

#	Comment	WDFW Response
1	Page 2. Advisory Committee is far too narrowly composed. All Washington citizens have an interest in these places, and that reality is not reflected in this very local representation. Steven Herman	All citizens do have an interest and their input valued, however local participation is most crucial given they spend significant more time in these areas as other Washington state citizens. Providing a 30-day comment period for the plan allowed interested citizens from across the state to provide input. A news release was issued locally as well as through our agency online to request feedback.
2	Page 6. Add grazing table to list of tables Steven Herman	The grazing table is listed on page 6.
3	Page 7. What is needed here is a DEFINITION of "ecological integrity". I know now that the definition is articulated later, but it should appear much earlier in the document, and be accompanied by a citation. Steven Herman	Ecological integrity is defined on page 87. Please see the Wildlife Area Management Planning Framework for more information: http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/
4	All the photography by Justin Haug is spectacular and adds immeasurably to the plan presentation. Steven Herman	OK
5	Page 9. all aspects resource management"? "significant public involvement"? NO! All Washington citizens are stakeholders here. Has this plan been circulated to WDFW staff for review? See Appendix K for public outreach details. Specific goals in Appendix A.\ Steven Herman	Appendix J in the final plan will detail the complete public process for development of the management plan. The public process for this specific management plan included two wildlife area advisory committee meetings and two public meetings. SEPA review included 30 day public comment period. Comments are summarized in Appendix J including meeting notes from all public meetings. The plan was reviewed several times during development by regional and Olympia staff.
6	Page 10. Only native wildlife? What is "ecological integrity", how is it determined site by site, and how will it be monitored? "summary of species"? Goal 4: who are the stakeholders? Reviewed only be the advisory group? Goal 5" Why only local "community neighbors"? Steven Herman	The statewide planning goals listed on page 10 are consistent with the agency's mission and strategic plan. See #3 above for information on ecological integrity. Stakeholders include local community members, county and city representatives, tribes, federal and state agencies, neighbors, Audubon representatives, local businesses, user groups, etc.
7	Page 11. Where are the quantitative data	Numerous before and after photos exist.

	<p>supporting the success of the ecosystem restoration project? There should be before and after vegetation data, or at the very least, before and after photos.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Grant funding did not allow for post-project vegetative monitoring. Photo monitoring performed using operational dollars.</p>
8	<p>Page 13. Quantitative data on the success of the biological control program? Check for Winston et al in References. Very good that this method is being employed.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>WSU-Extension has been collecting data pre and post-monitoring. Success has been determined by years of monitoring, and multiple site visits observed reduction in overall infestation.</p>
9	<p>Page 14. Details on shrubsteppe and riparian restoration? Again, if this restoration has actually been accomplished, the achievement is significant and should be documented.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Restoration throughout this document refers to the process or action of restoring an area to future historic condition(s). Enhancement would be what we currently have following these various activities.</p>
10	<p>Page 15. If shrubsteppe has been restored, the accomplishment is unique in the American West. Details please! No after photos?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>See above comment #9. Restoration photos will be included in future wildlife area plan updates.</p>
11	<p>Page 16. It's not clear that these are well paired before and after photos.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Not intended to be before and after photos</p>
12	<p>Page 17. "The species list is based on suspected occurrence"? Huh? This admission describes the most serious shortfall in the "plan". Some of these units are nearly 80 years old. Do you mean personnel still need to guess about the (mostly non-game) species that are present? Remarkable if true!</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Appendix F includes a link to species lists for the Sinlahekin WLA: http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/sinlahekin/</p>
13	<p>Page 19. All of the English names of species -here and elsewhere- should be capitalized. Is upland bird hunting allowed on this SHTG habitat?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted. Yes, upland bird hunting is allowed with post signs identifying sharp-tailed grouse presence.</p>

14	<p>Page 20. What is a "savanna habitat"? and how might it differ from a steppe habitat? See the definitive paper (Daubenmire 1970). And ah, the "social and economic benefits of a working landscape" What's that, and what are the benefits? Do they include economic stimuli from visits by Seattle birders?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>See Page 56 of DNR – Ecosystems of Washington State – A guide to identification by Roccio and Crawford. 2015.</p> <p>A working landscape recognizes the mutual benefit management activities can have on the local economy. Yes, birding is considered within these economic benefits.</p>
15	<p>Page 21. "rural ownership" is a "land use"? Restoration details? Upland bird hunting? "migrating song birds in the spring" (but not in the fall)? NOT "Hungarian partridge"! non-native bird! English names should be capitalized. Bird list woefully depauperate and speculative. "an array of song birds"?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Rural ownership corrected.</p> <p>Upland bird hunting is allowed.</p> <p>Fall migration also occurs.</p> <p>There's no suggestion that Hungarian partridge is a native species.</p> <p>Bulleted species in unit descriptions are not intended to be comprehensive.</p>
16	<p>Page 23. Are Mule Deer in need of recovery? And how does the grazing on this unit contribute to this vision?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>On the Scotch Creek Wildlife Area, the Limebelt area provides critical habitat for wintering mule deer.</p>
17	<p>Page 24. Brook Trout are not native! Here's "Hungarian Partridge" again. How often are Prairie Falcons seen here? Aha" Another place with "an array of songbirds"! What's a "Priority species"? Shrubsteppe restoration. Grazing every other year to protect the "ecological integrity" again. Focus here on the stated reasons for grazing. NO references!! How does targeting spring grasses and forbs with cattle "reduce competition to bitterbrush and other deciduous shrubs"?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>There's no suggestion that eastern brook trout are native.</p> <p>Prairie falcons are seen here sporadically.</p> <p>Priority species (WDFW def.) - <i>Priority species require protective measures for their survival due to their population status, sensitivity to habitat alteration, and/or recreational, commercial, or tribal importance. Priority species include State Endangered, Threatened, Sensitive, and Candidate species; animal aggregations (e.g., heron colonies, bat colonies) considered vulnerable; and species of recreational, commercial, or tribal importance that are vulnerable.</i></p> <p>Grazing references: <i>Ganskopp, D.C., Svejcar, A.J., Vavra, M. 2006. Improving late-summer and</i></p>

