



WELLS WILDLIFE AREA 2010 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Land Management Summary

This is an update to the 2006 Wells Wildlife Area Management Plan http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/ that provides management direction for the 8,170 acre of the Wells Wildlife Area including six separate land management units: West Foster Creek (1,050 acres), Indian Dan Canyon (4,412 acres), Central Ferry Canyon (1,908 acres), Bridgeport Bar (450 acres), Washburn Island [about 250 acres – Douglas County Public Utility District (PUD) owned] and Okanogan River Units (100 acres+). The plan



Indian Dan Lake

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 2009 accomplishments and performance measures for 2010.

Updates/Changes

WDFW applied for and received a Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) grant from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) that provides approximately \$45,000 for shrubsteppe restoration on 75 acres on the Bridgeport Bar and West Foster Creek Units. In 2009, the wildlife area staff mowed about 40 acres on the West Foster Creek Unit and cultivated about 20 acres on the Bridgeport Bar Unit in preparation for this project.

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New Issues

The wildlife area staff, with help from WDFW environmental engineer Gina McCoy, applied for a WWRP grant which will address a serious erosion problem threatening the West Foster Creek meadow. A 10-foot head-cut in West Foster Creek at the lower end of the meadow migrated about 40 feet upstream in one year (2008-09). This resulted in bank scouring, widening of the creek bed cross section and lowering of the water table in the vicinity. An excavator was used to place woody debris (“brush plug”) below the head-cut in an attempt to control erosion while funds are being sought for a longer-term solution.



West Foster Creek Head Cut Erosion and “Brush Plug”

Status Report of 2009 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 modify priority strategies for 2010.

2009 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure *	Explanation of Progress/ 2010 Related Activity/ Comments
Capture and band 150+/- California quail on adjacent un-hunted sites following the hunting season and relocate on the Indian Dan Unit.	Captured and banded 99 California quail and relocated these primarily on the Indian Dan Unit (81). Eighteen were released on the West Foster Creek Unit	Will continue trapping and releasing quail in 2010. Weather conditions were not conducive to trapping.
Survey hunting related public use through the hunter registration program to document use and wildlife population trends.	Completed. Hunting pressure and success was similar to that of 2008.	Continue in 2010
Grow 75 acres of irrigated grain on Bridgeport Bar and Washburn Island (wheat, barley, corn, millet etc.) and 30 acres of dryland wheat on	Grew about 100 acres of irrigated wheat and 22 acres of corn on Bridgeport Bar and Washburn Island. Grew about 20 acres of dryland wheat on	Continue in 2010

the Indian Dan and West Foster Creek Units.	the Indian Dan and West Foster Creek Unit.	
Plant shrubs and trees. Irrigate and maintain 60 acres of woody plantings.	Irrigated and maintained 60 acres of woody plantings.	Continue in 2010
Fill and maintain 24 bird feeders located throughout the area.	Completed	Continue in 2010
Maintain 11 gallinaceous guzzlers and 6 developed springs on the Indian Dan, Central Ferry and West Foster Creek Units as needed.	Not needed	Not needed at this time. Will inspect these developments and maintain them as needed.
Maintain about 100 nest boxes and 50 goose nest structures on and in the vicinity of Wells Pool including twenty islands, the Bridgeport Bar, Okanogan River and Washburn Units.	Completed	Continue in 2010
Maintain 3 deer exclosures surrounding West Foster Creek shrub and tree plantings.	Completed	Continue in 2010
Release about 3,000 bio control agents to control knapweed, purple loosestrife and Dalmatian toadflax primarily in the West Foster and Central Ferry Canyon units.	Not completed	Sites for planned releases were inspected and had established populations of bio control agents. These and additional sites will be surveyed in the spring of 2010 and insects released as needed.
Mow about 25 acres of weeds on the West Foster Creek Unit and treat 85 acres of weeds with herbicides throughout the wildlife area.	Chemically treated approximately 20 acres of diffuse knapweed, 2 acre of leafy spurge, 1 acres of puncture vine, 29 acres of grass, 4 acres of Dalmatian toadflax, and 2 acres of hoary cress. Mowed about 86 acres of Canadian thistle, Russian knapweed and reed canary Grass.	Continue in 2010
Maintain one mile of firebreaks on the West Foster	Completed	Continue in 2010

