



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

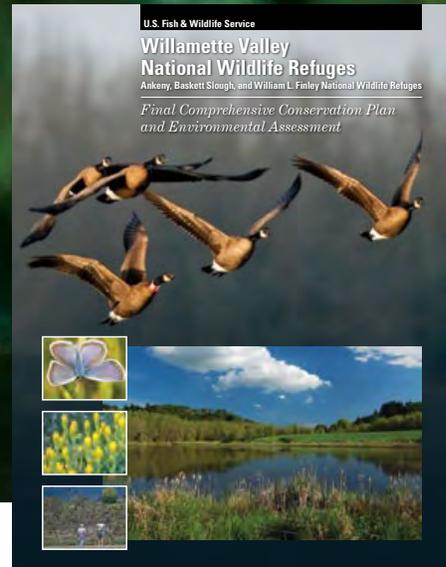
# Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges

Ankeny, Baskett Slough and William L. Finley

*Planning Update 5, February 2012*



American kestrel



© Joe Staff

## The Comprehensive Conservation Plan is Complete!

We are pleased to announce the completion of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Ankeny, Baskett Slough, and W.L. Finley National Wildlife Refuges (Refuges). The help of many dedicated people was essential to the development and completion of the CCP. We sincerely thank all the individuals and organizations who participated in our planning process and provided valuable comments.

Since the last planning update in May 2011, which announced the public comment period for the draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan/ Environmental Assessment, we have responded to public comments and made revisions to the CCP. The revised CCP, together with a Finding of No Significant Impact selecting Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative, were signed by the

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's (Service) Regional Director on September 26, 2011. The plan will guide management of the Refuges for the next 15 years.

*To view the final CCP, please visit:*

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

## What Happens Next?

As funding becomes available, projects will be implemented as identified in the CCP. Priorities are identified in Appendix E of the plan.

We will rely on grants and partnerships to help implement the plan.

### In this update

- Comprehensive Conservation Plan Highlights*
- Summary of Appropriate and Compatible Uses*
- 15-year Management Direction Maps*
- Summary of Draft CCP Comments*
- How to View or Get a Copy of the CCP*



Western meadowlark

© John and Karen Hollingsworth

## Comprehensive Conservation Plan Highlights

### Goose Management

Under Alternative 2, an emphasis on providing habitat for wintering geese will remain. Green forage for geese on the Refuges will continue to be provided primarily through cooperative farming agreements with local farmers. The conversion of 845 acres of farmed fields to native habitats could impact cooperative farming; however, the Refuges will pursue measures to help retain the services of cooperative farmers, such as providing enhanced irrigation capabilities; providing additional lure crops such as corn or other grains; the Refuges taking over farming on certain high goose use fields; the Service offsetting a portion of the costs to cooperative farmers, etc.

Goose use should be no less than under current management and could increase if specific goose management strategies are implemented. Wetland habitat management and restoration activities will also be intensified to improve habitat for geese and other wildlife. All projects related to goose management are designated as high priority under the plan.



### Native Habitats Restoration and Management

Tools such as water management, burning, mowing, planting, weed management, and enhancement will continue in remnant native habitats to maintain or enhance their conditions. Also, approximately 845 additional acres on the three Refuges currently or formerly in agricultural fields will be restored to wetland, wet prairie, riparian, oak woodland, or upland prairie/oak savannah habitats over the next fifteen years.



USFWS/Jeff Dillon

The endangered Kincaid's lupine

Threatened and endangered species management will continue to be a priority, guided by recovery plans where applicable. Existing populations of several threatened and endangered species will be strengthened through habitat management activities, and several new populations will be established on the three Refuges. Maintenance and restoration activities in most native habitats are designated as high priority under the plan.

### Public Uses and Facilities

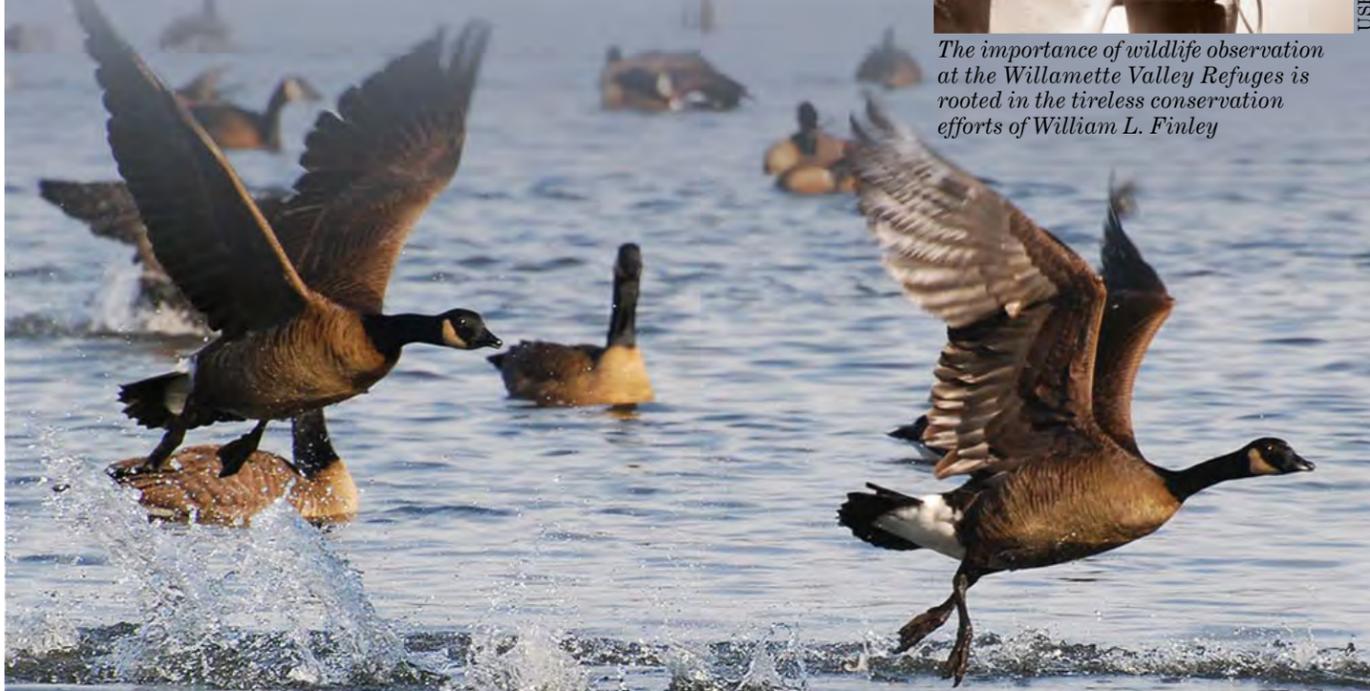
Wildlife observation and interpretation will continue to be emphasized as the cornerstone of the public use program. Several new trails and viewing facilities will be added. Interpretive signs and materials, including online materials, will be developed and added. Major special events will occur at a frequency of about 3-4/year, along with monthly weekend interpretive programs.

