



# SKAGIT WILDLIFE AREA 2008 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife



## Land Management Summary

This is an update to the 2006 Skagit Wildlife Area Management Plan ([http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas/management\\_plans/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/)). The plan provides management direction for the Skagit Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Complex that includes the numerous satellite units of Skagit Wildlife Area and a large portion of the Skagit Bay Estuary, which totals 16,708 acres in Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties and the five Snoqualmie units, approximately 1957 acres in King

and Snohomish Counties. 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.

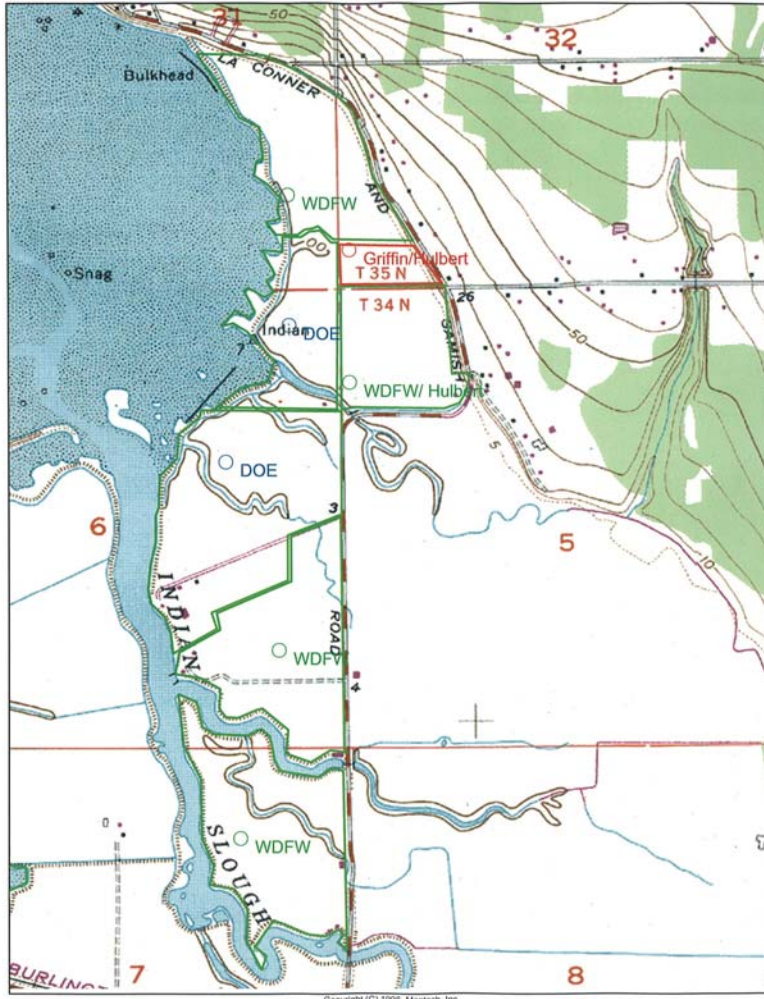
Plans are updated annually as habitat and species conditions change, as new regulations and scientific knowledge develop, as public issues and concerns evolve, and as administration of wildlife areas change. This management plan update also includes 2007 accomplishments, new issues, new land management strategies and performance measures for 2008.

## Inside

<b>Land Management Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Updates/Changes</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>New Issues</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Major Stewardship Accomplishments</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Status Report of 2007 Performance Measures</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>New Strategies</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2008 Performance Measures</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Citizens Advisory Group Input</b>	<b>13</b>

## Updates/Changes

**South Padilla Bay** - In 2006, several changes occurred on the wildlife area. Coastal Wetland Grant funds were awarded to acquire several parcels along South Padilla Bay near the community of Bayview. Wetland restoration and enhancement projects in South Padilla Bay were identified in the Pacific Coast Joint Venture plan and protect the area from further development. These properties are located near the Padilla Bay National Marine Sanctuary, Department of Ecology Demonstration Farm, and Skagit County Padilla Bay Trail.



The proximity of these new properties to other state and local ownerships provide an excellent opportunity to develop local partnerships and cooperative projects. Management options include a variety of projects to improve fish and wildlife habitat within a working agricultural system and a growing residential community as well as providing increased opportunities for fish and wildlife oriented outdoor education and recreation. Community outreach efforts following acquisition have begun and will continue through project design and development phases. Initial feasibility discussions between Department of Ecology - Padilla Bay, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Dike and Drainage District 12, Ducks Unlimited and Western Washington

Agricultural Association are outlining constraints and opportunities. A report defining potential design options will be prepared for the granting agencies by December 2008.

