SCOPING REPORT SUMMARY:
DEER FLAT NWR COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN
May 12, 2011

SCOPING EFFORT

Public involvement was sought in the early stages of development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). Public involvement strategies included face-to-face meetings with community organizations, local, state and federal agencies, elected officials (or their aides), and Refuge users. To inform the broader public, invite discussion and solicit feedback, the planning team also held open houses, provided a twice-a-month call-in line, and conducted weekly on-site field outreach. Field outreach included distributing pamphlets to visitors and engaging them in conversation regarding the CCP. The Refuge also maintained a website where CCP information could be found and where the public could print out comment forms or submit emails during the scoping phase. Below is a brief summary of the events, meetings, and outreach tools that were used in our scoping public involvement efforts.

During the Public Scoping phase of the CCP three issues appeared to be of most interest to Refuge stakeholders, Surface Water Recreation, Upland Recreation, and Hunting. Work sessions were created to continue discussion around these themes. Commenters with differing viewpoints and those that appeared willing to look for solutions to difficult issues, as well as local partners that had voiced interest in these themes, were invited to join these topic based work sessions. The Refuge invited approximately 130 people (or their representatives) to attend the work sessions on September 23 - September 25. Of those 130 invitees, 47 attended at least some part of the work sessions. Six members of the public also viewed the work sessions at some point during the three days. To view a summary of the work sessions, please visit the Deer Flat NWR Planning web page at http://www.fws.gov/deerflat/refugeplanning.html.

Invitation to the Tribes

- May 27, 2010. Letters requesting tribal involvement were sent to the Shoshone-Paiute, Shoshone-Bannock, and Nez Perce Tribes. No responses were received.

Meetings and Communication with Federal, State, or Local Elected Officials and Federal, State, or Local Agencies

- May 27, 2010. Letters requesting involvement on the CCP Interagency Coordinating Team were sent to US Senators and Representatives, State of Idaho Senators and Representatives within the Lake Lowell districts, the Governor of Idaho, Canyon County Commissioners, the Mayors of Caldwell and Nampa, Bureau of Reclamation Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, Canyon County Parks Department, and the Boise Project – Board of Control.
- July 1, 2010. First meeting of the Interagency Coordinating Team. Those in attendance included representatives from Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, Bureau of Reclamation, Canyon County Parks, Recreation and Waterways, Canyon County Commissioners, Senator Crapo's Office, State Representative for District 13, and the Nampa Mayor's Office.
- August 2, 2010. Monthly Update Emailed to Interagency Coordinating Team
- August 3, 2010. Scheduled an informational presentation for Canyon County employees. None attended.
- August 4, 2010. Provided informational presentation for employees of the State of Idaho. 4

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employees attended.

- August 11, 2010. Met with Idaho Department of Lands.
- September 9, 2010. Monthly Update Emailed to Interagency Coordinating Team
- October 8, 2010. Monthly Update Emailed to Interagency Coordinating Team
- November 10, 2010. Monthly Update Emailed to Interagency Coordinating Team
- November 30, 2010. 2nd meeting of the Interagency Coordinating Team.

Presentations with Community/Business Organizations

- June 10, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to Caldwell Kiwanis.
- June 10, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to Southwest Idaho Birders Association.
- June 16, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to Idaho Bass Federation Nation.
- July 10, 2010. Briefly spoke at the Premier Bass Tournament weigh-in.
- July 12, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the board of Golden Eagle Audubon.
- July 13, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Southern Idaho Sailing Association.
- July 14, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Idaho-Oregon Snake River Water Trail.
- July 20, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the SWID Resource C&D.
- July 21, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Friends of Deer Flat Refuge.
- July 26, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Intermountain Jet Boat Association.
- July 27, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Kiwanis Club.
- August 4, 2010. Informational CCP presentation at the Boise Watershed Teacher Workshop.
- August 9, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Western White Water Association.
- August 10, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Idaho Waterfowl Association.
- August 10, 2010. Spoke briefly at the Caldwell Chamber of Commerce luncheon.
- August 13, 2010. Spoke to a float plane club.
- August 18, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Caldwell Rotary Club.
- August 23, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway.
- August 26, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Nampa Association of Realtors.
- August 31, 2010. Informational CCP presentation to the Caldwell Optimist Club.

