

Notes from Participant Handouts – Day 1

Group Notes – Hunting

Question 1: Should we have a deer hunt on the Refuge? If so why, and how would you provide a safe hunt that does not interfere with providing a refuge and breeding grounds for migratory birds and other wildlife?

Yes

- Hunting opportunity that will address depredation concerns
- Adaptive management potential
- Address current poaching issues
- Promotes wildlife interest
- Safety – archery (shotgun/blaze orange)
- Control hunt

No

- Adequate enforcement?
- Questionable hunter ethics
- Public safety – adequate space
- Interference with non-wildlife dependent uses

Question 2: How could a deer hunt be implemented without impairing other wildlife dependent activities?

Yes

- Consistent with existing hunting practices
- Precautions for non-hunting public
- Increase enforcement

No

- Non-hunting activity interference
- Awareness

Question 3: How would you improve the quality of upland/waterfowl hunting?

- Habitat enhancement
- Land acquisition/easement
- Permit system or sign in system – over crowding
- Safety
- Enforcement
- Predator control
- Goose hunting
- Open additional areas
- Permanent blinds
- AM or PM hunts – not both

Question 4: How would you encourage ethical and sportsmanlike behavior?

- Continued enforcement
- Education
- Spanking

- Info packet to permit holders/orientation
- Sign-in permit displayed
- More severe penalties
- Fees

Individual Notes - Hunting

Question 1: Should we have a deer hunt on the Refuge? If so why, and how would you provide a safe hunt that does not interfere with providing a refuge and breeding grounds for migratory birds and other wildlife?

- Yes have a deer hunt on the Refuge
- I believe an archery hunt and cross bow hunt
- I don't believe guns would be safe for the people that live near the boundaries of the lake

Group Notes – Upland

- (new idea) Provide area and opportunity for hunting dog training
- (new idea) utilized large goat grazing herds to open up and improve habitat for wildlife, education, observation, and weed control

Question 1: How can non-wildlife-dependent land uses of Lake Lowell be managed to benefit and/or increase the understanding of the natural and cultural resources of the refuge?

- Increase audience give guidance with kiosks and signage
- Mitigate impacts with trade offs (users agree to improve habitat)
- (new idea) allow some non-wildlife uses on special announced dates and areas (ice skating)

Question 2: How can all land uses of Lake Lowell unit be managed to assure that they do not interfere with or detract from providing a refuge and breeding grounds for migratory birds and other wildlife.

- Segregate activities and identify crucial wildlife areas
- Segregate by time and space
- (new idea) by providing more surface water access for non-motorized craft will reduce shoreline pressure on Big 6 activities
- (new idea) Establish south side trail

Individual Notes - Upland (need susan to decipher notes)

Question 1: How can non-wildlife-dependent land uses of Lake Lowell be managed to benefit and/or increase the understanding of the natural and cultural resources of the refuge?

- Interpretive kiosks and signage
- Increasing audience, mitigation – tradeoffs.

Jogging – Competitive (Organized Group):

- If the competitors mitigated an offset or trade would it be allowed?
- Don't see it

- Conflicting other users – if on walking trails.
- Unless only annual event
- To qualify to hold event, group has to do something to benefit refuge – invasive weed pull

Walking and Jogging – non-competitive

- Signage for walking instructions promote interpretation, education opportunities with signage.
- Provide opportunities for env ed and cultural and natural resource interp.
- Promote walking as the preferred mode of experiencing the Refuge?
- Better observation.
- Dirt trail on south shore for ped. with interpretive signs (3). South side has parking areas
- Not encourage – but manage.
- This is not a right, but a privilege.
- Identify invasive weeds at start of trail and provide disposal – “these are weeds you are free to pull”

Horseback Riding:

- Non-competitive (2)
- Managed impacts
- Would be unloading sites conflicts.
- Designated trails
- Incidental to big 6, but larger impact (special trails, unloading facilities)
- Mitigation
- May have user conflicts
- Exotic weeds
- Waste
- Have to consider facilities
- Require on trail.
- Higher observation post – so can wildlife watch better.

