



OLYMPIC – WILLAPA HILLS WILDLIFE AREA 2012 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Land Management Summary

The Olympic – Willapa Hills Wildlife Area encompasses a total of 24 satellite units comprising of approximately 12,000 acres. Individual units were acquired, dating back to the early 1950's, for their specific benefit for fish and wildlife diversity and recreational significance. These lands include a wide range of important fish and wildlife habitats including riparian, estuarine, freshwater wetland, old-growth/mature forest, upland meadow and coastal dune systems. Focus units include Olympic, Wynoochee, John's River, Chinook and Chehalis/Hoxit.



This is an update to the management plan that provides management direction for the Olympic – Willapa Hills Wildlife Area Complex. The plan identifies needs and guides activities on the area based on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Mission of “*Sound Stewardship of Fish and Wildlife*” and its underlying statewide goals and objectives as they apply to local conditions http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/

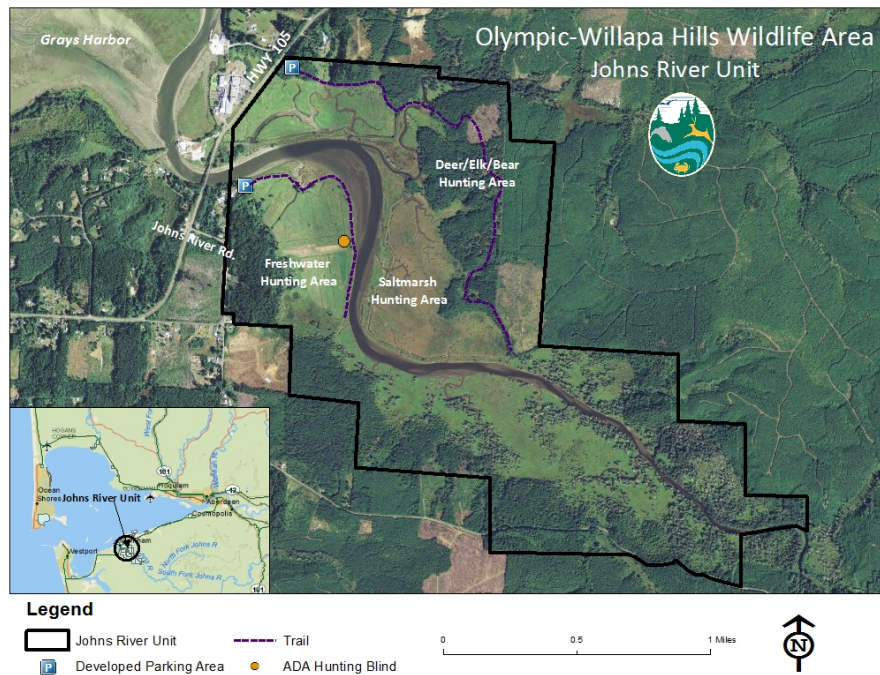
Plans are updated biannually as habitat and species conditions change, as new regulations and scientific knowledge develop, as public issues and concerns evolve, and as administration of wildlife areas change. This management plan update also includes accomplishments over the past two years, new issues, new land management strategies and performance measures for 2012.

Inside	
Land Management Summary	1
Updates/Changes	2
New Issues	7
Major Stewardship Accomplishments	8
Status Report of 2010-11 Performance Measures	11
New Strategies	13
2012-13 Performance Measures	15
Citizens Advisory Group	17

Updates/Changes

Waterfowl Hunting Guide

Late in 2011 regional biologists developed a comprehensive guide to waterfowl access sites across all wildlife area units in Region 6. This guide includes overview maps and unit specific maps with access locations, parking options, blind descriptions and a general scouting report. The guide can be found online at the WDFW website at:



http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/waterfowl/where_to_go.html

RMAP Update

All Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan (RMAP) work that is required throughout the region has been completed except for one problem area associated with the Johns River Wildlife Area. In 2010 and 2011, approximately 8,573 ft of forest roads were brought to the RMAP standard at the Olympic, Wynoochee and Johns River Wildlife Areas. All major problem areas and/or fish barriers have been corrected on all road systems except for the Beaver Creek Crossing at the Johns River Wildlife Area. The WDFW district team and Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) supports the creation of a crossing that will maintain public access and allow passage of heavy equipment (forestry and agricultural) along the Johns River east side road beyond Beaver Creek.

Davis Creek and Hoxit Agricultural Leases

Both agricultural leases in the Lower Chehalis Valley were renewed in 2011. The Davis Creek lease included an additional Farm Plan that the lessee is subject to fulfilling. Currently, the Conservation District is reviewing the farm practices in their development of a "nutrient management plan". This information will ultimately be utilized by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in their development of a "Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (whole farm plan)". The "whole farm plan" will help ensure that the resources are being




managed in a sustainable manner and will provide the avenue for the lessee to enroll the property into the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). This program has the ability to provide much needed resources for improving the function of the farming regime.