Environmental education efforts will be expanded with an objective of reaching more students and schools, particularly at W.L. Finley Refuge. Outdoor classroom shelters will be added. In addition, funding will be sought to construct an Environmental Education Center, indoor classroom facilities, and an interpretive exhibit area on W.L. Finley Refuge. Staff will continue to work with Salem Audubon Society to provide educational and interpretive opportunities at Ankeny and Baskett Slough Refuges, including exploring the potential to build a Nature Center at Ankeny Refuge.



USFWS

The importance of wildlife observation at the Willamette Valley Refuges is rooted in the tireless conservation efforts of William L. Finley



Wintering Canada geese

Goose photos on page 2 © Joe Staff

(Public uses and facilities continued)

A new option to hunt either sex deer will be added on W.L. Finley Refuge. In addition, new upland locations will be available for deer hunting during a portion of the restricted firearms season; this will require closure of two hiking trails for a week in November. The restricted firearms season will be shortened to two weeks at the end of October and first of November. A September goose hunt and youth waterfowl hunt will be provided at Baskett Slough Refuge. Within five years, fishing will be promoted at the Willamette River by developing safe fishing access and a canoe launch at Snag Boat Bend; Muddy Creek will be closed to fishing.

The current areas closed to public access in winter will remain in effect to provide sanctuary to wintering waterfowl, except major portions of the Snag Boat Bend Unit will be open year-round.

Maintaining existing programs and facilities is designated high priority under the plan; most new facilities are designated a secondary priority under the plan.

### Other Highlights

The Refuges will develop an elk management plan cooperatively with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife within 1-2 years of CCP implementation. The Refuges will continue to expand conservation partnerships, volunteer programs, and outreach to local communities. Proactive cultural resource management will occur by repairing/maintaining the historic structures on W.L. Finley Refuge and by adding associated interpretive facilities.

Valley that could contribute to the Refuges' purposes and goals. They would provide wintering habitat and forage for Canada geese; provide protection, enhancement, and restoration of native habitats and rare Willamette Valley species; and provide opportunities for additional wildlife-dependent public uses. The Refuges will undertake a subsequent land protection planning process to identify specific tracts of lands for these purposes.

The selected alternative also proposes protection, conservation, and management of additional lands within the Willamette



Roosevelt elk

© Joe Staff

### Appropriate and Compatible Uses

An important aspect of refuge management involves periodic determinations that public uses on refuges are appropriate (as defined under policy) and compatible (will not materially interfere with or detract from the fulfillment of the National Wildlife Refuge System mission or the purposes of the refuge).