		<p>winter forage quality with livestock grazing. Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center. SR1057:57-58.</p> <p>Vavra, M. 2005. Livestock grazing and wildlife: Developing compatibilities. Rangeland Ecology and Management. 58:128-134.</p>
18	<p>Page 26. Pogue Mountain Unit: A noble and well stated vision. This "plan" needs to be based on a vision like this one!</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	OK
19	<p>Page 27. Hungarian Partridge AGAIN! And Prairie Falcons but no Redtails! No mention of current grazing, present or absent, or objectives.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Not going to bullet all known species here – See link to species lists, see #12.</p> <p>No grazing permit exists on this unit.</p>
20	<p>Page 28. Does BLM graze this inholding? If so, is it adequately fenced against trespass?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	No. BLM does not graze this parcel.
21	<p>Page 30. Water Birch should be capitalized and its standard name should follow the English name. Gray Partridge for the first time? If the unit was burned, why does the photo show intact habitat? No mention of grazing. Here are those Prairies again! No Redtails. Snakes appear for the first time. Shrubsteppe restoration before and after the fire?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Revised 'Hungarian' to be consistent.</p> <p>Photo pre or post-fire irrelevant.</p> <p>No grazing permit exists on Tunk Valley Unit</p> <p>Shrub-steppe restoration occurred prior to the fire.</p>
22	<p>Page 33. What are the "benefits of a working landscape" to do with wildlife? Ring-necked Pheasant not native! No passerines mentioned here! "diving ducks of all kinds"? What species? Irrigated farming? Why? "bird watching" mentioned!</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>See comment #14 regarding working landscape.</p> <p>No suggestion that pheasants are native.</p> <p>Ducks – ring-necked, bufflehead, barrow's goldeneye, etc. observed.</p> <p>Irrigation is in place to retain water rights among other benefits.</p>
23	<p>Page 36. What is a "Life estate"? What relevance is Grizzly shot nearby in the 1950's? Chukar is non-native. First specific mention of shrubsteppe</p>	<p>A life estate allows the selling family to occupy a portion of the property until a specific time where said property is transferred to WDFW. No suggestion that chukar are native.</p>

	birds. Additional bird list is welcome! Small mammals and herps also detailed. Steven Herman	
24	Page 38. "Rocky Mountain aspen forest"?? Is this a subspecies of Quaking Aspen? Working landscape again. What does this term mean on this unit?. Steven Herman	That refers to an ecological system not species. See before mentioned Roccio and Crawford, see #14. Refers to the use of permitted grazing.
25	Page 39. This is a professional landscape description. Good fish list, including native "rough fish". Swainson's Hawk is not a shrubsteppe-dependent species. Grazing yes, a single lease. What are the payments and how big is the grazing area? And how does the grazing benefit wildlife? Steven Herman	Swainson's hawk corrected. Grazing area is 1,462 acres. Payments depend on USDA annual rate. See response #17 for grazing benefits.
26	Page 41. "song birds" The word is "songbird". This is the Sinlahekin WA. Steven Herman	Comment noted.
27	Page 42. "preserving cultural heritage." What is that? Steven Herman	Protecting cultural resources. State and federal law require the protection of cultural resources, see page 95.
28	Page 43. By far the most professionally written description, including a URL for details about species (although much of it speculation). Four grazing leases "to manipulate habitat and increase forage for mule deer and other wildlife". And how does grazing accomplish these objectives? "tiger trout"? Written by Justin Haug (also the Manager)? If so, this is a professional piece of work, the kind of responsible description that would be welcome elsewhere in this document. Steven Herman	OK Grazing objectives – see response #17. Tiger trout – sterile hybrid of a brown trout and brook trout.
29	Page 47. Hungarian Partridge is back! Along with "an array of song birds". Redtails mentioned,	Its standard WDFW protocol for service roads to be closed to the public. Access to Forde across Okanogan River is gated. Only staff and ag leasee, to

	generally detailed species list. Pheasant release site, ag operation. Some access limited to ag lessees and staff. Why? Steven Herman	complete the terms and conditions of their lease, are authorized to open. All others must cross via boat or fording the river.
30	Page 50. Why is any of it grazed? This is an interesting (and rare) admission that grazing produces damage that can benefit following its end! Steven Herman	Area grazed within a larger, encompassing permit. At the time of purchase, no fencing existed to keep cattle out. Exclusion of sensitive areas common in all permits.
31	Page 51. I see none of the mentioned DNR or BLM holdings. Why? Steven Herman	DNR is shaded light red on the map. No BLM property is adjacent to unit.
32	Page 53. How does grazing here "improve forage for wintering mule deer"? Good to see "songbird" spelled correctly. Steven Herman	See response to #17 for grazing benefits.
33	Page 54. If these BLM inholdings are grazed, are they also well fenced to exclude cattle from the WLA land? Are they grazed? Steven Herman	The BLM parcels are grazed and incorporated within WDFW pastures.
34	Page 56. "song birds"? It's one word! The bird list is as mysterious as most in this document are. How does this management for commercial activities fit into the WDFW mission? Steven Herman	Comment noted. WDFW Mission: <i>The mission of WDFW is to preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and <u>commercial</u> opportunities.</i>
35	Page 58. Lovely photograph. But "flora and fauna species"? How about plant and animal species? Steven Herman	Comment noted.
36	Page 59. This species list is as pathetic as most -s few token animals off the top of someone's head, but no details on plants. How would grazing "improve mule deer forage"? The excellent photo is of a WESTERN Meadowlark. Steven Herman	See response #17 for grazing benefits.