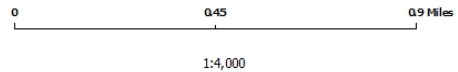
EXHIBIT 1 - Agricultural Lease Map

Davis Creek Unit



Legend

-  Livestock Holding Area
-  Building Infrastructure Included in Lease
-  Ballage/Silage Area



Johns River Unit

A new Americans with Disability Act (ADA) waterfowl hunting blind was installed at the Johns River Unit in 2011. This blind is access along the dike trail on the west of Johns River. The blind was donated by a local ADA hunter. Wildlife area staff placed the blind and constructed an additional span of ADA trail. Further, WDFW managed the areas immediately adjacent to the blind for wet soil management. This included the promotion of a significant stretch of barley and smartweed which is a very desirable food source for migrating and wintering waterfowl.



Davis Creek Unit

The Davis Creek Oregon White Oak Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) continued in 2010 and 2011. During this period, WDFW constructed approximately 1 mile of combination range and electrified fencing with wood posts. This fencing will effectively separate parking and field trial areas, as well as livestock holding areas, from damaging the oak planted during the winter of 2012. This planting consisted of installing approximately 1,200 12 inch Oregon white oak plants, many of which were grown from local acorns specific to the site.

Cedar River

Boundary and kiosk signing (including entire kiosks) continue to be vandalized and stolen from the Cedar River Unit. Wildlife area staff has worked closely with Green Diamond Resources to find resolve to this ongoing problem. WDFW is in the process of submitting a Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) grant proposal for construction of a small parking area at the Cedar River Unit. This may help to alleviate some of the ongoing problems at the site.

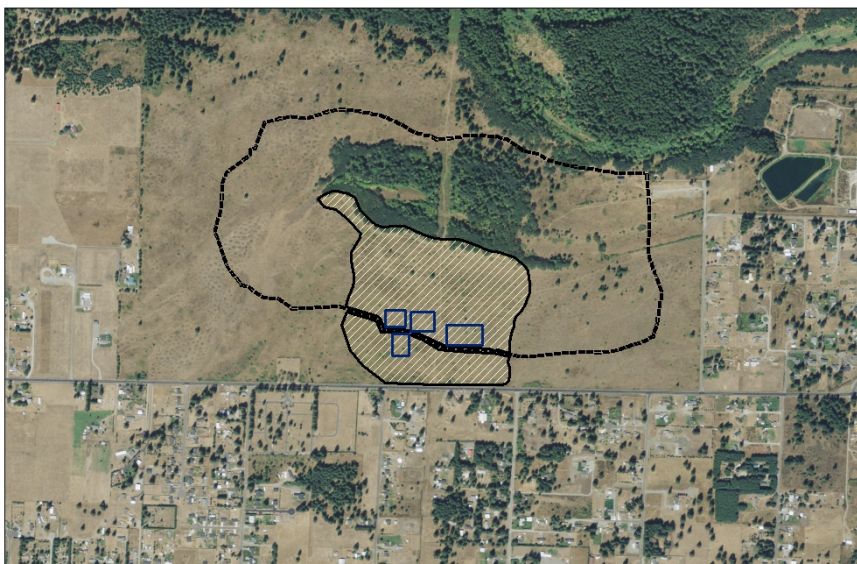
Field Trial Rules and Conditions

The rules and conditions for “*Temporary Use Permits*” for field trials were updated for the 2010 and 2011 season of events. These rules were developed after significant internal/external review of land management policies on the Scatter Creek and Davis Creek (Koopmans) Units and have been added as a provision to the “*Temporary Use Permit*”. During this time WDFW wildlife area staff met with multiple field trial participants. Several new provisions were added to the updated rules based on these meetings. After two years of applying these rules to the units



South Puget Sound Wildlife Area
Scatter Creek - South Unit

Sensitive Areas



Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly and Mardon Skipper Areas
Please respect the prairie and avoid impacts in these areas

0 425 850 1,700 Feet
1 inch = 833 feet

WDFW has found that the rules are working well for most recreational users. Wildlife area staff met with a broad range of field trial and hunt test participants along with Representative Jim McCune in January 2011 at the Washington State Legislature. This meeting proved to be valuable for all participants in understanding the goals and objectives for managing the Scatter

Creek and Davis Creek Wildlife Area Units.

Anderson Homestead Unit Parking Facility

WDFW partnered with Eyes in the Woods volunteers in the construction of a parking area at the Anderson Homestead Unit near the city of Forks. This project was partially funded by an Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) grant acquired by *Eyes in the Woods*. Construction activities included installation of perimeter fencing, informational kiosk, boundary signs and resurfacing with rock. The Anderson Homestead Unit is used primarily by deer and elk hunters and for bank fishing access along the Bogachiel River.



