



# SNOQUALMIE WILDLIFE AREA 2010 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife



## Land Management Summary

This is an annual update to the 2006 Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Management Plan, which can be found online at the following link.

[http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_area/s/management\\_plans/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_area/s/management_plans/)

The plan provides management direction for the Skagit\Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Complex, which includes the five Snoqualmie units, approximately 2,780 acres in King and Snohomish County

and the numerous properties of the Skagit Wildlife Area which total 16,708 acres in Skagit, Island, and San Juan 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 2010 accomplishments, new issues, new land management strategies, performance measures for 2011, and ongoing projects.

## **Updates/Changes**

WDFW budget and financial summary – Difficult economic conditions continue to persist following the statewide revenue shortfall expected for the 2009-11 biennium. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife experienced a \$21 million cut to the operating budget. At the same time, the WDFW capital budget was cut in half from 2007-09 levels.

## **Inside**

<b>Land Management Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Updates/Changes</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Major Stewardship Accomplishments</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Status Report of 2010 Performance Measures</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2011 Performance Measures</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>New Strategies</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Citizens Advisory Group Input</b>	<b>12</b>

Continual adjustments have been occurring throughout this budget cycle as revenue estimates fall short making additional spending cuts necessary.



### **Ebey Island Feasibility**

Ebey Island was once a freshwater tidal marsh with numerous sloughs that provided extensive rearing habitat for young Chinook and coho salmon. When Ebey Island was diked in the first half of the 1900s, salmon access to all sloughs was completely blocked. The loss of fish access to such sloughs has been identified as a limiting factor for salmon populations in the watershed. Restoring tidal influence to diked areas has been identified as critical component

to restoring salmon populations in the watershed.

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife has acquired 1,237-acres on the island with salmon habitat restoration as a major goal. WDFW has also acquired a Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant to complete a salmon restoration feasibility study for the property that it owns on the island. The study will evaluate a variety of technical factors and social considerations because the island contains well-established residences, small businesses, infrastructure and farms. The feasibility report will include recommendations regarding potential projects for salmon habitat restoration, and evaluations on how they would interplay with wildlife habitat protection, recreation, agriculture, utilities and transportation infrastructure.

The feasibility study will involve a stakeholder and public input. The goal of the stakeholder advisory process is to ensure that the feasibility study considers the needs, interests, opinions and perspectives of those who are most affected by its outcome. Public participation and input will be encouraged during the study. Project materials and meeting information will be posted on the project web site as the project develops at

[http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas/snoqualmie/restoration\\_study.php](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/snoqualmie/restoration_study.php).

The project is funded by the Recreation and Conservation Office's Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Natural Environmental Resource Damage Assessment Funding and by labor donated by numerous stakeholders.

**Ebey Island DOT parking access** – WDFW Region 4 Lands Agent initiated negotiations with Washington Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop a lease agreement for the parking area under the Highway 2 overpass near Ebey Slough. Lease discussions have gotten mired in a variety of legal issues that seem unlikely to be resolved in the short-term. Alternative access locations will need to be evaluated.

**Ebey Island Grazing Lease**

Ebey Island grassland habitats are dominated by reed canary grass, an exotic perennial, which requires regular removal throughout the growing season to prevent formation of dense stands that choke out wildlife habitat, hamper hiking, and inhibit wildlife-viewing opportunities. An efficient option for controlling this invasive grass is grazing or mowing. The grass’s root system can provide excellent erosion control and good forage/hay if managed properly.



Ebey Island Unit facing east (SR 2 is on the left side of photo).  
Photo by John Garrett

Mixed sitka spruce and western red cedar make up the areas forest. Sitka spruce is a native tree to the Pacific Northwest and the largest tree of the spruce family. It can reach heights over 200 feet and is known for its strength to weight ratio. This trait has encouraged logging to the point that very little old growth forests remain. Although the Ebey Island stands are not old

growth, they are over 100 years old.

Ebey Island is currently subject to a grazing lease that was in place at the time of purchase but expires November 1, 2010. WDFW may direct the location of the cows to reduce conflict with public access or riparian plantings. The continued use of limited grazing and/or farming to manage the areas aggressive, exotic vegetation will be evaluated. Grazing can be a useful tool to control vegetation and improve habitat conditions for wildlife and public recreation, and when rotated between pastures at the appropriate time and number, can be done with minimal impact to soils, wildlife, and the public.

A revised grazing lease is scheduled to be developed with WDFW range management staff from Eastern Washington using the agency grazing policy and suggested evaluation techniques.

