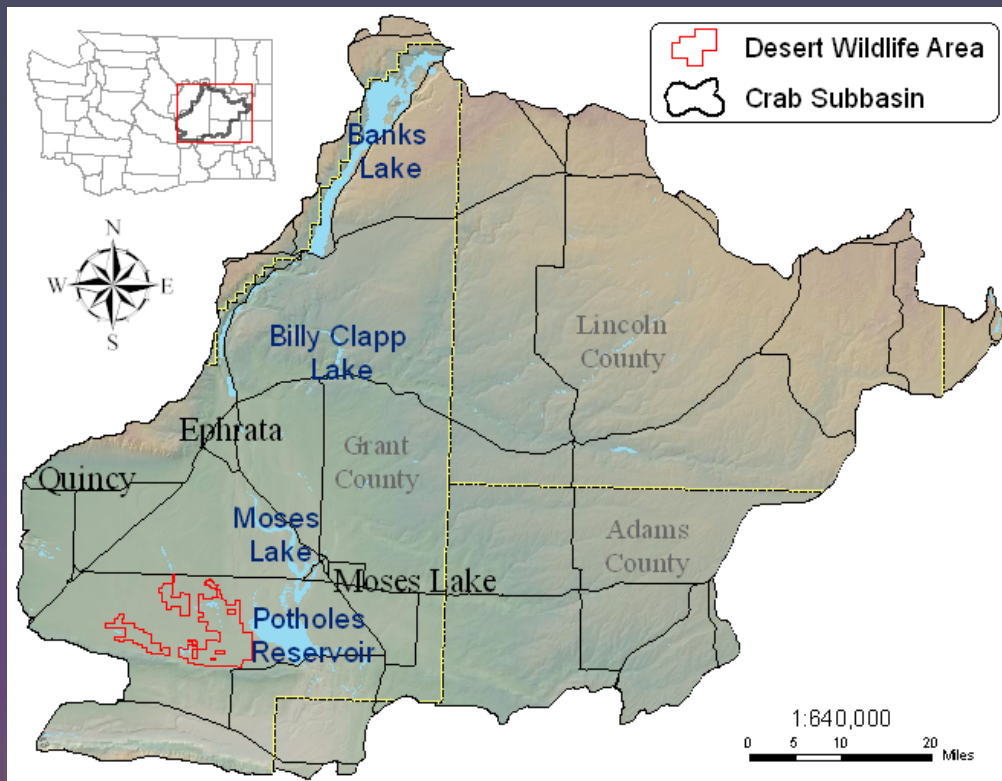


Desert Wildlife Area O&M (Wetland Enhancement)



BPA Project # 200600300



Presentation to ISRP; March 2009

Rich Finger

District Wildlife Biologist

Ephrata, WA

Area History: Landscape

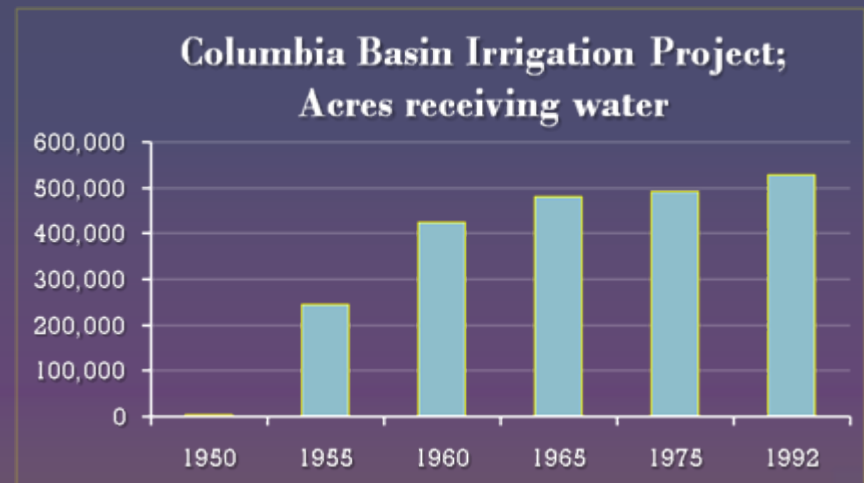
Columbia Basin Irrigation Project (<1952)

- Primarily native shrubsteppe habitat
- Numerous seasonal wetlands associated with Crab Creek
- Homesteaders encouraged by lush bunchgrass and sagebrush stands were determined to cultivate
- Dry farming only successful on lands with high water-holding capacities

