the following locations for concentrated shooting.	X	
17. WDFW should make limited improvements to the locations managed for shooting. Limited improvements should be designed to increase the likelihood of safe and predictable behavior and encourage compliance with requirements and expectations.		X

B. Education and Outreach

Education and outreach are the cornerstone of a long-term strategy to improve safety, reduce littering, reduce fire risk, provide habitat protection, and create a better overall environment for all users at the Wenas Wildlife Area. Committee recommendations are based on the notion that visitors to the Wenas Wildlife Area need the following types of information in order to recreate safely and compatibly with other users:

- When are you entering the Wildlife Area?
- What are the applicable rules/regulations for each user group?
- What are the expectations for each user group (shooters, horseback riders, hikers, mountain bikers, dog trainers, motorized users)? How can each group behave responsibly, both within its own activity and around other types of activity?
- Where are more commonly used areas for shooting?
- Where are more commonly used areas for other uses?
- Where are habitat conservation areas?

The Committee believes most people are interested in doing the right thing (or doing things the right way), and that the main obstacle to being able to do this is a lack of information. The Committee's recommendations address this information gap through several different approaches, most prominently:

- Development of clear materials describing what types of uses to expect at the Wenas Wildlife Area and requirements and best practices for various uses, including shooting
- Aggressive and coordinated distribution of the materials
- Increased staff presence at the Wildlife Area during peak use times
- Better signs and maps
- Continued and increased use of volunteers to amplify education and outreach efforts (including Eyes in the Woods)

Except for recommendation eight, which the Committee understands will take longer, the Committee recommends that all of the education and outreach recommendations be part of Phase 1 and that they be implemented by WDFW as soon as possible.

4. WDFW should develop and install clearer and increased signage at the Wildlife Area including at access points, at the four areas recommended for management for concentrated shooting, and at three identified sites of known likely overlap between shooting and other types of uses at the Wenas.

The Committee believes that signage at the Wenas Wildlife Area could be improved for clarity of message as well as general visibility. WDFW should develop a strategy around both the content and placement of signage in and around the Wildlife Area as part of its overall education and outreach efforts – this should ensure the right sign, with the right information, at the right place. The Committee is sensitive to the notion of “sign pollution” and “sign overload” and has structured its recommendations to highlight only the types and locations for signage that it believes are most necessary. Specifically, signs are recommended at the following locations:

Access points. Signs at access points should include information welcoming users to the Wenas Wildlife Area and describing the various uses that might be encountered, including target shooting, and indicating where various uses might be encountered, and encouraging respect between user groups.

Four locations recommended for management for concentrated shooting. As discussed in recommendation number 16 these are: Buffalo Road, Sheep Company, North Durr Road., and East Umptanum. Signs at locations managed for concentrated shooting should include:

- The type of firearm best suited for discharge at each location
- The intended shooting lanes and directions
- Requirements and expectations for shooting behavior
- Fines and penalties if requirements are not met
- Specific (directional) information on other nearby uses and what other users shooters might expect to encounter at each that shooters unfamiliar with the areas might not otherwise be aware of. Paragraph C below identifies an initial set of these areas. Additional areas, if necessary, should be identified in coordination with the Advisory Committee.

Known areas of likely heavy overlap between shooters and other users. Areas near or adjacent to locations managed for concentrated shooting where topography, lack of adequate backstop, the crossing of trails or roads, or the proximity of houses render shooting unsafe should be signed. The Committee has identified three such areas so far:

- The “cut off” trail to access the Sky Line trail at Buffalo Road which has heavy use by hikers and horseback riders
- The Umptanum creek crossing at Durr Road
- The Umptanum Falls parking area

Signs should read “Target Shooting Safety Zone – The Area Behind this Sign Does Not meet the Requirements of WAC XXX-XX-XXX for Target Shooting due to XXXXXXXXX”, or similar. [Note: I am not sure if there is agreement on this wording; this needs further discussion.]

Finally, signs should be placed where other users may be coming into proximity of areas managed for concentrated shooting but might be unaware of this use because they are unfamiliar with the area and are approaching from an area other than the main access. The Committee has identified one such area so far:

- The Cottonwood drainage (above Sheep Company) warning hikers and horseback riders they are nearing an area managed for concentrated shooting

The Committee emphasizes that areas signed in these ways should be identified in consultation with the Advisory Committee and with an eye towards limiting signs to only the locations most in need of them to reduce the overall number and type of signs on the Wildlife Area.