Public Open Houses/Scoping Sessions

- July 28, 2010. Open House from 12:00pm – 3:00pm at the Refuge Visitor Center.
- August 20, 2010. Open House from 10:00am – 6:00pm at the Refuge Visitor Center.
- August 21, 2010. Open House from 10:00am – 3:00pm at the Refuge Visitor Center.

Field Outreach

- June 26, 2010. Staff outreach at Upper Dam East.
- July 1, 2010. Staff outreach at Gotts Point and Lower Dam Recreation Area
- July 10, 2010. Staff outreach at Gotts Point, the Lower Dam Recreation Area and the Lavender Festival
- July 11, 2010. Staff outreach at the Lavender Festival
- July 22, 2010. Staff outreach at the Lower Dam Recreation Area
- July 30, 2010. Staff outreach at the Lower Dam Recreation Area, the Upper Dam, and Gotts Point.
- August 8, 2010. Staff outreach at Access #7, Lower Dam Recreation Area, Upper Dam East and Upper Dam West.
- August 14, 2010. Staff outreach at the Lower Dam Recreation Area.
- August 27, 2010. Staff outreach at the Upper Dam West, Upper Dam East, Lower Dam Recreation Area and Gotts Point

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- Work SessionsSeptember 23 – 24, 2010. Work Session 1
- September 24 – 25, 2010. Work Session 2

CCP Hotline

- June 23, 2010. Available 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- July 14, 2010. Available 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- July 28, 2010. Available 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- August 11, 2010. Available 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- August 25, 2010. Available 5:00pm – 7:00pm
- September 8, 2010. Available 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Workshops / Field Reviews

- June 16-19, 2008. Wildlife and Habitat Management Field Review on Refuge. Approx. 30 participants.
- September 9-11, 2008. Public Uses Field Review on Refuge. Approx. 25 participants.

Press Coverage *(April 1, 2010 - September 30, 2010):*

- April 14, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Deer Flat Prepares to Update Conservation Guidelines"
- May 02, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "County Seeks Full Access to Popular Recreation Spot"
- May 05, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Public Can Give Views on Lake Lowell Water"
- May 13, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Find Way to Open Gates at Gotts Point"
- June 16, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Lake Lowell Flush with Water"
- June 21, 2010. Press Release was sent to local press outlets informing the public of the start of Pubic Scoping and promoting the CCP Hotline.
- June 21, 2010. Idaho Statesman, "Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge Kicks Off Comprehensive Planning Process, Wants Public Comment"
- July 08, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Work begins on Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge Plan.
- July 19, 2010. Press release was sent to local press outlets informing them of the July and August Open Houses.
- July 24, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Refuge Meeting Plan Set for Wednesday"
- July 29, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Refuge Seeks to Save Water Sports"
- August 10, 2010. KIVITV, "Boaters Beware in Lake Lowell"
- August 10, 2010 KBOI AM 670, "Officials Urge Public Comment on Deer Flat National Refuge plan.
- August 11, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Help Save Recreation on Lake Lowell"
- August 12, 2010. KTRV-TV, "Lake Lowell Activities Debate"
- August 13, 2010. KIVI-TV, "Public to Weigh in on Lake Lowell Management Plan"
- August 14, 2010. KBOI, Story about boating, open houses, and comments.
- August 14, 2010. KBOI 2, Change "is coming" to Lake Lowell, Boaters Fear Worst"
- August 14, 2010. KTVB, "Public Weighs in on Future of Boating at Lake Lowell"
- August 15, 2010. KTVB, "Wildlife Refuge Could Curtail Water Sports on Popular Lake
- August 15, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Crowd defends Lake Use"
- August 17, 2010. Idaho Statesman online blog, "Boaters gear up for fight at Lake Lowell"
- August 24, 2010. KTRV-TV "Canyon County Commissioners Call on Citizens"
- August 26, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "'Save Lake Lowell' Meeting Today"
- August 27, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "'Save Lake Lowell' Group Meets"