OSB Thinning and Meadow Enhancement

Wildlife Area staff continued their efforts on finishing the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly (OSB) enhancement project located at the OSB Unit on the Long Beach Peninsula. This tree removal / meadow expansion project involves the creation of four cleared units that will be planted with meadow specific native plants. All of the units encompassing 3-4 acres have been cut and cleared. Locations were determined by the amount of standing trees, presence of openings, vulnerability to invasive plant encroachment and feasibility of propagation of desired meadow species.

Chehalis Wildlife Area Expansion

WDFW acquired approximately 120 acres adjacent to the Chehalis Wildlife Area in late 2011. This property abuts the Chehalis Wildlife Area and extends the WDFW ownership from 530 acres to 647.9 acres. The purchased parcels contain 85 acres of wetlands that are connected to protected wetlands within the Chehalis Wildlife Area. The Chehalis Wildlife Area contains 363 acres of wetlands. Acquisition of these 85 acres has increased the amount of protected wetlands by 12% to 448 acres of connected wetlands in this important migratory corridor. The purpose of this acquisition is to

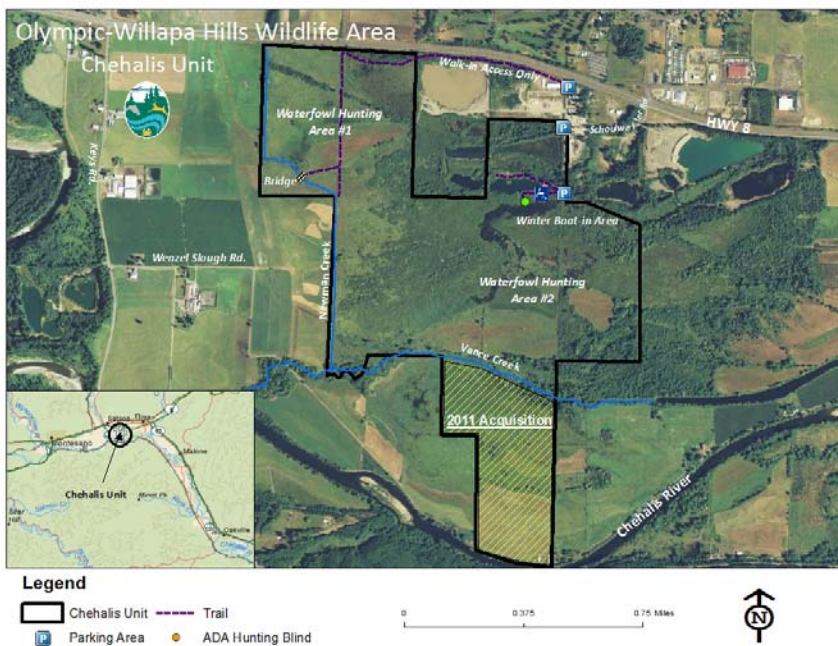


increase management opportunities for wetland enhancement and increased recreational access to the wildlife area specifically for waterfowl hunting. This project was jointly funded by a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) North American Wetland Conservation Act, Migratory Bird Stamp funds, the Washington Waterfowl Association and federal Pittman Robertson funding. In 2012, wildlife area staff along with volunteers from the Washington Waterfowl Association will create a small parking area and post all applicable boundaries in preparation of the 2012-2013 waterfowl hunting season.

Migratory Bird Stamp Funds

Wildlife Area staff developed several operations projects specifically for the Migratory Bird Stamp Funding in 2011. Three of these projects were funded in the region for enhancement work at the Chehalis, Johns River and Chinook Wildlife Area Units. In 2011 WDFW completed work at the Johns River Unit which included mowing approximately 100 acres to develop sheet-

water habitat and the tilling and seeding of approximately 15 acres into barely and smartweed production. This project will also complement the construction of the new ADA blind that was installed in 2010.



North Willapa Bay

Willapa Bay in southwest Washington State is widely regarded as one of the most pristine estuaries in the United States and is

the second largest estuary on North America’s west coast. It has been described as “the most productive coastal ecosystem remaining in the continental United States” and “the cleanest large estuary in the continental United States”. Willapa Bay and its associated estuaries, rivers, sloughs and shorelines provide internationally significant and important feeding habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds migrating along the Pacific Flyway. Over 250 birds, 53 mammals and 19 herptiles have been recorded within the vicinity. In 2010, WDFW was awarded a Coastal Wetland Grant from the USFWS



for acquisition support along the North Willapa Bay shoreline. WDFW has partnered with Forterra (formerly the Cascade Land Conservancy) for the past decade in their joint acquisition efforts throughout coastal estuaries in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor. The 2011 acquisitions have conserved a total of approximately 435 acres of North Willapa Bay coastline. Approximately 281 acres were acquired on the North River and its tributary Sippy Slough, including approximately 25 acres of occupied marbled murrelet habitat. In addition, approximately 154 acres were acquired at Hawks Point. The majority of this acquisition will be managed in perpetuity by WDFW as additions to the existing units that cover the majority of the North Willapa Bay coastline. In 2012, Forterra will be transferring the titles to nearly 1,500 acres of protected land around Willapa Bay. The featured sites on the North Bay are displayed in the map below.