The Committee acknowledges that signs alone are not enough to curb inappropriate behavior or educate the public about “where to go and what to do” at the Wildlife Area. The Committee also acknowledges that signs may be vandalized or destroyed and will require regular maintenance or replacement (as one Committee member said, “Whoever invents a bullet proof sign will be a very rich person”). However, proper signage is still an important part of education for visitors to the Wildlife Area

and should not be neglected. One of the interesting ideas proposed by Committee members is to use the image of the U.S. flag on Wildlife Area signage (possibly even as a background) as a means of deterring vandalism. WDFW could even try an experiment using one sign (or set of signs) with the flag image, and one without, and see if one set of signs receives more damage. Another idea put forward by Committee members is to put signs in place to ensure people understand that children and families may be playing/recreating nearby (akin to the “slow children at play” signs in many neighborhoods).

[Note: there are some concerns about too much reliance on signs – or too many signs – discussion is needed to know if the draft is striking the right balance.]

5. WDFW, working with user groups such as those represented on the WTS Advisory Committee, should develop simple and clear educational materials for all users of the Wenas Wildlife Area, with a particular emphasis on clear materials addressing regulations and best practices for shooting on public lands.

Educational materials should describe requirements and conduct expectations on public lands and where on the Wenas Wildlife Area users might expect to encounter different activities. At a minimum, this information should address:

- Common location of different uses including roads, trails, horse riding areas, dog training areas, managed shooting locations, and other relevant information on where different uses commonly happen on the Wenas Wildlife Area
- Requirements for public conduct
- “Good Neighbor” expectations for what users should expect when encountering other uses, and polite behavior / etiquette between user groups

Materials could include one-page handouts, flyers, maps (see also recommendation 6 on maps, below) or postcards. They could even include paper targets with safety/use information printed on the back.

WDFW does not have to start from scratch to develop these materials. Other public agencies and organizations have developed materials that could be adapted for use at the Wenas Wildlife Area.

Examples include:

- DNR
 - [Shooting Flyer](#)
 - [Mountain Biking Flyer](#)
 - Multiple Use Flyer
- Trash No Land
 - [Brochure: Common Rules for Shooting on Public Lands](#)
- National Shooting Sports Foundation
 - [Fire Warning Flyer](#)
- BLM
 - [Shooting Flyer](#)

6. WDFW should develop maps to describe all primary locations of roads and trails, indicate areas of concentrated shooting, and indicate areas of high use areas for other types of recreation (hiking trails, dog training areas, etc.).

Maps should be available on paper (for handout), prominently posted at all entrances and trailheads, and readily available online. They could also incorporate information on times of year when uses increase. Committee members note that the Green Dot map is a successful example of a clear, easy to understand map that indicates the appropriate trail system for motorized use at the Wenas Wildlife Area. It might be used as the basis for the more comprehensive map recommended here. A similar approach should be undertaken for other uses. An [example map](#) showing multiple uses was recently developed for the Teanaway Community Forest.

7. WDFW, working with groups such as those represented on the WTS Advisory Committee, should ensure broad distribution of educational materials and maps via multiple distribution methods.

Educational materials will only make a difference if they get in the hands of users. WDFW should consider and to the maximum extent practical, make use of, the following distribution methods for educational materials:

- Outreach to local stores that sell firearms and ammunition (for example, ask retailers to hand out a “best practices” flyer when people purchase a firearm and/or ammunition)
- Shared at events (including by supporting organizations, e.g., shared at the NRA table at the Central Washington fair)
- Available at DFW offices and on the DFW website
- Shared with local groups such as NRA chapters, Mule Deer Foundation, Field and Stream, 4H clubs, Master Hunters, Backcountry Horsemen, mountain bikers, local Audubon chapters, and hiking groups (note: this list is not comprehensive and is meant to illustrate that there are many local groups that could help distribute information)
- Distributed to local law enforcement and fire departments
- Distributed to Central Washington University for distribution to incoming classes and, particularly to University police and the part of the University that operates firearms lockers for students

People take in information from a variety of sources and methods, from television to newspaper to Facebook posts. Educating the public on proper use at the Wenas Wildlife Area is no different, and will require a mix of traditional media outreach, social media channels, and personal contact such as talking with users at trailheads, meeting with local groups, and having a presence at local events.

Recommendations 8-11 below address the notion that successful education and outreach will require not only written materials but also one-on-one contact with Wenas users.