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- August 29, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, Opinion, "Lake's Uses Must Be Balanced"
- August 31, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, Editorial Opinion, "Burden of Proof Should Fall on Closing Refuge"
- August 31, 2010, KBOI AM 670, Sept. Lake Lowell Month to Save Recreation Activities on the Lake"
- September 01, 2010. KTRV-TV, "Commissioners Worry About Losing Lake Lowell"
- September 02, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, Guest Opinion, "We Must Honor Deer Flat's Original Purpose"
- September 02, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Officials Support Lowell Recreation"
- September 03, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Lake Lowell Issue Continues Debate"
- September 04, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Lowell Plan Shapes Future"
- September 08, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, Deer Flat Editorial Opinion, "Wildlife, Recreation can co-exist"
- September 08, 2010. Idaho Statesman, "Lake Lowell Recreation Supporters Rally to Influence Refuge Planning"
- September 09, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Group Spearheads Opposition to Lake Restrictions"
- September 11, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Simpson, Minnick Weigh in on Lake Lowell, Wolves"
- September 12, 2010. Idaho State Journal, "Minnick, Simpson Send Letter Seeking Progress on Wolf Management, Lake Lowell Issues"
- September 12, 2010. KTVB, "Refuge Managers Receive Hundreds of Comments on Future of Lake Lowell"
- September 13, 2010. Northwest Cable News, "Refuge Managers Receive Hundreds of Comments on Future of Lake Lowell"
- September 15, 2010. ONEARTH Magazine, "A Gem in the Desert or Garbage Dump?"
- September 16, 2010. Press release was sent to local press outlets inviting the public to view the September Work Sessions.
- September 17, 2010. Idaho Press-Tribune, "Deer Flat to Host Use Plan Meetings"
- September 21, 2010. Idaho Statesman, "Brainstorming Workshops Planned This Week for Deer Flat Conservation Plan"
- September 23, 2010. KTRV, "Boating Ban Among Ideas at Lake Lowell Brainstorming Session.

Planning Updates

- July 15, 2010. Planning Update 1 was mailed to individuals on the CCP mailing list and adjacent landowners. Copies of the planning update were also available at the Visitor Center and made available at outreach events. Adjacent landowners in Malhuer County were accidentally left off of the initial mailing. They received Planning Update 1 and Planning Update 2 in December.

Other Tools

- The Refuge Website featured CCP information, Refuge Fact Sheets and Frequently Asked Questions.
- CCP information flyers and outreach "business cards" were placed in over 40 local businesses.
- CCP informational "half sheets" and/or outreach "business cards" were handed out at every presentation and outreach event and were passed out during field outreach.
- Refuge and CCP fact sheets were created and made available at presentations, outreach events, and in the Visitor Center.
- The Refuge created CCP messages that played on the Headquarters/Visitor Center phone lines if someone was put on hold or called after business hours.
- August 14, 2010. Participated in Senator Crapo's press conference at the Lower Dam Recreation Area.

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- SIBA July Newsletter
- IBFN Spring Newsletter
- Volunteer Newsletter

Federal Register Notices:

- July 15, 2010. Federal Register published Notice of intent to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental impact statement; request for comments.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

More than 900 comments were received describing concerns and providing suggestions for managing the Refuge. Comments were received by mail, e-mail, phone, in-person, and fax. In addition to those comments, two petitions and one form letter were also received. One petition, to "keep Lake Lowell open" was signed by 103 people. Another petition, "I support recreation on Lake Lowell," was signed by 566 people. A form letter, signed by 54 people, requested no change in motorized boating and allowance of on-trail team practices.

Comment delivery types:

Email	632
Comment Card	132
Letter	123
Meeting	5
Phone	31
Petition	2 petitions (669 signatures)
Form Letter	54

The majority of comments were received from Idaho; however comments were also received from Washington, New Jersey, and California. Each idea formulated in a comment was categorized into a themes and subtheme. Some comments included thoughts on several different topics, which were each categorized into their own theme and subtheme. Thoughts contained within comments fell into 29 themes and 68 subthemes; the number of individual ideas received within each theme is presented in Table 1. To view a list of categorized comments, please visit the Deer Flat Planning web page at http://www.fws.gov/deerflat/refugeplanning.html

Table 1. Number of comments received within each theme/subtheme combination.

