



Klickitat Wildlife Area 2012 Management Plan Update

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Land Management Summary

This is an update to the 2006 Klickitat Wildlife Area Management Plan that provides management direction for this Wildlife Area. 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. The 2006 Klickitat Wildlife Area Management Plan may be viewed online at:



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

The Klickitat Wildlife Area is comprised of several units. Most of the units share similar elements in habitat and recreational values, but have different management priorities according to the specific character of the unit location. The largest unit, the Soda Springs Unit, is approximately 13,000 acres in size and is managed primarily as a deer winter range. It also provides access to the Klickitat River for steelhead and salmon fishing and supports a strong population of wild turkeys. Deer and turkey hunting are the primary recreational uses of this unit. Western gray squirrels (Washington State threatened species) are also present and are a priority species for management. Land purchases for the Soda Springs Unit began in 1948 and continued into the 1990’s. The Mineral Springs Unit, Dillacort Canyon Unit, Fisher Hill Unit, and other smaller parcels are located in the Klickitat River Canyon and serve to protect fish habitat and provide access for fishing. They are distributed downstream from the Soda Springs Unit almost to the mouth of the Klickitat River. Collectively these units encompass more than 800 acres. They also offer limited access for turkey and deer hunting. The Mineral Springs Unit features an old building that has been retained by WDFW as an important communal roosting site for Vaux’s swifts. The Goldendale

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Hatchery Unit is 240 acres in size (excluding the hatchery facilities) and has been managed as a pheasant release site and for trout fishing. The Sondino Unit, on the plateau adjacent to the Columbia River, now totals approximately 211 acres. This unit is a conservation area managed specifically for western pond turtles, which are a Washington State endangered species. Purchases of parcels for this unit began in 1992 and continue to the present. A new unit, the Swale Creek Unit, was added in 2007. This 516-acre unit straddles the Klickitat Trail, which is owned and managed by Washington State Parks. It was established to furnish additional upland bird hunting opportunities and to maintain streamside and upland habitat for fish and wildlife.

Plans are updated biennially 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 accomplishments for 2010 and 2011, new issues, new land management strategies, and performance measures for 2012 and 2013.

Updates/Changes

A wildfire fuels reduction project will be implemented on the Soda Springs Unit in spring 2012. Understory vegetation and dead wood will be cut and chipped or left intact on the ground, to reduce the volume of ladder fuels near the roads where fires are most likely to start. Larger pieces of wood pose less of a hazard, and can be left on the ground to furnish habitat and nutrients for plants and small animals. The project has additional benefits by opening up the understory near the roads and the habitat for western gray squirrels will be improved. Also, if a wildfire occurs in this area, the ability of crews to safely contain the fire at the roads will be enhanced. WDFW and Department of Natural Resources staff will collaborate to develop a more extensive fuels reduction project for the Soda Springs Unit in the future. The project is expected to require several years to complete, but will go far to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Other similar projects have been proposed and partially accomplished on the Soda Springs Unit since 2007. This one differs in that the project has been reviewed by U S Fish & Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service under Section 7 (ESA consultation), and is approved for action this spring using existing Wildlife Area federal funding. This reduces the time needed to secure resources used in the work, which in turn allows more attention to be focused on producing measurable results on the ground.

A new fish capture and research facility on the Fisher Hill Unit is nearly complete. The primary purpose of the facility is to capture more fish to be used in the artificial production of spring Chinook salmon and steelhead at the Klickitat Fish Hatchery. Visitors may access this project site via an ungated road off the Fisher Hill Road. A gated road, which is closer to the Fisher Hill Road Bridge across the Klickitat River, is for Yakama tribal use only.

An agricultural lease has been drafted for the Goldendale Hatchery Unit and is expected to be available for bidding spring 2012. Wheat and grass hay are to be grown on a total of 105.6 acres of arable land under a sharecrop agreement. This is expected to furnish food and cover for pheasants. Pheasants are released on the property for public hunting each fall. While the existing vegetation in the old fields offers cover for the birds, the food resource is thought to be meager and weeds comprise a major component of the plant growth. Returning the fields to cultivation will help to reduce the weed issue on the Hatchery Unit.

In 2011 the agricultural lease on the Soda Springs Unit was renewed. A total of 181 acres are under cultivation for alfalfa and wheat production. These fields are utilized by deer and turkeys as well as elk, and serve to attract animals onto the state land, thereby relieving wildlife feeding activity on private properties nearby.