8. WDFW should increase staff presence at the Wildlife Area to offer information to users.

Every public contact is an opportunity to educate people on appropriate use of the Wildlife Area. WDFW staff should take advantage of these opportunities by handing out informational materials and communicating with members of the public whenever possible (for example, if WDFW staff are undertaking maintenance work and encounter a group of hikers, take the opportunity to provide information). Additionally, WDFW should coordinate staff efforts related to education and outreach during times of high user activity such as weekends and the 2-3 weeks prior to hunting season when a large number of hunters typically access the Wildlife Area to sight in their firearms. As with other recommendations, local volunteer groups can bolster WDFW staff presence.

As part of rolling out the new educational information recommended above, the Committee recommends a concerted effort to increase staff visibility and get information in the hands of users by stationing WDFW staff and/or volunteers at heavily used entrances to the Wenas during days and hours of peak use (likely weekends) for at least 4 weeks in an effort to meet a broad cross-section of users and get them information.

The Committee recognizes that resources are limited and that this sort of effort will involve decisions to move staff from other tasks to this work, and/or assign resources (managers, planners, etc.) that normally do not work in the field to temporary field duty.

9. To further increase staff presence at the Wenas Wildlife Area and provide for ongoing education and outreach, WDFW should work with the WTS Advisory Committee to create and fill the position of Outreach Liaison for WDFW Region 3.

At a minimum, the Outreach Liaison should be tasked with coordinating distribution of education and outreach material to increase knowledge of expected behavior and what to anticipate among all Wenas Wildlife Area user groups, identifying gaps in education and outreach materials, and working with user groups to create new materials as needed. Grant funding may be available for positions such as this and should be pursued. [Note: some Subgroup members think this position should be volunteer, others believe it should be WDFW staff. This issue needs further discussion.]

10. WDFW, in coordination with local groups, should support and expand the use of volunteers at the Wenas Wildlife Area to help distribute information.

Volunteers have been, and will continue to be, an important part of WDFW's outreach and education efforts. Many of the recommendations described above will be bolstered by volunteer actions, which WDFW can help coordinate in order to maximize outreach and education activities. In addition to the recommendations described above, volunteers can also help WDFW by:

- Providing information at areas commonly used for shooting, to encourage safe and responsible behavior
- Providing information at Wildlife Area access points about where various types of uses are most likely to occur and how users can safely co-exist
- Expanding trash pickup beyond the annual cleanups, for example by creating an "Adopt an Area" program similar to the "Adopt a Highway" program

C. Enforcement

Enforcement is intended to back up education and outreach activities. Recommendations are focused on clarifying regulations for shooting on public lands and optimizing existing enforcement resources, with the understanding that additional resources may be difficult to obtain. However, the Committee is recommending at least one new enforcement officer (see Recommendation 12, below) and is supportive of WDFW budget requests to establish these new resources. The Committee understands that the Legislature makes decisions about WDFW's budget.

Except for recommendation 11 to clarify requirements for shooting on public lands, and recommendation 15 on information management, which the Committee believes should be implemented as soon as possible, enforcement recommendations are intended to be part of Phase 2 and to come after initiation of increased education and outreach.

11. WDFW should revise its regulations on shooting on public lands (WAC 220-500-140 and WAC 220-500-220) to match DNR's regulations on shooting on public lands (WAC 332-52-145) so the regulations are consistent. If there are improvements or clarifications to be made to the regulations for shooting on public lands they should be made at the same time to both the WDFW and the DNR regulations.

Currently, WDFW and WDNR regulations for shooting on public lands are different. WDFW's regulations for shooting on public lands were put in place before WDNR's and are less detailed and less specific. The lack of specificity in the WDFW regulations can present a challenge for enforcement. In addition, given the checker-board nature of the lands, the difference between existing regulations can sometimes cause confusion. Revising the regulations for shooting on public lands to make them consistent would alleviate these concerns, clarify requirements, and simplify enforcement. In general, the Committee anticipates that the WDFW regulations will move in the direction of the WDNR regulations in this revision; however, if there are concerns with the clarity of the WDNR regulations, this also is an opportunity to address those. The outcome the Committee is looking for is one set of reasonably specific, reasonably detailed, clear regulations for shooting on public lands that execute existing requirements.

12. WDFW should enhance coordination with local law enforcement, non-enforcement WDFW programs, and volunteer groups (as appropriate) to focus their available patrols and on-site presence for the Wenas at sites of concentrated shooting during anticipated high-use periods and should create and fill at least one additional enforcement officer position for Region 3.

