



Wapato Lake Land Conservation Planning Study

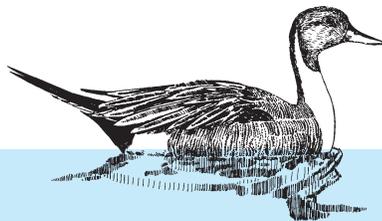
Planning Update 6, April 2006

Greetings

This is the sixth Planning Update from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), designed to inform and involve you in the planning process for the Wapato Lake Land Conservation Planning Study in Washington and Yamhill Counties, Oregon.

Each planning update notifies you of opportunities to become directly involved in the planning process and provides a status report of Service activities during development of the Land Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment.

Your input is very important; it helps us identify and analyze information and issues affecting you, your community, and the natural resources in the Wapato Lake area.



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Wapato Lake provides habitat for a large number of waterfowl including mallard ducks. Photo USFWS.

The Draft Land Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment are Available for Public Review and Comments

The Service has prepared a Draft Land Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment (LCP/EA) for a proposed Wapato Lake Unit addition to the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. The proposed addition is located in Washington and Yamhill Counties, Oregon. Please find the Draft LCP/EA enclosed for your review and comments. It is also available on the Service's website at <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning>. All comments should be received by May 31, 2006. Send comments to Amy Wing, see page 4 for her contact information. Summaries of the proposed action and each alternative are on the following pages.

You are Invited to an Open House

The Service will host a public Open House to answer questions and receive comments on the Draft LCP/EA for the proposed Wapato Lake Unit. The Open House will be held in Gaston High School's new Gymnasium.

Address: 304 Park Street, Gaston, Oregon

Date/Time: Thursday, May 4, 2006, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The Open House format will include a presentation by the Service, an informal question and answer and comment session with the audience, and a breakout session with stations setup for one-on-one discussions.

A Summary of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action



Tundra Swans, Photo USFWS

The Service proposes to establish the Wapato Lake Unit in Yamhill and Washington Counties, Oregon, as an addition to the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. The proposed Wapato Lake Unit would include Wapato Lake's historic lakebed and associated wetlands that support numerous species of shorebirds, waterfowl, and other migratory birds, and provide foraging and resting habitat during spring and fall migrations.

Areas to the south and north of the historic lakebed encompass creeks and the Tualatin River, respectively. These areas, made up of riparian and wet deciduous swales of mixed deciduous/coniferous forest, support breeding neotropical landbirds. Restoration of the proposed Wapato Lake Unit would improve habitat for three federally listed species; spring-run Chinook salmon and winter-run steelhead anadromous fish, and the bald eagle. A variety of native mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and other anadromous fish would benefit as well.

The proposed Wapato Lake Unit could provide opportunities for the National Wildlife Refuge System's priority public uses--hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

The Service considered a range of alternatives to accomplish wildlife conservation goals in the Wapato Lake area, and analyzed the physical, biological, social, and economic consequences of each alternative. A brief description of the alternatives follows.

Alternative A, No Action



Pintail duck. Photo USFWS.

Under this alternative, the Service would not establish the Wapato Lake Unit. The landowners within the proposed Unit's Study Area would not have the option of selling lands to the Service, and protection or development within the Study Area would be managed through existing land-use regulatory controls administered by Washington and Yamhill Counties, the State of Oregon, and Federal agencies. Habitat on Federal land in and adjacent to the Wapato Lake lakebed that is currently managed by the Service, may not be restored under the No Action Alternative. Restoration would occur, however, under Alternatives B, C, D, or E.

Alternative B, a 1,960-Acre Proposed Wapato Lake Unit

Alternative B is a proposal for a 1,960-acre Wapato Lake Unit boundary around a contiguous block of habitat that includes lands in the historic Wapato Lake lakebed, lands outside the lakebed, and lands outside the 100-year floodplain (see the map on page 5). This alternative includes most of the parcels of land within the following boundaries: Gaston Road on the north, Highway 47 on the west, Flett Road on the south, and Springhill Road on the east. It is the smallest of the action →

A Summary of the Proposed Action and Alternatives continued . . .

alternatives, and the minimum land area manageable for achieving the proposed Wapato Lake Unit purposes. When flooded in the fall and winter, the lakebed supports large numbers of tundra swans, mallards, pintails, canvasbacks, ring-necked ducks, lesser scaup, and lesser, Taverners, cackling, and Aleutian Canada geese.