Dog Walking:

- Same benefits as walking
- Increases audience for potentially promoting wildlife interpretation
- Need to define “leashed” (50’, e-collar, etc)

Bicycling:

- Managed, non-competitive
- Same benefits as walking
- Going a lot faster, so less chance of rec
- Mitigation – Once/year bicyclist weed pull event

Ice Skating and Ice Fishing

- Safety issues may require closure announce special openings
- Don't see much opportunity for education
- Refuge sponsored event.
- Emphasizes wonders of wintering wildlife.

Cross Country Skiing

- Safety issues may require closure announce special openings
- Not on lake
- Promote in good snow year for wildlife obs, etc
- Emphasizes wonders of wintering wildlife

Picnicking

- Interpretive signs in picnic areas
- Get info on garbage cans/bags
- Saturday interpretive programs at visitor use sites
- Is alcohol a problem?
- If limit alcohol, will upset a lot of people

Group Events

- Manage in certain areas
- Should be allowed but doesn't benefit – mitigate in some way.
- People who've never been here before and come back
- Require a permit

Beach Use

- Should be allowed but doesn't benefit – mitigate in some way.
- People who've never been here before and come back

New Use - Dog Training

- Possibly provide some fields as well
- Allow use of pigeons
- Train retriever in ponds
- In long term, provide some ponds specifically for dog training
- Off-leash for training

Question 2: How can all land uses of Lake Lowell unit be managed to assure that they do not interfere with or detract from providing a refuge and breeding grounds for migratory birds and other wildlife.

- Identify crucial breeding, loafing, migration sites and strategically ID rec spots.
- Need to manage [urw] and duration
- Identify and segregate sites for uses

- Goat herds on south side

Hunting

- Segregate for conflicting activities and key wildlife habitat

Fishing

- Designate sites and dates.
- Provide parking areas at sites.
- Increase shore fishing areas
- More fishing docks!
- Strategically placed fishing access
- Gotts Point
- Signage at bottom of trail to mark off water access 4-6' wide
- Better signs re: fishing closure in hunting season.
- If re-open Gotts Point, will decrease social trails.
- Continue use of boats for fishing to decrease social trails
- Better non-motorized launch site for Gotts Point (ADA accessible to decrease erosion as well)
- Gotts Point access provide superior fishing opportunities
- Shoreline fish below Visitor Center – create bank fishing - may be difficult to keep
- Make another place more attraction – manage special for fishing

Ice Fishing

- Restrict to 100 yd from shore, or some such

Wildlife Observation and Photography

- Encourage more from water
- Paddle craft to decrease on-shore pressure.

Environmental Education and Interpretation

- Interpretive signage everywhere

Walking and Jogging – Non-competitive

- Require to stick to existing trails

Dog Walking

- Define leashed – must be standard length, e-collars?

Bicycling

- Speed limits (2)
- Enforcement issues (2)
- Gravel, speed bumps, curves (2)
- Mitigate idea pick P.V.
- Increase chance of facilities, big 6 and decrease impact to wildlife.

Ice Skating

- Potential disturbance if on lake.
- Only in front of dam?
- Safety
- Don't increase number of people

Beach Use

- Gotts Point is also popular
- Restrict to open, non-riparian areas to decrease impacts
- Not on point – pretty deep

Question 3: How can non-wildlife-dependent land uses of the Lake Lowell unit be accommodated without impairing existing or future wildlife-dependent recreational uses (ie minimize conflicts between user groups)?

- Segregation in time and space

Swimming

- Swimming may be allowed only in designated areas.

Walking and jogging – non-competitive

- Continue some [urw] practices

Picnicking

- Segregated from wildlife dependent activities

Beach Use

- Perhaps only allow in designated areas

Group Notes – Surface Water

- Wants follow up to all those
- Rebuttal system
- Want to be continually involvement in process

Question 1: How can non-wildlife-dependent surface water uses of Lake Lowell be managed to benefit and/or increase the understanding of the natural and cultural resources of the refuge?