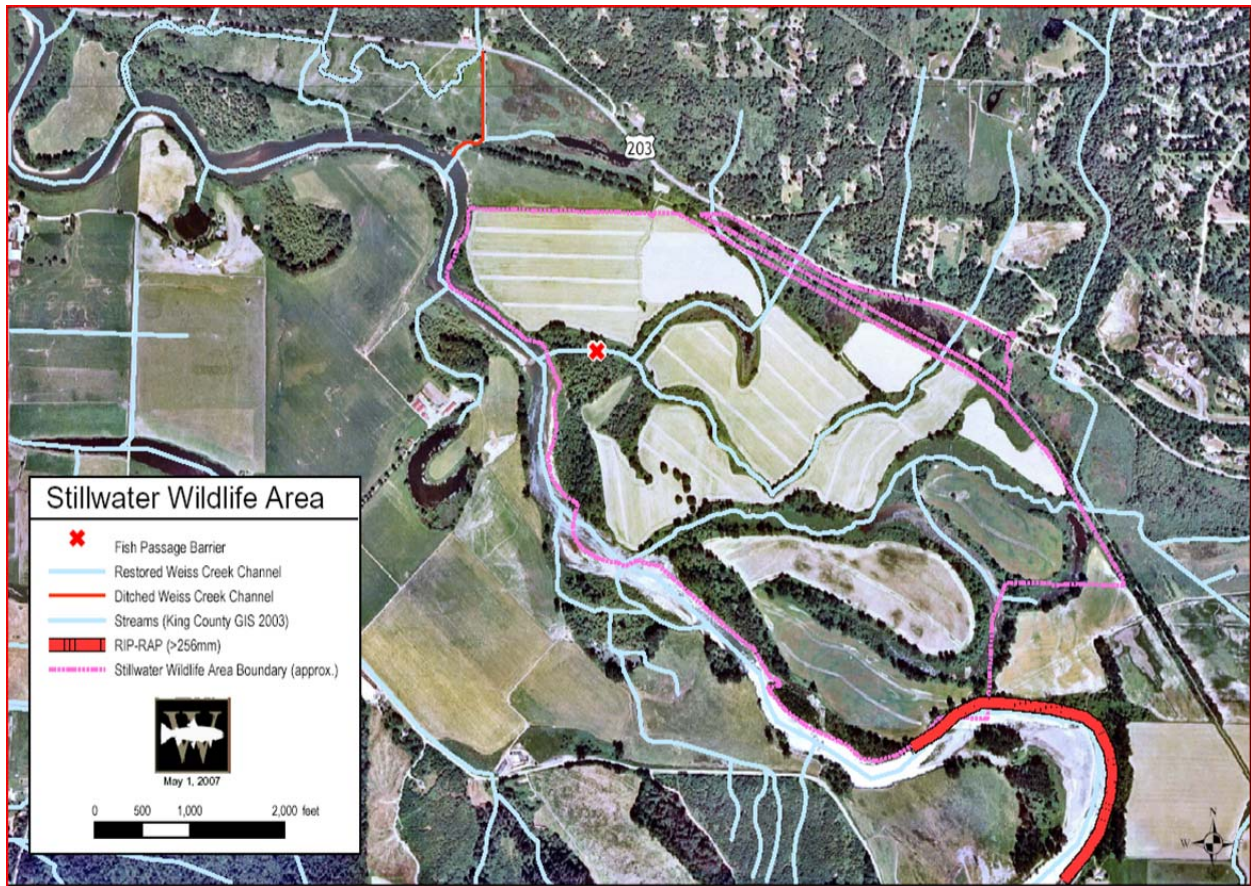
**Ebey Island Pheasant Release Program** – WDFW Private Land Access program has been working in Skagit County to find alternative pheasant release sites to offset the loss of hunting opportunity on Skagit Headquarters and Leque Island Units. Unfortunately sites selected in

Skagit County were not successfully acquired for the 2010 hunting season. On Ebey Island, the ability to provide public access has been a stumbling block for the development of a hunting program on Ebey Island. However, a neighboring landowner was willing to provide administrative and hunter access to a portion of Ebey Island to be used as a temporary pheasant release site. The continuation of this release site will be evaluated following this season's release and our ability to negotiate a long term lease for access with our neighbor and DOT.

**Stillwater Wildlife Area** – Several projects have been funded on the Stillwater Unit to improve habitat for fish and wildlife and include riparian planting, hydrologic modeling, and fish and forest habitat enhancement projects.

**Stillwater Hydrologic Modeling** – Wild Fish Conservancy submitted a proposal to the SRFB to request feasibility funding for a hydrologic model to examine the potential restoration of natural process on a portion of the Snoqualmie River and Harris Creek drainages. This model will provide information about the existing river conditions (two actively eroding banks and bank hardened sites) and the potential results of modifications such as placement of large woody debris and removal of bank hardening materials. The model will provide information on the potential for meander migration and channel avulsion following the proposed removal of bank hardening. Project design includes placing large woody debris near the two bank erosion sites to decrease sediment transport down river and will be evaluated when the final report is completed. Funding for the next phase of the project has been requested for permitting and construction. Final data gathering and analysis will be completed during the late spring and summer. Information will be presented to WDFW staff for review and decision. If this proposal is approved Wild Fish Conservancy will initiate a public review and comment process as the project moves forward through the permitting process.





