

Colockum Wildlife Area

2017-18 Management Plan Update

This document is intended to highlight accomplishments as they relate to goals and objectives identified within the [2006 Colockum Wildlife Area Management Plan](#). The plan addresses the status of wildlife species and their habitat, ongoing restoration efforts, and public recreation opportunities at the Whatcom Wildlife Area. Every 10 years, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) revises management plans for each wildlife area to identify new management priorities and actions. In between plan revisions, the updates focus on recent accomplishments over the last two years.

Management Highlights

Stemilt Basin Land Acquisitions

The Stemilt 2 transaction closed in June 2018. This purchase from Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) added 1,276 acres to the Colockum Wildlife Area (Statewide Planning Goal 1). The project started more than 10 years ago and culminated a vision developed by the Stemilt Partnership for the ultimate ownership of these parcels in the Stemilt Basin. Since 2014, nearly 3,200 acres have been added to WDFW ownership in the Stemilt Basin from DNR and private timber companies, directly from efforts by WDFW and the Stemilt Partnership.

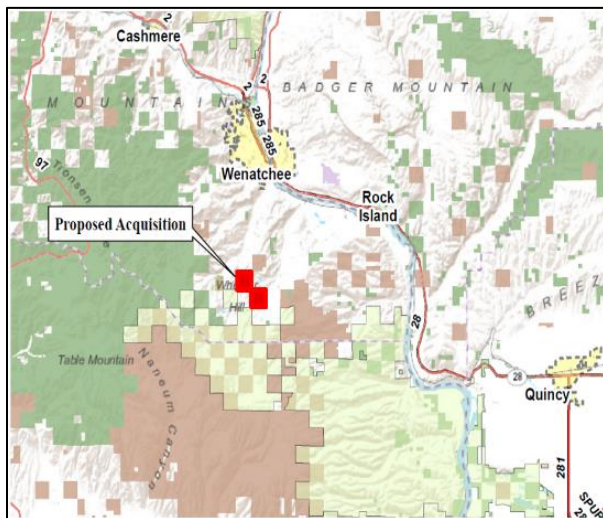


Figure 1: Map of property acquisitions added to the Colockum Wildlife Area



Figure 2: Lily Lake, one of the acquisitions

Stemilt Basin Recreation Planning

In 2016, the Chelan County Natural Resources Department, in a cooperative effort with state agencies, landowners, and stakeholders, began leading an effort to develop a recreation plan for the Stemilt and Squilchuck Basins. This plan is intended to compliment the Naneum Ridge to Columbia River Recreation Plan developed in 2015 and provides details and guidance for many of the concepts identified in that previous planning effort (Statewide Planning Goal 3). Stemilt planning work continued in 2017 and 2018, with development of recreation alternatives and a draft plan being presented for public comment in 2018.