- Organize user groups to develop/deliver [education program w/revocable permit]
- Timing/season of use/activity
- Location considerations
- Boundaries –i.e no wake, no activity etc.
- Noise abatement
- Water level dictating activity
- Repts provide specific [information from groups]

- Bass Boats – (groups, clubs) contribute funds and support go to wildlife. (all from motorized boating)
- Help provide data, that helps fish and game.
- They also help remove unwanted species.
- Habitat improvement for all species
- Although birds (wildlife) first has interest in total conservation – appreciate data that comes from other groups such as bass fisherman.
- Motorized boating provides access to areas people can't get to because trails are not there.
- Motorized boating provides access for mobility impaired people
- We need more information on how many boats are on the lake at any given time, and how they effect the birds (waterfowl), and trends.
- Has the migration patterns changed?
- Because of construction around the lake has the birds and waterfowl changed coming to the lake?
- Assisting mechanisms mitigate current circumstances
- Fee implementation aid to refuge for monitoring rules and reg of lake; administering use and maintaining the property
- ** If recreationist leave, would lose funds that contribute to lake
- Fees used for interpretation and education
- Explain no wakes zones w/signage
- Some species may not be affected; need to see
- Trends; don't have affects

Question 2: How can all surface water uses of Lake Lowell be managed to assure that they do not interfere with or detract from providing a refuge and breeding grounds for migratory birds and other wildlife?

- Fee System – Education System (parks and Rec – County)
- Contributed Service – Habitat projects – data/survey
- Sticker/stamp/enforcement
- Permit not necessarily tied to fee (revocable)
- New uses RC – aircraft/boats
- Old boats vs new boats; 2 vs 4 stroke
- Larger boats hold larger numbers, so more people seeing lake, education factor
- **Funds from local clubs support
- ** take tours on lake
- Families on lake, respect resource, benefits
- Have youth undivided attention on boats; education
- Uses contribute to appreciation; particularly youth
- Human use benefit (get involved in outdoor recreation)
- **Promote use/recognition of refuge
- Concessionaire to interpret/educate

- ** What about something like hunter education class/ to educate folks on resources to get license/permit.
- Partnership w/boater education groups to get program
- Need permit to access refuge – tied to education program
- Outreach strategies to groups that may not typically use lake
- **fee implement – less reliance on Congress budget
- Viewing platform; audio interpretation program – cd/radio talks about refuge resources
- Wouldn't want to restrict in time b/c some groups prefer different times
- Would like to open lake at night; discussion with current LE about situation
 - May see wildlife not otherwise seen
- If have fee/permit system may eliminate LE concerns, because these people have buy-in; less vandalism if patrols
- Wake not big impact because wind cause same condition
- Wildlife sensitivity to people at times of day, location, and seasons.

Question 3: How can non-wildlife-dependent surface-water uses be accommodated without impairing existing or future wildlife-dependent uses?

- Buffer zones
- **the answer is not to say no to something
- Could apply spatial zoning for different uses; would be hard to enforce
- Use GIS and colored buoys to ID sensitive wildlife areas and areas that are preferable for recreational users
- Identify conflicts and their magnitude and location
- **maximum speed for restriction, if option, not applied selectively
- Inform public that there is going to be a tournament; responsibility on bass groups to refuge, so refuge can inform users
- Minimize number of tournaments that occur on lake
- Zone lake for tournament – lake too small
- Restrict number of boats that can participate in tournament
- Night tournaments, est 40 entries and one boat, wake may travel 200 yds
- How contribute? Funds; youth involvement
- Don't restrict horsepower or speed? Eliminates users.
- Speed is a better option for reduction
- Put decibel levels in place
- **less than 45 mph has a wake; faster you go less wake
- Have updated guidelines for what allowed as far as emissions, engine type
- Economic impacts, 2 stokes going out on own.
- Allow hunting, but do boats have that much impact who kills more birds.
- Could non-wildlife dep users use more the center of the lake so segregated from "big 6 users
- Calif example: days are regulated to particular user; struggle is ctrl of users and oversight

- **add specific ramp for human powered vessels; mentions Gotts Point then provide access to no-wake zone; tied to permit; maybe less money for permit
- Permit money could be tiered to use

Individual Notes - Surface Water

Question 1: How can non-wildlife-dependent surface water uses of Lake Lowell be managed to benefit and/or increase the understanding of the natural and cultural resources of the refuge?