37	<p>Page 60. Horse Spring Coulee map. Why do some of these maps have in their legends keys to BLM and DNR lands when there are none present on the area mapped?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted. Standard legends are used for all maps.</p>
38	<p>Page 62. Here again we have grazing to "improve mule deer forage". Where pray where are data to support this assertion? This is a recurring theme in this document and my question requires and answer. Please.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>See response #17 for grazing benefits.</p>
39	<p>Page 63. Chiliwist Unit map. Is this area grazed?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Yes, this unit has a grazing permit.</p>
40	<p>Page 65. Is streamflow influenced at all by the removal of water for irrigation? If so, that goes in the last paragraph here.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
41	<p>Page 66. Really, part of WDFW's mission is "to provide commercial opportunities"? It's nice to see herps mentioned here, but to the near exclusion of birds and mammals, plants? How could it be that "inclusive species lists" are not yet available" on a WLA whose origins go back nearly 80 years? The Sinlahekin list is respectable but in many cases highly speculative. I am finding no support for the claim here that Appendix F contains "Documented species occurrence lists." What am I missing?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The compiling of species lists for each unit is a goal for each wildlife area (pg. 114 in Appendix A, 2D)</p> <p>The Sinlahekin species list is meant to act as a substitute for those units yet to have comprehensive lists. Once lists are developed, they will be added to the website.</p>
42	<p>Page 67. Table 1. English, not "common" names, and standard, not "scientific" names! And every word in each English name (except the second half of one hyphenated) should be capitalized. Sad that these lists don't incorporate natural history from</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

	<p>on-site observers. These lists could have been confected from regional lists and put together solely at a desk somewhere.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	
43	<p>Page 71. "grazing to promote 'leader' growth." This myth has been dead for nearly a quarter century. Go to Google Scholar and type Joy Belsky. And let me know what you find relative to my contention. "subspecies is not hyphenated .Mule deer also have white undertails!</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	Comment noted.
44	<p>Page 72. What management actions have "improved conditions" here?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	Fuels reduction (commercial and non-commercial thinning), prescribed burning and weed control.
45	<p>Page 73. Clicking on the mule deer URL did not take me anywhere productive. Does it work for you?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	Link corrected.
46	<p>Page 74. All the "statewide goals for large game mammals" are the same or similar. Why reiterate them with every species? Why are Mountain Goats detailed here if they "don't occur on any of these Wildlife areas?"</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Mountain goats have historically used the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, possibly the Similkameen-Chopaka Unit and may inhabit these units in the future.</p>
47	<p>Page 75. Again, little specific data: "Cougars could occur on any of the wildlife area units," Must this be mostly guesswork?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	Many units are relatively new and cougars have not been observed to date.
48	<p>Page 76. Sharp-tailed grouse is not mentioned under "Upland Game Birds!" on p. 76. While it is not purposefully hunted, it still falls under the rubric of "upland game bird". In fact, of course, it is hunted "accidentally", given that upland bird hunting is</p>	<p>Upland game birds in this section refer to those <u>hunted</u> species.</p> <p>WDFW's mission is not limited to native species – see response #34.</p>

	<p>allowed within its small range. Why does this practice persist? And again, if the Department's mission is limited to "native" animals, Gray Partridge doesn't qualify.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	
49	<p>Page 77. "SGCN, PHS"? Again, it would be helpful to know more about "shrubsteppe restoration". No mention that allowing upland bird hunting in Sharptail range risks the tiny remnant populations.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>SGCN and PHS are defined on page 66 of the plan. Further detail is provided in the framework document, see comment # 3.</p>
50	<p>Page 78. species name in standard name should not be capitalized (map). The standard name of Western Gray squirrel is misspelled. So suddenly there are in text literature citations in the Western Gray Squirrel account. Why not in other species accounts? "Confirmed sightings have been documented"? If they're confirmed aren't they already documented? I'm trying to imagine a Western Gray Squirrel "colliding" with a vehicle" I think they just get run over. "Burns of lower intensity" kill young oaks.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Fire is a natural disturbance removed from the landscape as we suppressed a century of wildfires. It's a natural part of this ecosystem WDFW would like to utilize for the benefit of numerous species.</p>
51	<p>Page 79. Species part of Western Gray Squirrel standard name should not be capitalized, but all three parts of the English name should be.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
52	<p>Page 80. IN text citations again. Laudable to be sure, but why this change of format?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
53	<p>Page 81. And now we have the standard format of standard names following English names. Why not earlier in this document? I'm not seeing a clear statement describing native non-game fish present in the WLA's. Why?</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Native, non-game fish can be within the Sinlahekin fish list linked to on pg. 129, website: http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/sinlahekin/</p>

	Steven Herman	The plan has been revised to include non-game fish.
54	Page 84. Map 21. What is the standard name for Pygmy W Steven Herman hitefish?	<i>Prosopium coulteri</i>
55	Page 85. As with some game birds, some fish "managed" by the Department fall outside the "native" definition to which the Department claims early in this document to be restricted. Could I have an explanation? Steven Herman	Consistent with WDFW's mission, the agency manages both native and non-native species.
56	Page 86. Where are the descriptions of the Ecological Integrity Assessment and Ecological Integrity Monitoring programs? Again, what definition of Ecological Integrity applies to Department lands? (I know now that the definition -and a decent one- pops up later in the document; it should appear on the first page, with identification of source.) Why not? Steven Herman	See comment #3 above.
57	Page 87. Good definition of Ecological integrity! But where did it come from? The DNR url doesn't work for me. Steven Herman	Comment noted.
58	Page 88. By Dwarf Sagebrush do you mean Low Sagebrush, or is this a legitimate species? If it is, what is its standard name? Steven Herman	The Ecological System was removed from plan.
59	Page 89. WHCWG 2012? The Connectivity Working Group displays the kind of broad representation that should be evident in the creation of this plan! First mention of Tiger Salamander? "Wildlife-unfriendly fencing"? What	Comment noted.