Alternative C, a 2,430-Acre Wapato Lake Unit

Alternative C includes all land in Alternative B, plus Wapato Creek south of Flett Road between Highway 47 and Wapato School Road, and Ayers Creek from Flett Road south about 1.4 miles (see the map on page 6). Including the lands along Wapato and Ayers Creeks could improve the quality of water entering Wapato Lake, and protect additional valuable habitat. Riparian areas along the creeks would support fish and provide habitat for numerous songbird species such as the willow flycatcher and American robin.

Alternative D, a 4,310-Acre Wapato Lake Unit (Preferred Alternative)

Alternative D includes all land in Alternative C plus the lands north of Gaston Road between Highway 47 and Springhill Road to their intersection (see the map on page 7). The additional lands in this alternative include intact riparian habitat along the Tualatin River and existing wetlands. These areas currently support various wildlife including songbirds, waterfowl, and raptors such as red-tailed hawks. This area would also be suitable for restoring a variety of native habitat types. Historically, this area supported riparian forests, emergent and forested wetlands, and upland prairies. This alternative, with restoration, would provide important habitat for resident and migratory fish and wildlife.

Alternative E, a 6,280-Acre Wapato Lake Unit

Alternative E includes all land in Alternative D plus the lands north of Springhill Road to the southern city limits of Forest Grove (see the map on page 8). As the largest area of consideration, this alternative includes most of the lands within the Study Area. Much of the land in the northeast portion of this alternative is currently owned by Metro and Clean Water Services. Restoring this area could provide connectivity to habitats located in Fernhill Wetlands, Gales Creek, and downstream areas of the Tualatin River. Much of this area was riparian forest according to historic records and would support a multitude of fish and wildlife species.

Public Comments and Selection of an Alternative

The Service will review public comments on the Draft LCP/EA for the proposed Wapato Lake Unit and recommend a course of action. Approval of the selected alternative will be made by the Service's Regional Director in consultation with the Director. If the proposed Wapato Lake Unit is approved as an addition to the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, the Service will notify the public. After approval, implementation of the selected alternative could proceed based on available funding and willing participants.



Red-tailed Hawk. Photo USFWS.

Planning Schedule

Planning Update #1	Completed.....	October 2001
1 st Open House.....	Completed.....	November 2001
2 nd Open House.....	Completed.....	December 2001
Planning Update #2.....	Completed.....	April 2002
Planning Update #3.....	Completed.....	December 2002
Planning Update #4.....	Completed.....	December 2003
Planning Update #5.....	Completed.....	December 2005
Planning Update #6.....	Completed.....	April 2006
Draft LCP/EA Released and Public Comment Period Begins.....	Current Step.....	April 2006
3 rd Open House.....	Scheduled.....	May 4, 2006
Public Comment Period Ends.....	Scheduled.....	May 31, 2006
Final Documents and Notice of Decision Released.....	Projected.....	July 2006

Points of Contact

Send Comments on the Draft LCP/EA to:

Amy Wing, Wildlife Biologist
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 Division of Planning and Visitor Services
 911 NE 11th Avenue
 Portland, Oregon 97232-4181
 Phone: (503) 231-2231 or toll free (877) 313-1751
 Fax: (503) 231-6161

**For Information on the
 National Wildlife Refuge System:**
 Ralph Webber, Refuge Manager or
 Christopher Lapp, Deputy Refuge Manager
 Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge
 16507 SW Roy Rogers Road
 Sherwood, Oregon 97140
 Phone: (503) 590-5811 Fax: (503) 590-6702