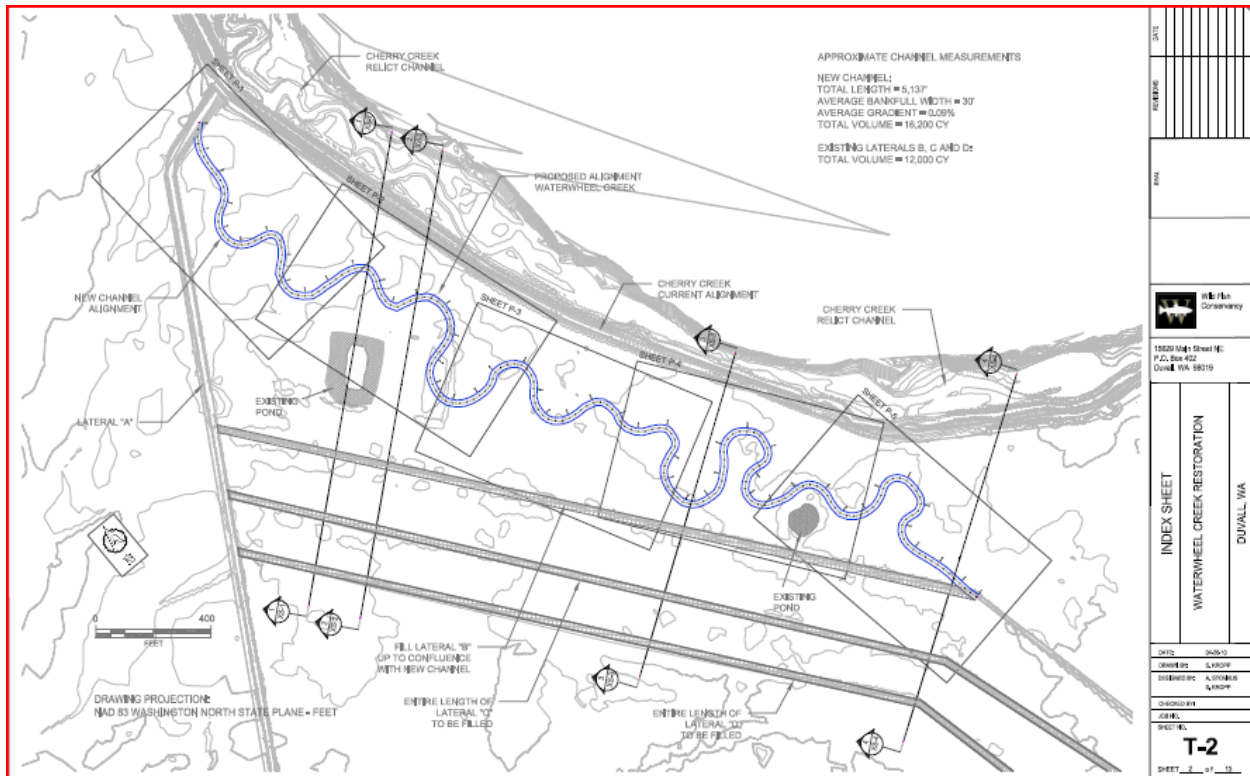
**Cherry Valley Restoration** - Conceptual designs are being developed for the proposed fish passage and aquatic habitat restoration project. Currently this design is near the 30% design level. Conceptual designs include: fish passage features, large wood placement, riparian plantings and a demonstration on how water elevations will be maintained in the wetlands when connected to the restored stream channel.

WDFW staff is currently evaluating the culvert crossings for removal and replacement. Wildlife Area staff are proposing to maintain the existing level of access to fields for maintenance and hunting although some access will be replaced with foot bridges.

WDFW first evaluated fish passage and habitat conditions on the Cherry Valley unit in 1998, as a part of an ongoing statewide inventory of WDFW owned lands. WDFW is mandated to correct fish passage barriers and inadequate screened diversions on agency-owned land. Locally, WDFW recently completed eight fish passage projects and partnered with a local enhancement group to restore riparian vegetation at the Stillwater unit.

WDFW partnered with Wild Fish Conservancy to develop a design to correct up to six fish passage barriers and restore Waterwheel Creek. The proposal is to combine the conveyance of the three lateral ditches B, C and D, fill these ditches, and create a meandering channel for

Waterwheel Creek (see drawing below). Additional habitat features would be included such as large woody debris placement and restoration plantings. This project would primarily benefit coho, Chinook and resident trout by improving adult access, reducing stranding, and improving rearing habitat conditions for juvenile fish. This project will benefit waterfowl populations by enhancing existing wetlands and increasing food availability and cover for nesting birds. This project is expected to benefit the drainage district by improving water conveyance and reducing maintenance needs. Preliminary design should be developed during the spring 2010. Design review and discussion with WDFW and Dike District 7 will be initiated during the summer 2010 with desired construction to begin summer 2011.