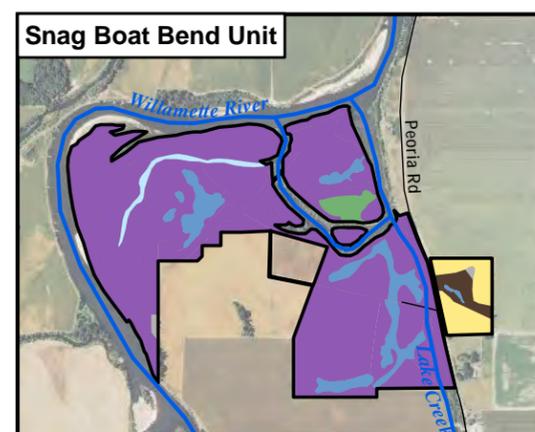
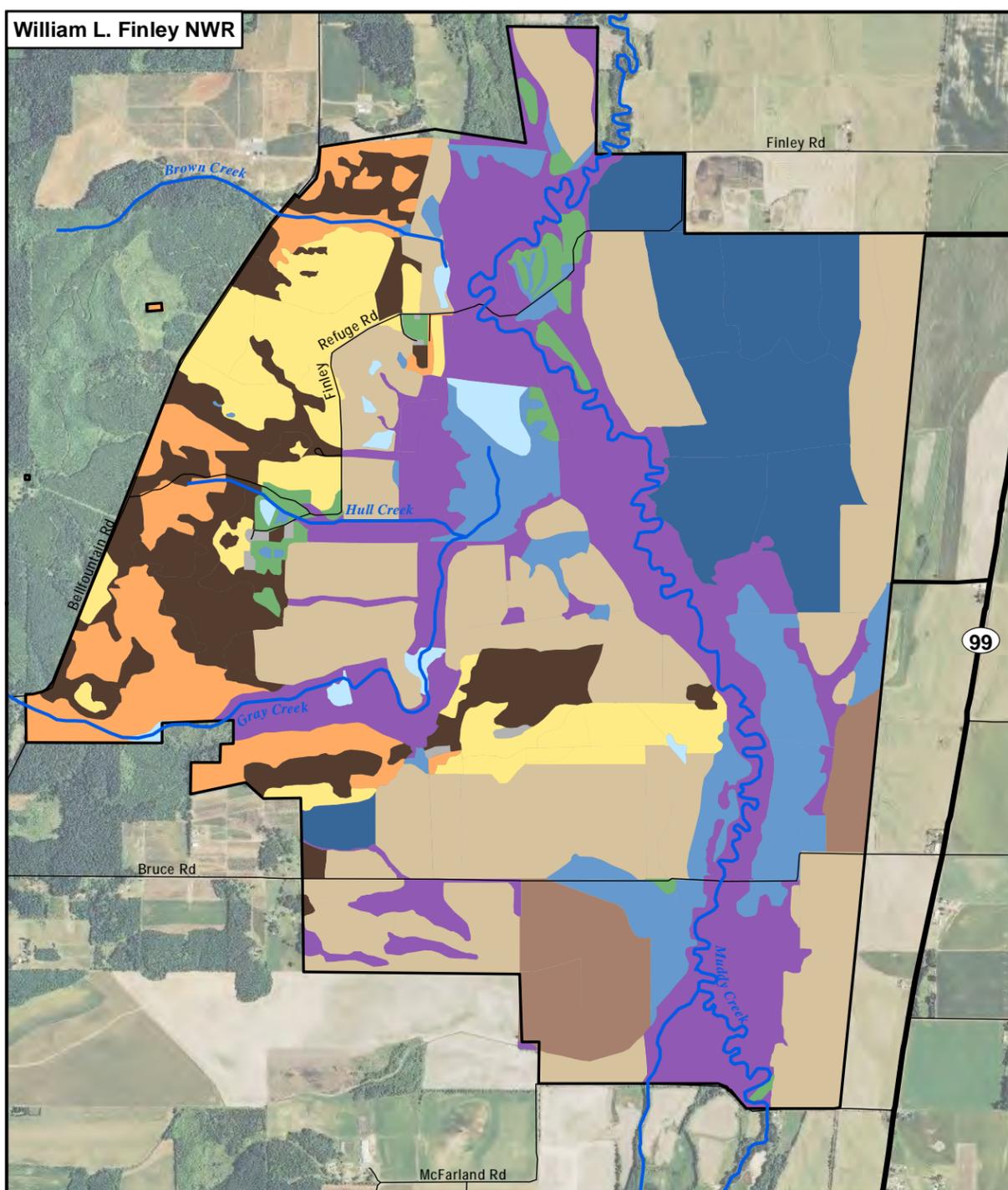
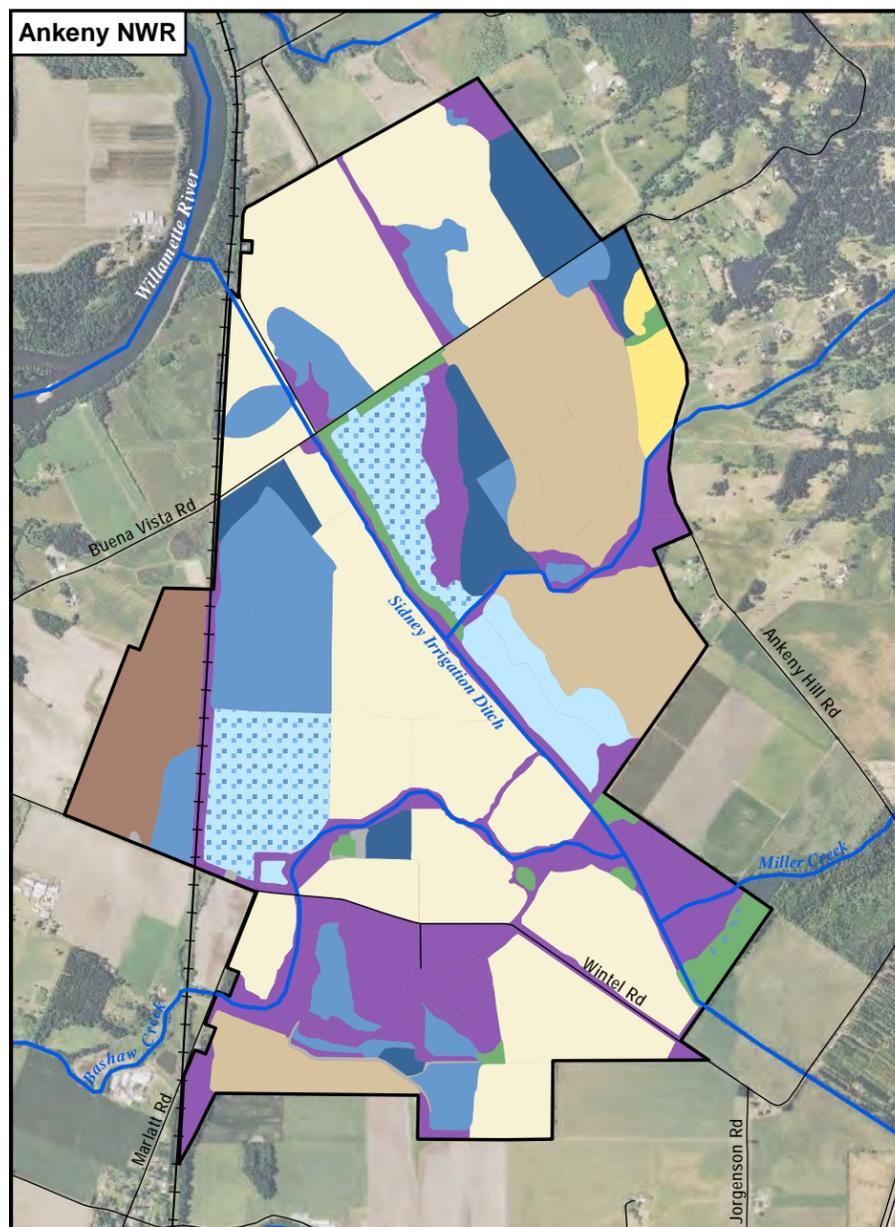
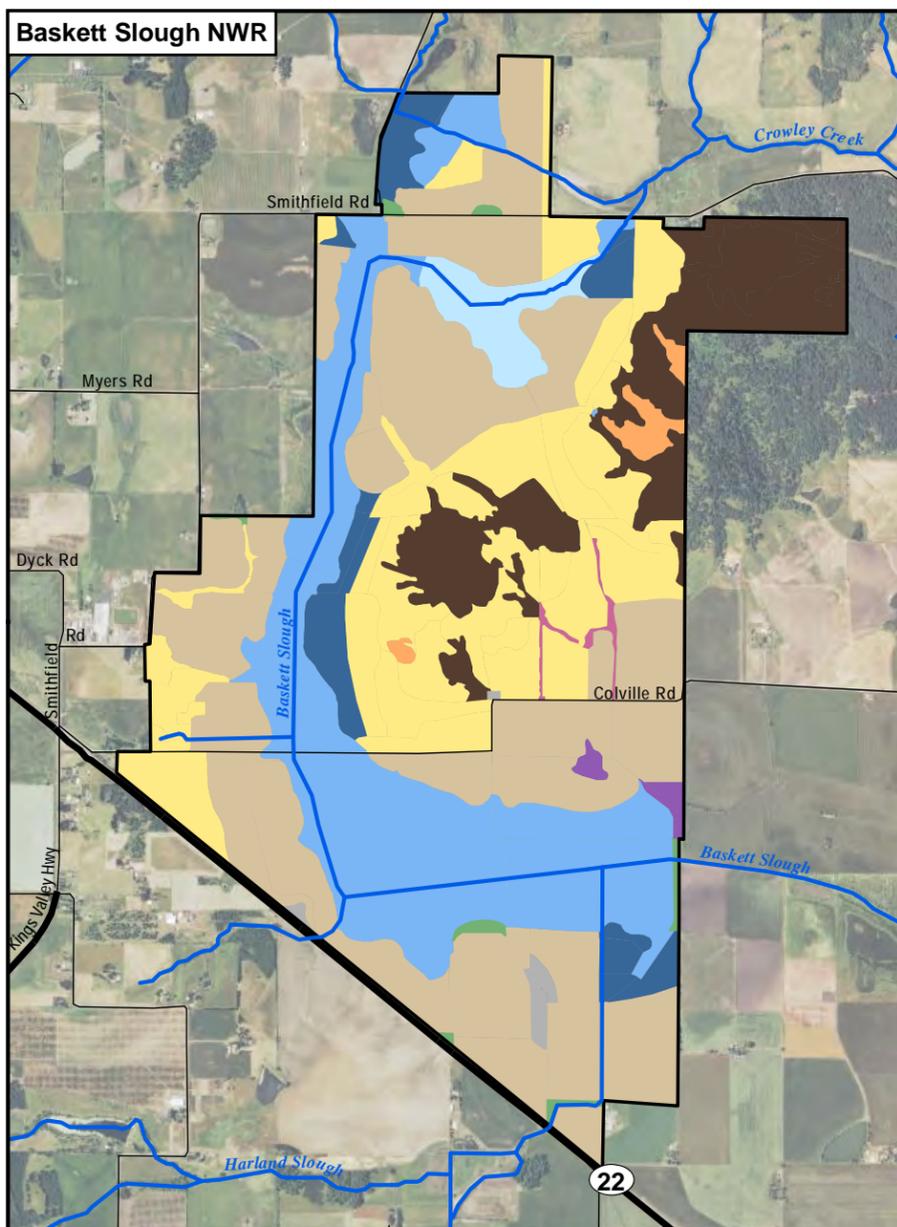
The Service evaluated several uses during the CCP process, and made determinations that are summarized in Table 1 to the right. Where a Refuge is named, the use is considered compatible at that Refuge only.