November 2006 floods were not as destructive as early predictions indicated but there were some slight infrastructure damages on the Skagit Wildlife Area. The shearlog that protects the boathouse and moorage facility on Freshwater Slough was damaged and a small portion of the dike on the Island Unit eroded during high water conditions. Representatives from FEMA recently toured these sites to examine the damage and make a determination. Level of funding available for all repairs is unknown at this time. The shearlog repair was completed and the Island and Moorage damage are currently under review.

**Wiley Slough Restoration** - In 2006, a National Coastal Wetland Grant was awarded to WDFW and Skagit River Systems Cooperative in the amount of \$568,872 to complete the funding package needed to implement the Wiley Slough restoration project on the Skagit WLA Headquarters Unit. The Wylie Slough restoration has been identified as a priority restoration project in the Skagit Chinook Recovery Plan and House Bill 1418 Report: Tidegates and Intertidal Salmon Habitat in the Skagit Basin. The remainder of the funding comes from federal and state sources: National Resource Conservation Service - \$1,290,000 and Washington State

Salmon Recovery Funding Board - \$1,175,155. Final permitting and initial construction work is scheduled to begin in late 2007.

The project was delayed due to public issues brought up during the SEPA review process. This resulted in a legal review process, which took several months; this process was just recently completed. The DNS (Determination of Non-significance) designation remains and other necessary county permit processes are being completed. The first phase of construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2008.

**Wiley Slough Recreation Collaborative** - A group of concerned citizen approached their legislators and created enough support during the last legislative session to block appropriation of funding for the Wiley Slough project. This event prompted the Governor's office and the Director of Fish and Wildlife to initiate the Wiley Collaborative process to work with the concerned parties to find some resolution to their concerns about lost recreational opportunities and changes in habitat. This process brought together agricultural and recreational interests to discuss their concerns and provide guidance on site and off site enhancements and opportunities for recreation access. A report was produced and provided to the legislature to inform and request funding for such projects as a private farmland recreation access program, enhancement plantings and trail access on other sites. The report is titled Wiley Slough Restoration Project Recreation Mitigation Process. During the interim session the legislature provided \$75,000 of funding for the private farmland recreation access program. WDFW will pass through money to the Washington Waterfowl Association who will develop this private land recreation access effort.

**Snow Goose Collaborative Process** – A committee of concerned citizens has been organized to examine the complex issues related to the increasing snow goose population. The issues being discussed range from increased depredation to agricultural crops, improving hunter access, improving wildlife viewing opportunities, unethical/unsafe hunting and viewing behavior, etc. The Snow goose committee will provide a summary of their activities to the June '07 WDFW Commission meeting. A final report from the Snow goose committee will be compiled to provide recommendations to the Commission that address community concerns. These recommendations could influence the directions of future management strategies on wildlife area units within the snow goose zone (Fir Island Farms/Hayton Snow Goose Reserve, Leque Island, Skagit Headquarters, and the Island Unit). Another year of the Quality Snow Goose Hunt program was successfully completed. This year the hunt area was expanded to include lands along the Stillaguamish and Port Susan Bay area. Additional funding will be requested to continue to provide this private land access program. A variety of other issues and concerns have been discussed as a part to the collaborative process and the final report and recommendations are being prepared at this time.

**Habitat Conservation Planning for Wildlife Area Lands** - This planning process will take several years to complete. During 2007, WDFW interviewed biological and wildlife area staff to identify known distributions of species of concern as well as anticipated species of concern. The Wildlife Area staff completed a site-by-site inventory of land uses including wildlife management and recreational activities. This information will be entered into a database and combined with other species and habitat data to develop a risk assessment model, which will

identify potential areas of impact to ESA-listed species. To learn more about the goals and benefits of the Wildlife Areas HCP process check the fact sheet online at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/hcp/wla\\_public.html](http://wdfw.wa.gov/hcp/wla_public.html)

**Dry Slough Estuary Function Restoration** – A proposal has been submitted by the Skagit Conservation District in partnership with WDFW to the Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership for an Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) grant for design development and acquisition of a portion of Dry Slough (**Fir Island Farm/ Hayton Snow Goose Reserve**). The basic project objectives is to restore and protect 11.4 acres of estuary rearing habitat for ESA-listed salmon as well as improve the habitat condition of approximately 12 acres of blind channel habitat between the dike and Skagit Bay. This project has been identified in the Skagit Wildlife Area plan as a part of the House Bill 1418 Report on Tide gates and Salmon Habitat restoration priorities. This ESRP proposal was withdrawn from consideration and will be resubmitted at a later date. Additional data is being collected to improve the design proposal before resubmission.