New Issues

A weed species that had not previously been identified as a significant problem was discovered to have established fairly extensive patches on three units of the Klickitat Wildlife Area. Everlasting peas are present on the Soda Springs Unit, Mineral Springs Unit, and Sondino Unit. This plant is more common farther west, particularly in the Columbia River Gorge, but extended wet and cool weather during springs 2010-11 may have favored range expansion. Where it is established, everlasting peas can form thick mats of spreading stems and leaves which cover other plants and objects up to four feet high. This is a special concern on the Sondino Unit, where the threat is to rare plants as well as common desirable natives.

In summer 2011, Department of Natural Resources transferred administration of two grazing permits in the Klickitat River Canyon to WDFW. Both permits are on the Fisher Hill Unit of the Klickitat Wildlife Area. This property was originally held by Department of Fisheries, which had no system for managing grazing. Department of Natural Resources agreed to take on this task in 1964. Later, Department of Fisheries merged with Department of Wildlife to become a single agency, and the property came under management responsibility of the Klickitat Wildlife Area. However, DNR continued to administer the two permits until last year. WDFW is evaluating the health of the range to determine whether the current use is compatible with fish and wildlife values.

Maintenance on Wildlife Area fences has fallen behind due to a lack of staffing during the critical period following winter and before livestock are turned out on the range. Fences are usually in their worst condition after winter due to trees falling on them and people cutting the fences to retrieve game. Some fence structures, especially corner posts, need replacing periodically. Hiring of field personnel would meet this need to accomplish fence repairs.

Major Stewardship Accomplishments

Road improvement projects and maintenance are continuing as part of an overall objective of making the Wildlife Area roads more user-friendly, especially on the Soda Springs Unit. All the major roads were graded as needed in 2010-11. Rock was added to about 3/4 mile of heavily used dirt roads, two small parking areas were created along one road, and four culverts and six armored dips were added to another road to improve drainage. One road on the Goldendale Hatchery Unit was improved, and grading was done on the Mineral Springs Unit.

A new gate was installed on one road and a short spur road was closed following review of the project under the State Environmental Policy Act. The gate was needed to implement a seasonal closure beginning the winter of 2011-12. This closure affects one mile of primitive road that has seen at least a few wintertime vehicle accidents, and is intended to protect rangeland from off-road driving during the wet season. The other closure cuts off a badly eroded primitive road about 1/4 mile long that goes to an area where unlawful activity has been a common problem. Department of Fish and Wildlife has fulfilled its obligations to bring the roads on the Klickitat

Wildlife Area up to standards according to the Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan approved by Department of Natural Resources:

In 2010 a total of 9.25 miles of roads on the Soda Springs Unit were graded, and another 0.5 mile of road was graded on the Mineral Springs Unit. Rock was added to 0.3 mi. of road surface. All of the main travelled roads were inspected periodically.

In 2011 a total of 5.5 miles of roads on the Soda Springs Unit were graded, and another 0.5 mile of road was graded on the Mineral Springs Unit. Rock was added to 0.5 mi. of road surface on the Soda Springs Unit and to 0.2 mi. of road on the Goldendale Hatchery Unit. Rock was also added to three parking/turn around areas. A grade sag was cut in one road to divert water from the wheel tracks. Four culverts were installed and six rocked dips were developed in one orphan road on the Soda Springs Unit. A new road gate was installed on one orphan road to implement a new seasonal road closure on the Soda Springs Unit. Pot holes were filled on three roads on the Soda Springs Unit. All of the main travelled roads were inspected periodically.

WDFW still plans to abandon selected old roads that no longer serve a purpose, in order to reduce the inventory of roads that require maintenance.

Noxious weed control efforts focused on Himalayan blackberry, reed canarygrass and everlasting pea infestations. Blackberries are much reduced on the Sondino Unit following herbicide treatment and mechanical cutting of the dead canes. Native shrubs were planted in some areas formerly occupied by blackberries. Reed canarygrass was moderately well controlled on the Sondino Unit, where it was treated with herbicide. However the application was conservative to avoid injuring non-target plants and canarygrass was not entirely eliminated from the treatment areas. Most of the everlasting pea infestations were discovered late in the 2011 season. Herbicide was applied but little effect was observed due to the maturity of the plants.