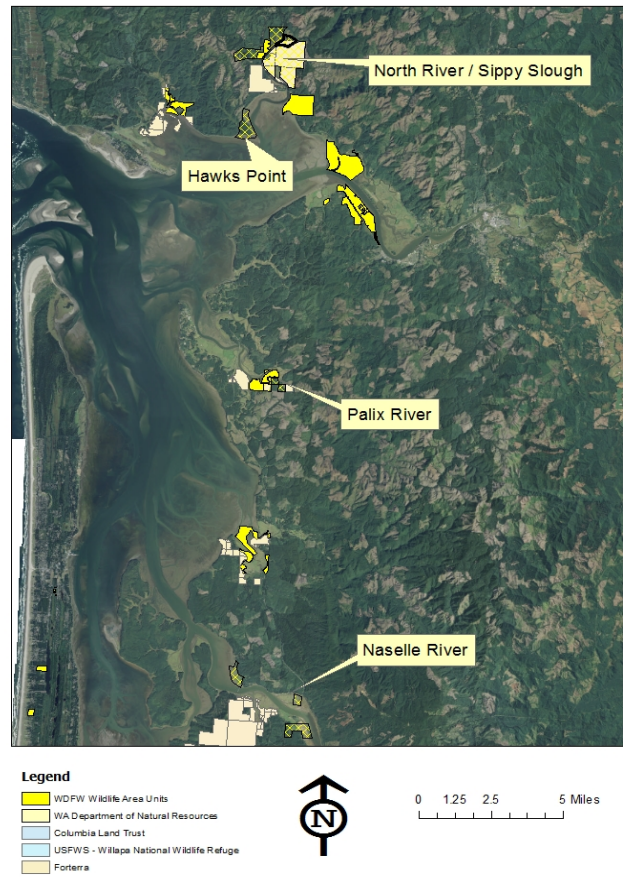
Additionally, WDFW will be accepting the transferred parcels from Forterra located at the Palix River and Nassele River. These properties include a mosaic of critical habitats including estuary, freshwater emergent and forested wetlands, late successional forests, tidal sloughs and channels and riparian corridors. Further, they provide the opportunity for a variety of recreational activities including hiking, bird watching, fishing, sea and river kayaking, shellfish harvesting, photography, waterfowl, upland bird and big game hunting, biking and multiple watchable wildlife opportunities.

New Issues

Johns River Salt Marsh Conversion

The John’s River estuary was diked on both sides of the river prior to 1950. In 2004, WDFW conducted several wetland restoration projects on the 1,500 acre wildlife area that included multiple dike breaches on the east side of Beaver Creek. During the summer of 2011 the water control structure that maintained the remaining diked area on the west side of Beaver Creek (north side of John’s River) failed and resulted in a dike breach. These fields had previously been maintained and mowed for elk forage. This breach will allow for regular tidal transition throughout the fields located across the highway from the Ocean Spray plant. As the area reverts back to a saltwater estuary, and the vegetative community changes from fresh water to saltwater plant species, the vegetation may take on a reddish appearance. This is normal during the transition of the plant community. Estuaries are important transition zones

Forterra Transfer Parcels

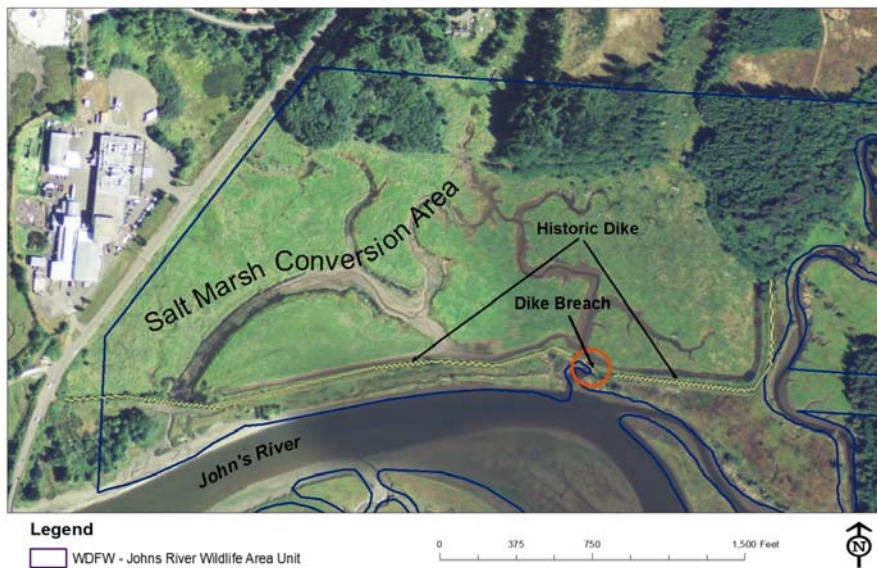


for juvenile salmon. They provide a salinity gradient for a gradual adaptation for salmon between the freshwater and marine environments. Also, estuaries provide a productive foraging area where juvenile salmon may experience faster growth and potentially higher marine survival. Waterfowl, shorebirds and wading birds use estuaries on a seasonal and daily basis. Estuaries are extremely productive environments that contain a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Chinook Unit