Creek Unit and two miles on Bridgeport Bar.		
Maintain 13 hunter registration booths, one office building, a shop and storage facilities. Maintain vehicles and equipment.	Completed	Continue in 2010
Survey goose nesting on 20 islands and wetlands adjacent to Wells Pool. Coordinate with volunteer to survey kestrel and wood duck nesting.	Completed: The estimated Wells Pool gosling production in 2009 was 253. Nesting on islands near Bridgeport Bar was again lacking due to raccoon predation.	Continue in 2010
Conduct fall wildlife population surveys on the West Foster Creek and Central Ferry Unit using other WDFW staff and volunteers.	Completed	Continue in 2010
Cultivate about 10 acres on Bridgeport Bar to be planted to permanent cover in the spring of 2010.	Cultivated 20 acres.	Continue preparing for permanent cover seeding.
Work with the Bureau of Land Management and volunteers to survey bald eagle winter roosts and American white pelican and double crested cormorant using Wells Pool.	BLM discontinued its surveys. WDFW staff surveyed the Indian Dan bald eagle Roost (two counts yielded 15 and 65 eagles). Volunteers made multiple counts of pelicans and cormorants (high counts of 214 pelicans and 105 cormorants).	Continue counts in 2010
Work with volunteers to increase monitoring of non-game species on the area. Emphasis will be placed on monitoring use of restored sites	Not completed	Volunteers were not available.
Experiment with forage kochia plantings in firebreaks.	Not completed.	Planned for 2010

The more detailed 2009 Wells Wildlife Mitigation Annual Report will be available from the Douglas County PUD web site in July of 2010.
http://relicensing.douglaspud.org/background/annual_reports/annual_wildlife_mitigation.asp.

New Strategies

The wildlife area plan identifies many strategies or activities to address the agency's strategic plan goals and objectives, why the area was purchased, habitat conditions, species presence, and public issues and concerns. No new strategies were identified.

2010 Performance Measures

Performance measures for the Wells Wildlife Area are listed below. Accomplishments and progress toward desired outcomes will be monitored and evaluated annually.

1. Capture and band California quail off the wildlife area following the hunting season and relocate these on the Indian Dan and other Units as needed.
2. Survey hunting related public use through the hunter registration program on the Indian Dan, West Foster Creek, Central Ferry, Washburn Island and Bridgeport Bar Units to document hunting use and wildlife population trends.
3. Grow approximately 75 acres of irrigated grain on Bridgeport Bar and Washburn Island (wheat, barley, corn, millet etc.) and 30 acres of dryland wheat on the Indian Dan and West Foster Creek Units.
4. Maintain and irrigate about 50 acres of permanent nesting cover on Washburn Island.
5. Plant shrubs and trees as needed. Irrigate and maintain 60 acres of woody plantings.
6. Fill and maintain 24 bird feeders located throughout the area.
7. Maintain 11 gallinaceous guzzlers and six developed springs on the Indian Dan, Central Ferry and West Foster Creek Units as needed.
8. Service, repair, and maintain about 100 nest boxes and 50 goose nest structures on and in the vicinity of Wells Pool including twenty islands, the Bridgeport Bar, Okanogan River and Washburn Units. Replace nest structures and boxes as needed. Survey and map wood duck boxes.
9. Maintain three deer exclosures surrounding West Foster Creek shrub and tree plantings.
10. Release bio-control agents as needed to control knapweed, purple loosestrife and/or Dalmatian toadflax primarily in the West Foster and Central Ferry Canyon units.
11. Mow and treat weeds throughout the wildlife area as needed.
12. Maintain one mile of firebreaks on the West Foster Creek Unit and two miles on Bridgeport Bar.
13. Maintain 13 hunter registration booths, one office building, one shop and storage facilities. Maintain vehicles and equipment.
14. Survey goose nesting on and adjacent to Wells Pool (Lake Pateros). Coordinate with volunteers to survey kestrel and wood duck nesting.
15. Conduct fall wildlife population surveys on the Bridgeport Bar and Indian Dan Units using other WDFW staff and volunteers. The extent of the surveys depends on volunteer availability.
16. Work with volunteers to survey American white pelican and double crested cormorant using Wells Pool and bald eagle winter roosts.
17. Work with volunteers to increase monitoring of non-game species on the area. Emphasis will be placed on monitoring use of restored sites. The extent of monitoring will depend on volunteer availability.
18. Experiment with forage kochia in firebreaks.

19. Prepare for the restoration of about 70 acres of shrub-steppe habitat on the West Foster Creek and Bridgeport Bar Units (WWRP grant).
20. Apply for a WWRP grant to address an erosion problem threatening a West Foster Creek meadow.

Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) Input:

The draft management plan update was mailed to the CAG for comment. The CAG members did not identify any new issues.

Wells, Chelan and Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Areas Citizens Advisory Group - 2010

Jim McGee	Public Utilities District No. 1 of Douglas County
Von Pope	Public Utilities District No. 1 of Chelan County
Bill Stegeman	Wenatchee Sportsmen’s Association
Bob Fischer	US Army Corps of Engineers – Chief Joseph Dam/ Adjacent Landowner /Recreationist
Tim Behne	Adjacent Landowner/Cattleman/Wheat Grower/Foster Creek Conservation District
Vacant	US Bureau of Land Management
Steve Wetzell	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Mary Hunt	Douglas County Commissioner
Mike Mackey	Chelan County Weed Board
Vacant	North Central Washington Audubon Society
Vacant	The Nature Conservancy
Neal Hedges	Chelan - Douglas Land Trust
Mallory Lenz	U.S. Forest Service
Bob Stoll	Adjacent Landowner

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Want to see the full plan?

Go to -
http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/