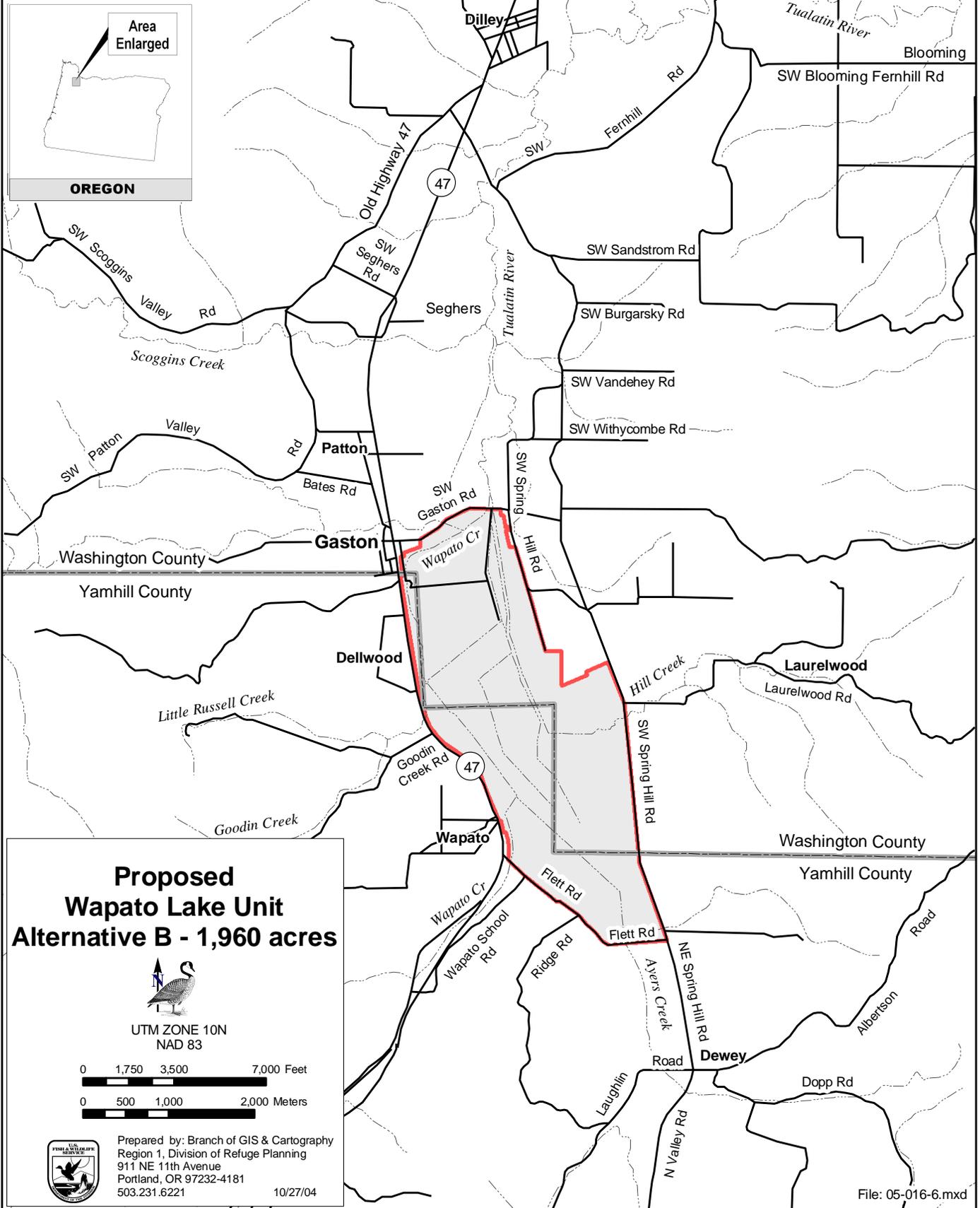
For Information on Land Acquisition:

Carmella Mares, Realty Specialist
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 Division of Realty and Refuge Information
 911 NE 11th Avenue
 Portland, Oregon 97232-4181
 Phone: (503) 231-2079 or toll free (800) 662-8933
 Fax: (503) 231-6161

You can also E-mail Comments and Questions to us or Visit our Website for more Information:

E-mail: FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov

Website: <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning>



Area Enlarged

OREGON

SW Scoggins Valley Rd
Scoggins Creek

SW Patton Valley Rd
Patton

Washington County

Yamhill County

Little Russell Creek

Goodin Creek

Gaston

Dellwood

Wapato

Wapato Cr
Wapato School Rd

Dilley

Old Highway 47

47

SW Seghers Rd

Seghers

Tualatin River

SW

Fernhill Rd

SW Blooming Fernhill Rd

Blooming

SW Sandstrom Rd

SW Burgasky Rd

SW Vandehey Rd

SW Withycombe Rd

SW Gaston Rd

SW Spurd Hill Rd

Wapato Cr

Hill Rd

Hill Creek

Laurelwood

Laurelwood Rd

SW Spring Hill Rd

Washington County

Yamhill County

Flett Rd

Flett Rd

Ridge Rd

Ayers Creek

NE Spring Hill Rd

NE Spring Hill Rd

Laughlin

N Valley Rd

Road

Dewey

Dopp Rd

Albertson

Proposed Wapato Lake Unit Alternative B - 1,960 acres



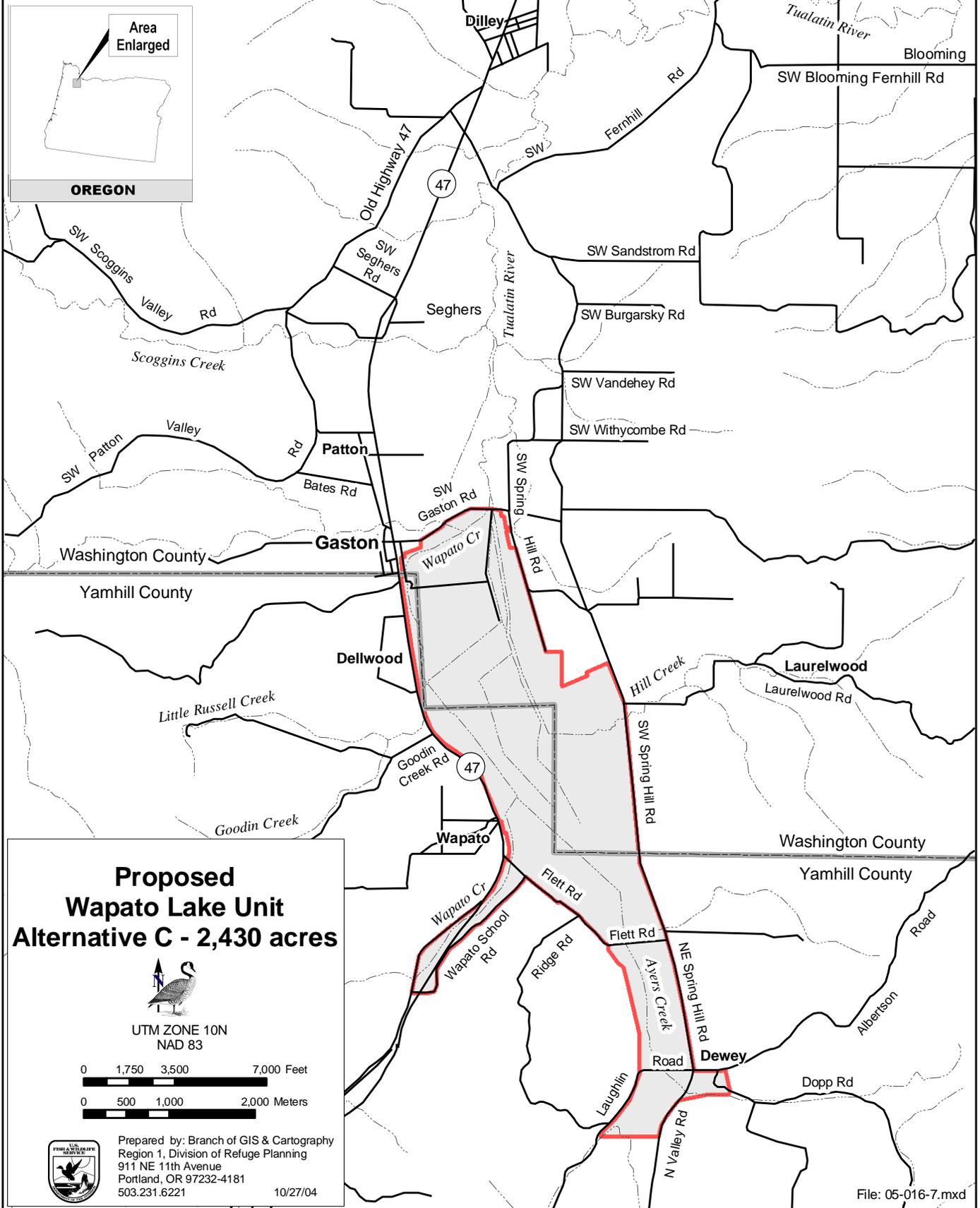
UTM ZONE 10N
NAD 83

0 1,750 3,500 7,000 Feet

0 500 1,000 2,000 Meters



Prepared by: Branch of GIS & Cartography
Region 1, Division of Refuge Planning
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232-4181
503.231.6221 10/27/04