Table 1. Appropriate and Compatible Uses

| Refuge Use                         | Appropriate | Compatible |
|------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Waterfowl Hunting (Baskett Slough) | Yes         | Yes        |
| Deer Hunting (W.L. Finley)         | Yes         | Yes        |
| Fishing (W.L. Finley)              | Yes         | Yes        |
| Environmental Education            | Yes         | Yes        |
| Bicycling (W.L. Finley)            | Yes         | Yes        |
| Farming/Grazing                    | Yes         | Yes        |
| Forest Management                  | Yes         | Yes        |
| Research                           | Yes         | Yes        |
| Geocaching                         | No          | n/a        |
| Horseback Riding                   | No          | n/a        |
| Collection of Fruits or Mushrooms  | No          | n/a        |
| Jogging                            | No          | n/a        |
| All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)        | No          | n/a        |
| Dog Trials                         | No          | n/a        |

# Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges

## Habitat Management Direction Next 15 Years



**LEGEND**

- Refuge Ownership Boundary
- Agriculture- Cooperative Farming
- Agriculture- Cooperative or Refuge Farming
- Agriculture- Refuge Farming
- Non-agricultural grassland
- Mixed Deciduous-Coniferous Forest
- Oak Woodland
- Upland Prairie/Oak Savannah
- Riparian
- Permanent Wetland
- Seasonal Wetland
- Seasonal or Permanent Wetland
- Wet Prairie
- Hedgerow
- Administrative/Developed