Skagit River Systems Cooperative is preparing a separate feasibility proposal for consideration during the 2009 Salmon Recovery Funding Board funding cycle. This proposal will examine 3 to 4 design alternatives for the Fir Island Farms property, which include Dry and Brown Slough. This proposal would examine intertidal restoration and tide gate relocation potentials of each alternative. WDFW postponed submission of this proposal until 2009 in order that the collaborative process between WDFW and Skagit County Agricultural community could be completed and the Tide Gate and Fish Initiative agreement could be finalized.

**Johnson DeBay Slough Swan Reserve** – A proposal has been submitted to the Puget Sound Energy Foundation to request funds to improve recreational access to this site by developing a viewing tower and improving ADA access viewing platform. Trumpeter Swan Society developed the grant proposal to request design and implementation money for this project.

### **New Issues**

New acquisitions provide a variety of challenges and opportunities to expand restoration enhancement and agricultural program objectives. The Ebey Island acquisition initiates a process to evaluate the physical and political landscape associated with many issues related to salmon recovery, sea level rise, land use conversion (agriculture to any non-agriculture), managed wetland systems, recreational access and other public use issues.

Funding as been requested to initiate the planning and feasibility work needed to examine the site potential given the current issues within the watershed. A variety of federal, state, and local agencies and organizations will need to be involved in the planning discussion to insure that appropriate objects are defined. This discussion will improve understanding of the role this site will play in the larger natural resources landscape.

### **Major Stewardship Accomplishments**

**Agricultural Enhancements** – On the Skagit Wildlife Area in 2007 approximately 1480 acres of agriculture enhancements were provided through contract farming agreements and staff time. Standing crops were provided on the primary hunting units on the Skagit WA: Headquarters,

Island, Leque Island and Samish Units. Barley was planted on the Samish, Leque Island, Headquarters and Island Unit to provide winter forage for waterfowl and provided enhanced hunting opportunities for the sportsman of Washington State. Corn was also planted on Headquarters and the Island Units and winter wheat was planted on Leque Island Unit. In addition, winter wheat and rye grass provided winter forage for the snow geese on the Fir Island/Hayton Snow goose reserve and on Leque Island while potatoes corn and barley were provided on the Johnson/DeBay Slough Swan Reserve.

Milltown Island – (Summary information and photos provided by Nora Kammer)  
 The Milltown Island Restoration Project is a large scale (~310 acres) habitat restoration effort led by the Skagit River System Cooperative. Milltown Island is located on the South Fork of the Skagit River and is part of WDFW’s Skagit Wildlife Area. Milltown Island was diked and disconnected from the hydrologic forces of the Skagit River and the Skagit Bay tides through a series of diking projects beginning in the late 1800s. The restoration effort seeks to restore natural hydrologic and biologic function to the isolated portions of Milltown Island. Project objectives were to (1) Remove or reduce hydrologic controls through levee removal or perforation; (2) Encourage channel development in the diked area in order to restore the quantity and quality of habitat for anadromous fish; and (3) Restore natural vegetative communities through plantings and control of invasive species. Restoration efforts began in Summer 2006, and were completed in Winter 2007. This project will continue to be monitored over several years to track the evolution of the interior constructed channels and changes in the plant community.



Due to the difficult access for heavy equipment to the island, it was decided to use explosives to accomplish project objectives. For conservation measures, the project construction window was limited to times when fish density was expected to be lowest in the project area. Actual blasting