WDFW was awarded restoration, acquisition and planning funding from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for its salmon recovery efforts at the Chinook Wildlife Area unit in 2011. Chinook River estuary provides critical habitat for fish and wildlife. The primary goal of this project is to expand on previous restoration efforts to recover the natural estuarine and riparian wetland habitats of the Chinook River by restoring historically present tidal flows through the

estuary. The outcome is a functioning estuary that will provide significant habitat improvements for in-basin (Chinook River) and out-of-basin (Columbia River) salmonids. BPA provided funding that was recently utilized to complete additional modeling scenarios for the tide gate management. The draft of this analysis was completed in



December 2011 and WDFW, BPA, and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory staff will be analyzing the data over the next several months to develop the long term management plan. The long term vision for the tide gates is to create a management scenario that allows consistent openings with limited operations and maintenance costs with no adverse impacts on privately owned lands.

Major Stewardship Accomplishments

In 2011 WDFW continued its effort to provide quality winter forage for elk throughout the Olympic-Willapa Hills Wildlife Area. This included mowing approximately 485 acres, fertilizing 400 acres and re-seeding 70 acres. These activities occurred at the Wynoochee Mitigation, Anderson Homestead, Quinault, Olympic and Chinook Units.



Fields of this nature provide a year round source of nutrition for elk amidst the intensively



managed forestland environment. These managed fields produce roughly 100 times the nutritional quality that is present in similar acreage habitats adjacent to the project

Olympic 3 Sorts Thinning Project

The Olympic 3 Sorts thinning project was a continuation of the 2008 salvage and thinning project that occurred as a result of the December 2007 severe windstorm. Three originally proposed units; Olympic Units 5, 6, & 7, were

not harvested due to a road easement dispute that had been occurring for several years. These units held approximately 65 acres of

salvage and thinning harvest potential. In 2010, regional staff along with assistance from the Attorney General's Office found resolve to this dispute and at the same time the domestic wood market began growing steadily. Each unit included in this project had been included in all facets of the permitting process in 2008. These permits included: Forest Practice Application, State



Environmental Protection Act, Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Section 7/106) and WDFW Fish and Wildlife Commission Approval. Market conditions were closely tracked through the first quarter of 2011. Export and domestic wood prices continued to grow during this period, however most of western Washington was experiencing one of the wettest springs on recent record. The units included in this harvest plan demanded dry weather since nearly one mile of temporary dirt spurs would be necessary for harvesting and transporting the timber included in this

sale. A total of 270 loads with a volume of 1,372 mbf (1,370,000 board feet) totaling 7,362 tons of delivered products were produced by this project over a two month period. The average amount of defect per load was 4.3% which amounted to 73.43 mbf. The harvesting contract and bid process was predominantly based on reimbursement on the total scale amount. Therefore the harvester was not reimbursed for the defect since this amount of scale was deducted from their total. This was a variation from the 2008 project when the harvester was paid by the tonnage for all sorts instead of being paid by the mbf. This produced additional revenue for WDFW and also gave significant incentives for the logger to produce quality loads that were



limited in defect. The thinned forest habitat will require several years to recover from the most recent operations; however the project will greatly enhance the biological diversity that is present at the wildlife area. The parcels that were included in the acquisition of the Olympic Wildlife Area in the 1950's were selected to offset the damage of the big game populations on the surrounding farmland. This habitat enhancement project will help create a late successional forest environment (old growth) that will provide enhanced forage conditions for Roosevelt elk as well as creating a multi-layered, continuous forest canopy, which will directly benefit a variety of "old-growth" dependant species.

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) project at Chinook

This project resulted in nearly 200 acres, including the establishment of 20 acres, of high quality grass and legume forage mix. This field will maintain a high level of quality balanced forage for approximately five-seven years. Project work began at this unit with a fall clipping of the site in 2010. Fields were re-visited March of 2011 to be treated with herbicide to kill all of the existing vegetation prior to being cultivated. Due to the wet spring of 2011 this was done with a "marsh master" boom spraying unit. Traditional agricultural equipment would not have been able to conduct the original herbicide application since the field conditions were still extremely moist. WDFW utilizes marsh masters primarily for spraying *Spartina alterniflora* in Willapa and Padilla Bays. However, this particular piece of