0 0.5 1 Miles

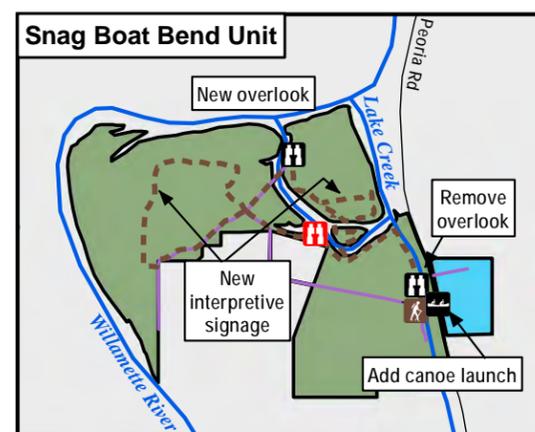
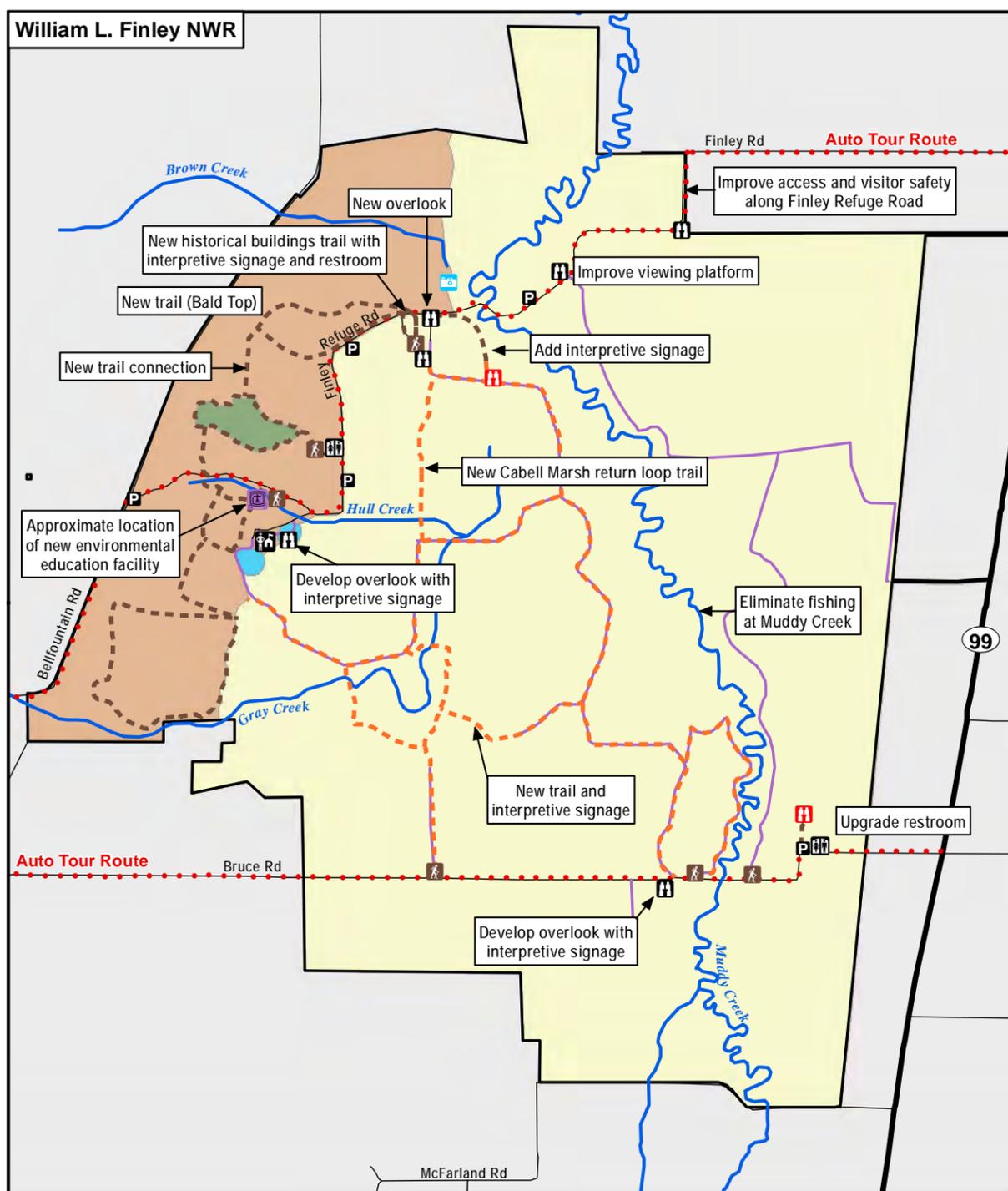
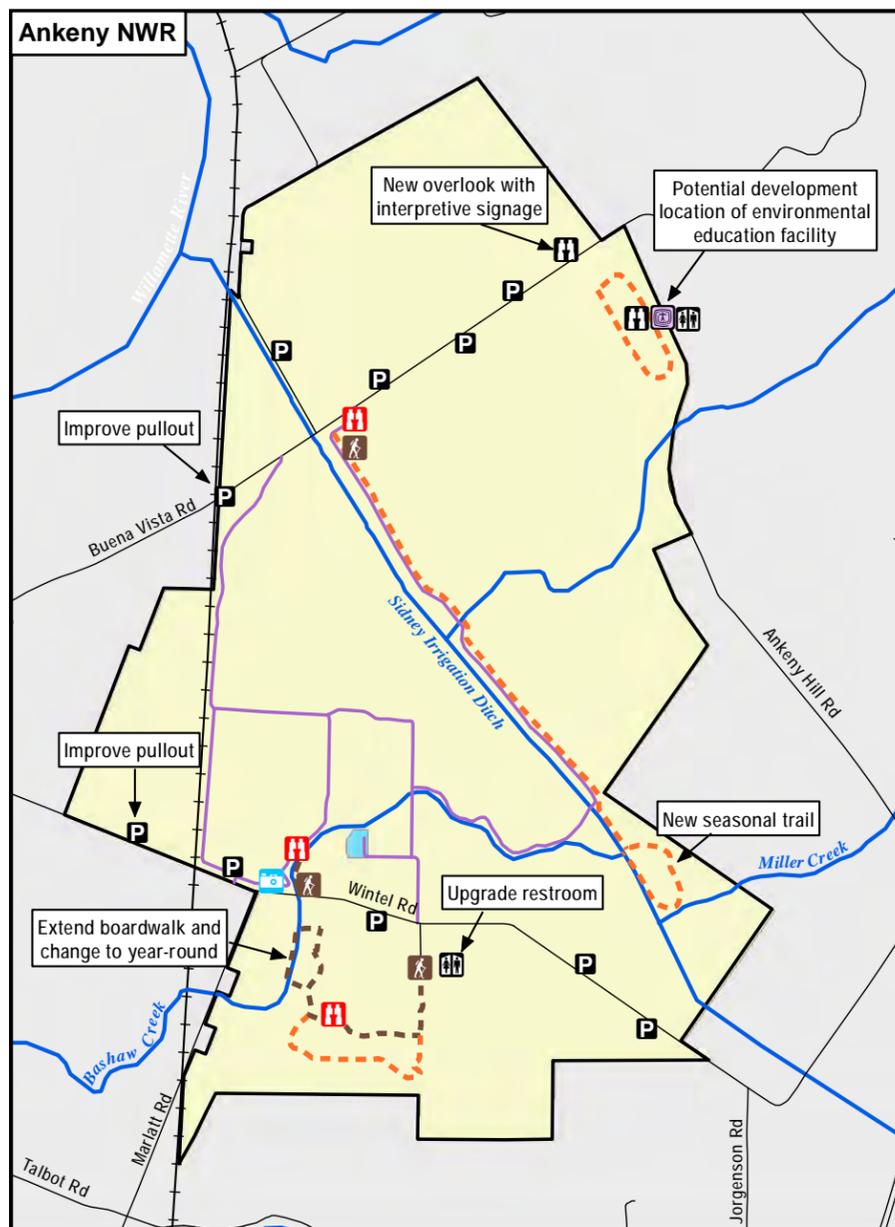
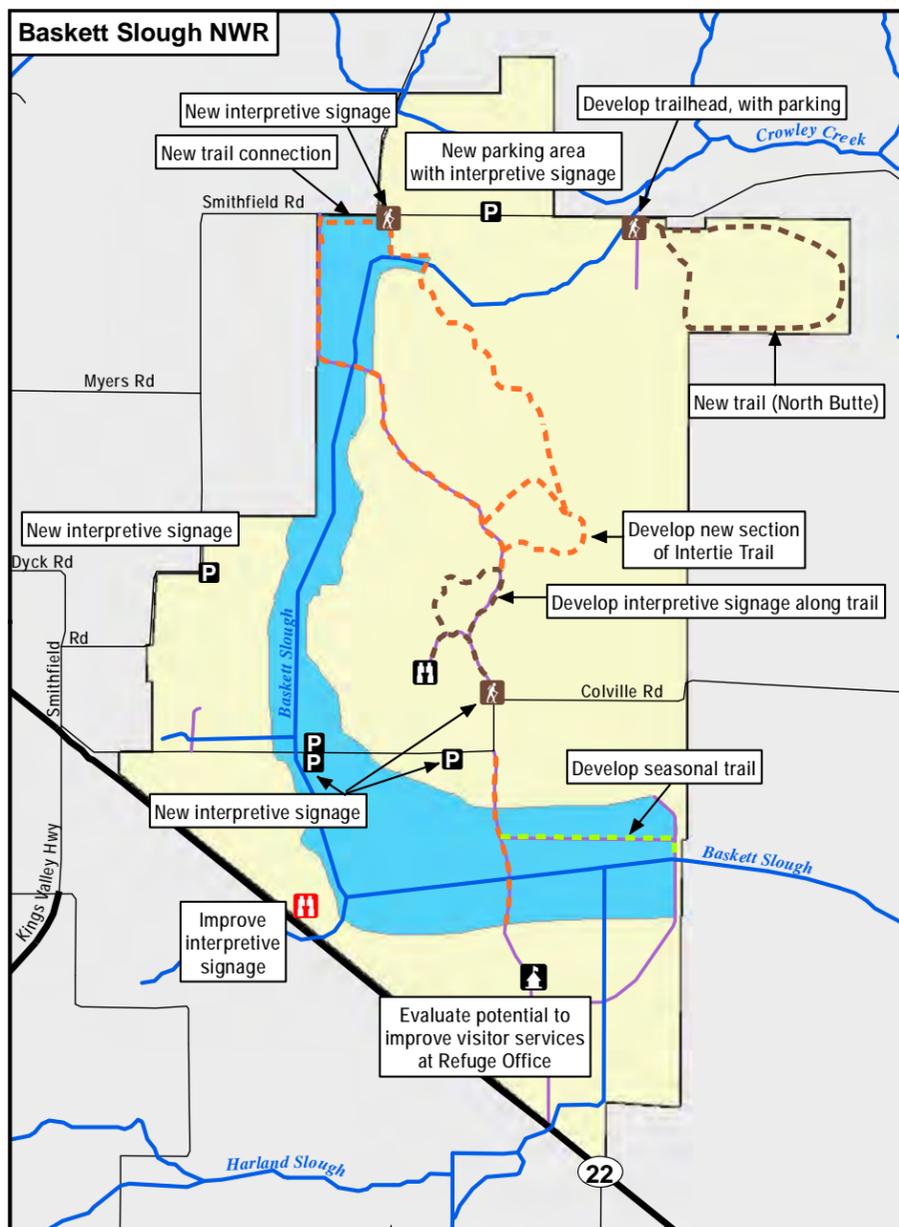
0 0.5 1 Kilometers