	fencing is wildlife-friendly? (yes, i know about the barbless lower strand, but that's hardly friendly to anything that hangs up on Steven Herman	
60	Page 90. Where is the literature support for the statements about fire regimes, insects, and pathogens? Steven Herman	Fire regime, see: Schellhaas studies on pg. 123.
61	Page 94. Standard name should follow English name and English name, Lady Slipper, should be captialized. Steven Herman	Comment noted.
62	Page 94. Are there examples of successful weed control with chemicals? Good to see standard names here. Steven Herman	Yes. Certain weeds have no effective biological agent for control. Many invasive plant species are controlled via herbicides.
63	Page 95. Quantitative as well as qualitative (before and after photos) data supporting the claim of successful shrubsteppe restoration would be very useful here, because this kind of restoration has been evasive over the extent of shrubsteppe habitats in the American West. Where are the quantitative dat supporting the claim of success relative to burning shrubsteppe? Pygmy Nuthatch? 100 acres restored in 25 years? That's all? Steven Herman	See response to comment #9. See response to comment #7. The pygmy nuthatch inhabits those ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests restoration efforts target to improve.
64	Page 98. How does the persistence of livestock grazing in 27% of these habitats affect the potential for climate change degradation? Steven Herman	Adaptive management implemented to address potential climate change effects.
65	Page 99. Should be "Bighorn Sheep". Steven Herman	Comment noted.

66	<p>Page 99. No need to say "Hungarian", "chuckar" misspelled. All English names should be capitalized! I don't see any mention of expanding access in future. Why?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>See Appendix A, statewide goal #3.</p>
67	<p>Page 100. Protection of shrubsteppe habitats has not included the exclusion of cattle in many WLA's. Cattle continue to degrade these landscapes today. Why?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>See response to comment #17.</p>
68	<p>Page 101. Birdwatching became a single word decades ago, and this activity is most appropriately called "birding" in the 21st century. And, while Sharptails may not be hunted, they may be mistaken for other hunted species, including hen pheasants. Why not close all Sharptail habitats to Upland Bird hunting?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Various areas noted for presence of sharp-tailed grouse.</p>
69	<p>Page 103. Just what is an "unauthorized" vehicle? How might I identify one?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Unauthorized vehicle is any non-WDFW vehicle or one not associated with agency business (volunteer, ag leasee or grazing permittee).</p>
70	<p>Page 105. is the stewardship agreement with BLM complete yet? How does it treat grazing? How does grazing of privately owned cattle on over 8000 acres of these WLA's serve wildlife? This is one of my major concerns. And remember, that myth about "leader growth" is as valid as the most recent sasquatch sighting!</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>The stewardship agreement with BLM is currently in the NEPA process.</p> <p>See response to comment #17.</p>
71	<p>Page 106. The "justifications" for agricultural leases are weak and little supported. "Numerous species of ducks"? I think not. "Succulent forage for deer" ? Huh? And I see here not even an</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>See response to comment #17.</p>

	attempt at justifying the abusive grazing! Please supply one. Steven Herman	
72	Page 107. 218 miles of fencing? That's enough to frame the freeway from Seattle to Ellensburg! Extraordinary! How much of this is internal fencing and what effect does this fencing have on wildlife? These comments supplement some made earlier. And please provide more detail on the "cooperative maintenance". Steven Herman	The majority is boundary fence. Fences are constructed with smooth wire on bottom to help with crossing and tabs are placed on some segments where sharp-tailed grouse are present. Fences associated with grazing permits are maintained by permittee. Shared boundary fences are maintained 50/50 in some areas.
73	Page 108. Adaptive management/monitoring section needs considerable more detail. How will monitoring be done? What will be monitored and how? What are "associated performance measures"? Have you an example of this method having been used elsewhere on Department lands? Steven Herman	Please see the framework (reference #3) for more information on adaptive management and monitoring: http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/ An EIM plan will be developed and added to the management plan. Other things that will be monitored, and associated performance objectives, are already stated in Appendix. A.
74	Page 109. Are these just "references" or are they "References cited". A very modest list, in any case, for a document like this. Certainly much in the document begs for additional support from the scientific literature. Steven Herman	Comment noted.
75	Page 112. Four years just to establish goals? Far too long. What's the story on the riparian fencing need? Too little, too slow Steven Herman	Establishing baseline biotic integrity requires in-field data collection, which will take time when conducted over a large landscape. Our intent was to use that baseline, WDFW priorities and capacity to then develop EI goals. Continued improvement, which includes additional riparian fences, is being made in regards to our grazing permits.
76	Page 113. Much that is detailed here is not mentioned in previous pages. What is the	The feedlot is a 50-acre area where concentrated cattle numbers significantly impacted the site before acquisition.