The Committee was briefed on the challenges associated with enforcement at the Wenas Wildlife Area. These included the need for enforcement officers to cover a broad area encompassing not just the Wenas but other wildlife areas as well, the difficulty in responding quickly (i.e., which an incident is occurring) given the distances that must be covered, and the need to address multiple enforcement priorities at any given time. The Committee understands these challenges; the Committee also understands that WDFW Region 3 enforcement already devotes more than half their available resources to the Wenas Wildlife Area.

To address these challenges the Committee recommends a two-pronged approach. First, the Committee recommends that WDFW meet with local law enforcement, and other enforcement agencies, to discuss concerns at the Wenas and develop a plan for emphasis enforcement patrols and presence. This should emphasize existing areas of concentrated shooting and times of known and anticipated high use. Education and outreach should be the focus of these patrols initially, however the focus should shift to issuing citations (when warranted) over time. Increased enforcement patrols should be coordinated with the increased presence of WDFW staff and volunteers (see recommendations 8-11) so the two activities can be mutually reinforcing.

Second, to supplement existing enforcement resources WDFW should add one additional enforcement officer for Region 3. The Committee understands that additional resources will be required to implement this recommendation and that Legislative action will be needed for these resources to become available. Committee Members are willing to support WDFW in seeking resources to implement this recommendation. *[Note: there is some concern that recommending additional enforcement emphasis patrols, and existing officers, is not realistic. This issue needs further discussion.]*

13. WDFW should offer an Eyes in the Woods course and support for the Wenas Wildlife Area, preferably in early spring 2018.

Eyes in the Woods is endorsed by Committee members as an important program that empowers hunters and others to report inappropriate behavior without the need for direct confrontation. [More on EOY?]

14. WDFW should develop a mobile application to make it simpler for people to document and report illegal behavior.

WDFW currently has a text-tip line that can be used to report concerns; however, Committee members who have experience with the line found it difficult and cumbersome to use. The Committee recommends development of a mobile application to replace the text-tip line. This could be similar (and perhaps use some of the same technology) as mobile applications the Department has developed for reporting invasive weeds and other invasive species.

15. WDFW should develop and/or adopt a records management system capable of producing analysis-ready reports specific to public safety.

The Committee was frustrated by the limited information available on WDFW enforcement activities at the Wenas and by the time (and level of effort) required to produce summaries and reports. Additional information on enforcement would allow better tracking and understanding of emerging problem areas and issues and promote more focused education and outreach, and more targeted enforcement follow up. The Committee recommends that WDFW invest in a records management system that can produce results similar to that available to most local law enforcement, including sufficient detail to allow for tracking of public safety issues such as:

- Type of call (question, accusation etc.)
- Where, when, date/time reported, date/time investigated/ date/time closed.
- Type of closure (arrest, citation, filed with prosecutor for review, warning, unfounded, not sustained etc.)

D. Management of Select Sites for Concentrated Shooting

The Committee recommends that four specific sites at which shooting has historically been concentrated be actively managed for concentrated shooting. The committee does not recommend development of formal shooting ranges at these sites. Rather it recommends that the sites be clearly identified as areas managed for concentrated shooting so that all users can plan their activities accordingly, and that the inherent safety features of the sites be improved and amplified to make them more obvious to users, particularly users who may be unfamiliar with the Wildlife Area.

Locations recommended for concentrated shooting management were identified by Committee members after visiting many of the current locations of concentrated shooting and considering their pros and cons relative to inherent safety features, proximity to high-use areas for other users, access, and ability for fire response. In most cases, Committee members visited the locations multiple times, together in small groups and individually. In response to Committee member requests, WDFW provided information on area under consideration for recommendation, including information on past evaluations of the sites.

16. WDFW should immediately begin to actively manage the following locations for concentrated shooting.

The Committee identified four existing locations of concentrated shooting to be actively managed for shooting uses going forward, two in the South Wenas and two in the North. These locations and the types of management recommended are:

- Buffalo Rd (exact location to be determined) -- WDFW should make limited improvements for shotgun and potentially pistol with NW orientation.
- Sheep Company Road (existing concentrated shooting area) – WDFW should make limited improvements for rifle and hand gun with NE orientation.
- North Durr Rd. (portion of existing concentrated shooting area) – WDFW should make limited improvements for short-to-mid-range and shotgun/trap.
- East Umptanum (portion of existing concentrated shooting area) – WDFW should make limited improvements for mid to long range.