Produced by USFWS Region 1  
 Refuge Information Branch  
 Portland, Oregon  
 Data Source: USFWS, 2011  
 Map Date: 12/15/2011  
 File: 12-029-1



# Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges

## Public Use Direction Next 15 Years

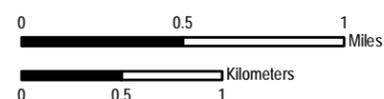


**LEGEND**

- Canoe Launch
- Complex Headquarters
- Environmental Education
- Overlook
- Photo Blind
- Refuge Service Road (seasonally open for hiking)
- All Year Use Trail
- Seasonal Use Trail (Open Jul.16 - Sep.30)
- Seasonal Use Trail (Open Apr.1 - Oct.31)
- Refuge Ownership Boundary
- Area Open to Public All Year
- Area Closed All Year
- Area Closed Oct.1 - Mar.31 Except on Trails Designated for All Year Use
- Area Open to Public for all but First Week of November for Deer Hunting
- Refuge Office
- Restroom
- Roadside Pullout
- Trailhead
- Viewing Blind

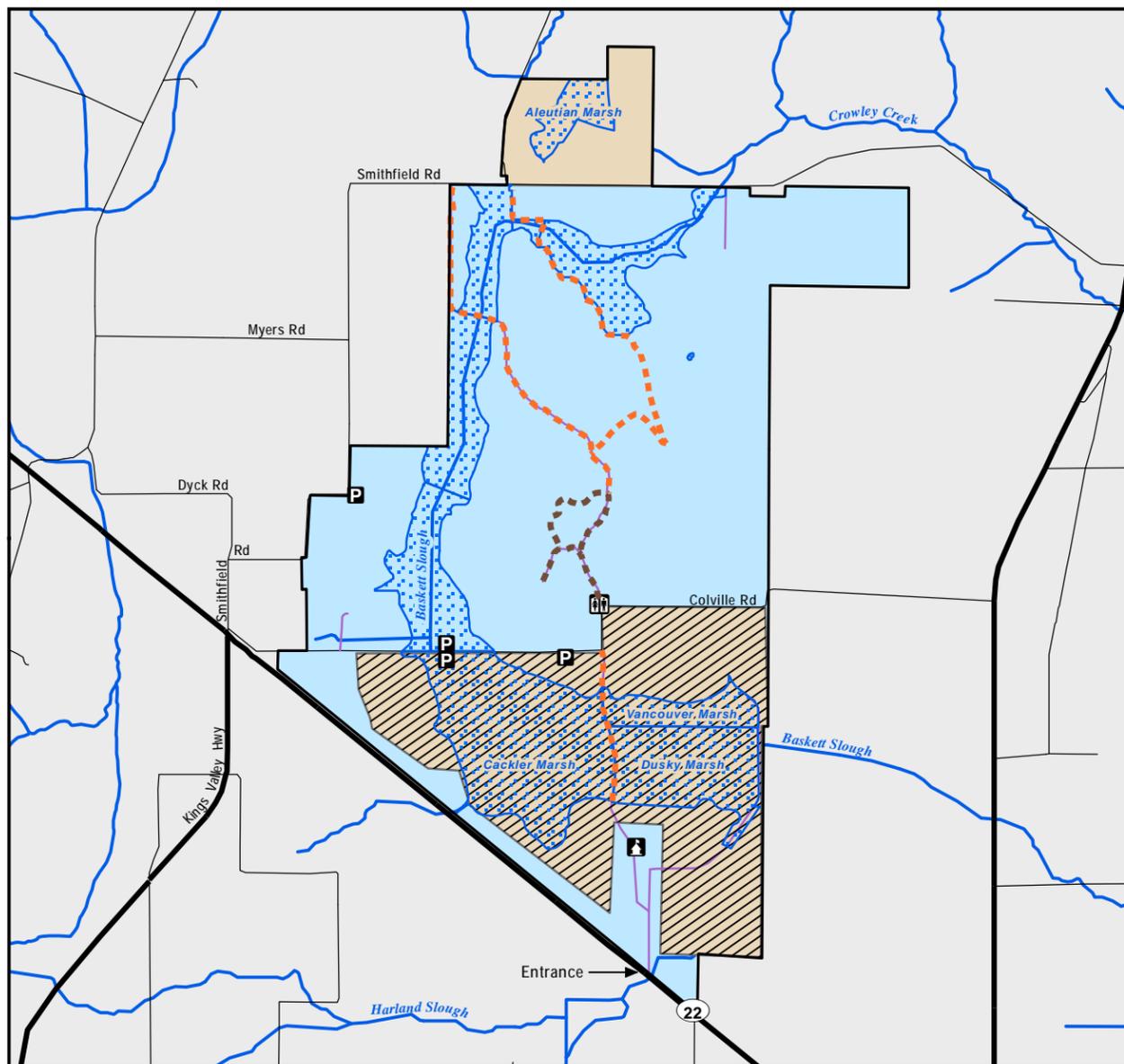
**NOTES**

Implementation of objectives are subject to funding availability. Some features have been offset from their true location for the purpose of map legibility.



