

6/15/11 Extended Team Meetings

Facilitators:

- Jennifer Brown-Scott, FWS
- Kendra Niemec, FWS
- Addison Mohler, FWS
- Susan Kain, FWS
- Scott McCarthy, FWS
- Sharon Selvaggio,

Participants:

- Paul Deveau, BOC
- Tim Page, BOC
- Vern Case, Director, Riverside Irrigation District, Board of Idaho Water Users Association, Chairman Boise River water district 63, Farm; farmers paid for building of Lake Lowell—watching out for water rights
- Duane Casey, Water master At Lake Lowell BOC
- Bob Carter, BOC
- Susan Law, Federal Highways Administration—provides funding, design and construction services
- Krystal Clair, BR—avoid user conflicts
- Steve Dunn, BR—make sure that reclamation project purposes are protected and contribute to resource questions
- Greg Humphreys—FHA, help with transportation issues
- Dave Dahms, Boating manager, represent boaters
- Jake Powell, IDFG, wildlife biologist
- Joe Kozfkay, IDFG, fish biologist, support fishing interests
- Mike Marxen, FWS
- Natalie Sexton, USGS; help FWS with social/economic aspects of plans; recent visitor survey
- Chris Reighn, FWS, educate re aquatic invasive species
- Deb Root, CC Development Services
- Philip Milburn, ODFW, wildlife biologist, Snake River Islands
- Mike Gregg, FWS, shrub-steppe
- Wendy Davis, City of Nampa Parks & Rec.
- Darrin Johnson, Nampa Parks & Rec., representing Mayor Tom Dale—recreation opportunities stay consistent as they have been for 100 years.

Kendra presentation—overview Refuge, CCP, sideboards

- Vern Case: Lake Lowell wasn't added to refuge until 1920s.
- Refuge Staff: Will provide a copy of the Executive Order creating the Refuge in 1909

- Wendy Davis: Q - Have you written a plan before? or Just now because just found out had jurisdiction
- Refuge Staff: A – The Comprehensive Conservation plan was required by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997.
- Wendy: Q - What do you have jurisdiction over?
- Refuge Staff: A - Surface water and lands within boundaries

Addison presentation—What is a vision

Gave Examples and definitions

Participants broke into groups to discuss the Preliminary Draft Vision and Goals

Group Reports on Vision:

Vision group 1

- Some mention of the history needs to be in the Vision. Where refuge came from and where it's gone. Tie into previous history.
- Quite a bit of discussion over word "wild" because the lake was man-made". Is there a better word? Rephrasing?
- More active management. The vision has a glass bubble feel.
- Reorganize ...starts with wildlife first, then habitat, then public use, then habitat, then public use. Habitat and use of it are linked together.

Vision group 2

- Focused too much on wildlife related activities (big 6) and not other activities (non-big 6)
- Didn't discuss economic impacts of stopping uses
- Felt decisions were being made without solid scientific basis
- Group 2 wrote their own vision – see Vision Statement Summary

Vision group 3

- Wildlife oasis in a sea of development. Existing vision doesn't recognize what happens if development completely surrounds. Oasis will be that much more valuable...but will require adaptation/management change
- Free from invasive species
- Irrigation remains a priority.
- Allow continued recreation use in a balanced way (sensitive to wildlife)
- Understanding of irrigation purpose weaved into statement.
- Some of language too fluffy.
- No acknowledgment of consumptive uses.
- Why grebes mentioned specifically when no other species called out. Replace with waterbirds?

Vision group 4

- Preliminary Draft Vision is a good start, but...
- More emphasis on terrestrial wildlife and fish. Slight overemphasis on shorebirds
- Is the public being "advocates" too strong of language?
- More emphasis on consumptive uses
- Emotional health, relaxation, ability to escape from hustle/bustle
- Minimizing conflicts and having a harmonious experience with different uses going on.
- The first sentence is troublesome. It doesn't talk explicitly about visitors but they are implied. Make connection to visitors more explicit?

- If only mention grebes, then justify that
- More on benefits to Treasure Valley. what's the benefit of having it in your backyard.

Group Reports on Goals:

Goal group 1

- Goal of monitoring is in wildlife and habitat goals, but not in public use
- Invasive species management needs to be moved to a goal
- More mention of partnership and dependence on Board of Control because refuge is so dependent. Maybe more reference to irrigation operations in goal.
- Increasing shrubs/trees below normal high water line can reduce water storage capability. Make sure that doesn't distract from storage
- Goal to discuss climate change and water rights. Irrigation districts encourage water conservation - we could also encourage water conservation through Environmental Education.
- Is information on water use/water quality comparing agricultural and developed areas?
- Goal 5 should not just be specific to agricultural crops. It should be broader to say forage to support waterfowl. Then agricultural crops is a sub-objective
- LE—Make sure it's a safe environment, but needs more emphasis. Objective: detect and deter things in advance.