Figures [number] through [number] are conceptual drawings showing a recommended approach to each area including a conceptual layout of shooting orientation, backstops, berms, firing lines, and lanes. [Note 1: there are ongoing discussions on the Buffalo Rd location and whether it truly constitutes an appropriate place for concentrated shooting; this requires further exploration. The Committee could continue to try to resolve this question in its deliberations or could decide to craft a recommendation for WDFW to undertake additional work to figure out the Buffalo Rd. site. This issue is not resolved and needs further discussion.] [Note 2: conceptual drawings for the north sites exist and for the south sites are under development.]

17. WDFW should make limited improvements to the locations managed for shooting. Limited improvements should be designed to increase the likelihood of safe and predictable behavior and encourage compliance with requirements and expectations.

The Committee had extensive deliberations on the types of limited improvements that would be appropriate for managed shooting sites. The goal was to develop an approach to these sites that offered flexibility to make improvements over time and could be implemented relatively inexpensively. The Committee recognizes that implementing these improvements will require resources. Committee Members are prepared to support implementation of these recommendations by supporting resource requests and with volunteer time.

The following limited improvements for sites managed for concentrated shooting are recommended, in order of importance. They are recommended in addition to the signs at areas managed for shooting described in recommendation 4, earlier in this report.

- Install fences, signs, or other deterrents to prevent unsafe direction of fire. This is largely addressed in recommendation 4, but is reiterated here for emphasis
- Manage vegetation and install fire breaks to reduce fire risk, including clearing vegetation for a distance of at least 10 feet from backstops
- Improve backstops using existing materials from within the site, commercially sold bullet traps, or other means to achieve a backstop that is at least 10 feet in height

- Identify shooting directions and lanes and install separation berms of at least 8 feet in height between shooting areas
- Install durable bench rests for sites used for rifle shooting and durable elevated stands at sites used for pistol and shotgun shooting suitable for placing ammunition, supplies, tools, etc.
- Clearly mark intended firing lines with marking paint, signage, or other means
- Improve or relocate existing access roads and improve parking including graveling parking areas, maintaining them relatively level and free of vegetation, and separating parking areas from roads and from shooting areas by rocks or other means
- Provide consideration(s) for the disabled
- Provide trash collection or other mechanism to reduce the likelihood of littering
- Provide sanitation stations (outdoor toilets)

Public and private grant funding may be available for these sorts of improvements and should be pursued.

IV. Conclusion

[Placeholder; to be added]

[Wenas Advisory Committee Meeting 5 – Attachment 3 \(of 3\)](#)

Wenas Target Shooting Advisory Committee

Public Comments Received via Web Form

Date	Category	Comment
7/25/2017	Management, safety, fire and shooting	First off, I am not against gun ownership or target shooting. I am however very concerned in regard to fire, destruction of public land by fire, and garbage that is left behind. I'm concerned with those who are going to the shooting range that have no training or knowledge of guns or gun ownership. They are young people that come out from Yakima. They have no gun safety skills at all and show up in groups. I'm not sure how it would work but I would like to see the range somehow regulated for the sake of safety and saving public land. I'm not sure how it would work but if a foundation could be set up to manage the range area. Would volunteers be allowed to go onto the land with equipment and build safety bunkers to shoot into much like the shooting range in Moxee. People pay a tag fee to hunt. I don't see a problem with a range fee/pass. People pay to ski, boat, and hunt on public land. I'm not sure if a discover pass is needed in the area or not. Is there such a thing as grant or federal funding for development of public lands? We don't go to the shooting area because of problems we have seen and heard about from others. We can hear the rapid fire of high powered guns from our house. I know we have the option to call the sheriff. However, by the time an officer can become available the problem people have left. Sadly, we have come to a point in time where people are not responsible with there actions and not much is free anymore. It costs money to maintain public areas and pay fire fighters. Another options, put the land out for a lottery, new winner each year, to rent the public land to pasture sheep or cattle in the areas that are at high risk of fire. There is a lot of grass that is going to waste and becoming fuel. Grazing rights could be limited depending on the available grass on a year to year basis. A contract agreement could have something like any animals left beyond the exit date would become property of the state and sold at a livestock sale. I know some people think that wildlife eat all the grass. We live next to the LT, wild life is not eating the grass, but it burns really well. A huge THANK YOU to all the fire fighters!
8/28/2017	SHOOTING	I don't see how shooting and wilderness area go together.