	"feedlot"? Steven Herman	
77	Page 116. Why not consider restricting upland bird hunting on areas where Sharptail recovery is planned? A few errant shots could cut deeply into this miniscule population. Steven Herman	In an ideal world, that would be considered. In fact, we have had this discussion on numerous occasions. It isn't just the issue of killing sharp-tailed grouse, but also the issue of disturbance to key times of year when habitat is limited. The problem is the political support we have for these areas (already small in some areas of Okanogan County) may further dry up if we add more restrictions. This is why we have placed all the sharp-tailed grouse and sage-grouse signs on our wildlife areas. The goal is to educate the hunters and minimize the risk as much as possible. Another approach, which is used in the lower West Foster Creek area is to have a local closure to everyone to keep people from disturbing and/or shooting the birds in areas that they frequent. A local closure can be small and target a specific area, like the valley along Scotch Creek. In any case, our past experience with radio-marked birds has shown that grouse are not very likely to be shot.
78	Page 117. Canada. not, please not, "Canadian" Geese! Steven Herman	Correction made.
79	Page 119. grazing leases? Steven Herman	Not sure what is requested
80	Page 120. I am pleased to see here at least oblique acknowledgment that grazing is destructive to Sharptail habitat. Getting cows off Sharptail habitat should be very high priority. But the effort here outlined to EXPAND grazing in Sharptail habitat is disturbing to say the least; I will want detail on this terrible idea. The Sharptail Recovery Plan makes the incompatibility of Sharptails and grazing is very,very clear. Why wasn't this prospect mention and described earlier in this "plan"? Steven Herman	This pertains to a recent request by a nearby landowner who asked about the possibility. WDFW is in the process of consulting with WDFW staff and district team to see if we can provide an opportunity.
81	Page 121. Center pivots on WLA's? Terrible idea!	Results in water efficiency at the leasee's expense.

	Steven Herman	
82	Page 123. Forest Plan. Much of this has already been articulated. Repetitious indeed. the negative effects of cattle grazing on Aspen reproduction need to be described and justified where grazing occurs. Steven Herman	Comment noted.
83	Page 124. Forest Plan Map. What is the "Douglas Fir Beetle"? Steven Herman	<i>Dendroctonus pseudotsugae</i>
84	Page 125. Forest Plan. I see it here! but the standard name should be on the map. Steven Herman	Map utilized from a DNR publication
85	Page 126. Forest Plan. Do you mean tree mortality? Steven Herman	Yes.
86	Page 126. Forest Plan. Yes, revenues! And these come from without as well as within Okanogan County. Which is another reason the Advisory Committee should be expanded. Steven Herman	Noted. See response to comment #1.
87	Page 126. Forest Plan. Again, a detailed justification of the grazing leases is needed in this document. It is not enough to blithely say, "It continues to be an integral part of conservation management..." No! Steven Herman	See response to comment #17.
88	Page 128. Forest Plan. Are aspen suckers being eaten by cattle anywhere on these lands. On Hart Mountain NWR cattle prevented aspen reproduction for decades. Aspen flourished following the removal of cattle in the early nineties. Steven Herman	No. Many areas where aspen are present are excluded from cattle. Other areas need additional fencing which is addressed in Appendix A.

89	<p>Page 130. Forest Plan. If there is a discussion of the negative effects (or any effects of grazing on forest landscapes her), I've missed it. Please direct me to it or admit it doesn't exist. I see a bit about access and "rest"; why would these lands need rest from grazing?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>It is standard practice to allow an area which has recently burned (prescribed or otherwise) to recover at least 2 growing seasons before allowing grazing to continue.</p>
90	<p>Page 132. Forest Plan. How many acres of the aspens are grazed, and what is the status of aspen reproduction there?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Amount of acreage would need to be analyzed and calculated using GIS. Aspen reproduction is occurring.</p>
91	<p>Page 133. Forest Plan. pressure from browse" By what?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Language corrected.</p>
92	<p>Page 135. Forest Plan. Is there additional information on the Douglas-fir tussock Moth "infestation"? This native insect does not often effect tree mortality. Has this "infestation" been studied, monitored for the native nuclearhydrosis virus that typically controls the insect? Were any of these lands sprayed with DDT in the massive (and useless) spraying in 1974? See Herman and Bulger, Wildlife Monograph 69.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>For more info on the tussock moth infestation Google: Palmer Mountain Tussock Moth EA. An assessment completed by the BLM in 2009.</p> <p>We have no records of DDT being sprayed.</p>
93	<p>Page 139. Weed Management Plan. What does "managing livestock use" mean here?</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Incorporating known weed concerns within the grazing plan for a specific permit and mitigating for potential impacts.</p>
94	<p>Page 140. Weed Management Plan. Cattle spread weeds, but, oddly, that subject is not treated here under Heavy use and Disturbed Areas. It needs to be discussed.</p> <p>Steven Herman</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
95	<p>Page 142. Weed Management Plan. Another good example of the benefits of biological control. Are</p>	<p>See response to comment #8.</p>

	there data on effectiveness here? Steven Herman	
96	Page 143. Red-neckED Grebe. All English names need to be capitalized. How many Preble's Shrews have been documented? Steven Herman	Correction made. Occurrences of Preble's shrew is unknown. Need further surveys to determine.
97	Page 144. Standard names should be included in this table. Steven Herman	Comment noted.
98	Page 150. Cultural Resources Summary. Much repetition here. and why not a "Natural History History" section? The Okanogan Valley (on both sides of the international border) was the subject of much early work, exploratory and otherwise. Steven Herman	The cultural resources summary was condensed for the final plan, do reduce repetition.
99	Page 154. FEWER than.. And "sitting PRESIDENT..." Steven Herman	Edited.
100	Page 155. RESIDENTS", not "residences". Steven Herman	Edited.
	Comments regarding Appendix I Steven Herman	This appendix has been removed from the document (USFWS consultations).
101	Page 199. Water Access Site Inventory. access misspelled Steven Herman	Corrected.
102	Page 202. If this is also an access site, perhaps it should be so labeled. Steven Herman	Corrected.
103	Page 204. Where are these materials? Steven Herman	The summary of public process will be completed after SEPA review is complete.
104	Create more drawing opportunities (quality buck) in wildlife areas due to point creep in the other areas. 1 or 2 permits is not helping people get the chance at getting drawn.	In general there is no way to alleviate the difficulty in drawing high demand special permits by creating more hunts, since we'd have to reduce the permits in an existing hunt to create a new one; it's still the same number of hunters chasing the same number of deer. On the other hand, we may