equipment came in very handy for this project. Fields were again treated with AquaNeat in late May 2011 since the condition of the fields remained too wet to cultivate. Finally, in late July/early August WDFW was able to conduct the cultivation activities on the site. This was completed by using two separate tractors equipped with rotavators/rototillers . Two fields were cultivated directionally three times totaling approximately 20 acres effectively preparing the site for seeding. Prior to seeding the site, fertilizer and lime were spread throughout



using a tractor mounted spreader with rates pre-determined by soil samples taken by WDFW. The site was then seeded with orchard grass, red clover and winter oats (cover crop) just prior to the first late summer rain event. This acreage "greened-up" within a week of being planted due to the perfect soil and growing conditions. Following planting, the remainder of the acreage was mowed on the site which totaled approximately 170 acres. In total, the forage conditions of the site will be significantly improved. The elk moved into the new planting quickly, prior to the first archery season opened in the game management unit.

Status Report of 2010-2011 Performance Measures

Key performance measures are identified each year to monitor progress and identify any issues that might interfere with planned priority activities. This information will be used to delete, add or alter priority strategies for 2010.

2010 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2011 Related Activity/ Comments
Complete performance measures per Wynoochee Mitigation Plan	All activities completed	Documentation of activities described in the annual Wynoochee Report
Reseed 30-50 acres of elk forage	Accomplished 45 acres at Wynoochee Unit	Per Wynoochee Mitigation Plan
Fulfill all RMEF Grant Guidelines for forage enhancement activities at the Chinook Unit including reseeding 20 acres	Project completed in 2011. This project resulted in nearly 200 acres of enhanced forage conditions, including the establishment of 20 acres of high quality grass and legume forage mix.	This project received high praise from local hunters and by RMEF who plans on featuring the highlights of the project in an upcoming issue of "BUGLE"
Mow and fertilize 400 acres of elk forage	Mowed 485 acres for elk forage and fertilized 400 acres	Elk forage projects occurred at Wynoochee Mitigation, Anderson Homestead, Chinook and Olympic Units
Remove brush around the perimeter of 50-70 acres of elk forage	55 acres Wynoochee, Unit 4-B	Location of re-seeding
Conduct soil samples for proposed forage locations	10 soil samples taken	For development of fertilizer blend specific for each forage management area
Develop 40+ new acres of elk forage (John's River Estuary Restoration Mitigation – Habitat Program)	Not completed -- the dike breach that occurred in 2011 has further pushed the need to complete this task	Awaiting grant funding for mitigation of estuary restoration or separate grant funding for elk forage creation
Fall Clipping on 100-250 acres for waterfowl sheetwater habitat	Completed approximately 275 acres	Chehalis, Chinook, Hoxit and Johns River Units
Spray and disc approximately 30 acres at the Chinook Unit to encourage smartweed growth	Approximately 30 acres were sprayed and mowed for smartweed development.	Site conditions were too wet in 2011 to disc the area after spraying occurred, so the area was mowed which also proved to be an effective treatment
Spray, cultivate and seed barley on approximately 10-20 acres	This project was completed in 2011 via Migratory Bird Stamp funding	See description and details in the "Updates" section
Release pheasants at the	Completed throughout	Will occur throughout the

Furbache Unit and Chinook Units	pheasant season	2012 season as planned
Manage tidegates at the Chinook Unit, working with neighboring landowners	Experimental openings through the year occurred with the majority of the opening success happening during the summer season	BPA has committed to funding additional research and tidegate management, along with possible land acquisitions / conservation easements (See "Issues")
Find settlement to the "Lynn" easement access dispute -- purchase new road easement and maintain existing easement as a trail	In 2010, WDFW management with the legal guidance of the Attorney General's office decided to utilize the original easement road as the main access to the WDFW "Lynn" fields at the Olympic Unit	The road was re-surfaced and brought to the Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan (RMAP) standard prior to hauling Olympic 3 sorts timber through the project area
Utilize existing permits (FPA, SEPA, Section 7 and 106, etc.) to conduct additional forest thinning on the Olympic Unit	Variable Density Thinning and salvage occurred in 2011	See Olympic 3 Sorts description in "Major Stewardship Accomplishments"
Conduct "Wet Soil" management activities at John's River, Chehalis, Hoxit, Willapa Wetlands and Chinook Units	Completed in 2010 and 2011	
Convert permanent duck blinds to a temporary structured aligned with the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) Conservation Easement at the Willapa Wetlands Unit	National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has determined that these blind structures are able to be removed if necessary to meet the WRP easement	Waiting for final approval from NRCS
Develop grant proposals for funding package for acquisition of targeted parcels adjacent to the Chehalis Unit	Awarded a small North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant in 2011 from the USFWS for purchase of the Osgood parcels	Small NAWCA was matched with Migratory Bird Stamp funding along with matching support from the Washington Waterfowl Association (see "Updates" section for complete details
Maintain six water control structures for waterfowl habitat	Three structures at Willapa Wetlands (Potters Slough) were managed effectively. One structure at the Hoxit Unit was successfully managed. One structure at the Johns River Unit was successfully	