Area History: Landscape

Columbia Basin Irrigation Project (1952-1992)

- Productive, early successional stage wetlands associated with new irrigation waters
- Abundance of native shrubsteppe habitat
- Mixture of agricultural and native habitats were favorable to some wildlife species
- Highly invasive wetland plants gaining foothold

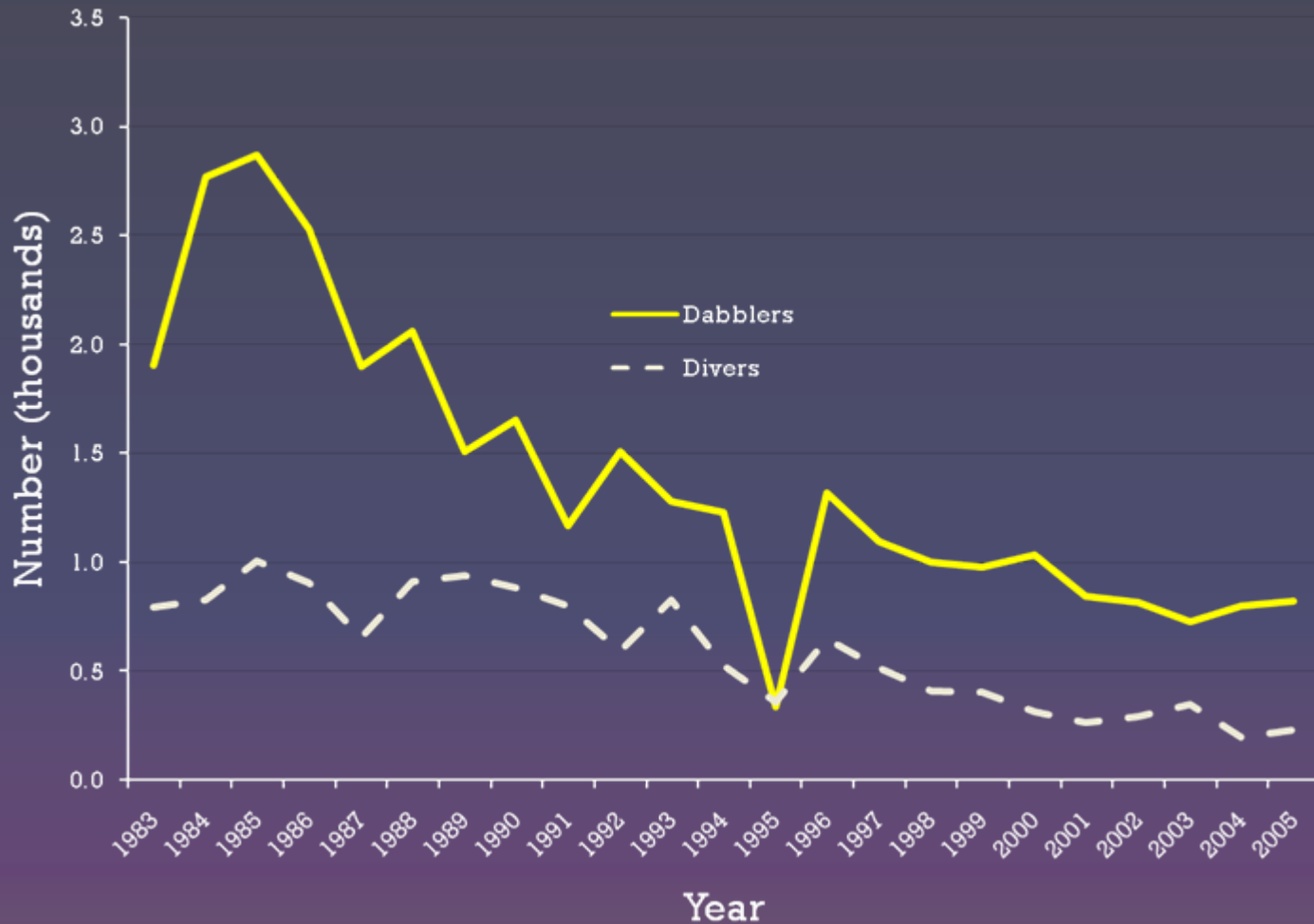


Area History: Landscape

Columbia Basin Irrigation Project (1992-present)

- Cultivation reduced native shrubsteppe habitat
- Altered hydrology favors highly invasive wetland plants
- Wetland succession lowers wetland productivity and open water availability
- Desert Wildlife Area dominated by shrubsteppe and wetland habitat, much of which is deteriorating in quality

