



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

2/18/2022

Agenda item:

New Grazing Permit

Presenter(s):

Cynthia Wilkerson, Lands Division Manager, and Jeff Burnham, Range Ecologist

Background summary:

A recent temporary grazing permit issued on the Spears Unit of the Cowlitz Wildlife Area led to improved control of reed canarygrass, desirable habitat outcomes, and positive working relationships with nearby residents. As a result, a 230-acre, 5-year grazing permit is proposed on the unit that would allot 420 animal unit-months of forage annually from April through October. The goal of the permit would be to reduce reed canarygrass biomass on former agricultural fields with the expectation that this will improve forage for elk, increase plant diversity, and increase habitat productivity for amphibians and waterfowl. Electric fence would be used to implement rotations across the acreage and prevent livestock from accessing a nearby creek except for a single watering location. The proposed permit is exempt from SEPA owing to its small size.

Staff recommendation:

Implementation of grazing permit as described. No action recommended from Commission.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

The Department's updated grazing WAC (220-500-200) now requires that the Commission be provided the opportunity to review a proposed transition from a temporary permit to a multi-year permit.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

The permit could generate up to \$5174.40 of permit revenue annually. Some staff time would be required to monitor and administer the permit, but the electric fencing infrastructure would be provided and maintained by the permittee.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

N/A

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

No action requested

Draft motion language:

N/A

Post decision communications plan:

N/A