	managed. One structure at John's River has failed and resulted in a dike breach as described in the "New Issues" section.	
Maintain riparian plantings along the Chehalis River and the Chehalis and Hoxit Units	Both areas were mowed throughout the season. Survival at both sites is very positive	Plants maintained throughout the summer of 2010 and 2011
Maintain the forested riparian buffer at the Chehalis Unit	Not completed in 2010 or 2011 due to lack of available NRCS project funding	Limited success in this planting was due to the lack of maintenance and significant elk browsing
Complete RMAP requirements resolving fish barriers and upgrading forest roads at the Olympic Unit	All RMAP work that is required throughout the region has been completed except for one problem area associated with the Johns River Wildlife Area.	See "Updates" section for complete details
Where applicable maintain all informational kiosks at wildlife area units	Completed throughout 2010 and 2011 - new kiosks installed at several locations	
Initiate emphasis enforcement patrol for illegal ORV usage at the Olympic Unit	Not completed	Staffing and priorities
Provide management guidance for the North Olympic and South Puget Sound Wildlife Area Complexes	Completed in 2010 and 2011	New manager hired for the South Puget Sound and North Olympic Wildlife Areas in January 2011

New Strategies

The wildlife area plan identifies many strategies or activities to address the agencies strategic plan goals and objectives, why the area was purchased, habitat conditions, species present, and public issues and concerns. The following updated strategies have been added to respond to previously unaddressed or new issues or changes on the wildlife area. New strategies may also be in response to adaptive management as staff evaluate the impacts of past management activities.

Issues identified in italics were provided by the Citizens Advisory Group. These public comments are captured at the end of this document. Although underlined strategies have no current funding source, identifying these needs is the first step to securing additional funds.

Agency Objective: Protect, Restore and Enhance Fish and Wildlife and their Habitats

1. Maintain big game populations

- A. Strategy: Develop funding proposals for enhancing the forage conditions on upland parcels adjacent to the Willapa Wetlands (Potters Slough) Unit.
 - B. Determine alternative locations for elk forage enhancements in the vicinity of the Johns River Wildlife Area to mitigate the loss of forage due to the 2011 dike breach.
- 2. Improve and Maintain Fish Populations**
- A. Strategy: Manage the tide gates in a straightforward manner that minimizes "openings" and "closings" of the gates.
 - B. Strategy: Develop long term tide gate management plan for the Chinook Unit that is funded by the Booneville Power Administration for operations and maintenance (O&M).
 - C. Strategy: Develop estuary restoration improvements on the Chinook Unit that are consistent with the Olympic-Willapa Hills Wildlife Area Management Plan and Updates.
 - D. Strategy: Acquire lands that are critical to the Chinook River estuary restoration project.
- 3. Manage for waterfowl/wetlands**
- A. Strategy: Wet-soil management on 90 acres at the Chinook Unit (three year rotation involving cultivation and mowing for enhanced emergent wetland plant response) 2012 – disc approximately 20-30 acres to encourage smart weed generation
 - B. Strategy: Maintain freshwater wetland units and water control structures at the Willapa Wetlands (Potter Slough) Unit. Control spread of canary reed grass and thistle throughout the unit.
 - C. Strategy: Implement suitable habitat management practices that enhance habitat conditions for waterfowl at the Chehalis Unit expansion (Osgood) in 2012.
 - D. Strategy: Coordinate with agricultural leaseholder to improve wet swale conditions for wintering waterfowl at the Davis Creek Unit
- 4. Protect and Restore Estuary**
- A. Strategy: Coordinate with Forterra on land transfers throughout the Willapa Bay Coastline consistent with the approval from the Lands 20/20 process
- 5. Protect and Manage Other Species**
- A. Strategy: Coordinate with Diversity Division in the development of a snowy plover enhancement project at the Oyhut Unit

Agency Objective: Provide Sustainable Fish and Wildlife-Related Recreational and Commercial Opportunities Compatible with Maintaining Healthy Fish and Wildlife Populations and Habitats. Improve the Economic Well Being of Washington by Providing Diverse, High Quality Recreational and Commercial Opportunities.

- 1. Provide public access compatible with fish, wildlife and habitat protection.**
 - A. Strategy: Develop funding proposals to increase the access and availability to Willapa Bay Wildlife Area Units.
 - B. Strategy: Develop trail access to Hawks Point and North River - North Willapa Bay Unit.

- C. Strategy: Develop an elk viewing platform and parking area at the Willapa Wetlands Unit.
- D. Strategy: Create a Beaver Creek crossing that will maintain public access and allow passage of heavy equipment (forestry and agricultural) along the Johns River east side road.

Agency Objective: Provide Sound Operational Management of WDFW Lands, Facilities and Access Sites.