Area History: Breeding ducks



Project History: Acquisition

Desert Wildlife Area 1960-present

- 1960 - BOR transfers 3,280 acres to WDG
- 1971 - BOR transfers 16,900 acres to WDG
 - WDG purchases 6,769 acre ranch
- Additional BOR parcels and acquisitions increase size to present 35,100 acres

Project History: Management

- BOR and WDFW share ownership
- WDFW manages the land
- Management focused on waterfowl and mule deer

Management Goals

- Manage wetlands to balance successional stages
- Manage wetlands to support breeding and wintering waterfowl
- Monitor and manage for a quality mule deer herd

Linkages

Wetland Enhancement

1. Desert WA Wetland Enhancements
2. Winchester Regulated Access Area moist soil project
3. Marsh Unit I & II, Columbia National Wildlife Refuge
4. Royal Bluffs Ranch moist soil project
5. East Foster Creek Impoundments

Carp Removal

1. Potholes WA Wetland Enhancement
2. Gloyd Seeps WA Wetland Enhancement
3. Ephrata Lake Carp Removal
4. West Arm, Potholes Reservoir Carp Removal
5. Westlake Carp Removal

Major Accomplishments

- 2002. Completed Desert Wildlife Area Mitigation Work Plan.
- 2003-04. Pre-project wildlife surveys conducted.
- 2005. TD1 environmental compliance and water delivery system completed.
- 2006. TD1 additional funding secured. TD2 basin excavation.
- 2007. TD1 impoundments built and operated. TD2 vegetation monitoring.
- 2008. Managed vegetation at TD1 and TD2.
- 2009. Fish removed from TD2 wetlands

Future Work

- Continue vegetation control through herbicide application
- Limit wildfires and spread
- Continue to monitor and control undesirable fish populations



Threats

- Wetland succession
- Invasive plants
- Wildfires
- Non-native fish



Long-term Management Needs

- Fish and Wildlife Biologist
 - Operate project wetlands
 - Maintain infrastructure
 - Wildlife monitoring
 - Vegetation monitoring
- Spring and Fall herbicide applications
- Annual tilling and seeding with moist soil plants
- Levee repair

Monitoring

- Vegetative communities
 - Aquatic bed
 - Moist soil seed production
 - Community composition
- Waterfowl production
 - Pair counts/brood counts
 - Monitoring of nest cylinders



Budget

Item	Note	FY 2010 cost (\$)	FY 2011 cost (\$)	FY 2012 cost (\$)
Personnel	F&W Biologist 2, 12 months Wildlife Area Manager, 3 months	\$66,500	\$68,163	\$69,867
Fringe Benefits	F&W Biologist 2, 12 months Wildlife Area Manager, 3 months	\$21,091	\$21,618	\$22,158
Travel	3 days of lodging, 4 days of per diem	\$456	\$467	\$480
Supplies	800' of chain link fencing for dike armoring	\$3,200	\$3,280	\$3,360
Supplies	155 staples to secure chain link	\$687	\$704	\$721
Supplies	Spring (broad-leave) herbicides, 50 acres	\$940	\$964	\$988
Supplies	Fall (non-selective) herbicides, 90 acres	\$4,973	\$5,097	\$5,225
Supplies	Moist soil seed mix, 2,000 lbs, 50 acs	\$4,869	\$5,000	\$5,120
Supplies	Native grass seed, 16.5 ac, 330 lbs	\$3,647	\$3,739	\$3,831
Supplies	Mileage, pick up	\$7,200	\$7,380	\$7,560
Supplies	Mileage charge for 2-ton truck, 2,000 miles	\$2,050	\$2,102	\$2,154
Other	Contract for 50 acres of tillage on TD1	\$6,273	\$6,430	\$6,591
Other	Contract for moist soil seed planting on TD1	\$2,217	\$2,272	\$2,329
Other	Contract for aerial herbicide application, spring, 50 acres	\$1,800	\$1,850	\$1,900
Other	Contract for aerial herbicide application, fall, 90 acres	\$3,240	\$3,330	\$3,420
Other	Contract for aerial weed recon, in conjunction with spring and fall aerial herbicide applications, 2 hours total	\$820	\$840	\$862
Overhead	25.67%	\$33,362	\$34,202	\$35,057
Itemized budget totals		\$163,325	\$167,438	\$171,623