Fact Sheet

March 2010

Wapato Lake land acquisition would provide multiple benefits

A proposed land acquisition holds the promise of producing benefits for a variety of species – fish, birds, mammals and plants. In particular, migratory birds would gain a boost in habitat.

The Bonneville Power Administration is currently working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to fund a USFWS purchase of 13 parcels of land – approximately 227 acres adjacent to Wapato Creek in northwest Oregon. The area encompasses the Wapato Lake bed, which historically supported large populations of waterfowl including tundra swans.

The land would become part of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge's Wapato Lake Unit in Washington and Yamhill counties. Other partners include Friends of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge.

Many species would benefit

If acquired, the properties would become part of ongoing protection/restoration efforts within the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, which is now home to many species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

By providing and preserving native habitat, the acquisition would support species such as wintering waterfowl, raptors and resident mammals. Restoration of historic hydrology and habitat types would benefit anadromous fish species listed as threatened or endangered. In addition, there are opportunities to reintroduce endangered plant species.

The goal is restoring habitat

Currently the parcels are farmed and have been farmed for the past 80 years. In the short term, acquiring these parcels would promote cooperative farming agreements allowing farmers to grow small grains or pasture leaving a share of the crop in the field to benefit migratory birds.

However, restoration of native habitat is the longer-term goal. Because the proposed acquisition is adjacent to other USFWS parcels being protected and restored, the addition of these and future parcels will provide a large contiguous tract of land available for wildlife habitat protection and enhancement.

The purchase of these properties will provide BPA with credits for partial mitigation of wildlife habitat losses due to the construction and inundation associated with Detroit and Dexter dams along the North Santiam and Willamette rivers in Oregon.

Plan to guide development

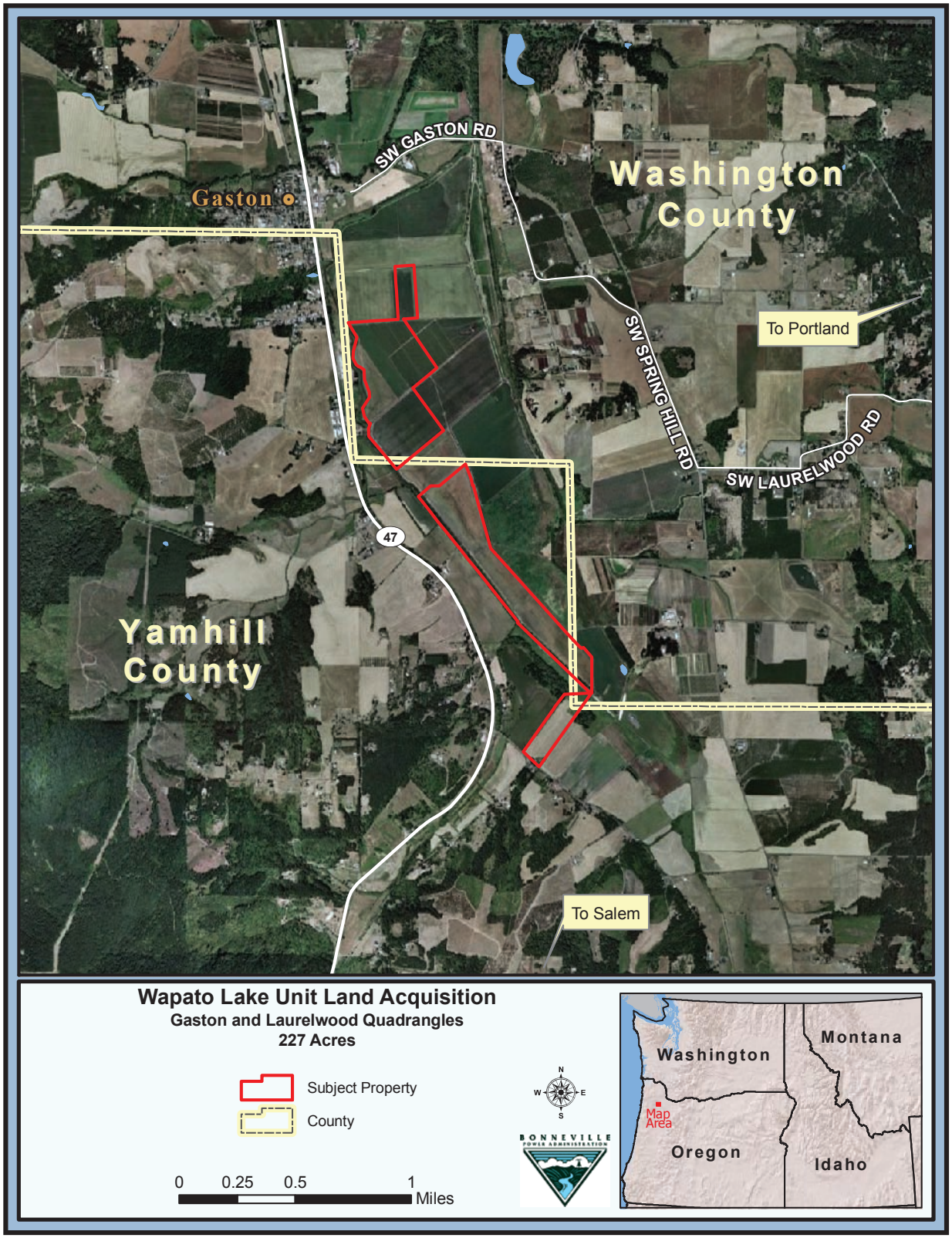
A decision on the acquisition is expected in spring 2010. If these proposed properties are acquired, a Comprehensive Conservation Plan will be developed for these and all other parcels within the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. The plan will determine the management approach for the refuge for 15 years.

Public participation will be encouraged during the development of this plan.

For more information

If you have questions about this proposal or would like additional information, please contact Jason Karnezis, BPA, at 503-230-3098, toll-free at 800-282-3713 or via e-mail at *jpkarnezis@bpa.gov.* You may also contact Pete Schmidt, biologist, or Carmella Mares, realty specialist, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 503-625-5944, 503-231-2079 or via e-mail at *Peter_Schmidt@fws.gov* or *Carmella_Mares@fws.gov.*

The area provides important habitat for migratory bird species.
(Photo by Pete Schmidt, USFWS)

Wapato Lake Unit Land Acquisition

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