Notes from Participant Handouts – Day 2

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?

- No interference with breeding birds
- Do we know we have a harvestable number of deer?
- Are the deer causing a problem?
- Too much public infrastructure around Lake – safety issue
- If there is a clear problem, let management take care of it – Alternative removal
- Wounded deer may cause public views issues
- Archery hunts don't typically cause problems. Should not concern management
- Need population estimate and target numbers before hunts are allowed.
- Controlled hunt – limited numbers of hunters
- Could archery hunt reduce deer population?

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

- Wounded deer may cause public views issues
- Need population estimate and target numbers before hunts are allowed.
- Could archery hunt reduce deer population?
- It seems that hunting is given more of a priority than the other "Big 6". They are supposed to be given equal consideration.
- Educate hunters about other wildlife dependent users in the area
- First come, first serve
- Some non-hunters are not willing to take the risk/conflict during hunting season.

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

- Is the current amount of "refuge"(security) for all species (eg C. goose) suffiecient to meet the goals of (meeting the needs of wildlife) the Refuge?
- More land?
- Are we maximizing the amount of resources for migratory birds? Food & farming.
- Reduce crowding by draw system - permanent blind may be needed in the future
- Plant more crops for both waterfowl and upland birds
- Contract or force account farming
- Russian olive removal may be impacting quail population

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

- Ban motorized duck decoys – ethics question/unfair advantage
- Refuge use permit
    - Good enforcement tool
    - Reduce violations and bad behavior (sky busting)
- Limit number of shells allowed in the field

- Reduce crowding by draw system - permanent blind may be needed in the future

Transcendent

- Are we meeting the purpose of the Refuge? Need to Evaluate
- Do we have a sustainable population for hunting upland game
- Management needs to consider wildlife use of non-native species before removal

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?

- No hunting unless population exceeds the carrying capacity of the remaining lands.

Question 2: How could a deer hunt be implemented without impairing other wildlife-dependent recreational uses? Also consider potential conflicts between a proposed deer hunt and existing non-wildlife dependent uses.

I am aware that hunting is one of the 6 priority uses for NWRS lands and as such, is assumed to be less questioned as a public use. However, since it is to be given equal consideration to the other 5 priority uses, it seems to me that it, and the others, must be subjected to scrutiny somewhat like the non-priority uses are. Most conspicuous is the potential for conflicts with wildlife viewing, environmental education and perhaps interpretation.

It seems important to recognize that these last mentioned uses serve the purpose of adding to the user's aesthetic experiences in life…certain an admirable benefit made more possible by living near DFNWR. A few examples to clarify: 1) I still remember the very first time I heard a bunch of coyotes howling one night in the 1960's in Teton NP. And now, I hear them with just as much pleasure some nights near the DFNWR. 2) It remains an excitement and a pleasure to see deer: even though I've seen them time and again over the years. I have noticed many times other folks stopped in their cars, looking out the windows at deer, eagles, other birds on the refuge. So – these experiences are cherished by many as well…our lives are the richer.

At last nights session, we were told the history of DFNWR area included deer and elk…I hadn't known that. In Teddy Roosevelt's time, that would have been the case. And most likely, if there were elk, there were wolves. What wonder to witness then! No wonder the place was designated a refuge.

The years since have seen the wolves, the elk and I suppose other wildlife crowded and hunted to their current state of complete elimination. I know there is too little space left for restoring those species. I see that as a permanent loss to the environment and the aesthetic experience available to ourselves. The "where appropriate restoration of" portion of the MISSION statement is undoable, to our great loss.

These thoughts lead me to the hunting priority again. I think whatever hunting is allowed should be subject to serving a purpose that is unique and important to the mission statement. Hunting to cull excessive numbers for available habitat which remains makes sense. But hunting just for the thrill of the kill, less so, if at all. An example of the latter might be the shooting of mourning doves….I might be wrong but I believe few of those shot ever get to one's dinner table…there is so little meat. It's more an allowed target practice, isn't it?

To my knowledge, the deer population is not excessive, not problematic. I'm inclined then to say it should not be hunted unless it gets too large.

