

Wildlife & Habitat Goals

Goal 1: Enhance, maintain and protect viable mud flat, emergent bed and open water habitats associated with Lake Lowell to benefit migratory birds and other wildlife.

- Objective 1.1. Maintain and protect emergent beds – Lake Lowell shoreline
- Objective 1.2. Maintain and protect mudflats – Lake Lowell shoreline
- Objective 1.3 Create mudflats – Lake Lowell shoreline
- Objective 1.4. Enhance, maintain, and protect open water habitat – Lake Lowell

Comments for Goal 1 and associated objectives:

- Submerged plant beds need to be added

Goal 2: Enhance, maintain, and protect riparian forest benefiting migratory birds and other riparian-dependent species.

- Objective 2.1. Enhance, maintain, and protect riparian forests – Lake Lowell
- Objective 2.2. Enhance, maintain, and protect riparian forests – Snake River Islands

Goal 3: Enhance, maintain, and protect non-lake wetland habitats for the benefit of migratory birds and other wildlife.

- Objective 3.1. Enhance, maintain, and protect emergent wetlands

Goal 4: Enhance, maintain, and protect shrub steppe habitats characteristic of the historic Columbia Basin.

- Objective 4.1. Enhance, maintain, and protect shrub steppe – Lake Lowell
- Objective 4.2. Enhance, maintain, and protect shrub steppe – Snake River Islands

Comments on Goal 4 and associated objectives:

- “Historic Columbia Basin” is too broad of an area.
- This goal may not be achievable – prioritize noxious weed removal
- Difficult to achieve native habitats
- Time frame should be on attributes (%)
- Need inventory before you can quantify
- Do you have the staffing and money to do this?

Goal 5: Provide agricultural crops to support migrating waterfowl as well as resident wildlife.

- Objective 5.1. Provide Grain and Forage Crops
- Objective 5.2 Provide Managed Grasslands to Benefit Migratory and Wintering Waterfowl

Comments on Goal 5 and associated objectives:

- Make this Goal Common to all or focus on providing forage
- Prevention of depredation on adjacent agricultural lands
- Like idea to provide forage base, and keep waterfowl away from private landowners

- This goal should be at the objective level.

Goal 6: Gather sufficient scientific information to guide responsible adaptive management decisions for Refuge's trust resources.

- Objective 6.1. Monitoring activities
- Objective 6.2. Inventory activities
- Objective 6.3 Research
- Objective 6.4. Assessments and Information Needs

Comments on Goal 6 and associated objectives:

- Include invasives in monitoring activities

Public Use and Cultural Resource Goals

Goal 1 (General Visitor Services): Connect the hearts and minds of visitors with Refuge wildlife and wildlife habitats. With minimal impact, Refuge visitors will experience abundant native wildlife and increase their understanding and appreciation of the importance of Deer Flat NWR as wildlife habitat.

- Objective 1.1. Welcome and Orientation
- Objective 1.2. On-site Interpretation
- Objective 1.3. Wildlife Observation and Photography
- Objective 1.4. Compatible Non-Wildlife-Dependent Public Uses

Comments on Goal 1 and associated objectives:

- Objective 1.3
 - not time dependent
 - should be more measurable – stating how many blinds will make it more achievable
- Emphasize hunting and fishing
- Weave the irrigation story into the wildlife story

Goal 2 (Hunting): Hunters will enjoy a family-friendly, safe, undisturbed, quality hunt that minimally impacts Refuge habitats and wildlife and increases their understanding and appreciation of the importance of Deer Flat NWR as wildlife habitat.

- Objective 2.1. Hunting: Waterfowl
- Objective 2.2. Hunting: Upland Game
- Objective 2.3. Hunting: Deer on the Snake River Islands Unit

Comments on Goal 2 and associated objectives:

- Objective 2.2
 - As soon as x are filled
 - No opportunities for ADA upland hunting
 - No quality upland hunting on Lake Lowell
 - Safe?
 - Not time dependent
 - Undisturbed quality questionable for Lake Lowell
- What about trapping on islands? People trap on islands now, but nothing has been said about it.
- “Safe and Undisturbed” are exclusionary terms

Goal 3 (Fishing): Anglers will enjoy a peaceful, family-friendly, quality fishing opportunity that minimally impacts Refuge habitats and wildlife and increases their understanding and appreciation of the importance of Deer Flat NWR as wildlife habitat.

Objective 3.1. Provide quality fishing opportunities

Comments on Goal 3 and associated objectives:

- Add easily accessible to the goal
- Peaceful is an exclusionary term

Goal 4 (Environmental Education): Students, teachers and Refuge visitors will understand the biology and management of the Refuge, the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System and how to help conserve the Refuge and other wildlife habitats.