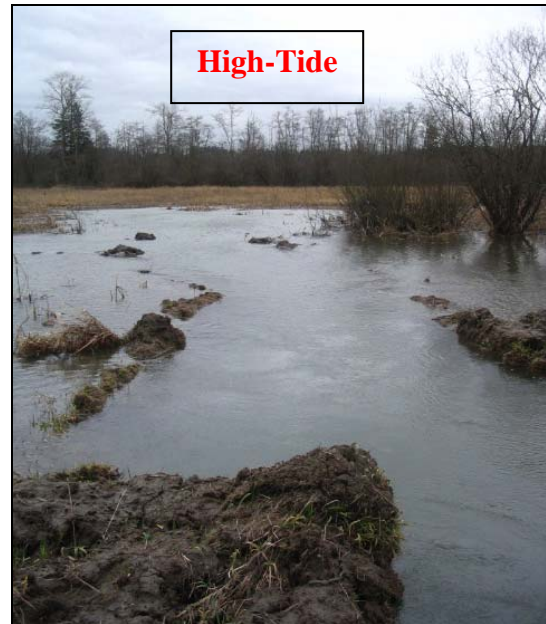
events were scheduled during daytime low-low tides to further limit possible impacts on local fish populations. In addition, fish exclusion efforts occurred prior to the execution of the demolition efforts.

Work on the project site began in summer 2006. At the end of the 2006 work season, 800 feet of dike was deconstructed, and 1460 feet of channels were created. Due to time constraints, dike deconstruction and channel creations were not completed in Summer 2006, and it was decided to continue those efforts in Summer 2007. The process of levee deconstruction and channel creation left a sizable opportunity to re-occupy the site with native riparian plant species. In January 2007, 3850 riparian plants were installed throughout the project area, with efforts focused along the pilot channels and the remnant levee footprint.

The Milltown Island Restoration Project dike deconstruction and channel creation continued in Summer 2007, with 300 feet of dike deconstructed, and 1650 feet of new channels created. Additionally, three channels that were created during Summer 2006 were enlarged by 150 feet each. In total, 2100 feet of channel was created in Summer 2007.

To resist revegetation by nonnative vegetation, planting and weed control efforts continued this winter. In January 2008, crews installed 5750 native plants along created channels and deconstructed dikes at the Milltown Island Restoration Project site. This included more than 4500 willows, 500 Nootka rose, and 250 Pacific crabapples. Crews also tended vegetation installed last winter, and monitored the reestablishment of nonnative invasive weeds.

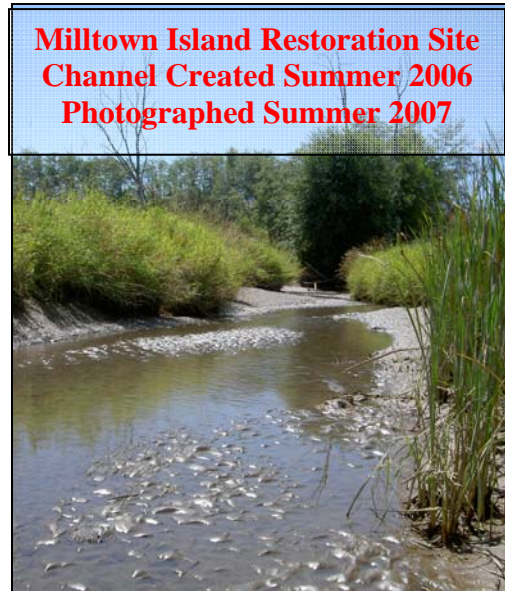
**Milltown Island Restoration Site – Paired Shots (Mid- and High-Tide)  
Channel Created Summer 2007**



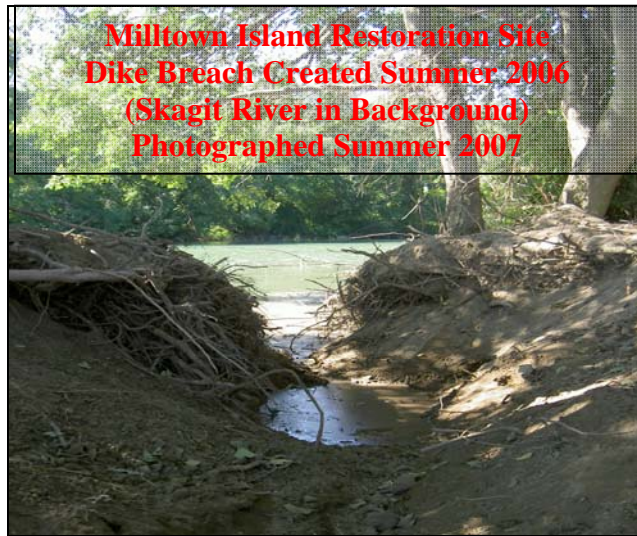
**Milltown Island Restoration Site – Paired Shots (Mid- and High-Tide)  
Dike Deconstructed Summer 2007**