**Crescent Lake Fish Passage Barrier Removal** - WDFW will resolve two fish passage barriers at the Crescent Lake Unit. The lower crossing road will be abandoned, the road fill and barrier culvert will be removed for better water exchange in Crescent Lake to allow improved and fish passage. The failed culvert at the upper crossing will be removed and replaced with a larger, fish passable culvert. Project work was initiated late summer and fall 2010, additional work will be scheduled for the lower crossing that was unable to be completed during the required permitting window.

**Corson Unit Fish Passage Barrier Removal and Road Management** – WDFW is scheduled to resolve two fish passage barriers and several road management and drainage issues on the Corson Unit during the summer 2011. Currently the access point to the property for equipment



and vehicular entry has been denied by the long-term steward of the property Lynn Dye. Ms Dye is not supportive of the proposed changes that are necessary to bring WDFW in compliance with these regulations. Efforts to develop an acceptable compromise will continue.

### **Major Stewardship Accomplishments**



**Stillwater Riparian Planting** – WDFW has partnered with the Stilly-Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force (Taskforce) to develop a long term plan to improve and restore riparian habitat along the Snoqualmie River and its tributaries on the Stillwater Unit. The Taskforce has been very effective in acquiring grant funding to implement the restoration project. To date, the Taskforce has received funding from: King Conservation District (KCD), Aquatic Lands

Enhancement Account, American Rivers, and REI. This multi-year planting project was designed to improve habitat conditions by replacing invasive plant species with woody native vegetation and developing riparian corridors along the streams within the Stillwater Unit. In 2010, as a part of the community outreach portion of the project, the Taskforce organized an Earth day volunteer planting event in April. Approximately 120 volunteer planted about 1,600 trees and shrubs at various riparian locations on the property.



In addition the Taskforce coordinated with local partner organizations to provide information booths for the volunteers on such subjects as water quality, noxious weeds, wildness education, and bird watching. Mr. Moen's 6<sup>th</sup> grade science class from Snoqualmie Middle School came out to plant for student planting day. In all 225 volunteers planted nearly 2,000 native shrubs and trees along the main stem of the Snoqualmie River. The next phase of the restoration plantings have been proposed along Harris Creek and unnamed tributaries. Additional funding was approved by REI. Planting dates will be scheduled for Spring 2011.

### **Agricultural Enhancements**

Crescent Lake- The sharecrop lease was put out for competitive bid for the 2009 planting season as a result of issues regarding past lease agreements. The winning bid provided a dramatic increase in the state share of the crop left standing and could easily have been the best share crop lease ever on the Crescent Lake Unit.

Cherry Valley – A 3-year sharecrop lease was negotiated to redevelop the agricultural program on the Cherry Valley Unit. Thirty five acres of corn were planted. For the 1<sup>st</sup> year all the corn was harvested, the two following years (3.5 and 7 acres) of corn will be left standing for wildlife.

Stillwater - A 3-year sharecrop lease was negotiated to redevelop the agricultural program on the Stillwater Unit. Ninety eight acres of barley were planted. For the 1<sup>st</sup> year all the barley was harvested, but the two following years (8 and 16 acres) the barley will be left standing for wildlife.

**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 alter priority strategies for 2011.

2010 Performance Measures	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2011 Related Activity/ Comments
Implement projects that will remove fish passage barriers and improve wetland function on the Stillwater Unit		Culvert replacement and removal are completed final planting work completed Oct 2009.
Research opportunities to improve wetland functions with managed wetlands on the Cherry Valley Unit. Develop and implement a wetland enhancement project to restore portions of Cherry Creek drainage (Cherry Valley Unit) with Ducks Unlimited and Wild Fish Conservancy	Discussions regarding development of a wetland impoundment have stalled due to concerns from the county flood control and local drainage district related to impact on flood capacity from impounded water and dike infrastructure. There are also concerns about fish entrapment and proposed creek diversions	Current funding will run out Summer 2010.
Work closely with the Citizen Advisory Group, District Team and other stakeholders on unresolved issues to suggest workable management options for public use issues (access, sanitation, information needs, conflicting recreational uses, and additional recreational lands), dog use issues and wildlife viewing enhancements	Work to develop hunting/viewing brochure.	New focus issue has not been identified.
Work to develop a detailed color map and brochure for the Wildlife Area	Information brochure has not been completed at this time due to current project workload.	Currently not funded



