

Staff Summary

Background

The Department has initiated a review and update of its 12 wildlife area long range management plans originally developed in 1993. To date, the goals and objectives of eleven wildlife area management plans have been adopted by Commission action. Four new plans have also been written and adopted by Commission action.

Changes from previous review process

While the previous 1993 plan review process was aided by a wildlife area review committee, the current process relies heavily on local wildlife area and regional staff. Using the 1993 plan as a foundation, Department staff developed a draft management plan for the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area which was presented to the Commission in June 2009.

Local stakeholder groups and island residents were informed of the planning process and were invited to help develop or review the draft plan.

Revised Draft Goals and Objectives

Using input from an extended formal public review process and internal review by staff, the Department has revised the goals and objectives of the draft plan that was presented to the Commission in June, 2009. These are listed below.

The revised draft goals and objectives for the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area are:

Goal 1: To protect, enhance and manage wetland habitats to benefit fish and wildlife species.

Sturgeon Lake

Objective 1.1: Conduct research on methods and then implement these methods to improve the biological and hydrological function of the 3,000 acre Sturgeon Lake system.

Inside the levees

Objective 1.2: Protect, enhance and manage approximately 286 acres of palustrine seasonally flooded wetlands and convert approximately 200 acres of existing poorly drained agricultural land into a total of 486 acres of this wetland type to benefit a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Outside the levees

Objective 1.3: Protect and enhance approximately 2,922 acres of lacustrine seasonally flooded wetlands to benefit a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Objective 1.4: Protect and manage 285 acres of lacustrine permanently flooded wetlands to benefit a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Objective 1.5: Protect, enhance and manage approximately 795 acres of palustrine permanently flooded wetlands to benefit a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Objective 1.6: Enhance and manage 62 acres of palustrine semi-permanently flooded and 52 acres of palustrine seasonally flooded wetland habitats to benefit a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Objective 1.7: Protect and enhance approximately 161 acres of riverine wetlands to benefit a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Objective 1.8: Maintain and improve critical physical and functional infrastructure affecting wetland and water management activities within and outside the levees.

Goal 2: To protect, enhance and manage upland habitats to benefit a wide variety of wildlife species.

Objective 2.1: Enhance habitat carrying capacity for wintering Canada geese by reviewing current habitat management practices on 2,230 acres of pasture and 1,316 acres of agricultural cropland.

Objective 2.2: Maintain and improve the quality of 193 acres of existing Willamette Valley oak woodlands.

Objective 2.3: Maintain 2,857 acres of riparian/bottomland hardwood forest and improve the quality of these habitats.

Objective 2.4: Protect, enhance and manage approximately 2,230 acres of pasture/grassland habitat to benefit wildlife species, with emphasis on ground nesting songbirds.

Objective 2.5: Maintain and enhance SIWA facilities, structures, and equipment used to conduct habitat management, public use projects and other administrative functions.

Goal 3: To maintain waterfowl hunting programs and to provide a variety of other fish and wildlife oriented recreational and educational opportunities to the public that are compatible with Goals 1 and 2.

Objective 3.1: Provide approximately 165,000 hunting, trapping, and angling use days annually.

Objective 3.2: Provide opportunities for individual dog training and dog field trials which will not conflict with wildlife habitat management objectives or Objective 3.1.

Objective 3.3: Provide 100,000 wildlife viewing, wildlife-oriented education and interpretation use days annually, compatible with Objective 3.1 and habitat management objectives.

Goal 4: To control other public uses to minimize impacts on fish and wildlife, their habitats, and fish and wildlife related recreation and to maintain the security of the wildlife area and reduce disturbance to neighboring private lands.

Objective 4.1: Manage non-wildlife oriented public use to minimize disturbance to wildlife species on SIWA.

Objective 4.2: Review the SIWA Parking Permit program to determine its effectiveness in providing appropriate levels of funding for maintenance, law enforcement and administration.

Objective 4.3: Continue implementation of the 1993 SIWA Beach Use Plan.

Public Review Process

The Department presented the first draft of the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area management plan at the June 5, 2009 Commission hearing. From June through September 2009, the Department presented the draft plan at four public review meetings; three on Sauvie Island and one in Clackamas. The meetings were announced via local news outlets, the department's website and through informational flyers. Below is a summary of the meetings.

The Sauvie Island Wildlife Area draft plan was presented and discussed at four public meetings, on June 30, July 30, August 25 and September 22, 2009. The June, August and September meetings were held at the Sauvie Island School and the July meeting was held at the Monarch Hotel in Clackamas. In anticipation of a very large turn-out (which occurred in 1993) the first two meetings were led by a professional facilitator. However, due to unexpectedly low turnouts (the first meeting had 21 attendees and the second meeting had 11), SIWA and Wildlife Division staff conducted the next two meetings themselves. The third meeting had 25 and the fourth meeting had 15 attendees, for a total of 72 members of the public. SIWA staff received 13 comment sheets submitted during the four public meetings.

Key issues and concerns raised at these meetings included: addressing the impacts of the ever increasing goose populations; restoring Sturgeon Lake; enhancing oak woodland habitats; allowing rabbit and raccoon hunting; dog training opportunities; increased access for birders and wildlife viewers and boating traffic and access.

Approximately 40 hard copies of the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area draft plan have been handed out to area visitors, neighbors, local businesses and interest groups. The draft plan was also posted on the Department's home page and as a link within the Northwest Zone weekly recreation reports and the Sauvie Island Community Association's listserv.

The Department has received 61 correspondences to date.

The Department has since revised the draft plan to such an extent that another informational briefing to the Commission was warranted. The Commission will be informed of the major revisions and changes to the draft goals and objectives at the June 3, 2010 hearing in Salem. After this informational briefing, the Department will have another short public review period, with one public meeting scheduled for June 16 at the Sauvie Island School. Public comments received during this review process will be incorporated into a final draft plan which will be presented to the Commission, for potential adoption, at the August 6, 2010 hearing in Salem. An opportunity for public testimony will also be provided at this Commission hearing.