Objective 4.1. Environmental Education

Comments on Goal 4 and associated objectives:

- Hunters and Anglers pay bills – North American model of wildlife management
- Tell the irrigation story
- Understand the North American fish and wildlife model

Goal 5 (Law Enforcement): Visitors will have limited impacts to wildlife, feel safe during their visit, and understand Refuge regulations and how they help protect wildlife and wildlife habitat as well as other visitors.

Objective 5.1 Provide Safe Public Use Opportunities

Comments on Goal 5 and associated objectives:

- Detect and deter illegal activity especially because of our family friendly and safe goals
- Clarify the types of impacts as negative or undesirable

Goal 6 (Volunteers and Partners): Initiate and nurture relationships and develop cooperative opportunities to build support for the Refuge and instill in others an understanding and appreciation of the importance of Deer Flat NWR as wildlife habitat.

Objective 6.1. Volunteers

Objective 6.2. Partners and Friends

Comments on Goal 6 and associated objectives:

- Work with landowners and farmers off refuge.
- Include irrigation partnerships – do not have jurisdiction but can highlight shared goals
- Reference goals from other plans

Goal 7 (Cultural Resources): The Refuge will protect and manage its cultural resources and look for ways to gain new understanding of the history and cultural resources of both the Lake Lowell Unit and the Snake River Islands Unit.

Objective 7.1. Inventory, evaluate, monitor and protect the Refuge's cultural resources

Comments on Goal 7 and associated objectives:

- History – irrigation. Emphasis on lake historical uses.

Goals Discussion Questions

- 1) Are there any items in the common to all action alternatives that are sufficiently important that they should be elevated to a goal?

- Include safety and traffic flow at goal level (goal 1 or 5 – safe/reliable access).
- Need a better explanation as to why ice skating is not allowed.
- Weed control should be more explicit – it is only talked about on Snake River Islands Unit
- More on detecting and deterring illegal activity
- More on shared goals in water quality w/ irrigation district
- Monitor public use effects on wildlife – elevated to goal
- **Promote Refuge Friendly Land Use to Neighbors and Local Municipalities**—this is a critical part of ensuring that you have local support as you move through implementation of CCP, step down plans, etc. It seems important that this be an explicit part of your planning document. Not only so that you can be a “good neighbor” but also so that you can strategically connect with local entities/community so that they can better recognize the value provided by the refuge. This not only includes the economic value (which will be articulated in the economic impact analysis) but also the ecosystem services provided, the fact that this is a natural oasis in an area that is being rapidly developed (what would the landscape look like if Deer Flat was not protected?). I have sometimes seen this as a “partnering” goal or objective.
- **Conduct community outreach**—similar to above...engaging the community and getting ownership in the refuge and the activities there is paramount. I would see this and the above falling under the same goal. This could be an expansion of Goal 6
- **Reduce Impacts of Fishing**—needs further discussion with state fish and game—not sure should be common to all or a goal at all.

2) Are there topics/issues that should be a goal in the CCP that are not included?

- Need goal to: Provide for managed recreational activities such as powerboating, jet skiing etc, in creating a compatible relationship with the wildlife habitat and uses.
- Add goal to maintain/promote economic stability of the local community
- Should deer population management be a refuge goal?
- Eliminate Change
- Water Quality – Algae bloom
- Acquire adjacent “buffer” or agricultural land for forage.
- Monitor effects of public use programs on wildlife.
- Public Use
- Goal 4--EE Why is EE a goal and other big 6 are objectives?; not arguing it shouldn't be, just not clear the rationale for its placement.
- Goal 3--Fishing—need to ensure that there are easily accessible opportunities; there is little now if you don't have a boat; it would be good to add shoreline access (bank fishing) and could probably do without disturbing wildlife. Maybe add “accessible” to the goal wording or potentially having an explicit objective regarding bank fishing.
- More local government control as opposed to federal control
- More efficient movement of people and vehicles
- More efficient means to launch and retrieve boats

3) Are there any goals that should not be goals, i.e, they are not important enough for the refuge to concentrate on?

- Agricultural crops
- Cultural resources

4) Other comments on goals

- Goal 5: “historic Columbia basin” is too broad of an area to consider
- “Peaceful and undisturbed” is exclusionary language
- Primary use of the lake is systematically eliminated
- Fish habitat (old tires, concrete blocks etc) need to be addressed.
- Mention BOC and BR plans for Lake Lowell, or specific management (can we incorporate BOC/BR normal operational plan into our plan.
- BOC does not want habitat to reduce reservoir capacity – are we proposing anything that would affect capacity?
- Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan – Department of Water Resources