2010 Performance Measures	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2011 Related Activity/ Comments
Complete proposal to improve trail surface and develop blinds that are ADA accessible on Spencer Island Unit.	Currently unfunded. A capital proposal has been submitted.	Capital proposal submitted but not funded. Evaluate the potential to submit an RCO proposal.
Implement projects on Cherry Valley Unit that will remove fish passage barriers and entrapment areas with WDFW Technical Applications (TAPPS) Program, Wild Fish Conservancy and Ducks Unlimited.	Barrier removal project moving forward. Proposal being evaluated by field staff. Report forwarded to Olympia Staff for review and cost analysis.	No scheduled work for 2010.
Identify potential riparian corridor and/or wetland projects on Stillwater Unit with WDFW Technical Applications staff (TAPPS), Ducks Unlimited, and King County's Surface Water Management Division.	Riparian planting projects along the main stem Snoqualmie River, Harris Creek, and unnamed tributaries. Funding was received from the King Conservation District and ALEA grants for the planting project.	The King Conservation District approved the riparian planting project. The third year of planting along the Snoqualmie River was completed during April 2010. Additional work proposed for Spring 2011
Evaluate proposed habitat restoration projects on all units with District Team and Citizen Advisory Group	Ebey Island feasibility study currently underway. Working group evaluating estuary restoration proposals.	No recommendations developed at this time.
Develop a prioritized list by unit in which to conduct an inventory of wildlife area to determine species, use and needs	Ongoing need	No surveys currently funded
Work with Citizen Advisory Group and District Team to maintain and improve fishing opportunities on appropriate units	No suggestions currently proposed to improve access.	
Pursue funding to implement 1-3 projects on the Crescent Lake Unit to remove fish passage barriers	Capital budget funding requests have been submitted for 2009-2011.	Funded received. Construction Summer 2010.
Pursue funding to implement 1-3 projects to remove fish passage barriers on the Corson Unit	Capital budget funding requests have been submitted for 2009-2011	Funded received. No work scheduled at this time. Additional permitting and public review needed
Develop and evaluate a pheasant release program at other upland sites and/or on private property (if owners are willing) with Citizen Advisory Group, District Team and other interested stakeholders	Currently there is no funding available to expand the program to private land access program in King or Snohomish County.	WDFW Region 4 has a new private lands biologist assigned to Skagit and Whatcom counties. The potential to include Snohomish and King counties will be investigated.
Inspect and maintain footbridges on Cherry Valley, Crescent Lake and Stillwater units	Work with volunteers to inventory, mark and maintain footbridges.	Develop a work crew to fix footbridges.
Develop and post boundaries of the on all Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Units.	Will prioritize sign posting and boundary work. Coordinate with survey crew on unknown boundary lines.	Survey of southeast boundary on Crescent Lake unit needed.

2010 Performance Measures	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2011 Related Activity/ Comments
Mow and maintain meadow trails on Crescent Lake and Stillwater Units.	Investigate the use of the Department of Corrections work release crews to maintain trail on Crescent Lake	Trails mowed on Crescent Lake. Additional work has been proposed by area users. Further evaluation of proposal is needed to determine priority.
Develop a list of projects by unit that individual volunteers or groups could help complete	Work with District team and CAG to identify some potential volunteer projects.	No new projects at this time.
Mow fields on Cherry Valley and Stillwater units	Completed  Discuss the potential to develop a haying lease on the site to improve habitat conditions.	Coordinate with volunteers to spot mow to improve site between current mowing schedule
Maintain trails on Corson Natural Area	Mowing completed	Completed by volunteers
Release 3,100 to 3,800 pheasants on Cherry Valley, Crescent Lake and Stillwater units	Completed	
Attend and participate in monthly to quarterly meetings of the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum and Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum.	Attend Snoqualmie Watershed Forum coordination meeting. Now on the list for meeting schedule and will attend meetings pertinent to Wildlife Area lands.	Need to get on the announcement list for Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum. .
Research and discuss options to provide recreational access to the nearby Honor Farm (coordinate with tribes)	The Qualco cooperative, which is operating the Honor Farm property, is not allowing public hunting on the property. Further research of the documents of this agreement will be requested for our records.	Will continue to determine property access restrictions on the Honor Farm. Contact has been made but no documentation has been received.
The management of the open field component of the wildlife areas is not adequately addressed in the plan. Many of these fields are not currently being managed for agriculture and are starting to be encroached by blackberry and other woody plants.	Opportunities to acquire funding through the Duck Stamp process and/or farming with sharecrop or lease agreements will continue to be pursued. Done	Development of riparian buffers along streams and interior drainage structures will be implemented when feasible. Efforts to develop agricultural programs on Cherry Valley and Stillwater unit continue.
Identify noxious and invasive weeds, species and distribution	Notified by King County weed board about tansy ragwort on the Stillwater Unit	Continue to work with Weed Crew
Determine the risk level of weed species to develop control priorities	Ongoing	
Coordinate weed control efforts with other agencies	Ongoing	