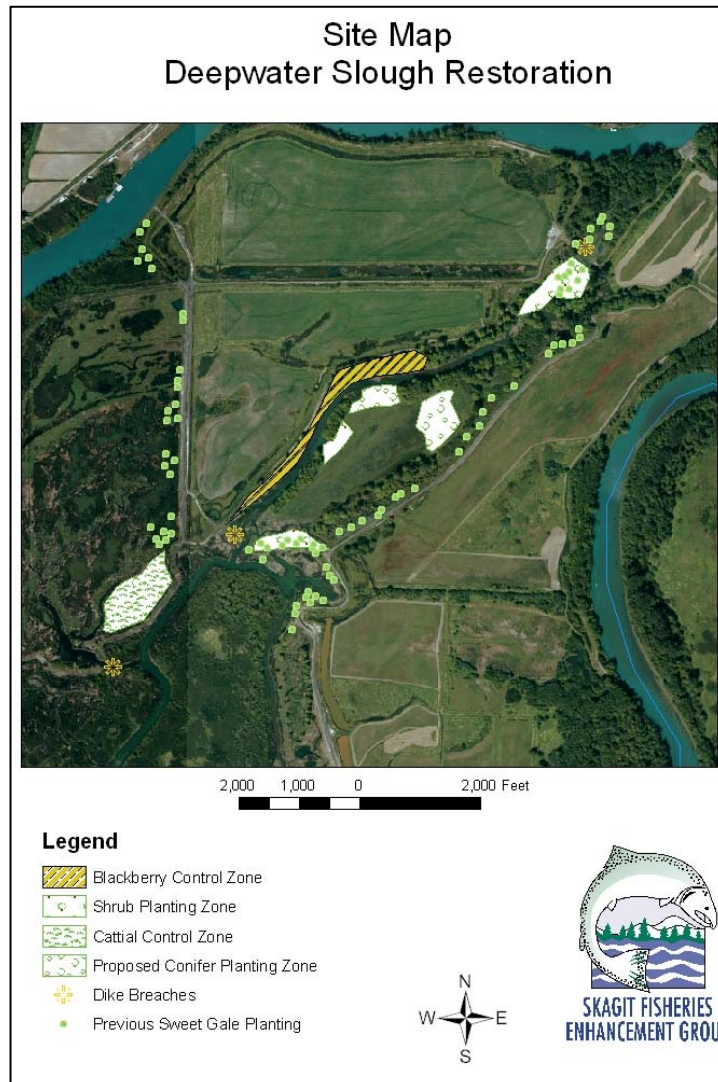
In total, the Milltown Island Restoration Project actively created 3750 feet of channel, deconstructed 1100 feet of dike, and installed almost 10,000 native plants. The site is now being monitored to evaluate project success and to guide future restoration efforts.



The created channels allow a greater volume of water to enter the interior of the island, increasing the tidal prism and energy potential for additional channel development. Two sets of paired mid-tide and high tide photos exhibit the tidal prism that now is able to reach the interior of Milltown Island. It is anticipated that the natural forces of tidal prism and river flow will aid in additional channel creation and improved quantity and quality of fish habitat. As part of the monitoring effort, topographic changes will be examined and the project area will be regularly checked for re-establishing invasive species.



Deepwater Slough vegetation monitoring and restoration – (Summary information and photos provided by Perry Welch) Efforts continue on Deepwater Slough restoration project to enhance and restore native vegetation communities. Established invasive species such as reed canary grass and cattail communities expanded following project implementation. Skagit River Systems Cooperative and Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group have acquired funding through US Fish and Wildlife Service to examine the effect of mowing established cattail stands in the newly restored tidal environment. The first year of mowing (Aug 2003), resulted in short plant with no seed production. Following the second mowing cycle (June 2005) little regrowth occurred with many dead stems. Some native water plantain was observed on the site in the summer of 2006. Colonization of native sedges on bare earth were observed to take 2 years to occur following the dike removal at Deepwater Slough.





Observation



Native Plantings 2008	
Species planted	# Planted
Sitka spruce	400
Myrica gale	200
Willow	100
Red osier dogwood	100
Western red cedar	121
Total	921

will continue during 2007 to determine the effectiveness of native vegetation in colonizing this site following this disturbance regime.



Most revegetation efforts have been focused on re-establishing the native shrub, Sweet gale (*Myrica gale*). SFEG is also building on species diversity by planting Sitka spruce (*Picea Sitchensis*), willows (*Salix spp*), red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), and Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) on higher grounds around areas that have been exposed to tidal flooding by the removal of dikes. Recent planting occurred in March 2008 during a period of favorable tides following the end of hunting season and the early part of the growing season. The general location of plantings is shown on the Site Map above.