Area Enlarged

OREGON

Washington County

Yamhill County

Washington County

Yamhill County

**Proposed
Wapato Lake Unit
Alternative C - 2,430 acres**



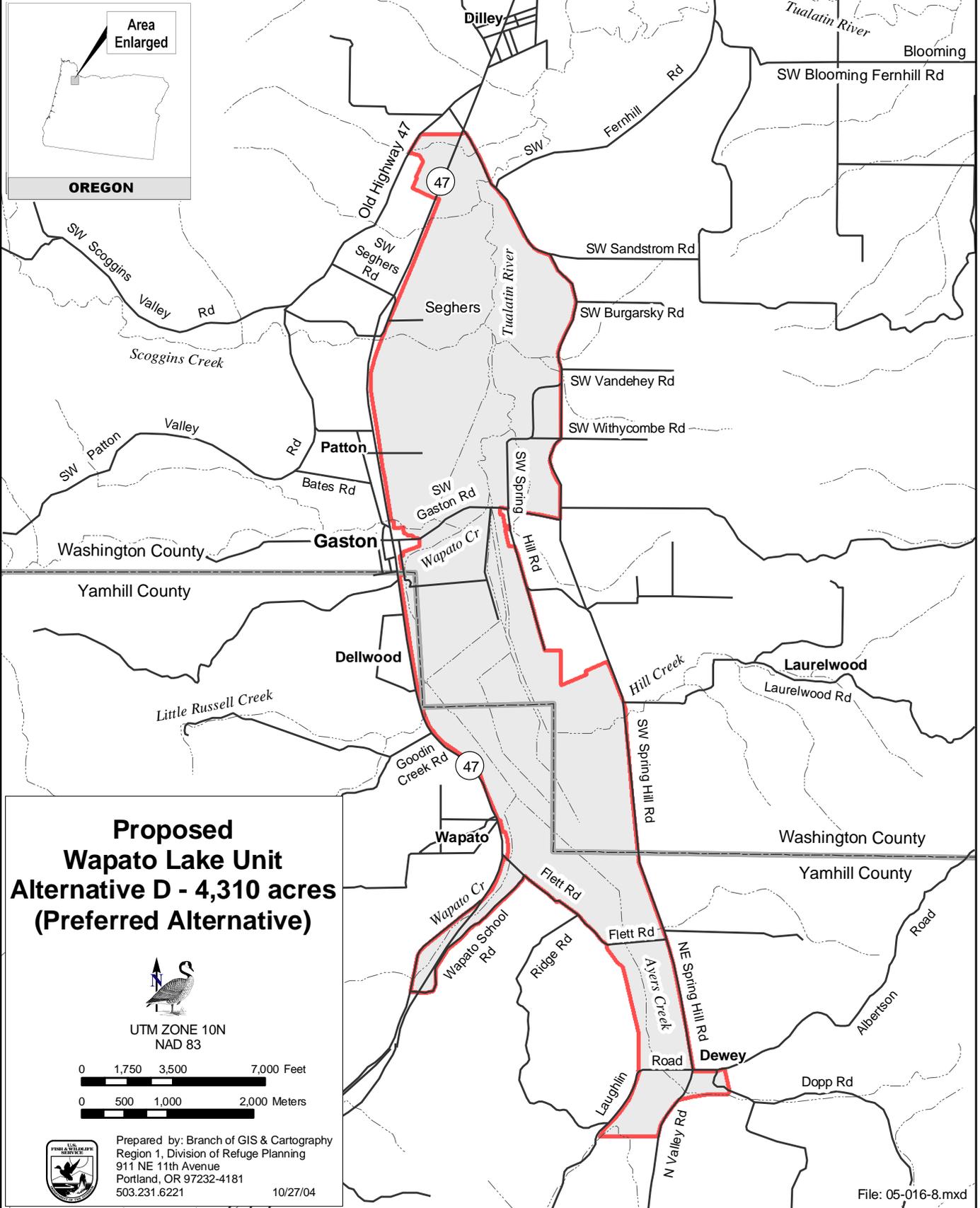
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Area Enlarged