	Mitchell Dean	explore creating some other limited access opportunities on wildlife area similar to what we have done on the Eder Unit in GMU 204.
105	Your department does a pretty good job of managing wildlife land, and I support your efforts! Ed McConnell	Thank You.
106	If you are taking properties from the tax base, you are crippling the county by eliminating taxes for us to operate. David Mendelsohn	WDFW pays counties In Lieu of Taxes in place of property taxes. Recent payments have been lower due to legislative action reducing what's owed to counties. The Scotch Creek and Sinlahekin Wildlife Areas advocate paying our fair share to Okanogan County. In addition WDFW Lands division employees 11 employees that live in the local community and spend locally. The budget for which these 11 work under, exceeds 1 million dollars of which a majority is spent locally. WDFW also develops multiple small works contracts which are bid on competitively by local contractors, such as harvest contracts and fencing contracts.
107	I lead two Washington Ornithological Society Trips to Scotch Creek every winter to observe Sharp-tailed Grouse in the Water Birch along the creek. One is a scout trip of 4-8 bird watchers, the other is a field trip of 18. We visit area venues and donate free seed to folks with bird feeders. Please continue to conserve our public lands to conserve habitat for Sharp-tailed Grouse. Thank you, Shep Thorp, VMD	Noted. Thank You.
108	I am George Joyner, a member of the Washington State chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society. I am writing to encourage you to allow the RGS to repair or replace the water guzzlers that were damaged in the Sinlahekin and Scotch Creek fires of late. These guzzlers benefit every species of small wildlife and birds in these areas by providing a source of drinking water during the hot months. The RGS provides partial funds and all the labor of	Guzzlers on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area damaged during the 2015 wildfires will be replaced in the Spring of 2017.

	<p>placing and repairing these vital wildlife resources.</p> <p>Please include the guzzlers in any Sinlahekin management plan you produce and approve. The wildlife of Washington's forest are stressed enough as is and they need a break. These guzzlers provide just that.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, George Joyner</p>	
109	<p>My one comment is concern over increase in future wildfire and weeds. I noticed quite a bit of cheatgrass and some other annual non-native grasses today at Scotch Creek. Parts of Oregon and Idaho have fallen in to the cycle of cheatgrass - fire - more cheatgrass - more fire. I don't think cheatgrass and other invasives are taking over Scotch Creek at this point in time. But they could in the future. I read through the "Weed Management" appendix - so obviously WDFW is aware of this challenge. I did see the planted sagebrush on the bench to the northwest of the parking lot, and that the young sagebrush were coming up pretty good. And I understand the success of any future plantings may be based on luck (i.e. that sagebrush plantings occur during wet years). But I think continued restoration and aggressive action to tackle the weed problem is key - with climate change the fire season window has and will continue to lengthen. And re-occurring fires could exacerbate the weed problem and further degrade sagebrush-habitat. Maybe using tools not often considered - like grazing in the spring to reduce cheatgrass and</p>	<p>WDFW staffs on both the Sinlahekin and Scotch Creek have the same concern over the invasion of cheatgrass and invasive noxious weeds, and work to address the issues as they arise. During fire events staff try and work with Incident management teams to provide logistics in an attempt to minimize this potential. Staffs spend a large part of the field season performing week control activities and work to coordinate efforts with other entities.</p>

	<p>overall fuel loads - could be a tool to combat weeds and reduce fire risks.</p> <p>Thanks for your time.</p> <p>Ryan Niemeyer</p>	
110	<p>Page 49. Would be clearer if this read as - Pittman-Robertson, USFWS; Washington State RCO, WWRP</p> <p>David Leonard, USFWS</p>	Corrected in all unit descriptions.
111	<p>See previous comment related to clarity and would it be possible to include the percent funding from each entity? Given that USFWS provided 94% of the funding for this parcel, it would be difficult for the public to argue against its primary purpose.</p> <p>David Leonard, USFWS</p>	We will consider to include in future wildlife area plans.
112	<p>Page 50. Need to provide a narrative which includes all the species for which the funds were provided.</p> <p>David Leonard, USFWS</p>	USFWS covered species will be added in each unit description.
113	<p>Page 50. Need more information to judge whether this is a compatible use. Given that this property was meant to provide habitat for large carnivores this seems to be inviting conflict.</p> <p>David Leonard, USFWS</p>	At the time of acquisition, very little fencing existed to exclude cattle from surrounding grazing programs, public and private. Staff constructed fences to address potential impacts to Buzzard Lake and surrounding wetlands. A permit was drafted to address incoming cattle to the property to better manage surrounding livestock. WDFW will continue to improve fencing on this unit to address cattle use.
114	<p>Page 50. Wildlife friendly fencing? The primary purpose of this parcel is wildlife conservation not human use and future development needs to be discussed.</p> <p>David Leonard, USFWS</p>	This area was already a popular recreation destination when purchased. The fencing and other improvements were to keep users localized in one location rather than impacting a larger area. The unit is located at the intersection of 3 major ATV routes. Not providing a primitive stop for the recreating public would have produced significantly more resource damage.
115	<p>Page 53. Potentially incompatible. Need to see</p>	A grazing permit and plan were drafted for this unit prior to WDFW

