

STAFF SUMMARY

Current Draft Management Plans

Background

The Department has initiated a review and update of its 12 wildlife area long range management plans originally developed in 1993. Four new management plans are also being developed.

As of October, 2008, eleven management plans (Ken Denman, Elkhorn, Phillip W. Schneider, Jewell Meadows, Wenaha, Summer Lake, White River, Klamath, Ladd Marsh, E.E. Wilson and Columbia Basin) have been reviewed and adopted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

The adoption of the Fern Ridge Wildlife Area draft management plan was delayed while the Department and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers underwent a new 25-year re-licensing process. The license was signed by both parties in late October, 2008. The 2009 Fern Ridge management plan has been revised to incorporate the resulting re-license boundary changes.

Purpose of management plans

Wildlife area management plans will be designed to guide management activities for the next 10 years. The intent of all wildlife area management plans will be to:

- Provide clear direction and continuity for the management of each wildlife area over the next 10 years;
- Communicate the Department's management priorities for each wildlife area to neighbors, visitors, and public;
- Ensure that management programs are consistent with the original mandate and purpose of the area;
- Ensure that management of each wildlife area is consistent with Federal, State, and local laws and regulations; and
- Provide justification for each wildlife area's staffing, operations, maintenance, and capital improvements needs.

Wildlife area management plans will offer a comprehensive vision and action plan for the next 10 years. The plans will describe management issues unique to each wildlife area, as well as actions or strategies to address these issues. These actions will be implemented during the life of the plan; subject to funding and personnel availability. Each management plan will be reviewed in 2014 to gauge implementation progress and will be revised in their entirety beginning in 2019.

Process to date

The Department is continuing the process of reviewing and revising its 12 existing wildlife area management plans and writing four additional ones. Eleven plans on the schedule have been completed. Three new plans (Bridge Creek, Lower Deschutes and Riverside) and one existing plan (Fern Ridge) will be presented to the Commission on

January 9, 2009. This will be followed by a formal public review process through April 17, 2009. Public comments received through March 13 will be incorporated into final draft plans. These final drafts will be presented to the Commission for potential adoption on April 17, 2009. Comments received between March 13 and April 16 will be presented to the Commission as amendments to the final draft plans.

The Bridge Creek, Fern Ridge, Lower Deschutes and Riverside Wildlife Area Draft Management Plans are attached (Attachments 3, 4, 5 and 6).

Proposed Timeline

The following is the tentative timeline for review of the next four wildlife area management plans:

- January 9, 2009 – Presentation of draft plans in a briefing to the Commission
- January 9 – Public review process begins
- Mid-January/February – One or two public meetings per wildlife area conducted at local venues
- March 13 – Incorporate public comments into final drafts
- March 14 - April 16 – Incorporate public comments received during this time into final draft plan amendments
- April 17, 2009 – Potential adoption by Commission action