

ORV Park Discussion

Thursday, Oct. 10, 2024 1-4 p.m.

Columbia Basin Wildlife Area

• 193,000 acres

Wenatchee

- **13 Management Units**
- Most lands owned by USBR

Eakes-Dry State Park

28

ORV Park in Desert Unit





Department of Fish and Wildlife



Agreements & Plans

USBR & WDFW

- First established in 1952
- 25-Year Term
- Last updated in 2003
- Important Components for ORV Park
 - Exhibit A
 - "The State will, where one exists, follow a United States approved Resource Management Plan..."



. exip From 5. Unter, 60.R. \$5/F-05

Contract No. 3-07-16-L3726

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF RECLAMATION APR 0 2 2007

HABITAT PROGRA

MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND THE STATE OF WASHINGTON FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF RECREATION, AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES AT: POTHOLES RESERVOIR, BANKS LAKE AND COLUMBIA BASIN WILDLIFE LANDS

EXPLANATORY REMARKS

THIS MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT, is made this <u>24/1/1</u> day of <u>Appl/L</u>2003, by and between THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Interior, hereinafter referred to as the "United States," and the STATE OF WASHINGTON, herein after referred to as the "State," acting by and through the Department of Fish and Wildlife, herein after referred to as "Fish and Wildlife". Pursuant to the statutory authority and discretion of the United States and the State, this Agreement is made in accordance with the Reclamation Act of June 17, 1902, (32 Stat. 388) and amendatory and supplemental Acts collectively referred to as Federal Reclamation Laws; the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of July 9, 1965, (P.L. 89-72)(79 Stat. 213), as amended October 30, 1992, (P.L. 102-575)(106 Stat. 4690-4693); and rules of the State, (RCW 794.05 and RCW 39.34) to the extent consistent therewith.

WHEREAS, the United States has constructed O'Sullivan Dam and Potholes Reservoir, North Dam, Dry Falls Dam and Banks Lake and retains numerous lands within the Columbia Basin as part of the Columbia Basin Project authorized by the Columbia Basin Project Act of March 10, 1943 (57 Stat. 14) and these reservoirs are operated in support of the Columbia Basin Project;

WHEREAS, P.L. 89-72, as amended, directed the United States to find non-federal public entities to administer project land and water areas and accomplish the operation, maintenance, and replacement of its recreation facilities,

WHEREAS, the United States and the State have agreed to be proactive partners in the administration of project land and water areas, hereinafter referred to as Management Areas, associated with the operation, maintenance and replacement of recreation facilities at Reclamation Reservoirs and Projects in Washington State;

WHEREAS, the parties hereto have entered into previous Memorandums of Agreement for the management of public recreation and recreation facilities on the subject Management Areas in order to provide for public use and enjoyment of the Management Areas consistent with project purposes, and;

WHEREAS, the parties hereto desire to enter into this Management Agreement (Agreement) for the administration, operation, maintenance and development of public recreation

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Agreements & Plans

USBR Resource

Management Plan

- Final EIS in 2001
 - Preferred alternative modified to "Maintain as seasonally open (July 1 to October 1) 540 acres of the 1,459 acre Yellow Zone."
- **Potholes Reservoir Resource Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement Grant County**, Washington November 2001 Potholes Reservoir **Resource Management Plan** Grant County, Washington August 2002

- Adopted in 2002
- Never implemented or enforced



Agreements & Plans

WDFW, County, & USBR

- AKA "ORV Park Agreement"
- 1984 Agreement to formally establish ORV Park
- 10-Year Term, modified to 5-Year
- 2013-2017 agreement extension to 2019
- WDFW Elects not to Extend Agreement Beyond 2019





WDFW Concerns

- Ambiguity with Exhibit A
- Conditions of the ORV Park Agreement were not being met (e.g., signage, enforcement of seasonal closure, maps, etc.)
- Lack of effective coordination with the County & USBR
- Liability associated with unpermitted activities & organized events
- Environmental impacts & alignment with our Mission

To preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.





- 1. Do we amend agreement with USBR to not include lands associated with the ORV Park?
- 2. Do we attempt to enforce 2002 RMP? If so, what are the consequences of that decision?
- Do we allow & permit organized ORV events? If so, which ones
 & what are the conditions?
- 4. What are the legal risks (environmental & liability) associated with ORV activities (e.g., non-compliance with RMP, potential wetland violations, potential "take", etc.)?
- 5. What agreements need to be in place for these activities to continue?