OREGON

SW Scoggins Valley Rd
Scoggins Creek

SW Patton Valley Rd
Patton

Washington County
Gaston

Yamhill County

Little Russell Creek

Dellwood

Goodin Creek Rd
Wapato

Wapato

Wapato Cr
Wapato School Rd

Flett Rd

Ridge Rd

Ayers Creek

Flett Rd

NE Spring Hill Rd

Road
Dewey

Laughlin

N Valley Rd

Dopp Rd

Dilley

SW
Fernihill Rd

SW Blooming Fernhill Rd

SW Sandstrom Rd

SW Burgasky Rd

SW Vandehey Rd

SW Withycombe Rd

SW Spurd Hill Rd

Hill Creek

SW Spring Hill Rd

Laurelwood

Laurelwood Rd

Washington County

Yamhill County

Road

Albertson

Tualatin River

Blooming

47

Old Highway 47

Seghers

SW Seghers Rd

Bates Rd

SW Gaston Rd

Wapato Cr

47

Wapato

Flett Rd

Ridge Rd

Ayers Creek

Flett Rd

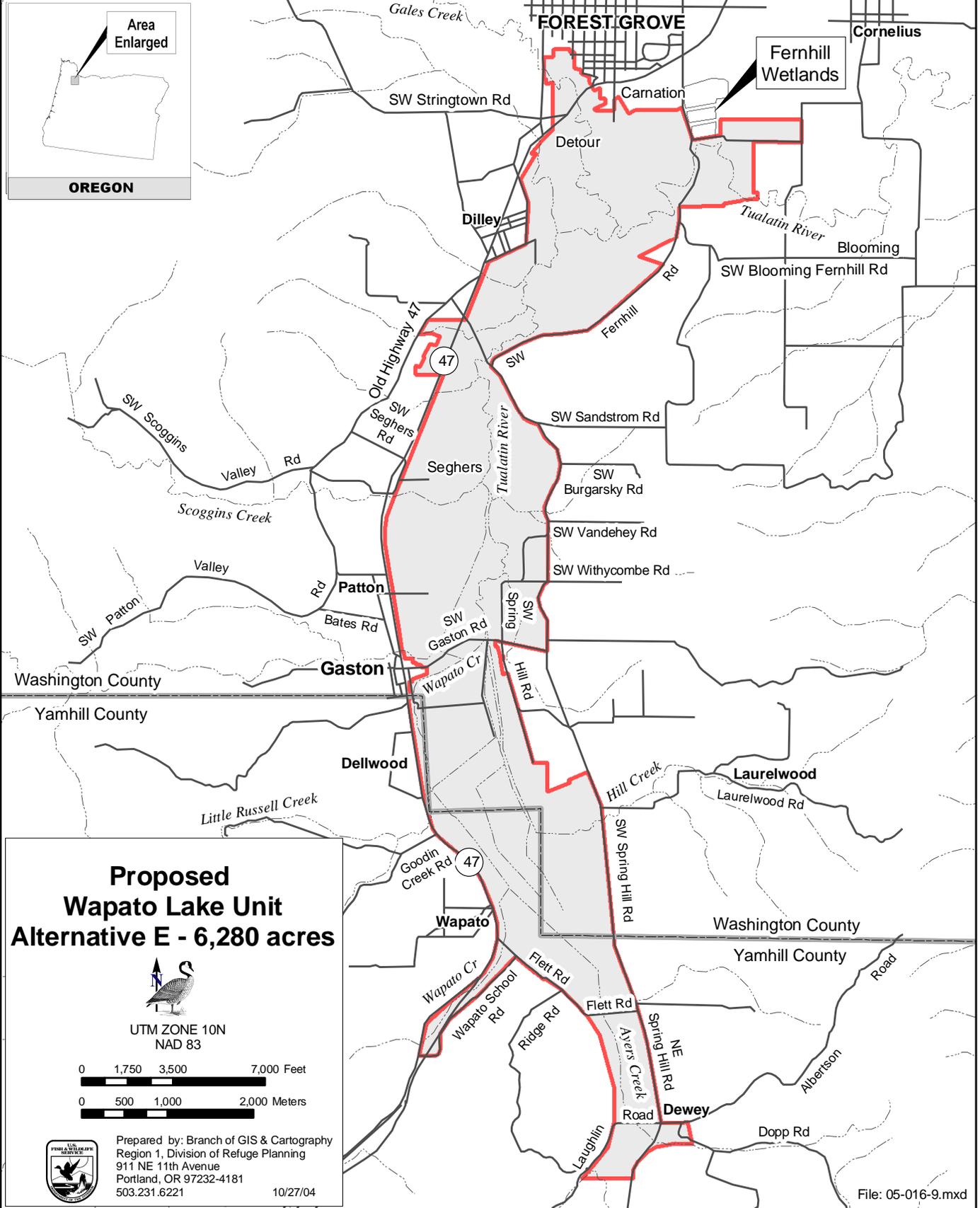
NE Spring Hill Rd

Road
Dewey

Laughlin

N Valley Rd

Dopp Rd



**Proposed
Wapato Lake Unit
Alternative E - 6,280 acres**



UTM ZONE 10N
NAD 83

0 1,750 3,500 7,000 Feet

0 500 1,000 2,000 Meters

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