Goal group 2

- CTAAA...traffic safety/flow. Should that be a goal?
- Weed control is not addressed enough
- Re-evaluate uses not allowed (e.g., ice skating, dog walking, horse-back riding)
- Add goal: need for maintaining/accommodating boating and other uses.
- Add: Maintain economic stability of local community
- Not goal: Don't like exclusionary sound of peaceful, undisturbed of public use goals 2 and 3. Need coexistence and etiquette. Not exclusion.
- Historic Columbia basin is too broad of a reference.

Goal group 3

- WH Goal 5—ADD: Objective - prevention of depredation on adjacent land by wildlife of the refuge
- WH Goal 6—would that include invasive species? Aquatic, in particular?
- Add: Acquire adjacent buffer or agricultural land for additional forage. Ties back to urbanization.
- Add: Noxious weeds
- Goal 1: Think irrigation story needs to be woven into that. Use refuge also use farm fields related to water supply

- Goal 4: Tell the irrigation story, provide understanding of the funding model for state fish and game and the refuge. Role of hunters/anglers in conservation/funding.

Goal group 4

- CTAAA—promote refuge-friendly land use and community outreach...make expansion of goal 6?
- Reduce impacts of fishing needs further discussion with the state. Who has jurisdiction?
- Add: Why is EE a goal and some others are objectives? Provide explanation
- Goal 3: More of an emphasis about accessibility for shoreline/bank fishing
- WH1: Nothing related to submerged weed beds.

Group 1:

PU Objective 1.3

- SMART except no T
- Should be more measurable—state how many blinds going to be.
- Does meet vision/goals overall
- Does scientifically valid apply to this objective? Maybe only allow structures to be occupied at certain times? Tie in educational component to science.

PU objective 2.2

- specific as soon as x's filled.
- Consensus—not much opportunity for ADA-accessible—not achievable
- Can there be a quality upland hunt on lake Lowell sector? Can that be achievable? Can safety be achievable?
- Not time-dependent?
- Undisturbed quality is questionable for LL Unit.
- Some things not feasible.

PU Objective 2.3 Deer hunting islands

- Did not address because it is mostly status quo

WH Objective 4.1 Shrub steppe

- Similar between two units
- May not be achievable. Prioritize noxious weeds. Focus more on those than cheatgrass and Russian olive.
- Achievable depends on staffing and money

Maybe too much focus on getting back to native. Maybe instead look at non-native habitat. Better than what it is rather than completely native system

Group 2:

WH Objective 2.5.2 Riparian

- SMART.
- Definitions—enhance? Plant more? Make what have better?
- Protect?
- Better define...“where high concentrations of wildlife.”
- Support goal and vision
- Scientifically defensible. Some question about control of Russian olives
- What does riparian mean? When below the high water line? Doing enhancement there?

2.6.2 Hunting

- Quality-based, so struggled with measurability. Guess quality is defined. But much discussion on what is quality. Can be SMART, but qualitative makes it difficult
- Does support goal/vision
- Scientifically valid/feasible—no problems
- Quality can be measured with visitor satisfaction survey

Group 3:

WH 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4

- Mostly talked about objectives, not Q2 and 3
- Can you get rid of Eurasian milfoil if don't get rid of carp? How do those objectives under different goals potentially impact one another?
- Confusing that acreage #s aren't broken up into enhance, maintain, and protect acreages
- Maintain/protect mudflats...creation of mudflats. What do those words mean? Can we use fire to reach some of our objectives?
- Open water objective talked about moving #/acre rather than % for carp
- Tie x in this objective to specific lake elevation

PU 1.4, 3.1

- Squishy public use objectives...hard to be smart in same way as WH objectives. Need to link back to goal 1 more? Link more to interpretive aspects of 1.1 and 1.2

Group 4:

PU 1.1

- difficult to measure welcome/orient. Visitor use survey, number of features (signs, kiosks, visitor contact stations, etc.) No current time frame in the objective (but some in strategies)
- Availability of one-on-one staff contact should be elevated to objective
- Connect Hearts and minds...reword, to also connect people physically. Getting them to refuge and getting them there safely

PU 1.2

- Include irrigation history; revise to “potential interpretive themes”
- Need to prioritize strategies and put into interpretive plan

PU 4.1

- Include irrigation history, water conservation; revise to “potential interpretive themes”
- 80% increase. Instead, should be 80% understanding of the concepts.

PU 5.1

- Current objective says reduce by 10%/year. Instead 10% of previous year?