- All Uses need to increase understanding because they do not benefit wildlife.
- It would be very reasonable for all of these groups to organize so that they can commit service hours to the Refuge besides just fees. This is kind of a buy in philosophy. So as to help educate more of the community to what goes on at the Lake (Refuge).

Motorized Boating

- Organized bass clubs (over 16 involved with State Federations – over 500 members) are required to maintain conservation officers and funds. These are used to improve fish habitat through things like structure plants and shoreline improvements.
 - These funds and volunteer assistance are only applied to waters that allow motorized boating and bass fishing.
 - These habitat improvements benefit multiple fish and wildlife species
 - National grant funds are also available
- Assist with invasive weed and species control INCREASE
- Bass tournaments provide data to F&G and F&W on fish quality, quantity, etc.
- Tournament caught fish are released alive after treatment for stress and skin diseases.
- Organized bass clubs also assist in acquiring desirable species to re-stock or supplement refuge stocking plans.
- They also assist in the removal of undesirable fish species (such as carp).
- Why not keep the lake open through November 30th?
- Set aside areas to protect wildlife (no wake, buffer zones, closed areas)
- Cooperative surface water management – partnerships for optimal reservoir conditions
- Service or user fee designated for education
- Required environmental education for boaters
- Revocable permits if privileges are abused
- Boaters – Sticker & mandatory education
- User fee that supports education of user groups and enforcement
- Limited to areas determined to be suitable (not affecting nesting or foraging wildlife – waterfowl, raptors)
- After reading the various species noted and defined I am unaware of how many of these waterfowl are threatened by motorized boating. A review of the map shows (or appears to show) that most sensitive for the birds are isolated.
- However because boating is important for recreation, education, economic purposes, I would suggest that is very important to keep the boating, but possibly have fees for boaters that could go to the Refuge to better support the efforts of taking care of the

wildlife. These funds can also help cover the expense of the county enforcing and helping protect these sensitive wildlife areas.

- Discontinuing recreation on the lake is really not an option. The lake is appreciated by most recreationists who help support the lake in many ways.

Water-Skiing

- Water-skiing and wakeboarding are good clean sports enjoyed on the lake. Our youth and families are so important. These kinds of activities keep families close. Time in our boat together is generally not matched by any other kind of activity. Think about it. What else can you do that keeps your family that close together all day. Not much. These activities are good and wholesome.
- Boy Scouts can even obtain water-skiing merit badges and I think a wakeboarding one as well.
- The purchase of boats and other products associated with these sports also help our economy.
- It should never be assumed that the people don't love and appreciate our wildlife. Their financial contributions and volunteer efforts can be very positive to helping the Refuge over the years.

Personal Water Craft

- They can contribute to the success of the lake if they choose to by paying fees that can help boost the efforts of the Fish and Wildlife
- The people must stay within the guide lines and areas permitted.

Swimming

- The water quality of Lake Lowell is scary at times. However over the last 100 years thousands and thousands of people have not only swam there, but have learned to swim there.
- I'm not sure how I feel about charging for swimming. There are some things that are really a God given right.
- Allowing people to swim down in these small areas seems like a reasonable [thing] to do.
- Once again these people learnt to appreciate the lake.

Non-motorized boating

- Once again I don't believe the wildlife is threatened by non-motorized boats or canoes.
- However the lake is a wonderful place to enjoy like any park or recreation area.
- However it costs many to maintain. Those who would want to use need to help contribute to the expense of keeping it nice and helping protect the wildlife

Kite Boarding

- Localized use
 - Gotts Point
 - 5th access point when water is 70% full
- Not compatible (appears to be a predator to nesting birds)

- I have a hard time trying to think of how kite boarding could ever be destructive to fish or fowl.
- To enjoy the lake and to be able to take advantage of it, a parking or boating permit would need to be purchased to help the Refuge.