	the grazing plan. David Leonard, USFWS	ownership as part of the acquisition.
116	Page 53. Mule deer are supposed to be for large carnivores. David Leonard, USFWS	Text edited.
117	Page 56. As per the original proposal for E-46 HL-2, these lands were purchased for wide-ranging carnivores. David Leonard, USFWS	Text edited.
118	Page 56. Potentially at odds with purpose of the grant. David Leonard, USFWS	Text edited.
119	Page 66. Would be appropriate to include a narrative regarding the east-west wildlife movement corridor for rare, wide-ranging carnivores as well as north-south movement corridors as per the original Section 6 grant proposals. David Leonard, USFWS	Text added.
120	Page 69. Lynx and Wolverine are included in the original Section 6 proposals. David Leonard, USFWS	Lynx and wolverine species information included in the final plan.
121	Page 71. Length of narratives for games species vs. diversity species may provide a slanted view of the purpose of these lands. David Leonard, USFWS	Comment noted. USFWS covered species information added additional species in the Diversity (non-game) section.
122	Page 77. Wolves, Grizzly Bear, Lynx, Wolverine, Fisher? David Leonard, USFWS	A description of wolves, grizzly, lynx and wolverine have been added to the Diversity Species narrative. Fisher was not identified as a priority species in the Section 6 grant narratives.
123	Page 89. No mention of wide-ranging carnivores. David Leonard, USFWS	Text added.
124	Page 97. An assessments for wide-ranging carnivores - wolverine?	Lynx: none of their critical habitat falls on WDFW property as the wildlife areas are located in drier, lower elevation habitats less suitable for lynx. As a

	David Leonard, USFWS	result, no lynx are expected to reside permanently on the wildlife areas. Wolverine: wolverine habitat across the continent is tightly correlated with areas that retain a significant snowpack well into spring (mid-May). In Washington this limits them to our higher elevation landscapes. As a result, no wolverines are expected to reside permanently on the wildlife areas.
125	Page 98. Less snow pack? David Leonard, USFWS	Noted. Implied by lowered stream flows, increased risk of fire, etc.
126	Page 99. Maybe include a narrative describing that some units / parcels were purchased for the conservation of wide-ranging carnivores and that in these areas human activities are limited. Could include as an additional column in Table 9. Restrictions related to this need to be identified in Table 9. David Leonard, USFWS	Wildlife area plan objectives (Appendix A) recognize species and management activities to be consistent with the original Section 6 grant purpose.
127	Page 104. Include a table which summarizes this information. David Leonard, USFWS	Comment noted. The wildlife area overview section includes a summary of funding sources per each unit.
128	Page 104. This is not accurate. Section 7 only applies to federal agencies; WDFW does not have any Section 7 obligations. David Leonard, USFWS	This section and the corresponding appendix was removed.
129	Page 105. See previous comments re. carnivores. David Leonard, USFWS	Comment noted.
130	Page 114. Maybe include species for which Section 6 properties were purchased to protect? David Leonard, USFWS	See response to comment #124, text has been added in the plan to account for large carnivores. The Diversity Division selects SGCN species to focus on for surveys each year; they tend to focus on species that have a lack of occurrence information documented on the wildlife area.
131	Page 115. and the large carnivores that prey on them? David Leonard, USFWS	Noted.
132	Page 116. This should not be an issue on lands purchased for wolves, i.e., livestock should not be grazed on these parcels.	This is a statewide goal directly from the WDFW wolf conservation and management plan. This goal relates to those units where there are current grazing permits.

	David Leonard, USFWS	
133	Page 117. Building infrastructure that facilitates human use should not be priority on lands purchased with Section 6 funds. David Leonard, USFWS	By not providing primitive facilities in high use areas may negatively affect the surrounding resources by leaving the option of dispersed uses over a larger landscape.
134	Page 120. Building infrastructure that facilitates human use should not be priority on lands purchased with Section 6 funds. David Leonard, USFWS	See above, #133.
135	Page 120. This would be great language to include for wolves ect. David Leonard, USFWS	WDFW has identified a list of potential wolf-livestock conflict prevention measures already used in some areas. These will be evaluated and applied in the future where appropriate on WDFW lands including the Scotch Creek and Sinlahekin Wildlife Areas.
136	Page 122. As appropriate. David Leonard, USFWS	Noted.
137	The table listing noxious weeds present, treated acres, etc is incorrect and does not accurately portray the classification of noxious weeds and acres present on the WLA's. Anna Lyon, Okanogan County Noxious Weed Control Board (OCNWCB)	The table was edited to address this concern.
138	Bladder Senna and Common Mullein are listed on the above referenced table but are not included in the 2016 or 2017 Noxious Weed List. It should be noted that Bladder senna was planted previously by WDFW personnel to provide forage for deer. It has escaped the planting site and is invading nearby habitats. Anna Lyon - OCNWCB	These two weeds are priorities for certain WDFW properties; which may differ from county and state lists/priorities. Correct - Bladder senna was planted by former agency staff on the Sinlahekin Unit for an alternative browse for deer. Current staff is working to eradicate this and other species planted for the same purpose.
139	Because all activities on WDFW lands have the potential to spread or introduce noxious weeds, the Weed Management Plan should be referred to	Edits completed.