As to hunting regulations, I am reluctant to turn over rule, season, limit setting to the Idaho Fish and Game folks because I believe their purpose is more aligned to the hunter's interest in having something to shoot at than the non-hunter's interest in sharing the environment with the amazing array of life forms we found sharing our spaces. Governor Otter's wolf views are abhorrent to many of us, yet shared by many hunters who would kill but not eat the meat of that threatened species. So, if hunting regulations are not set by the DFNWR folks, then perhaps either that should change or hunting should not be allowed on the Refuge. (Who, by the way, defines the mourning dove as a "game bird" rather than a "songbird"?) Can songbirds be hunted? (They are even smaller targets!). [The following was written in the margin of the page next to this paragraph] Science, not politics should drive such decision making .

Shouldn't those who hunt be required to pick up their cartridge casings? Seems it is a form of litter…not enhancing the quality of experiences of others. But how can that be enforced seems a question to be pondered.

Group Notes – Upland

Cross country – non competition

- Orientation and education required prior to activity
    - This would increase the value and appreciation of the refuge
- Map, seasonal use (fall)
- Practice only
- Require coaches to actively volunteer to educate, monitor and enforce Refuge rules
- Encourage volunteer services of runners ~ weed, trash
- Potential of disrupting fall migration and niches.
- Buffer – trail – greenbelt around Refuge
    - Potential partnerships
- Urban Encroachment
- Historical Use
- Use Controled

Horseback Riding

- Non-group riding

- Education of maintained roads and trails for riding
- Requirements to clean up or contain manure
- Designate clearly area of use
- Educate Horseman Associations and local riders and encourage monitoring and self enforcement of refuge rules
- Natural activity with minimal wildlife disturbance

Dog Walking

- Designate a restricted area
- Disallow Completely?
- Educate dog associations
- Educate on behalf of wildlife habitat; restrictions due to sanctuary/refuge
- We love dogs!!
- Dog walking can be educational of natural and cultural resources.

Bicycling

- Impact - Noxious weed seed movement
- Impact - Erosion of trails/habitat
- Impact - Encouragement of larger groups
- Impact – Mountain Biking jumps/terrain
- Solution – Seasonal Use – non winter
- Solution – Restrict to Tio Lane to Gotts Pt and other paved only roads.

Picnicking

- Encourage public participation in monitoring use by 10% that chose not to care for refuge
- Keep to designated areas
- Partnerships – once per week SILD for trash pickup
- Fee – Day use

Group Events

- Impacts to wildlife
- Damage to facilities

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?

- Individual Use adds to and promotes understanding and benefits of Refuge.
- Education requirement for use

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.

- Designated areas, education, seasonal use
- But – Enforcement needed.
- Difficulty of some activities being compatible with wildlife and other activities

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)?

- Designated areas, limit or exclude group activities,
- Seasonal use
- Law enforcement needed.

Individual Notes - Upland (need susan to decifer 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?

Jogging – Competitive (Organized Group):

- For practices only; not meets.
- Require orientation for coaches and team members to provide exposure.
- People learning birds
- Require participate in one work day/year
- Kids who don't have access to outside, outside of school time
- How much instruction before visit – train team
- Coach require training and be present
- If don't follow rules, lose privileges

Horseback Riding:

- No groups
- Require Education – video.
- Parking area with trash receptacle.
- Does increase wildlife viewing. See more wildlife on a horse than on feet or bike
- Designate an area

Dog Walking:

- Require Education.
- Parking area with trash receptacle.
- Does increase wildlife viewing.

Bicycling:

- Maybe not a mode for wildlife watching – Advocate disagrees
- Require Education.
- Parking area with trash receptacle.
- Does increase wildlife viewing.

Group Events

- Theme – exclude group events.
- Impact other people's ability to use it.

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.

Jogging – Competitive (Organized Group):

- No competitive meets should be allowed.
- Practices allowed with orientation.
- Limited dates and times.
- Use of social trails, no coach [problem]
- Orientation re times and where can use
- Coach must go with
- Moving seeds down social trails [problem]
- Limit number of days (wildlife disturbance concern)

Horseback Riding:

- Gotts Pt to Teal Lane
- Clean up parking lot poop
- Poop-catcher basket?
- Wildlife doesn't seem to be disturbed by horses

Dog Walking:

- Leash only
- Provide poop bags and trash receptables
- High fines for off-leash
- No way to enforce
- Leaning toward no dog
- Only allow on dams?