Windsurfing

- Localized use
- I have a hard time trying to think of how windsurfing could ever be destructive to fish or fowl.
- To enjoy the lake and to be able to take advantage of it, a parking or boating permit would need to be purchased to help the Refuge.

Sailing

- I have a hard time trying to think of how sailing could ever be destructive to fish or fowl.
- To enjoy the lake and to be able to take advantage of it, a parking or boating permit would need to be purchased to help the Refuge.

New Uses:

- Radio controlled aircraft, boats, submarines, sailboats
 - Great for retired vets and pilots
 - Seniors and youth participation
 - Increase understanding
- Education about impacts to wildlife

Question 2: How can all surface water uses of Lake Lowell be managed to assure that they do not interfere with or detract from providing a refuge and breeding grounds for migratory birds and other wildlife?

Waterfowl hunting

- I'm not much of a hunter; and I have no problem with the hunting, if the Refuge believes it's fine.
- It is hard for me to understand how hunting represents one of the big 6 and there could be any concerns with the other activities (boating, waterskiing, etc...). The very idea that hunting can take place would seem as though the other boating activities would be fine.
- I'm sure that just a few hunters would average more in the death of wildlife let alone (4% -6,271 hunters). Once again I have no problem with the hunters. They do should contribute in the form of special parking or hunting permits that contribute to the refuge.
- Hunters would need to stay out of restricted areas – those areas might need to be marked better.

Motorized Boating

- Closed/no wake zones in shorelines and deep water to meet habitat requirements of all species

- Mandatory education for boaters (wake-zones, wildlife needs)
 - Must be easy for users to access (online option?)
 - Needs to have accountability (e.g. test to get permit)
- Of course motorized boats need to follow the rules with regards to wake zones.
- However please keep in mind I have seen wakes various times during the summer months that can swamp a boat if not off the lake in a hurry. It is a fact at many boats get caught in these waves and sink. In other words the wildlife must contact these same wakes (waves) which a far more destructive, and last longer than any boat wake.

Non-Motorized boating

- Non-motorized should be held to parking permits and rules that motorized boats are.
- They also need to stay out of sensitive areas.

Fishing

- Have not apparently affected to date as populations seem to be successful – data?
- Provide forage through habitat improvement
- Fishermen are not much different from hunters. I can't see what much harm they cause.
- Once again, there are areas that might need to be marked so that that not effect the wildlife.
- They do in one form or another need to contribute to the refuge if they expect to use it.

Water-Skiing

- Closed/no wake zones in shorelines and deep water to meet habitat requirements of all species
- Mandatory education for boaters (wake-zones, wildlife needs)
 - Must be easy for users to access (online option?)
 - Needs to have accountability (e.g. test to get permit)
- Time periods for use 10:30am – 9:15pm (a time prior to sunset)
- Contract season to reasonable season for comfortable skiing (e.g. June – August)
- Not compatible
- Funds raised by parking permits or other means can help mark certain areas as no wake zones to better protect the wildlife. However, summer winds are far greater than boaters make.

Personal Water Craft

- Closed/no wake zones in shorelines and deep water to meet habitat requirements of all species
- Mandatory education for boaters (wake-zones, wildlife needs)
 - Must be easy for users to access (online option?)
 - Needs to have accountability (e.g. test to get permit)
- Time periods for use 10:30am – 9:15pm (a time prior to sunset)
- Contract season to reasonable season for comfortable use (e.g. June – August)
- Not Compatible

Swimming

- User fee to maintain areas

Other

- Radio controlled boats and aircraft use mufflers on engines and/or electric motors (noise abatement)
- Zones for Use

Question 3: How can non-wildlife-dependent surface-water uses be accommodated without impairing existing or future wildlife-dependent uses?

Motorized Boating

- If heavy use occurs, may have to go to specific day for specific user groups. All should have access to weekends periodically.

New Uses:

- RC's could have a designated area
- May need to be allowed at specific times/days
- Most fuel engines have mufflers and are quieter than 2 stroke boat motors
- 4 stroke motors are as quiet as most boats or less
- RC boats can retrieve air craft