2010 Performance Measures	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2011 Related Activity/ Comments
Apply for grants to control weeds, plant native vegetation, and utilize the WDFW Weed Crew	Ongoing	
Partner with co-managing tribal agencies to monitor the restoration projects on Spencer Island and other units as they are funded and implemented	Discuss with the Watershed Steward to initiate this discussion.	Watershed Steward continues to request that WDFW restoration projects be included in the regional monitoring projects. Efforts to find funding will be pursued.
Spencer Island –Sign development and dedication of the Willy O’Neil memorial is in the planning stages.	As funding becomes available, the next step is to improve the trail surface to make it ADA accessible, to develop boardwalks and elevated hunting and viewing platforms similar to the ones on the Snohomish County Parks property.	Capital budget requests have been submitted for 2009-2011 and grant funding opportunities will be submitted when available.
Ebey Island – South boundary	Boundary and topographic surveys have been completed.  WDFW engineers have assessed the easement and will develop road and parking area designs to submit for county and state permitting	Landowner and neighbors do not support the development of the access easement. Neighbor has offered administrative access through his property. Long term agreement should be developed.
Ebey Island – North access	Lands agent currently coordinating with DOT to develop an access easement and parking area under the Ebey Slough Bridge.	No progress to report.
Ebey Island - West Parcel Access	No access will be available until the City of Everett completes the water pipeline project.	

### **2011 Performance Measures**

- Work with the Citizen Advisory Group, District Team and other stakeholders on management options regarding public use issues (access, sanitation, information needs, conflicting recreational uses, and additional recreational lands), dog use issues and wildlife viewing enhancements.
- Work with department personnel to develop a detailed map and brochure for the Wildlife Area
- Complete the proposal to improve trail surface and develop blinds that are ADA accessible on Spencer Island Unit.
- Spencer Island – The dedication of the Willy O’Neil memorial is in the planning stages. Signs need to be developed
- Implement projects on Cherry Valley Unit that will remove fish passage barriers and entrapment areas with WDFW Technical Applications Program, Wild Fish Conservancy and Ducks Unlimited.



- Expand the riparian corridor and/or wetland buffer on Stillwater Unit with WDFW Technical Applications staff (TAPPS), Ducks Unlimited, Stilly- Snohomish Taskforce and King County's Surface Water Management Division.
- Complete implementation of fish passage barrier removal project on the Crescent Lake Unit
- Implement fish passage barriers removal projects on the Corson Unit
- Mow and maintain meadow trails on Crescent Lake and Stillwater Units
- Mow fields on Cherry Valley and Stillwater Units
- Maintain trails on Corson Natural Area
- Release 3,100 to 3,800 pheasants on Cherry Valley, Crescent Lake and Stillwater Units
- Identify noxious and invasive weeds, species and distribution
- Coordinate weed control efforts with other agencies and WDFW staff

### **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 presence, 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.

No new strategies were identified.

### **Citizens Advisory Group Input**

In lieu of hosting a public meeting to review the management plan update, Skagit staff forwarded a draft document to all the citizen advisory group members. Comments received from CAG members are listed below to be sure their concerns are captured accurately. Here is a brief summary list of concern:

- Plan difficult to understand and priorities are not clear.
- Good status reports but priorities and objectives not clear enough to be plan.
- Would like to be more involved in planning process.
- Would like opportunity to be involved earlier in planning process.

### **List of current Citizen Advisory Group members and their affiliations:**

Steve Aslanian	Skagit Audubon Society
Rone Brewer	Washington Waterfowl Association
Virginia Clark	Pilchuck Audubon Society
Edward Connor	Skagit Watershed Council
Curt Kraemer	Fish and Wildlife Advocate (retired fish biologist)
Marilyn Dahlheim	Dog Trainer
Oscar Graham	WDFW Waterfowl Advisory Committee

Gary Gibbs	Waterfowl Hunter
Steve Hinton	Skagit River System Cooperative
Martha Jordan	Trumpeter Swan Society
Art Kendall	WA Waterfowl Association (retired fish biologist)
David Randolph	Dog Trainer
Allen Rozema	Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland (executive director)
Allison Studley	Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (executive director)
Albert Vincent, Jr.	Fish and Wildlife Committee for Persons with Disabilities
Sharon Swan	Fish/wildlife advocate (Snohomish County Parks & Recreation Department Planner)
Dallas Wylie	Neighbor, Farmer