The Goldendale Hatchery Unit has extensive infestations of reed canarygrass and bachelor buttons. Returning the best fields to cultivation will address most of the bachelor button infestation. The canarygrass is primarily along Spring Creek, which is managed by WDFW Fish Program. Time and budget constraints have forced a postponement of intensive canarygrass control efforts there.

A well decommissioning project that was planned for implementation in 2008 was mostly completed in late fall 2010. The old water wells on the Mineral Springs Unit were brought into compliance with state law by decommissioning them. Some of the “wells” were determined to be more properly identified as developed springs. Strong natural outflow from these springs prevents movement of contaminants down into the aquifer. Therefore, the threat to public health due to groundwater contamination is very low. One other well was decommissioned in June 2011. This well was originally drilled for residential service, but yielded a very marginal output. Subsequently, WDFW acquired the property and in 2011 returned the field where the well was located to dryland farming. The well was never used and was not needed for wildlife because of the availability of other water nearby. The project was undertaken by WDFW Engineering Division with assistance from Department of Ecology, and the well work performed by a local contractor.

An oak forest conservation project was completed early this year on the Sondino Unit. A dense stand of small pine trees had become established in a forest of mature oaks. In order to preserve the health of the oak community, most of the pine saplings were cleared and chipped on site. A Department of Corrections forestry crew performed the work, with support from a private chipper contractor.

Other recently initiated activities on the Sondino Unit include monthly reading of the water gauges in the turtle ponds and surveys for rare plants, all done by dedicated and able volunteers. The plant surveys are done under a permit issued to Rare Care, a plant conservation organization associated with University of Washington. Rare Care volunteers have also been active in surveying for plants on most of the other units of the Klickitat Wildlife Area, and survey results are shared with WDFW.

Campground safety continues to be a concern where dead standing pine trees are present. When it is practical to do so, Department of Natural Resources fire fighters gain experience by felling these trees under direction from training supervisors. Removing dangerous snags from high-use areas preserves public safety, and fire suppression crew personnel learn an important element of their craft in the process. The downed trees are salvaged for firewood by individuals or charitable organizations. Issuing woodcutting permits for up to three cords of wood per permit holder has been a useful tool for reducing the amount of large debris where there is already an abundance of downed logs.

A field on the Soda Springs Unit was cleared of small trees in summer of 2011. Wildlife Area Manager Van Leuven worked with a volunteer to cut small pines and pile them. The piles were burned in February 2012. The field is long and narrow, and rimmed by dense brush and trees. Valley quail are observed in this area fairly regularly, so maintenance of this field is expected to benefit this species.

Eight food plots on the Soda Springs Unit were plowed, disked, and planted in summer and fall 2011. These comprise about a quarter of the plots that have fallen into disuse since about 2003-2004. A mix of surplus seed from samples collected by Washington Department of Agriculture was used on the plots. At least two varieties of wheat, lentils, corn, barley and sunflower seeds were present in the mix. Although the cultural practices on these plots could be improved upon, at least some forage production should be realized.

Status Report of 2010-11 Performance Measures

A list of performance measures is reviewed biennially for purposes of evaluating and reporting progress on the management plan. Many of the performance measures will be on the list for several years because they require a long-term effort to achieve the desired result. A report on accomplishments for each update period will be included in the management plan update. Issues that interfere with accomplishment of these goals will be noted and may necessitate adjustment of the performance measures for the following period.

In 2011, WDFW transitioned from annual updates to biennial updates. The list of performance measures for 2010 was intended to be reviewed after one year, and a Citizen Advisory Group

meeting was held in 2011 to review progress. The following table presents a progress report on these measures as of spring 2011.

2010 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2011 Related Activity/ Comments
1. Renew the agricultural lease on the Soda Springs Unit.	Accomplished	
2. Establish a new agricultural lease on the Goldendale Hatchery Unit, to furnish habitat for pheasants.	Incomplete	District Team members have visited the site and support the proposal. More input needs to be gathered from local farmers to develop a workable lease agreement.
3. Design and implement a plan for limiting sprawl of camping activity along the Grayback and Sheep Canyon Roads. This is necessary to stop the spread of soil compaction and damage to range plants.	Accomplished	Implementation requires frequent, regular public contacts in the field.
4. Improve public safety and reduce soil erosion and impacts of inappropriate road use by closing a section of the Sheep Canyon Road and short spur road off the Sheep Canyon Road.	Incomplete	A SEPA review has been completed, and a DNS has been issued for a proposed seasonal closure of the Sheep Canyon Road and permanent closure of the spur road. A gate will be installed on the Sheep Canyon Road, and permanent barriers will be used to block the spur road. Arrangements are being made for installation of all necessary structures by the end of June 2011.
5. Address livestock trespass issues on the Wildlife Area. Continue to work with neighbors to develop ways to control movement of livestock as needed.	Accomplished	This will require an ongoing effort.