Theme	Number of Comments Received
REFUGE ACCESS	
Gotts Point	10
Refuge Access	4
Trails	21
PLANNING PROCESS	
Planning Process	6
WILDLIFE DEPENDENT RECREATION	

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Theme	Number of Comments Received
Environmental Education	9
Fishing	39
Hunting	34
Wildlife Observation	25
OTHER RECREATIONAL TOPICS	
Boating	46
Motorized Boating	128
Non-Motorized Boating	7
Other Non-Priority Public Uses	1499*
HABITAT MANAGEMENT	
Grain Farming	2
Off-Refuge Issues	3
Predator Management	2
Water Management	29
Wildlife/Habitat Management	86
REFUGE ADMINISTRATION	
Refuge Administration	56
GENERAL VISITOR EXPERIENCE	
Visitor Experience	12
Visitor Facilities	24
Visitor Services	2
OTHER	
Collaboration	3
Law Enforcement	7
Miscellaneous	4
Public Safety and Health	11

* Includes the "I support recreation on Lake Lowell" and the "Keep Lake Lowell Open" petitions which were signed by 669 people and a form letter which was sent by 54 people.

COMMENT CONTENT SUMMARIES

Refuge Access

Gotts Point

Almost all of the ten comments received regarding Gotts Point asked for it to be reopened. Only two of the comments mentioned that Gotts Point is currently open to walkers. Their concern involved anglers that are not physically able to walk to the point. One commenter asked for better disabled access and improved law enforcement. Gotts Point was referred to as a favorite fishing spot, the best shoreline fishing spot, and a good spot for bank fishing.

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Refuge Access
These comments included the desire for closed areas to be open, better access to the water's edge with stairs on every beach, and keeping gates open as much as possible.

Trails
Several people that commented on refuge trails wanted to see trails in new areas and some commenters wanted to see a trail around the entire lake. A couple of people wanted to see improved paths to the lake providing easier access for human-powered boats. Several people wanted to continue to use the paths for walking, and using trails as fire breaks, and for bicycling, and running were also mentioned. One commenter also asked for jogging, dog walking and horseback riding to be restricted to roads.

Planning Process

Planning Process
There were several comments regarding the priority and non-priority recreation definitions. Some felt that non-priority recreation activities should be made priority activities and one commenter was concerned that classifying into priority and non-priority categories would bias planning against the majority of public recreation currently taking place. One commenter felt that there was no "real information" to make decisions on, and another was happy that we are taking on this management process.

Wildlife-Dependent Recreation

Environmental Education
Most of these comments involved support for environmental education. A couple pointed out that recreational activities give them the opportunity to help their families learn about the environment. There was also support for the educational programs provided by the Refuge.

Fishing
In general, the comments expressed support for maintaining fishing opportunities on the Refuge. Comments involving access included more docks, more shoreline fishing access, and easier access to shoreline fishing. A reduction of carp in Lake Lowell was requested by a few commenters. A couple of comments also requested a continuation of bass tournaments.

Hunting
Although the Refuge received several comments opposed to hunting on the Refuge, the majority of comments were in favor of maintaining or expanding hunting. The comments requesting an expansion in the Refuge hunt were variable and included deer hunting, predator hunting, squirrel hunting and goose hunting at Lake Lowell. There were several comments suggesting specific hunting changes, including preventing sky busting and overcrowding, instituting a 25 shell daily limit per hunter, restricting waterfowl hunting to 3-4 days a week on federal and state- owned waters, reopening gates if ice thaws before the end of hunting season and prohibition of electronic calling and decoys on Lake Lowell. There were several different ideas concerning deer hunting on the Refuge, including not hunting deer, providing a youth hunt, providing an archery season, hunting deer only if it is necessary for habitat management, and hunting deer to reduce depredation on neighboring lands.

Wildlife Observation

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Almost all of the Wildlife Observation comments discussed the enjoyment that people get from viewing the wildlife and landscapes of the Refuge.

Other Recreation

Boating

Most of the general boating comments requested that the Refuge continue to have boating. Many of the comments referenced recreational boating and boating as a mode for fishing. Several people were concerned that removing boating could negatively impact the economy of the surrounding area. The comments focusing on additional opportunities included the general request for more boating opportunities as well as the removal of the on-water curfew, the ability to use the canal for non-motorized boats, and crew training and racing on the Lake.

Motorized Boating

Most of the comments submitted that motorized boating continue to be allowed at the Refuge. Some comments suggested that motorized boating should not be changed in any way from the status quo, while others mentioned limitations to boating including hours of use, motor size, months of use, increased no wake zone, speed limits, allowing in the west pool only, lake zoning, emissions requirements, shorter season, limits on numbers, only electric motors, and an enforced decibel level. Some comments voiced the opposite view that they did not want horsepower limits, time restrictions, or seasonal restrictions. Several comments also suggested the elimination of Personal Water Craft~~s~~, sport boating, motorized boats and/or large boats from some or all of the Lake. The Refuge also received comments that thought the wildlife populations and recreational boating are co-existing, while others felt that some motorized boating activities are not compatible with enhancing wildlife.