**Invasive Species Control**

List Invasive species removed or controlled	Acres	Length	Avg. Width	Date(s)
Himalayan blackberry	1	726	60	August 2007
Narrow leaf Cattail	2	500	200	August 2007
Scots broom	.25			August 2007

SFEG is conducting invasive species control for blackberry (*Rubus discolor*); narrow leaf cattail (*Typha angustifolia*) and Scots broom (*Cytisus scoparius*). Past activities have dealt with purple loosestrife. This activity will primarily occur along the base on the existing dikes. SFEG is also working with the Skagit River System Cooperative to inhibit the spread of narrow leaf cattails and promote colonization of native wetland species. The expectation is that native sedge (*Carex lyngbyei*) will move in this season or next following this disturbance--it takes a couple of years to germinate and establish a belowground biomass base. SRSC plans to pursue additional funding to scale up this exotic species control effort.



SFEG will make periodic visits to Deepwater Slough to monitoring native plant establishment and invasive control. We have already observed that beaver have eaten many of the new cedar trees that were planted.

### **Status Report of 2007 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 2008.

#### **Ongoing Performance Measures:**

- Coordinate with the Shared Strategy effort to restore 2,682 acres of wetlands in the Skagit River delta (**Skagit Bay Estuary**) Continue with Wylie Slough planning and implementation.
- Secure wetland habitat in the English Boom, Port Susan, Livingston, Skagit and South Padilla Bay areas for protection, restoration and enhancement purposes as identified by the Pacific Coast Joint Venture Plan (**Skagit Bay Estuary**)
- Work with WDFW Weed Crew to monitor and control approximately 150 acres of known problem weeds such as knotweed, purple loosestrife, spartina, thistle spp., poison hemlock, and scotch broom on the **Headquarters, Island, Leque Island** and **Samish** units
- Identify noxious and invasive weeds and inventory species and distribution on all units
- Determine the risk or threat level of 18 weed species to develop control priorities
- Apply for grants to control weeds, plant native vegetation, and use the WDFW Weed Crew
- Develop programs and funding strategies (with WDFW staff, Citizen Advisory Group and others) to successfully buy/lease land for recreational purposes
- Work with the local agricultural community concerning what is planted, retaining or planting hedgerows for huntable and watchable wildlife; and how farming practices might benefit both farmers and fish and wildlife
- Continue regular CAG meetings in order to continue to provide public input on Wildlife Area Management.
- Continue hosting public workshops to inform and educate citizens and recruit volunteers for various levels of assistance

2007 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2008 Related Activity/ Comments
Finalize, with Skagit River Systems Cooperative, the restoration design for Milltown Island and implement project ( <b>Skagit Bay Estuary</b> )	Project implementation 2/3 complete. Will be completed summer 2008. Additional plantings may occur depending on site and channel development.	Potential to implement a controlled burn on portions of the reed canary grass pasture still being considered if the appropriate burn conditions exist.
Support Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group with enhancing riparian vegetation on up to 200 acres along Deepwater Slough ( <b>Island Unit</b> )	Some initial vegetation control completed. Winter 2008 a planting plan will be developed and implemented.	Planting project completed February 2008.
Plant up to 610 acres of Fir Island Farms/Hayton Reserve in cereal grains	Completed	Completed
Plant approximately 80 acres at Headquarters Unit 165 acres of Island Unit 145 acres of Johnson/DeBay Swan Reserve 215 acres of Leque Island Unit 280 acres of Samish Unit	Completed (acres planted) HQ- Corn (17) Barley (60) Island- Barley (135) DeBay- Corn (55) Barley (35) Leque- Wheat (90) Barley (115) Samish- Barley (225)	Will continue as budget allows
Flood up to 60 acres (Headquarters Unit) and 70 acres (Island Unit)	Completed	Completed
Identify at least four areas where shorebird habitat exists and could be easily be enhanced ( <b>Fir Island Farms/Hayton Reserve, Island, Leque Island and Samish units</b> )	Water control and flood capabilities are currently limited on the wildlife area.	Cannot easily be enhanced. Investigate other options for water control in 2008.
Release 3,800 pheasants on <b>Headquarters</b> and <b>Leque Island</b> units and 100 each <b>Samish, Headquarters, and Leque Island</b> units for youth-only pheasant hunting season	Done with the assistance of volunteers	Completed
Attend and participate in monthly to quarterly Skagit Watershed Council, and Stillaguamish Implementation Review Committee meetings.	Meeting attendance has been limited due to other scheduling conflicts and deadlines.	Attend when subject matter is relevant to WA issues.
<b>Maintain 50 footbridges on</b> Headquarters, Samish, Leque Island and Island Units	Volunteer work party with WWA put in new footbridges and replaced/improved some existing ones on the Leque Island Unit.	Need to identify other foot bridgework from other remaining units. Washington Waterfowl Association members completed work on footbridges on Leque Island.
Establish and maintain stewardship groups for <b>Fir Island Farms/Hayton Reserve, Goat Island, Leque Island</b> and other major units where justified	Scheduling new groups or committee is difficult with the other current activities.	No change