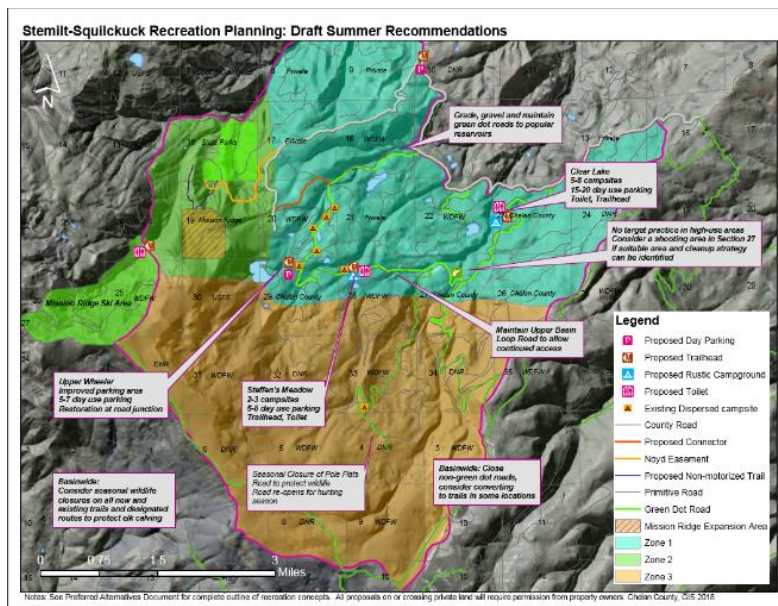


Figure 3: Summer recreation proposals in the Stemilt Recreation Plan

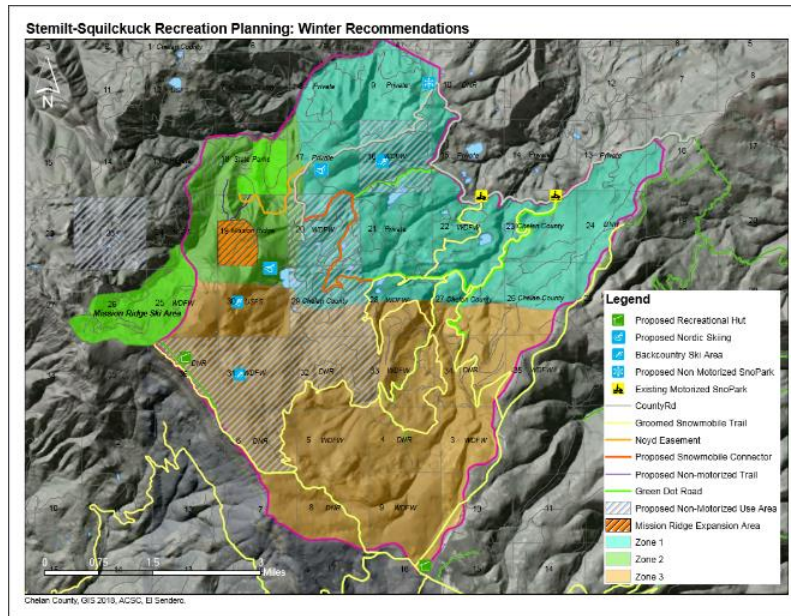


Figure 4: Winter recreation proposals in the Stemilt Recreation Plan

WDFW was an active partner in development of the Stemilt Recreation Plan, helping to ensure that the plan protects the important values of wildlife and natural resources not just on WDFW lands, but within the entire 17,000+ acre planning area.

New Issues

Forest Health – Timber thinning and harvest

WDFW has increased its efforts on actively managing timber stands on the Colockum Wildlife Area to promote healthier forests. Fire suppression for the past century and a “hands off” forest management philosophy has created dense, overstocked forest stands stressed by tree competition and ripe for disease and insect outbreaks, as well as uncontrollable wildfire. As land transactions became final in the Stemilt Basin, WDFW began working in close partnership with Chelan County and the Stemilt Partnership to identify forest health priorities in this area, including 300 acres slated for treatment in 2019.

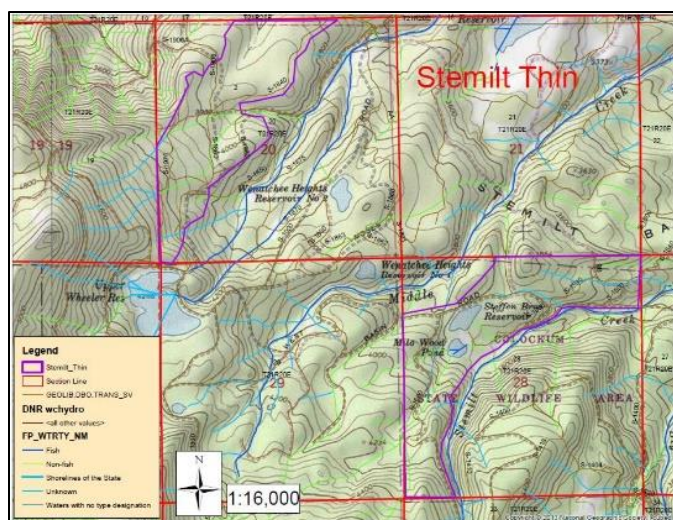


Figure 5: Map of units planned for treatment with logging in 2019



Figure 6: Forest planned for logging treatment in 2019

Forest Health – Prescribed fire

In 2005 and 2006, WDFW thinned overstocked timber stands in the Colockum Creek drainage and on Jumpoff Ridge. Ten years later, logging slash still remained and new tree seedlings were quickly establishing. In 2016, WDFW staff applied for a grant with the Recreation and Conservation Office with the main goal of reducing fire fuels and maintaining ponderosa pine stands in a more natural, open condition by using prescribed fire. WDFW received the grant funds and plans are underway to treat these areas with fire in 2019 and 2020. The 2006 Colockum Wildlife Area Management Plan highlighted timber thinning and prescribed fire as Management Plan Objectives and Strategies to protect and restore forest habitats.

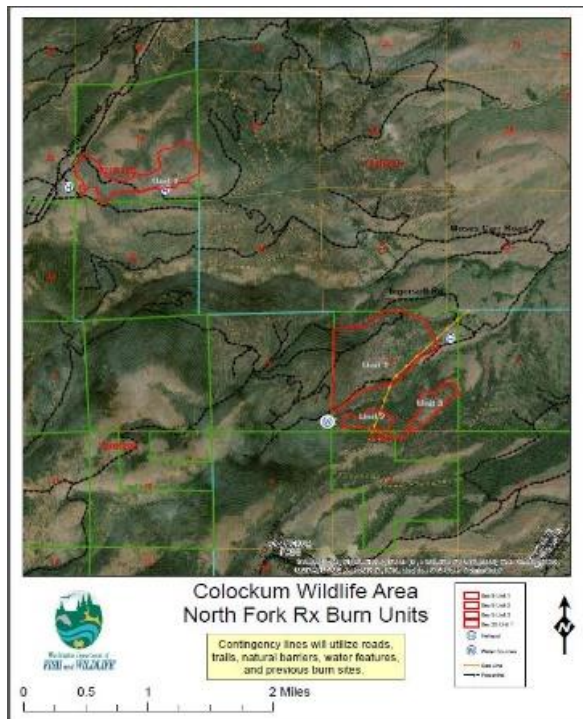


Figure 7: Map of units planned for prescribed fire treatment in 2019 and 2020



Figure 8: Forested area planned for prescribed fire treatment in 2019 and 2020