Non-Motorized Boating

Most of these comments offered the opinion that non-motorized boating has no affect on wildlife. There was one comment requesting an increase in sailing regattas. A couple of comments supported allowing only non-motorized boats on the Lake. Another commenter thought that the no wake area makes canoeing and sailing more enjoyable.

Other Non-priority Public Uses

Many comments and two petitions asked the Refuge not to remove uses from the Refuge, to remain a multi-use facility, and not to close the Refuge to recreational uses. Other comments requested that the Refuge maintain its public uses in their current state and that trails should be open to cross-country team practice. Some concerns addressed in comments included the economic impacts of any changes, the increased impacts to other reservoirs, potential reduction in the ability for families to spend time together. Another popular theme centered around the idea that wildlife and humans are co-existing currently. Some comments argued that Lake Lowell is a man-made reservoir and cannot be a National Wildlife Refuge, while others thought that, since Lake Lowell is part of a National Wildlife Refuge, it should be managed better for wildlife.

Some ideas on how to provide for wildlife, wildlife-dependent recreation, and non-wildlife-dependent recreational uses included no-wake zones, partitioning uses, fee implementation, and implementation of a permit based on completion of an environmental education program. Some comments advocated for increased restrictions including elimination of motors, radios, and cell phones, and the removal of some uses all together.

Habitat Management

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Grain Farming
Both of these comments wanted to see wildlife-friendly crops planted on the Refuge. Reasons given were to provide a wildlife food source, provide areas for sportsmen to hunt, and take over areas that are currently weeds.

Off-Refuge Issues
All three of these comments suggested that future development around the refuge be restricted. Concern was voiced over the loss of wildlife feeding habitat adjacent to both units of the Refuge.

Predator Management
One comment voiced concern over the predation levels on the Snake River Islands. The other requested a predator management plan that involves public participation and access to the Refuge at night.

Water Issues
The majority of comments in this theme focused on the need to improve the water quality of Lake Lowell. There were also some comments that showed concern over the preservation of water rights and how water levels, both in Lake Lowell and in the Snake River, affect wildlife.

Wildlife/Habitat Management
Many comments addressed concerns over invasive and noxious weeds. Most of these comments seemed to center on the Lake Lowell Unit, but a few did mention the need to manage these weeds on the Snake River Islands as well. The use of goats, fire, and cattle were some of the suggestions offered to provide weed control.

The comments regarding wildlife and habitat management were varied. They ranged from positive comments about Refuge wildlife to a feeling that the Refuge has been neglected for several years. Suggestions for habitat management included removal of dead trees, creation of pheasant habitat, planting trees for eventual timber harvest, increasing cattle grazing, and keeping Lake Lowell full in the fall. Some comments that were received questioned the amount of impact that uses have had on wildlife and asked for any decisions to be made based on scientific data.

Refuge Administration

Refuge Administration
Comments concerning Refuge administration ranged from positive comments about Refuge management to a request that the Refuge be given to Idaho Department of Fish and Game. There were several comments that voiced opposition to the federal government. Several comments pointed out a general lack of management for many years. Many of the comments were also concerned with the purpose of the Lake and stated that the Lake was created for irrigation. A few comments also asked that the Refuge be managed as a wildlife refuge.

General Visitor Experience

Visitor Experience
Most of these commenters enjoy the Refuge because it is a place to recreate close to home. Almost all of the comments showed a positive visitor experience.

Visitor Facilities

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Most of the comments regarding general visitor experience focused on visitor facilities. Comments requested more parking, overnight facilities, better maintained bathrooms and dumpsters, better boat ramps, and better facilities for the disabled public. Some comments expressed a positive view of Refuge facilities.

Visitor Services
One commenter really liked the visitor center, and the other wanted to see more welcome and orientation information.

Other

Collaboration
These comments focused on partnering with Canyon County, local colleges, and other non-profit organizations to patrol and cleanup the Refuge.

Law Enforcement
These comments asked for more enforcement of hunting, vandalism, littering, fighting and public drunkenness regulations.

Miscellaneous
These comments included an overall observation of wildlife and habitat of the Refuge, support for the local mosquito abatement district, and a request to have the lake open one month earlier and close one month later.