2010 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2011 Related Activity/ Comments
6. Continue to work on forest habitat projects to improve habitat for priority species, improve forest health, and reduce fire hazard.	In progress	A fire hazard reduction project proposal was sent to US Fish & Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service for review and approval. This allows federal funds for operation of the Wildlife Area to be used for the project. Approval was granted in summer 2011.
7. Maintain and repair upland water sources. Clean all guzzler reservoirs at least once during the year.	Accomplished	All were cleaned in 2010, and one received major repairs. Cleaning of guzzlers for 2011 was still in progress as of mid-April 2011.
8. Work to develop a larger parking area along Harms Road, to serve hikers and hunters using the Klickitat Trail to access the Swale Creek Unit.	In progress	A privately owned parcel of land located on Harms Road at the crossing of the Klickitat Trail is being formally proposed for acquisition, for a trailhead. The parcel was placed on the market last August by the current owner.
9. Conduct more public outreach to improve visitor behavior on the Klickitat River.	Not done	The Klickitat Wildlife Area obtained a surplus drift boat with trailer for accessing the river. However, the boat and trailer both need repairs before they can be used.
10. Finish installation of water level gauges in the Sondino Ponds and initiate regular recording of water levels.	In progress	Gauges were installed in November 2010. A schedule of water level reading, and assignment of the task, will be developed this spring.
11. Conduct surveys of black-tailed deer on and around the Soda Springs Unit. Monitor western pond turtle population at Sondino Unit. Conduct mourning dove survey for nationwide survey effort in May. Survey for western gray squirrels, as needed, in relation to forest habitat enhancement projects. If opportunity arises, survey for bighorn sheep and elk during deer survey effort.	Accomplished	

2010 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2011 Related Activity/ Comments
12. Implement weed control treatment in areas of known infestations.	Accomplished on 10.5 acres	
13. Restore native shrubs and trees along Spring Creek. This will occur incrementally over several years with help from volunteers.	Not done in 2010	This is a fall activity. Early onset of snow and cold weather forced a redirection of work priorities.
14. Monitor range and water sources in association with grazing permit.	Accomplished	
15. Reduce disturbance to wildlife in sensitive areas and times by continuing seasonal road closures.	Accomplished	
16. Write new sections for the management plan describing special management strategies for the satellite units.	Accomplished	Draft versions of management plans for all but one satellite unit are done. Field checks of public access points need to be done before posting the final versions online.
17. Scan current maps showing the boundaries of the Soda Springs Unit, Mineral Springs Unit, Goldendale Hatchery Unit, Dillacort Unit, and Fisher Hill Unit, and post them on the internet as pdf files available for downloading.	In progress	Maps for all of these units have been developed. Field checks of public access points need to be done before posting the maps online.
18. Address increased facilities maintenance and repair needs.	In progress	Arrangements are being made for repairs to be completed.

The following table describes performance measures recommended for 2011 and how these measures were met as of spring 2012.

2011 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2012 Related Activity/ Comments
1. Establish a new agricultural lease on the Goldendale Hatchery Unit, to furnish habitat for pheasants.	Nearly accomplished	The lease documents and farming plan are being reviewed before putting the lease out to bid. The lease should be available to bidders this spring.
2. Continue to implement the plan for limiting sprawl of camping activity along the Grayback and Sheep Canyon Roads.	Accomplished	
3. Improve public safety and reduce soil erosion and impacts of inappropriate road use by closing a section of the Sheep Canyon Road and short spur road off the Sheep Canyon Road.	Accomplished	
4. Address livestock trespass issues on the Wildlife Area. Continue to work with neighbors to develop ways to control movement of livestock as needed.	Accomplished	
5. Continue to work on forest habitat projects to improve habitat for priority species, improve forest health, and reduce fire hazard.	Work is scheduled to begin April 23, 2012	WDFW is consulting with Dept. of Natural Resources to develop a long-term fire management plan for the Klickitat Wildlife Area. This should help WDFW secure approval and funding for more fuels reduction work in the future.
6. Maintain and repair upland water sources. Clean all guzzler reservoirs at least once during the year.	Partially done	Cleaning was done; repairs were not.