Ongoing Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2008 Related Activity/ Comments
Post regulatory signs on Goat Island and Guemes Island units	Needs further review by the District team and citizen advisory group	No change
Post regulatory signs on the Goat Island and Guemes Island units.	Work with the District Team and citizen advisory group regarding signs	Ongoing
Work closely with the CAG, District Team and other stakeholders to prioritize and resolve issues over the next few years (access, sanitation and general information needs and priorities; additional recreational land/opportunities; overcrowding/conflicting recreational uses; dog-related impacts; and Watchable Wildlife site needs	Scheduled CAG meeting with limited response there is a scheduled meeting for June 7. Additional Subcommittee CAG meetings will be scheduled for later in the summer to discuss issues.	Wiley Collaborative took place during, summer 2007. A report was provided to legislature.
Train and update existing stewardship groups for Johnson/DeBay Swan Reserve, Samish Unit, Camano Island Natural Area, Guemes Island and Island Unit.	Meeting planned for this spring for DeBay Slough Swan Reserve.  Implementation of restoration planting and invasive species control on Camano Island Natural Area continues	Contacts are being made to redevelop group of DeBay's Slough Swan Reserve.  Stewardship group for Camano Island Natural Area also completed a heron nest survey.
Complete proposal for a flora and fauna inventory (baseline) of the Headquarters Unit prior to the implementation of the Wylie Slough Restoration Project	No funding available at this time. There is the potential that a partial project inventory will be completed by the WLA HCP process.	Efforts to gather existing project reports and data will be initiated. SRSC completed an inventory of the existing riparian vegetation. WDFW Field Biologist will initiate a breeding bird survey.

### **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 populations and their habitats.**

#### **1. Manage Species Diversity**

Concerns exist regarding the impact of recreational activity on wildlife habitat and populations. To address these concerns the district team will evaluate public use and wildlife population to determine if public use restrictions are necessary and if so to develop a proposal to establish a Wildlife Reserve on **Cottonwood Island Unit**.

**Agency Objective: Ensure WDFW activities, programs, facilities and lands are consistent with local, state and federal regulations that protect and recover fish, wildlife and their habitats.**

**1. Protect federally listed species.**

WDFW is currently working through a Habitat Conservation Planning process with US Fish and Wildlife Service to identify all activities on our wildlife areas and how these activities have the potential to impact endangered species. This review will identify potential impacts and develop way to minimize and mitigate these impacts.

A. Strategy: Work with WDFW HCP planning staff to implement HCP process.

**2008 Performance Measures**

Evaluate with others, via feasibility study, the the potential estuary restoration/water connectivity actions on **Telegraph Slough Unit** to benefit salmon, other fish and wildlife species consistent with management goals and objectives. Feasibility for the site to be completed during 2006-2008 with s

- Evaluate with others, via feasibility study, the potential salmon recovery alternatives involving fish passage on **Johnson/DeBay Swan Reserve**
- Implement, with Ducks Unlimited, the restoration of 115 acres on **Leque Island** to intertidal estuary (initial project development and permitting are underway. A variety of public meetings will be held to inform neighbors and stakeholders about project issues and objectives. Currently in permitting and detailed project planning phase)
- Develop recreational use plans, with District Team and Citizen Advisory Group, for **Goat Island, Samish, Headquarters Unit** and all other major units that are compatible with fish, wildlife and habitat objectives
- Develop and evaluate (with Citizen Advisory Group, District Team and others) a pheasant release program at other upland unit sites and/or on private property, if owners are willing
- Evaluate, with District Team and Citizen Advisory Group, proposed riparian habitat designs on **Fir Island Farms/Hayton Reserve**
- Evaluate with others, via feasibility study, the potential estuary restoration of proposal of the **Fir Island Farms/Hayton Reserve**.