Public Safety and Health
Several comments pointed out concern over littering and dumping on the Refuge. A couple of people don't think dogs should be allowed on the Refuge. One person suggested that the Refuge be cleaned up to keep fires to a minimum, while another was concerned about E. coli.

MAJOR ISSUES

Issues within the Scope of the CCP/EIS

The issues listed below are within the scope of the CCP/EIS and are considered by the Service to be the major issues to address in the planning process.

Threats to Refuge Resources: What actions should the Service take to reduce threats to refuge wildlife and habitats including: human disturbance to wildlife; invasive species; global climate change; degradation of water quality? Many of these threats are much larger in scope than just the Refuges. They will be addressed at various scales depending on available information and what is most appropriate and relevant to the Refuges.

Habitat Restoration: What wildlife species and habitats should be the focus of Refuge management?

Wildlife: What can be done to reduce disturbance to feeding, nesting and resting areas used by wildlife?

Research: What kind of surveys and studies will the Refuge need to inform future management?

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Public Uses: What uses are compatible and appropriate at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge? How can the Refuge provide the best wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities possible without negatively impacting wildlife or Refuge habitat. Which non-wildlife-dependent uses can the Refuge provide without negatively impacting wildlife-dependent users, wildlife, or Refuge habitat. What should the Service do to enhance public enjoyment, understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of refuge resources? What can the Refuge do to improve the safety and quality of Refuge hunt programs?

Refuge Administration: What partnerships can be formed to increase public awareness of the Refuge, management of public use programs, and management of refuge habitat and wildlife resources? How can the Refuge provide increase safety for Refuge visitors and enforcement of Refuge regulations? Should the Refuge institute a fee to fund increased facility management, public use programming and/or law enforcement?

Facilities: What structures and facilities are needed for refuge administration and are there opportunities to remove other structures to enhance habitat conditions?

Issues outside the Scope of the CCP/EA

The issues listed below were found to be outside of the scope of the CCP/EIS.

Refuge boundary: The Lake Lowell Unit was partially surveyed in the mid-1970s. However, much of the boundary fence may not be on the legal boundary on the east end of the Lake. The boundary in other locations is also in dispute. The Refuge will need to consult Refuge and Regional Office files and adjacent landowners for further information. This process will likely take extensive coordination and time and is outside of the scope of the CCP.

Deer Hunting: Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) and some community members have requested a mule deer hunt on the Lake Lowell Unit. Before a Refuge hunt can be opened, it must be found compatible. The Refuge supports a mule deer population of unknown size, age/sex ratios, health and movement patterns. To determine the compatibility of a Refuge hunt, the Refuge must obtain this data. We are currently collecting data to facilitate a future decision about deer hunting.

Fisheries Management: Service policy requires us to develop a fisheries management plan. The plan will be developed in close coordination with IDFG, and will evaluate whether fish stocking is compliant with Service policy. The plan will emphasize meeting the Refuge purpose. Additionally, the biological and recreational values of Lake Lowell's fishery warrant the special emphasis of a step-down management plan.

Water Quality Control: Although water quality is extremely important to the health of the wildlife and habitats of Deer Flat NWR, water quality is not within the management control of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Deer Flat NWR staff may partner with other agencies to create solutions to the water quality problem and assist in implementation of the Total Maximum Daily Loads plan proposed by the Department of Environmental Quality.

Development: Several comments requested that the Refuge restrict development. Development that reduces habitat, impacts wildlife, or increases pollution outside of the Refuge borders could impact the wildlife and habitats of the Refuge. The CCP may discuss partnering with local entities to identify areas of concern for future development, but the Refuge will not be attempting to restrict or direct future county or city development within the CCP. Managing development outside the Refuge's boundary is within the management control of city and county governments, not within

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the management control of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Restructuring of Priority and Non-Priority Recreational Activities: Several comments requested that the list of priority (wildlife-dependent) and non-priority (non-wildlife dependent) recreational activities be changed. Because the concept of priority/non-priority and wildlife-dependent/non-wildlife-dependent are found in the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended, and are a matter of law, making changes to these categories is not within the scope of the CCP.

Snake River Water Flows: Some comments requested better flows within the Snake River and lake to maintain healthy ecosystems. Water levels on both the Snake River and Lake Lowell are outside of the management control of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

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