2011 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2012 Related Activity/ Comments
7. Work to develop a larger parking area along Harms Road, to serve hikers and hunters using the Klickitat Trail to access the Swale Creek Unit.	In progress	A key land acquisition proposal has been approved by WDFW. A project grant is now being prepared for presentation to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.
8. Conduct more public outreach to improve visitor behavior on the Klickitat River.	Limited success	Repairs to the surplus drift boat and trailer are only partly done. Since the boat is not ready for use, access to the river is a constraining factor.
9. Conduct surveys of black-tailed deer on and around the Soda Springs Unit. Monitor western pond turtle population at Sondino Unit. Conduct mourning dove survey for nationwide survey effort in May. Survey for western gray squirrels as needed in relation to forest habitat enhancement projects. If opportunity arises, survey for bighorn sheep and elk during deer survey effort.	Accomplished	
10. Implement weed control treatment in areas of known infestations.	Partially done	More patches of weeds were discovered than were successfully treated.
11. Restore native shrubs and trees along Spring Creek. This will occur incrementally over several years with help from volunteers.	Not done	
12. Monitor range and water sources in association with grazing permit. (There was only one permit being monitored at the time the performance measures were drawn up.)	Mostly accomplished	The WDFW pasture on the Soda Springs Unit was rested in 2011. Photo point photos were accidentally omitted.

2011 Performance Measure	Status of Performance Measure	Explanation of Progress/ 2012 Related Activity/ Comments
13. Reduce disturbance to wildlife in sensitive areas and times by continuing seasonal road closures.	Accomplished	
14. Finalize new sections for the management plan describing special management strategies for the satellite units, and post them on WDFW's website.	Nearly done	New sections will be presented to the CAG and District Team for review, then submitted for posting on the WDFW website.
15. Scan current maps showing the boundaries of the Soda Springs Unit, Mineral Springs Unit, Goldendale Hatchery Unit, Dillacort Unit, and Fisher Hill Unit, and post them on the internet as .pdf files available for downloading.	Not done	
16. Address increased facilities maintenance and repair needs	Limited progress	A new roof is scheduled to be installed on the garage roof at the KWA Headquarters in summer. Other repairs and maintenance remain to be done.

New Strategies

The Wildlife Area plan identifies many strategies or activities to address the agency's strategic plan goals and objectives, why the area was purchased, habitat conditions, species presence, and public issues and concerns. 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 effects of past management activities.

New strategies for 2012 and 2013 address the new issues identified earlier as well as action items in the Performance Measures.

Agency Objective: Provide sound operational management of WDFW lands, facilities and access sites.

1. Maintain facilities to achieve safe, efficient, and effective management of the wildlife area.

New strategy: Direct more attention toward building maintenance at the KWA Headquarters

Agency Objective: Protect, Restore, & Enhance Fish and Wildlife and Their Habitats

1. Maintain big game populations.

New strategy: Follow-up on the plan to establish Sanfoin on food plots.

Agency Objective: Provide sound operational management of WDFW lands, facilities and access sites.

1. Maintain facilities to achieve safe, efficient, and effective management of the wildlife area.

New strategy: Fence repairs will be made a higher priority on the wildlife area.

Agency Objective: Provide sustainable fish and wildlife-related recreational and commercial opportunities compatible with maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations and habitats. Improve the economic well-being of Washington by providing diverse, high quality recreational and commercial opportunities.

1. Provide public access compatible with fish, wildlife and habitat protection.

New strategy: Partner with local volunteer groups to increase public access to unused WDFW easements and properties.

2012-2013 Performance Measures

1. Establish a new agricultural lease on the Goldendale Hatchery Unit to furnish habitat for pheasants and control weeds.

2. Continue to work on forest habitat projects to improve habitat for priority species, improve forest health, and reduce fire hazard.

3. Work with local experts to identify weeds and evaluate rangeland health.

4. Delineate property boundaries of WDFW parcel at the end of the Skookum Flat Road, and raise public awareness of this river access site.