**Citizens Advisory Group Input**

A Citizens Advisory Group meeting was held on February 12, 2008 to review management progress and address any new issues or input on existing issues. WDFW staff members present were John Garrett Wildlife Area Manager, Belinda Schuster Asst. Wildlife Area Manager. CAG members in attendance were Martha Jordon, Sharon Swan, Art Kendal, Oscar Graham, David Randolph, and Tom Rutten. John and Belinda provided a summary update of the most recent activities on the Wildlife Area and the new project opportunities.

Agenda items discussed included updates on the following items.

- Wiley Slough Restoration project and the Wiley Collaborative Report

- Leque Island Restoration project including the status of the permit process and public meeting schedule
- Padilla Bay planning process
- Ebey Island hunting lease and funding requests for acquisition
- Samish Unit Enhancement Proposal status
- SRFB funding for projects and new acquisitions
- Cherry Valley proposal for acquisition and a Wild Fish Conservancy's proposal for restoration
- Wild Fish Conservancy's proposal to model bank-hardening removal of on the Stillwater Unit on the Snoqualmie River
- Volunteer and Sub-committee opportunities such as the renewal of the DeBay Slough Stewardship group and the upcoming volunteer tree-planting events on Stillwater.

The CAG was also informed that there would be an upcoming request a list of Top 10 most important operations and maintenance items. *Below are the written comments that we received from some of the CAG members regarding the funding request.*

*David Randolph:*

I have no comments on most of the items listed. As to the odd and even for weekends on the Samish unit I like the idea makes the hunting pressure less and it is safer with fewer people out each day.

*Rone Brewer:*

1. Wylie Slough Restoration Project - Project implementation may begin this summer 2008.

Wylie Slough Collaborative process report

Comment: Through the Wiley Slough recreational mitigation planning process, funding has been obtained for the Ag and hunting/recreational interests, but the hiker/bird watcher concerns have not yet been well funded. Therefore, additional funding should be sought to implement the riparian/passerine habitat and recreational/trail improvements listed in the recreation/habitat mitigation plan.

2. Leque Island Restoration Project - Construction scheduled to begin summer 2008.

Comment: Additional funding should be sought by WDFW for repairing the eastern dike. WDFW engineers should examine the use of sheet pilings to avoid having to move Eide Road and the dike landward.

3. Padilla Bay Properties planning effort - Feasibility report underway in cooperation with Department of Ecology, and Ducks Unlimited

Comment: glad planning is underway. This should be part of the strategic planning being laid out with the local agricultural community as well as with the recreational community. The WWA would also like to be involved in this planning if waterfowl management/hunting is to be incorporated into future uses of the properties.

4. Ebey Island Acquisition - The property should be purchased during the summer 2008.

Comment: What is the plan for this property? Before purchase, the public should be informed of what the intended purposes are. This should be made part of the strategic planning being laid out with the local Agriculture community, as well as with the recreational community. I suggest the WDFW develop a one page bulleted summary plan that highlights likely

use/enhancement/restoration planned for the property do it now so everyone knows what is coming!!

5. Samish Unit Wetland Management Proposal - Draft plans will be completed this year by Ducks Unlimited, to implement a three cell "moist soil" management project on this site.

Comment: Wahoo!!! Git'r Done

6. Cherry Valley/Stillwater Unit - WDFW, Wild Fish Conservancy, and Ducks Unlimited fisheries enhancement projects on these units, as well as the "barrier" removal projects on both of these units.

Comment: WDFW Really needs to better inform the public of these projects. Many current users could be impacted and will be even unhappier with WDFW if they don't know what is planned. Will these projects displace past management practices and users? How will these be mitigated...if at all...if not mitigated, better tell folks now!!!

7. Samish Unit "Odd/Even" Hunting Proposal on Weekends - A proposal has been made to restrict the hunting use on the Samish Unit on the weekend, to odd and even days.

Comment: I, and in general, the WWA are in favor of this proposal. I think WWA can help WDFW get the word out to local hunters about the reasons/rationale behind this. WWA would also like to implement a pilot "blind hunt only" concept (not a reservation system but first come/first served) on at least a portion of the Samish Unit in an attempt to decrease hunter conflict and promote a BIT more quality to the hunting atmosphere

**Want to see the full plan?**

Go to -

[http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas/management\\_plans/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/)

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