1. Maintain facilities to achieve safe, efficient and effective management of the wildlife area.

- A. Strategy: Coordinate with NRCS and Davis Creek Agricultural leaseholder to enroll the property into the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Develop EQIP proposal for improving the conditions of the existing farm facilities and the construction of additional facilities that foster best farming management practices.
- B. Strategy: Coordinate with the Grays Harbor Conservation District for creation of a "*Nutrient Management Plan*" that will govern all agricultural leases located at the Davis Creek Unit.
- C. Strategy: Develop a Beaver Creek crossing that will require a minimum cost to maintain over-time.
- D. Strategy: Develop the long-term tide gate management plan for the Chinook Unit that prevents any adverse effects to private lands.

2012-13 Performance Measures

1. Complete performance measures per Wynoochee Mitigation Plan
2. Reseed 30-50 acres with elk forage at the Olympic and Wynoochee units
3. Mow 400 acres of elk forage at the Olympic, Wynoochee and Chinook units
4. Fertilize 400 acres of elk forage at the Wynoochee unit
5. Remove brush around the perimeter of 50-70 acres of elk forage at the Olympic and Wynoochee units
6. Conduct soil samples for proposed forage locations at the Wynoochee unit
7. Develop 40+ new acres of elk forage John's River Estuary Restoration
8. Fall clipping on 100-250 acres for waterfowl habitat at the Chehalis, Hoxit, Johns River and Chinook units
9. Spray and disc approximately 30 acres at the Chinook Unit to encourage "smart weed" generation
10. Submit a capital project for resolving the Beaver Creek fish barrier at the Johns River Unit. Create a Beaver Creek crossing that will maintain public access and allow passage of heavy equipment (forestry and agricultural) along the Johns River east side road.
11. Spray, cultivate and seed barley on approximately 10 acres of the moist soil management area of Johns River.
12. Work with Forterra to transfer targeted parcels along the Willapa Bay Coastline
13. Manage tidegates at the Chinook Unit working with neighboring landowners to eliminate the threat of flooding during high water events.

14. Conduct wet soil management activities (John's River, Hoxit, Chinook, Willapa Wetlands and Chehalis Units)
15. Release pheasants at Furbrache and Chinook Units
16. Maintain six water control structures for waterfowl habitat - two at John's River, one at Hoxit, and three at Willapa Wetlands (Potters Slough)
17. Maintain riparian plantings along the Chehalis River at the Chehalis and Hoxit Units.
18. Maintain 48 acres of riparian forested buffer along the Chinook River and its tributaries
19. Where applicable, maintain all informational kiosks at wildlife area units
20. Continue Efforts for Snowy Plover Recovery Plan at Oyhut Unit
21. Initiate Emphasis Enforcement Patrol for illegal ORV usage at the Olympic Unit.
22. Develop funding proposals for enhancing the forage conditions on upland parcels adjacent to the Willapa Wetlands (Potters Slough) Unit which include creation of a screening buffer and elk viewing platform.
23. Develop a forage enhancement project that will mitigate for the loss of elk forage due to the Johns River dike breach which occurred in 2011.
24. Develop the long-term tide gate management plan for the Chinook Unit that prevents adverse effects to private lands. Manage the tide gates in a straightforward manner that minimizes "openings" and "closings" of the gates.
25. Construct a gated parking area at the Chehalis expansion area off of Wenzel Slough Rd.
26. Implement wetland enhancement activities on the Chehalis expansion area to improve habitat conditions for waterfowl.
27. Implement wetland enhancement activities on wet swales at the Davis Creek Unit.
28. Improve access to North Willapa Bay Units (Cedar River, Hawks Point, North River and Smith Creek).
29. Assist the leaseholder at the Davis Creek Unit to enroll into the EQIP program administered by NRCS.
30. Coordinate the development of a nutrient management plan for the Davis Creek Unit by the Grays Harbor Conservation District.



Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) Input

Wildlife Area staff hosted a Citizen Advisory Group meeting on March 19th at the Region 6 Montesano office. Although invitations were sent to the 15 CAG members, only 4 members participated in this year's meeting. Those in attendance included: Bill Brackus – Wishkah Valley landowner; Kurt Snyder – Grays Harbor Chapter Washington Waterfowl Association; and Ivars Mattisons, Mattisons Timber Services LLC. However this didn't preclude from several quality discussions on management actions on the wildlife area.

The CAG was presented a summary power point highlighting multiple portions of the update material. CAG members were very interested in the current and recent acquisitions that occurred in the Region. The Washington Waterfowl Association (WWA) chapter president expressed his support and willingness to help develop the Chehalis Expansion site for the 2012-13 waterfowl season as well as helping to clean-up derelict buildings on the site. Wildlife area staff also sought input from the group regarding shot shell limits at waterfowl hunting units. WWA will have further discussions on this topic and will likely relay its findings later this spring.

Prior to the next CAG meeting wildlife area staff will continue its efforts to recruit more active CAG members located throughout the coastal wildlife area.



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Want to see the full plan?

[Hhttp://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/)