CAG MEMBER	DATE	COMMENTS
Art Kendall	2/6/2011	I have read through the plan. It would be very helpful to have a short summary of the things that are new compared to the last plan, stating how is this updated from the previous plan.
Curt Kraemer	2/14/2011	<p>I have reviewed the two plans (Snoqualmie and Skagit) and as far as I can tell they both are reasonable updates from the previous documents and clearly illustrate the diverse demand being placed on those management areas.</p> <p>However I do have a comment/concern that might warrant some further discussion.</p> <p>The two plans are both good status reports of the current situations on the two wildlife areas however I feel they lack the details of priorities and strategies to accomplish various objectives to really qualify as "plans".</p> <p>There is no doubt the agency and the Snoqualmie/Skagit wildlife areas are facing huge challenges from the current budget situation as well changing demands/pressures on conflicting use of wildlife areas lands. To move forward in a rational matter the agency needs to develop a list of need objectives/activities, priorities of those activities as well as strategies to achieve those objectives. Clearly many of us would like to see public involvement in that process though it should go without saying that under current conditions it will be impossible to meet everyone's interests. I understand such an approach would require a lot of work but it seems to me that is the only logically way for staff to begin taking proactive control of management and begin logically</p>

		addressing conflicting demands.
Dallas Wylie	2/15/2011	<p>Dallas would like to be sure that we continue to pursue the efforts to improve the Skagit Boat launch. The boat launch has been identified as a priority by the CAG group and the Wiley Slough collaborative process. He is concerned that has not received full funding even with all this public support.</p> <p>He would also like to see additional corn left standing on the DeBay Slough Swan Reserve. He has noticed that during the past few years WDFW have been allowing the harvest of all the corn within the reserve and planting a cover crop. Since the changes in management the waterfowl use of the area has decreased to include swan use. He believes that leaving corn on DeBay Isle would improve swan and other waterfowl use of the site.</p>
Martha Jordan	2/15/2011	<p>The update does not provide details or justification for some of the work being planned. If the document is intended to be a Plan, then it lacks enough detail other than these are the projects and this is what we are going to do.</p> <p>My main concern is with the Corson Unit. It appears WDFW is still on target to conduct "fish barrier" removal project in summer of 2011. There still is no solid evidence that will benefit fish.</p> <p>I have been to the site, walked all the proposed areas. In at least three areas, there is no way for fish to get into these isolated forested wetlands. Meaning, they never were there in the first place or if they were, the connection to the creek is long gone and not by man's activities.</p> <p>WDFW has yet to be forthcoming with fish data, proof of what fish are actually in these wetlands and proof that what they are proposing will actually be enhancement. Last summer this same project was attempted to be rammed through. The reason for it that I received is: WDFW has about \$35,000 and needs to spend it. This is a good place to spend it since we need to do so before October 15.</p> <p>That is no reason to push a project. As I stated earlier: where</p>



		<p>is the information we have requested on fish use in the area?</p> <p>Where is the information on how this change in water flow will affect adjacent downstream property owners?</p> <p>What will finding an alternative access route cost WDFW?</p> <p>Will this then allow the public to access the site in an uncontrolled way and create the same or similar problems with vandalism as before?</p> <p>This is simply a bad idea until further discussion and thought has been put into this aspect of the Snoqualmie WA Plan.</p>
Martha Jordan	2/15/2011	<p>Please disregard my comments just posted about the Snoqualmie WA Plan. It appears that the Corson Unit is being addressed by WDFW in a different way. Therefore, my comments have no relevance at this time because of the efforts of WDFW is doing to resolve the situation. This is a good thing.</p>
Art Kendall	2/16/2011	<p>I have similar concerns regarding the proposed inundation of the Farmed Island Segment in the Skagit WLA in the name of salmon restoration. To what extent will it benefit salmon? How will its effectiveness be measured (cost-benefit)? What will be done to mitigate for loss of waterfowl feeding habitat and hunting opportunities?</p>
Art Kendall	3/11/2011	<p>I appreciate the opportunity to review this document beforehand, but I think the CAG needs to meet face-to-face to provide meaningful guidance. I have now spent some more time with this update, the original plan and the previous updates. Once I get into them, I see that they are valuable documents. However, the format is less than ideal. It is difficult to get to the meat of the plans. The verbiage and the tables tell different stories, and it is hard to rectify them. For example, the 2010 update talks about plans for the South Padilla Bay properties, but I don't see any mention of this in the measures of performance tables. The lack of comments by others on the CAG might mean that we are overwhelmed or confused by the document, or that we don't think our input really matters. As a cause of concern, I see that Rone Brewer is not on the CAG mailing list, and that WWA was not</p>

		included in the South Padilla Bay working group, nor on the Ebey Island Restoration stakeholders group.
Martha Jordan	3/11/2011	<p>You articulate your concerns well. I have the similar ones about this document. My sense is, our comments will not matter in the end. This is an exercise that is required by WDFW policy or WAC. That said, I do strongly suggest that we have a CAG meeting face to face to discuss this. The unfortunate part is that it is too late to do so before the comment period ends. I do not have any open time to attend a meeting before April 8.</p> <p>Perhaps giving comments about what needs to be rectified will be of value. I greatly appreciate your taking the time with these documents. It is only through concerned citizens taking time to comment and more that we can influence how government agencies conduct our business.</p>
Gary Gibbs	3/17/2011	<p>Thanks again for taking the time to run off and print the plan update for me.</p> <p>It is quite a large document and covers a lot of ground in it's 13 pages.....it shows the successes, and the challenges we have remaining on significant projects started in the last 2-3 years, as well as future projects.</p> <p>On page 5 the mitigation issue is mentioned. As we all know, the mitigation promises made to deal with the loss of access/use have not been fulfilled for the Leque and Wiley Slough projects. The document gives the reader the sense that the WDFW has handed off this problem to the WWA and responsibility rests now with them. I would hope that this would be clarified to show that mitigation for WDFW projects is always the responsibility of the WDFW, even though citizen groups have offered to assist the WDFW.</p> <p>While reading "New Issues" on page 7, Wiley Slough and Leque Island were mentioned. Probably a more accurate heading would have been "Old Issues coming home to roost" To the casual reader of the report it would seem that these Wiley Slough drainage issues were brand new and the WDFW did not see them coming. The hydraulic problem of the silting</p>