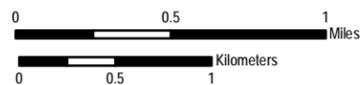
# Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges

## Baskett Slough Waterfowl Hunting Management Direction Next 15 Years



Under Alternative 2, the Youth Waterfowl Hunt period is for two days, typically on the last weekend of September. The Early Season Goose Hunt will be conducted on the opening and closing weekends of the State September Season. Dates fluctuate annually and are set by ODFW.

- LEGEND**
- Refuge Ownership Boundary
  - Youth Waterfowl Hunting
  - Early Goose Season Hunting
  - Area Closed to Hunting
  - Wetland
  - Existing Seasonal Use Trail (Open April 1 - Sept 30)
  - All Year Use Trail
  - Restroom
  - Refuge Administrative Office
  - Trailhead
  - Roadside Pullout



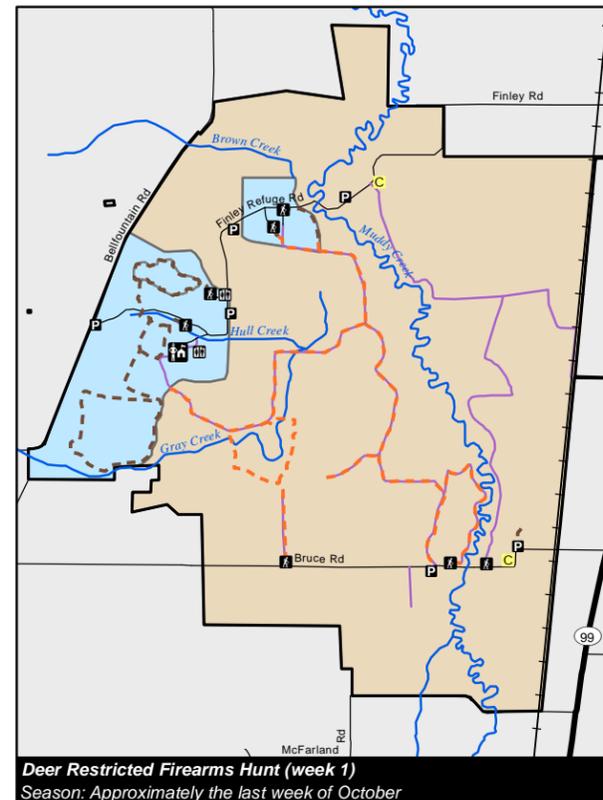
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 Refuge Information Branch  
 Portland, Oregon  
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 Data: USFWS (WVNWRC), 2010  
 File: 12-129-3



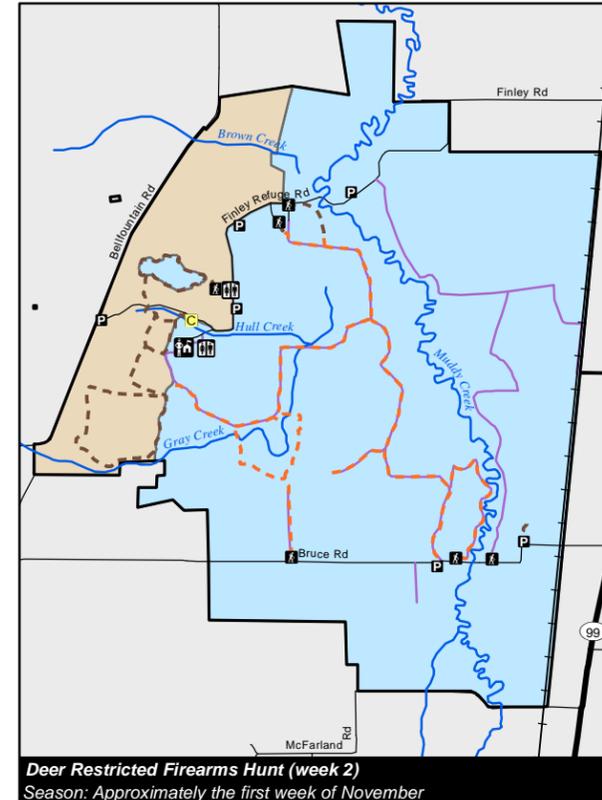
UTM ZONE 10  
 NAD 83

# Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges

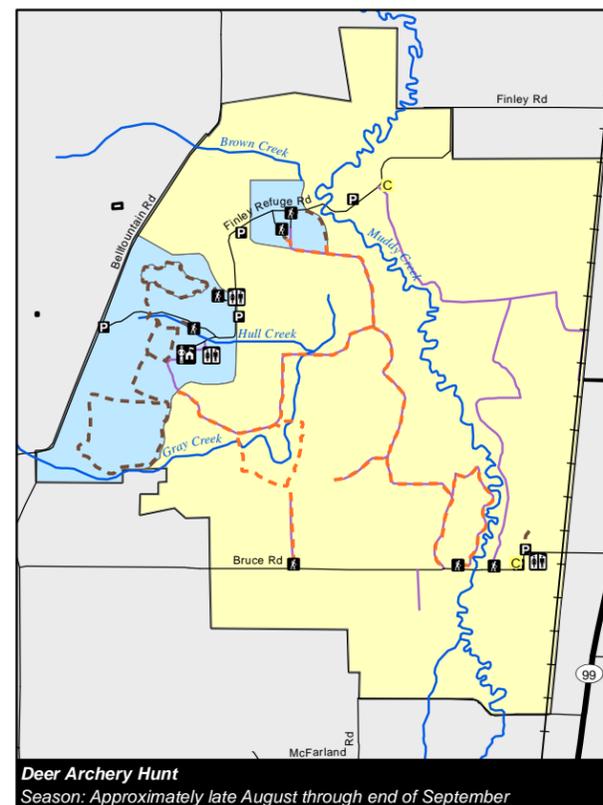
## William L. Finley Deer Hunting Management Direction Next 15 Years



**Deer Restricted Firearms Hunt (week 1)**  
 Season: Approximately the last week of October



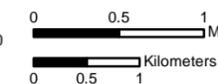
**Deer Restricted Firearms Hunt (week 2)**  
 Season: Approximately the first week of November



**Deer Archery Hunt**  
 Season: Approximately late August through end of September

- LEGEND**
- Refuge Ownership Boundary
  - Deer Hunt Area- Archery
  - Deer Hunt Area- Restricted Firearms
  - Closed to Hunting
  - Complex Headquarters
  - Check Stations
  - Trailhead
  - Roadside Pullout
  - Existing Seasonal Use Trail (Open Apr.1 - Oct. 31)
  - Existing All Year Use Trail

Map Date: 12/20/2011  
 Data: USFWS (WVNWRC), 2010  
 File: 12-029-4.mxd  
 Produced by USFWS Region 1  
 Refuge Information Branch  
 Portland, Oregon



UTM ZONE 10  
 NAD 83

## Comments on the Draft CCP/EA

We solicited comments on the draft CCP/EA from May 25, 2011, to June 24, 2011. A brief summary of the comments that were received is presented below. See Appendix L of the CCP/EA for the full text of comments and the Service response.