Bicycling

- Disturbance – tendency for off-trail
- Closed in winter
- Only Gotts – Tio and paved

Picnicking

- Designated areas
- Fee to mitigate impact – but low income

Group Events:

- Group events would detract and interfere with providing a refuge for migratory birds and wildlife and impact negatively existing wildlife dependent uses such as bird watching, etc.

Beach Use

- Designated areas

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)?

Jogging – Competitive (Organized Group):

- Require coach to be a volunteer
- Limited dates and times.
- Keep on roads only!
- Concern for wildlife observers
- Encourage dialog between conflicting user groups

Horseback Riding:

- Don't allow group horse activities.
- Require clean-up in parking areas.

Bicycling:

- Limit from Teal Ln to Gott's Pt. and paved roads.
- No Use January – March

Picnicking:

- Trash and Vandalism.
- Keep partnership with sherrif's department to clean up.
- Small fees for day use to pay for enforcement.

Group Events:

- Group events would detract and interfere with providing a refuge for migratory birds and wildlife and impact negatively existing wildlife dependent uses such as bird watching, etc.
- Exclude these activities – let them go to new Canyon County Park [probably means City of Caldwell Park at 10th and Orchard]

Group Notes – Surface Water

- Noise reduction policy
- Ski jet boat

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?

- Education – educate them
- More information boards at ramps
- On the ground interpretation
- Leaflets
- County sheriffs do education

- IDPR – boats registered, education grant
- Use IDPR mailing list to send out information/education
- Whoever stop boat (mussel inspection etc) be educators
- Outreach to organized clubs, kids groups
- Organize group of volunteers to be on-site educator
- People ID where use their boat – target them – very accessible group
- RESPONSIBLE SHARED USE
- >16ft have to register, but all have to have invasive species sticker
- Enter point for some youth because increases understanding of the environment; natural environment.

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?

- Extend no wake
- Seasonal use zones – geared at particular use
    - Big 6 – Lake Wide
- Times of year
- Zoning to protect habitat
- Eliminate uses/significantly reduce
- Enforcement
    - Can Canyon County write/codify federal statute
    - USFWS deputize others
    - Seasonal law enforcement
- Limit number of people on lake, possible
- Reservation system; permit
    - Lot of resources to administer
    - Difficult to enforce
    - Refuge currently issues SUP
    - Only use for nonwildlife dependent, not Big 6

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

- Ban music – enforcement
- Are non-wildlife dependent impacting Big 6?
- Special use day for Big 6 only
- Emphasize Big 6 more
- Adaptive management
    - Start w/education, encourage respect by groups, before enforcement/regs
    - If not work, increase addressing problem.

Other:

- Economic impact
    - Refuge not responsible for that, meet the mission of USFWS

- What is economic impact?
    - Gas, food, boats, etc.
- Does refuge users have economic input?
- Quality of life considerations, not measurable
    - Definition of quality of life is different
- Don't see negative impact of swimming, but H2O quality impacts to swimmers

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?

Motorized Boating:

- Restrict motor horse power or require electric motors.
- Used for fishing and wildlife viewing only
- I can't see how roaring back and forth across the lake contributes to wildlife and the noise certainly detracts from others enjoying birding, hiking, picnicking, etc.

Water-Skiing, Wakeboarding, etc:

- Incompatible with Refuge mission.
- Noise interferes with peace and quiet of hikers, bird watchers, and photographers using the Refuge.
- Contributes nothing to wildlife.

Personal Watercraft:

- Restrict motor horse power or require electric motors.
- Used for fishing and wildlife viewing only
- I can't see how roaring back and forth across the lake contributes to wildlife and the noise certainly detracts from others enjoying birding, hiking, picnicking, etc.
- Incompatible with Refuge mission.
- Noise interferes with peace and quiet of hikers, bird watchers, and photographers using the Refuge.
- Contributes nothing to wildlife.

Swimming:

- Keep at present designated areas

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?

- I am very concerned over the decreasing numbers of heron, grebes and Canada Geese. We need to look at how increasing recreational motorized activity may be contributing to their decline.