	<p>in each activity section, including the Forest Management Plan.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	
140	<p>Each unit has its own characteristics, and its own noxious weed control issues. These issues should be noted in the descriptions of the areas to increase public awareness, and establish WDFW's commitment to controlling these weeds.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>Noted. Noxious weed control on these 14 units is number one, if not the top priorities for managing these wildlife areas.</p>
141	<p>Prevention is surely the best management tool for noxious weeds, and WDFW should make it a priority to plant native species when doing site restoration, or providing habitat and forage to the wildlife on its lands.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>The Scotch Creek and Sinlahekin Wildlife Areas currently use only native species of grasses, forbs and shrubs for restoration efforts. These species are commonly specific bio-types, seed collected and grown out from plants associated with a specific site.</p>
142	<p>OCNWCB would like to see WDFW stand with its Plan and fund control efforts that are performed in a coordinated manner with Okanogan County Coordinated Weed Management Area partners, including BLM, DNR, USFS and OCNWCB.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>WDFW has and will continue to participate in the Coordinated Weed Management Area process and fund weed control efforts on WDFW properties that affect adjacent federal, state, and private properties.</p>
143	<p>Fire management is noted in this document and WDFW is dependent on outside entities for its fire suppression needs. Activities associated with fire suppression, including on site control, have the potential to spread noxious weeds into newly disturbed areas. OCNWCB recommends that WDFW require a noxious weed wash station on every fire that requires out of county personnel or equipment. This will assist in prevention measures and limit spread of noxious weeds not already present in the county.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>Noted. The feasibility of a wash station for fire suppression equipment would need to be discussed with the DNR. The wildlife areas will support efforts to address this issue.</p>
144	<p>Funding will always be an issue in addressing</p>	<p>Noted. Funds to control noxious weeds are a part of a biennial budget.</p>

	<p>WDFW weed control efforts. Funds allocated during the purchase of properties are not sufficient to meet the goals of WDFW. The abundance of recreational activities on WDFW lands leads to the need for constant vigilance against newly invading or spread of existing species of noxious weeds. Funds must be available on an annual basis to ensure compliance with RCW 17.10 and control the required noxious weeds.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>Supplemental funding was made available to control weeds within recent burned areas from the 2014 and 2015 wildfires. Additional funds from Agricultural Lease fees and Grazing Permit fees are utilized each year to purchase herbicides to control weeds.</p>
145	<p>There is no mention of an Early Detection, Rapid Response processes or awareness of the need for such processes.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
146	<p>WAC 16-750 provides an annually updated list of noxious weeds. Class A noxious weeds are required to be eradicated. Known infestations of Class A noxious weeds on these WLA's are limited to Mirabilis. However, another Class A noxious weed (Spurge flax) is present in several areas in close proximity to these WLA's.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>Noted and referenced in the plan. Eradicating Mirabilis is a very high priority. WDFW will continue to work with the OCNWCB to survey for spurge flax on those units close to know infestations.</p>
147	<p>Class B and C weeds designated for control, by WAC 16-750 and OCNWCB, are also required control. Control for these species means to eliminate spread of all propagative parts. Known infestations occur of Leafy spurge, Hoary alyssum, Musk thistle, Scotch thistle, Plumeless thistle, and Rush skeletonweed. These species, and other designated species, must be controlled to prevent additional spread and funding must be allocated to ensure control to the extent of RCW 17.10.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

148	<p>Weeds that are not designated, or required to be controlled, are also present on these WLA's, including access sites, and campgrounds. WDFW needs to improve the condition of these areas and prevent the spread of these noxious weeds from infested sites to surrounding areas and across the state. To further this goal, educational information should be posted at all public area kiosks, and noxious weed treatments should occur to eliminate accidental transfer of plants, seeds and propagative parts.</p> <p>Anna Lyon - OCNWCB</p>	<p>Noted. WDFW will work with the OCNWCB to produce educational information to best suit recreational sites in regard to noxious weed awareness.</p>
149	<p>Re: DNS 16-071, Scotch Creek and Sinlahekin Wildlife Areas Management Plan</p> <p>The following paragraph has been copied from your statement:</p> <p>"Proposed uses include sharp-tailed grouse protection and enhancement; recreation and wildlife conservation; protection and restoration of shrub-steppe, forest and riparian habitat. There are 10 agriculture leases and 13 grazing leases. The leases provide food and cover for wildlife and as well as revenue. Under the direction of the new plan, management activities will remain as they have over the past 10 years"</p> <p>I have read this paragraph several times, and am left with questions. What exactly is meant by 'recreation and wildlife conservation' in this statement? I understand the sharp-tailed grouse issue.</p> <p>Are the grazing and agricultural leases in jeopardy? I have no issues with either; just want to know if they will remain as they are; since they were mentioned.</p>	<p>Recreation and wildlife conservation' – recreation refers to hunting, fishing, hiking, etc. and the wildlife area's goal to maintain and protect those opportunities for future generations. Wildlife conservation is similar in that the Scotch Creek and Sinlahekin wildlife areas will continue to “. . .preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems . . . “ as stated in WDFW's mission.</p> <p>No, grazing permits and agricultural leases are not currently in jeopardy. Scotch Creek and Sinlahekin wildlife areas are continuing to improve both types of agreements to benefit local citizens, agency interests and a broad array of species.</p> <p>Big game hunting will still be made available. Certain units such as the Charles and Mary Eder Unit have a permit-only hunt. WDFW is currently working with the USFWS to determine if hunting will continue to be compatible within certain USFWS-funded lands on both wildlife areas.</p> <p>This sentence refers to the general management of these two wildlife areas will remain as it has over the previous decade. The Scotch Creek and Sinlahekin wildlife areas recognize changes in policy, strategy and science and employ and adaptive management approach when necessary. However our general approach to management will remain as it has.</p>

Will there still be big game hunting? I am a hunter (big game) and wonder if this will remain open for hunting?

I have noted that the final sentence in this paragraph states that 'management activities will remain as they have for the past 10 years'. So, what exactly are the changes? Simply what is stated in the first sentence?

I appreciate the clarification.

Cynthia A. Grabeel