### General Comments

- Concern that proposed actions would adversely impact the viability of cooperative farming.
- Concern about process used for categorizing goose use and that fields used by dusky Canada geese may not have been adequately addressed.
- Concern about use of farming rather than native vegetation for providing goose browse.
- Concern that CCP incompletely addresses goose depredation off-refuge.

### Native Habitats Restoration and Management Comments

- Concern that native habitat restoration will be difficult to achieve and areas for maintenance and restoration are not prioritized.
- Concern the draft CCP did not clearly identify prioritization between habitat maintenance and restoration or among individual fields slated for restoration.
- Concern that habitat restoration hurts instead of helps wildlife.
- Concern that seasonal wetland passage would trump native fish passage needs.

### Wildlife Observation, Interpretation, and Environmental Education Comments

- Support for expanded interpretation and education.
- Concern that not enough recreation is allowed at Snag Boat Bend Unit.

### Hunting Comments

- Concern that expanding hunting programs compromises the idea of refuge.
- Support for new hunting options presented in the draft CCP.
- Concern that proposed Refuge seasons don't exactly match state seasons.
- Desire for more areas open to hunting.

### Fishing Comments

- Concern about eliminating fishing at Muddy Creek.
- Support for new fishing opportunities at Snag Boat Bend.
- Concern about fishing season dates at Snag Boat Bend.

### Elk Management Comments

- Desire for elk hunting to reduce property damage to neighbors.
- Concern that elk hunting step-down plan will be a biased process; support for a healthy elk herd at W.L. Finley and proposal for reducing elk damage by increasing hunting access to private lands.

### Native Habitats Restoration and Management Comments

- Suggestion that the CCP should anticipate and develop contingency plans for climate change.

### Cultural Resources Comments

- Suggestion that every effort be made to remodel and preserve the historic buildings on W.L. Finley Refuge.

### Protecting and Restoring Off-Refuge Habitats Comment

- Suggestion to increase the land for goose crops through off-refuge conservation easements or other means so that the Refuges can augment restoring natural habitats.

### Volunteers

- Suggestion for intensified focus on attracting more volunteers and generating more public support.

### Water Quality

- Concern that discharge of water from impoundments that have been heavily used by ducks and geese may negatively impact downstream water quality.
- Concern about pumping water from water-limited streams to flood up for ducks or produce crops for wintering ducks rather than support in-stream resources.

### Refuge Purposes

- Concern that the purposes for the Refuges have been misinterpreted, causing waterfowl objectives to appear to outweigh environmental laws enacted since the Refuges in the Willamette Valley were established.



Pigeon Butte is a Research Natural Area at William L. Finley NWR

© Joe Staff

## Changes Made to the Selected Alternative Based on Comments

Based on the public comments we received and considered, Alternative 2 in the Final CCP/EA has been slightly modified.

- The archery deer hunt dates have been changed to late August through September 30.
- The shotgun deer hunt has been changed to a restricted firearms hunt (muzzleloaders will be permissible weapons).
- Hunter orange will be required only of youth hunters.
- The fishing season at Snag Boat Bend Unit has been changed to year-round.
- The site plans and costs for the W.L. Finley Environmental Education Center have been modified. The cost of constructing the center under the new design increased.
- Additional text on how the Refuges will use scientific information for managing under changing climatic conditions has been added.
- Clarification on how fields have been selected for restoration under the action alternatives was added.
- The prioritization system in Appendix E (Implementation) was modified, and priorities changed.
- Under cultural resource management, the clause that some buildings may be removed in the future if unsafe was deleted.
- Some maps were updated.



Thanks to public comments, this belted kingfisher won't be the only one fishing year-round at Snag Boat Bend

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## Looking Back at the Planning Process

We initiated the planning process in October, 2006. Early planning steps included forming the planning team; developing a common understanding of the main habitats, public uses, and cultural resources existing on the refuges; and investigating the establishment history and purposes for each Refuge. Issue statements—an identification of some of the key problems and opportunities present at this time—were written and base maps completed.

A list of comprehensive resources of concern was developed. This was a list of all the species or habitats that had been identified for their importance or rarity in other plans or assessments (most prepared by partners such as the State of Oregon, or the Division of Migratory Birds within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). We pared down this lengthy list to develop a list of priority resources of concern. For each priority resource of concern, we compiled a scientific description of its ecological needs. Preliminary biological goals and objectives were then developed, using these descriptions as a starting point.

We began the public scoping process in January 2008 and held two public open houses as well as several meetings with partners and Congressional offices. We compiled the comments and suggestions received during scoping into a report.

At that time, we began developing possible alternatives to guide management for the next fifteen years. We evaluated our preliminary alternatives with partners and FWS management, and released a planning update to our mailing list to solicit feedback on these alternatives. We then continued to refine our alternatives based on feedback. We also completed appropriate use determinations for existing or proposed uses.

Once the alternatives were final, we completed our effects analysis, compatibility determinations, and other portions of the document, and we circulated the document for review internally and by partners prior to releasing the Draft CCP/EA for public review in May 2011.



© Joe Staff

Many miles of hiking trails provide an immersive nature experience throughout the Willamette Valley Refuges



Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
26208 Finley Refuge Road  
Corvallis, Oregon 97333

*The CCP is complete  
and available for you  
to view.*

*see back page for details*

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## How to View or Obtain the CCP/EA

*The final CCP and FONSI/EA are available in the following formats:*



### Electronic PDF

Download at <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning>



### CD-ROM

*Request via e-mail:* FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov (subject line: Willamette Valley NWR CCP/EA")

*Request via phone:* 541/757 7236



### Printed Copy

*Request via e-mail:* FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov (subject line: Willamette Valley NWR CCP/EA")

*In-person Viewing:* Call 541/757 7236 to make an appointment during regular business hours

W.L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge  
26208 Finley Refuge Road, Corvallis, Oregon 97333

*Libraries:* Copies will be available for reference at the following libraries

- Corvallis-Benton County Public Library  
645 NW Monroe Avenue, Corvallis, OR 97330
- Albany Public Library  
2450 14th Avenue SE, Albany, OR 97231
- Dallas Public Library  
950 Main Street, Dallas, OR 97338
- Jefferson Public Library  
128 South Main Street, Jefferson, OR 97352

*Rufous hummingbird*



**For further information contact the Refuge headquarters at 541/757 7236**