



WELLS WILDLIFE AREA 2012 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 Wells Wildlife Area including six separate land management units: the 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



Central Ferry Canyon Unit

PUD owned) and Okanogan River Units (100 acres). 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. Plans are updated every two years regardless of changes to habitat, species, regulations, scientific knowledge or administration of wildlife areas. This update includes accomplishments, updates, new issues, new land management strategies and performance measures for the 2010 to 2011 period.

Updates/Change

Marc Hallet, who served as Wildlife Area Manager since its inception in 1975 retired in April on 2011. Dan Peterson, who had been the Assistant Manager for the past 11 years, was promoted to the Managers position.

Major Stewardship Accomplishments

Shrub steppe restoration: During the reporting period, staff prepared and seeded 70 acres with native grasses and forbs. This acreage was made up of multiple fields located on the West Foster Creek and Bridgeport Bar Units. The fields ranged in size from 2 to 26 acres and were dominated by non-native perennial and annual grasses, primarily quack grass, pubescent wheatgrass and cereal rye. Field preparation consisted of treating the sites with glyphosate to kill existing vegetation followed by disking and/or cultivation. Since the Bridgeport Bar fields could be irrigated, we seeded that acreage (20) in

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March of 2011. The sites were then irrigated weekly until July. The West Foster Creek fields were seeded in November. Species planted included: bluebunch wheatgrass, Sandberg bluegrass, Idaho fescue, basin wildrye, arrowleaf balsamroot, blanket flower, prairie clover, shaggy fleabane, snow buckwheat, Venus penstemon, Lewis flax and yarrow. This project will increase vegetation diversity thus benefiting upland game birds on the Bridgeport Bar Unit and at West Foster Creek, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse and greater sage grouse.

Strategies

No new strategies to report.

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 modify priority strategies for 2012.

2010 -2011 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2012-13 Related Activity/ Comments
Survey hunting related public use through the hunter registration program to document use and wildlife population trends.	Completed	Continue in 2012
Grow 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.	113 acres of irrigated wheat and 20 acres of corn on Bridgeport Bar and Washburn Island were cultivated. 21 acres of dryland wheat were grown on the Indian Dan and West Foster Creek Unit.	Continue in 2012
Fill and maintain 24 bird feeders located throughout the area.	Completed	Continue in 2012
Maintain 11 gallinaceous guzzlers and six 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.
Service 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	Completed	Continue in 2012

River and Washburn Units		
Maintain three deer exclosures surrounding West Foster Creek shrub and tree plantings.	Completed	Continue in 2012
Mow 25 acres of weeds on the West Foster Creek Unit and treat 85 acres of weeds with herbicides throughout the wildlife area.	Chemically treated 20 acres of diffuse knapweed, 1 acre of leafy spurge, 2 acres of puncture vine, 47 acres of grass, 4 acres of Dalmatian toadflax, and 36 acres of Canadian thistle. Mowed about 36 acres of Canadian thistle.	Continue in 2012
Maintain one mile of firebreaks on the West Foster Creek Unit and two miles on Bridgeport Bar.	Completed	Continue in 2012
Maintain 13 hunter registration booths, one office building, a shop and storage facilities. Maintain vehicles and equipment.	Completed	Continue in 2012
Survey goose nesting on 20 islands and wetlands adjacent to Wells Pool. Coordinate with volunteers to survey kestrel and wood duck nesting.	Completed	Continue in 2012
Establish and irrigate about 50 acres of permanent nesting cover on Washburn Island	Completed	Evaluate seeding and the need for additional seeding in 2012
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	Completed. In 2011 the BLM ceased surveys of bald eagle roosts adjacent to Wells Pool. Wildlife Area staff and volunteers will continue annual monitor of roosts on wildlife area lands.	Continue in 2012
Prepare for restoration of 70 acres of land on the West Foster Creek and Bridgeport Bar Units (Recreation Conservation Office grant).	Fallowed fields in summer 2010. Seeded Bridgeport Bar fields in spring of 2011 and West Foster Creek fields in October of 2011.	In 2012 fields will be monitored and weeds controlled as needed.

2012-13 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. 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.
2. Grow approximately 125 acres of irrigated grain on Bridgeport Bar and Washburn Island (wheat, barley, corn, millet etc).
3. Submit a grant to secure money from the federal Duck Stamp Program. If successful, the funding will be used to establish irrigated food plots on Washburn Island. Use cereal grains such winter and spring wheat, barley, corn and canola.
4. Maintain and irrigate about 50 acres of permanent nesting cover on Washburn Island. Evaluate 2008 seeding and need for additional seeding.
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. Mow and treat weeds throughout the wildlife area as needed.
11. Maintain one mile of firebreaks on the West Foster Creek Unit and two miles on Bridgeport Bar.
12. Maintain 13 hunter registration booths, one office building, a shop and storage facilities. Maintain vehicles and equipment.
13. Survey goose nesting on and adjacent to Wells Pool (Lake Pateros). Coordinate with volunteers to survey kestrel and wood duck nesting.
14. Coordinate with volunteers to survey bald eagle winter roosts and American White Pelican and double crested cormorant using Wells Pool.
15. Work with volunteers to increase monitoring of non-game species on the area. Emphasis will be placed on monitoring use of restored sites.



Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) Status

The Wells Wildlife Area was split from the Chelan Wildlife Area in late 2011. The new manager will be creating a CAG in 2013.

Contacts:

Dan Peterson, Wildlife Area
Manager
(509) 686-4305
WDFW Ephrata Office
(509) 754-4624

Want to see the full plan?

Go to -

http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/