5. Address livestock trespass issues on the Wildlife Area. Continue to work with neighbors to develop ways to control movement of livestock as needed.

6. Continue to develop a larger parking area along Harms Road, to serve hikers and hunters using the Klickitat Trail to access the Swale Creek Unit.

7. Finish repairs to the drift boat and trailer, so they can be placed in service.

8. Post online new sections for the management plan describing special management strategies for the satellite units.

9. Scan current maps showing the boundaries of the Soda Springs Unit, Mineral Springs Unit, Goldendale Hatchery Unit, Dillacort Unit, and Fisher Hill Unit, and post them on the internet as pdf files available for downloading.

10. Address increased facilities maintenance and repair needs.

11. Maintain and repair upland water sources. Clean all guzzler reservoirs at least once during the year.

12. Conduct surveys of black-tailed deer on and around the Soda Springs Unit. Monitor western pond turtle population at Sondino Unit. Conduct mourning dove survey for nationwide survey effort in May. Survey for western gray squirrels as needed in relation to forest habitat enhancement projects. Survey for bighorn sheep and elk during deer survey effort if opportunity arises.

13. Implement weed control treatment in areas of known infestations.

14. Monitor range and water sources in association with grazing permit.

15. Reduce disturbance to wildlife in sensitive areas and times by continuing seasonal road closures.

Citizens Advisory Group and District Team Input

A meeting with the Citizen Advisory Group was held April 24, 2012 to review progress on the 2010-2011 Performance Measures and discuss new ideas. Some members could not attend the meeting, but provided input via e-mail. Members who attended or sent comments by e-mail include the Klickitat County Weed Board Coordinator, local conservationist, and a landowner/avid hunter and fisherman who resides along the Klickitat River and is employed in the recreational fishing sector. Their comments are presented below. Comments from the wildlife area manager and District Team are included, in italics. Only the items that generated discussion are listed.

- Grazing monitoring: A request was made for a brief statement describing why grazing monitoring is being done, and what variations or trends in the range plant community have been detected.

The most important reason for monitoring grazing activity on the Wildlife Area is to avoid damage to resources. Monitoring efforts include ensuring that fences are intact, water troughs are working properly, animals are well distributed on the range, and that the permit limitations (number of animals and duration of use) are not exceeded. Anything that can affect livestock utilization of the range, especially in sensitive areas, is checked. If a problem arises, the Wildlife Area Manager makes arrangements with the permittee to solve the problem within an appropriate time frame. The objective is to prevent undesired impacts from occurring, and to optimize conditions for achieving the desired habitat management results.

Range improvements develop slowly and can take three to ten years to detect. However, excessive negative impacts can be observed fairly quickly depending on the severity of the problem. The routine monitoring of grazing activity is designed to discover and address negative issues promptly. Photo records and range plant surveys are better suited to detecting long-term changes, either positive or negative.

Photos taken at established photo points seem to show little change over the years. Annual variations in growing conditions seem to be more apparent in the photos than long-term effects of the grazing program.

Exclosures were constructed for monitoring of vegetation changes in two grazed areas of the Soda Springs Unit. Baseline data was collected in 2005. In 2007, the shrub and tree components of the plant community were resampled, and in 2008 the herb layer was resampled. So far, no clear trends are apparent. Climatic variation seems to account for differences observed as of 2008. Another replicate of veg sampling is due this year, and analysis of those observations may show a trend. Copies of analysis results to date are available by contacting the Klickitat Wildlife Area.

- Marty recommended an effective treatment for cut oak stumps that are likely to resprout within the fuels reduction project area, where small trees were thinned from a forested road corridor.

Manager Van Leuven will follow up on this and apply herbicide as deemed necessary to ensure that the objectives of the fire fuels reduction effort are not thwarted by regrowth.

- Attendees of the meeting felt that the summer tour of the Wildlife Area last year (2011) was informative, and thought that another tour this summer should be planned.

CAG members will be invited for another tour this summer. The date will depend on upon CAG member availability.

Cover photo taken on the Leidl Grade segment of the Glenwood Highway, overlooking the Klickitat River.

Contacts:

Susan Van Lueven

Wildlife Area Manager

(509) 773-4459

WDFW Vancouver Office

(360) 696-6211

Want to see the full plan?

Go to:

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