Recent Events

- WDFW incorporated an informal structured decision-making process to evaluate potential outcomes of various alternatives
- Resolved Exhibit A issue
 - Lands associated with ORV Park are included
 - Includes USBR lands in Green & Yellow Zones
- Documented the presence of Northern Leopard Frogs, a State Endangered Species, in the Yellow Zone





- Resolved E
 - Lands as Park are
 - Includes Green &
- WDFW inc informal st decision-m evaluate pe outcomes alternative
- Document of Norther a State Enc Species, in



Proposed Path Forward

- 1. Continue to monitor the distribution of northern leopard frogs and pursue resources to assist with better understanding the relationship among frogs, wetland habitat, & ORV usage
- 2. Identify process to review alternatives & make decisions as a group. SDM?
- 3. Willing to permit existing organized events with appropriate conditions (e.g., footprint, length of time, Discover Pass, cost, etc.) & agreements
- 4. Establish agreement with event organizers, County, & USBR that identifies roles & responsibilities for organized events.
 - Would include a plan to ensure permit conditions are being met
- 5. Reestablish agreement with County & USBR identifying management responsibilities for general ORV Park
- 6. WDFW committed to this approach unless relevant new natural or cultural resources information becomes available









Department of Fish and Wildlife

Northern Leopard Frog Overview

October 24, 2024 Hannah Anderson Wildlife Diversity Division Manager



Northern Leopard Frog Overview Summary

Status

- State endangered since 1999
- Species of Greatest Conservation Need
- Single population in WA **Threats**
- Invasive non-native predators
- Disease
- Water fluctuations
- Human impacts

Conservation Actions

- Reintroduction
- Bullfrog management
- Habitat enhancement
- Habitat protection
- Population monitoring





NLF Life Cycle – "meadow frogs"

Adults emerge from wintering sites in late winter – early spring

They lay eggs in shallow areas of ponds, attached to emergent vegetation in late March, early April

The tadpoles remain in the breeding ponds into the summer.

In mid-summer, the tadpoles metamorphose into frogs and start the transition to upland feeding areas.

As the juvenile frogs grow throughout the summer, their upland use increases.

Both adults and juveniles return to aquatic habitat as temperatures start to cool in the fall.

Frogs seek winter refuge in waters for brumation period



Habitat Use

Ponds – open, shallow ponds for breeding with gradual slopes and short emergent vegetation

Uplands – meadows with adequate vegetative cover and moisture, varied distance from ponds. Avoid trees and dense grasses.







Population Status

Northern Leopard Frog Historic Range













WA current 2018-2024







ORV park survey and genetics

WDFW surveyed in 2023 and detected new subpopulation

WSU genetic analysis to understand relationship of this area to other known subpopulations.

"Northern leopard frogs in the Moses Lake Mud Flats and Sand Dunes have retained genetic diversity similar to other subunits of the Moses Lake population and this area provides migrants to neighboring subunits."





Current Threats

Invasive and Introduced Predators



Bullfrogs detected in 1990s, and now ubiquitous



Non-native fish: pumpkinseed, mosquito fish



Water Fluctuation

NLF yearly reproductive success tied to water management

Pond levels affected by reservoir height

- Small fluctuations up/down during egg deposition time
- How much does this result in pond water level changes?
 - egg masses stranded and exposed
 - Water level also increases through deposition period – fish access





Disease

Chytrid

- Present at Potholes and at CNWR
- Viral loads not assessed

Ranavirus

- Not detected at Potholes and CNWR
- Not sampled in other site reviews







Conservation Actions

Reintroductions

With only one population and minimal control over major threats, WDFW embarked on reintroduction efforts

Currently working with Columbia National Wildlife Refuge as release site, seeking others

Egg collection, captive rearing, and metamorph release is current strategy





Bullfrog Management

Controlling bullfrogs at release sites

All life stage removal

Exclusion fence

Water drawdowns







Habitat Management

- Tall emergent vegetation control
- manual removal
- herbicide
- prescribed fire

Russian olive





Population Monitoring

Visual Audio eDNA

Metamorphs







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