		<p>in of the bayfront causing a raise in elevation was brought up time and time again at your many public meetings. It should be clarified in the report that the WDFW knew of these potential problems and chose to proceed anyway. The Leque Island Project is characterized as being hamstrung by public agencies holding up permitting, and being blocked by citizen advisory boards. The report states that these delays and problems are characterized as "cause was unknown". The Leque drainage issues and dike concerns that exist today were aired many times at your public meetings. To give a more realistic picture of these projects it should be added that the WDFW opted to not order additional SEPA reviews on these projects that very well could have brought these issues to light.</p> <p>On page 10 "New Strategies", I would hope the 2 items below would be added.</p> <p>All projects proceed only after a complete and proper SEPA review.</p> <p>Reconnect with stakeholder groups such as the WWA and bring them back into the process in a meaningful way.</p> <p>The report probably should mention the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project, and how its possible impacts could effect the Skagit Wildlife Area. It's in its infancy, but a project of this scope should be noted.</p> <p>Thanks for the chance to review and comment on the report</p>
Rone Brewer	3/22/2011	<p>My thought on the Skagit/Snoqualmie Wildlife Area management plan updates are embedded in the attached documents.</p> <p>Many, if not most, of the 2006-2010 management related priorities originally identified by the CAG have not been attended to, primarily because of budgetary shortfalls and low priority. The new objectives seem to pretty clearly show that WDFW is heading more and more to a focus on restoration of natural fish and wildlife conditions and not on management of said resources or related recreation/public access. This is the inevitable endpoint of continually shrinking budgets and the</p>



	<p>related prioritization necessity.</p> <p>WWA would prefer to see more program funding directed to maintenance and operations of the wildlife areas, without which we will soon see a collapse of many of the areas and subsequent removal from public accessibility, contrary to their original intent and purpose.</p> <p>The other disturbing issue I see is the repeated lack of involvement of WWA as a stakeholder in multiple fish restoration projects. Given our past involvement and familiarity with the region, it seems WDFW is purposefully omitting WWA and its perspective from these groups.</p> <p>Thanks for the opportunity to comment.</p> <p>Milltown Island – Does not support continued funding for additional work habitat work on Milltown Island.</p> <p>North Fork Access footbridge – Appreciates and supports the replacement of the crossing after culvert was removed. This provides hunter access to the marsh.</p> <p><i>Guidance on WDFW'S Vision for Conservation and Land Acquisition for the Skagit Delta</i> – Requested that we make this publication available on our website</p> <p>South Padilla Bay - Concerned about lack of involvement of Washington Waterfowl Association in the previous stakeholder process for Padilla Bay. Would like to have WWA involved as the project moves forward.</p> <p>Skagit Boat Launch – Believes that SRFB funding should have been requested and used to rebuild the boat launch as a part of the restoration project.</p> <p>Wiley Slough Drainage Issues – Was concerned that WDFW is paying for pumping cost and believes that is should e paid for with SRFB money.</p> <p>Status Report of 2009 Performance Measures – Observed that few of the projected performance measures were not completed. New Strategies pretty clearly show that WDFW is focusing on fish and wildlife and less and less on public</p>
--	---

		<p>access. I understand this is budget related. However, it highlights the importance of concepts like the Heritage Lands Program for the future of public access.</p> <p>WWA involvement – Would like to have WWA involved more and earlier in the planning processes of larger project such as Cottonwood Island, Samish, Leque Island, and Island Units.</p> <p>Snoqualmie Update Comments</p> <p>Ebey Island Feasibility – Concerned that WWA was not on the stakeholder group for this feasibility study. Spencer Island – WWA would be interested in working to develop trail for Willie O’Neil. Cherry Valley Unit – Would like to have WWA involved in the stakeholder group for Cherry Valley and Stillwater.</p>
--	--	--

**Contacts:**  
**John Garrett**  
Wildlife Area Manager  
(360) 445-4441  
WDFW Mill Creek Office  
(425) 775-1311

**Want to see the full plan?**  
Go to -  
[http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas/management\\_plans/index.htm](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/index.htm)