

The Proposed Gilpin-Morrissey WMA Planning Process: SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED ISSUES

The following are the recorded comments from meeting participants (at the September 22 Workshop and Information Session) concerning issues associated with the proposed WMA, and secondarily within the two new provincial parks.



- The area of the proposed WMA has significant wildlife values that warrant higher management protection.
- Concern of the impact associated with increased wildlife in the WMA and provincial parks on adjoining private land.
- What will the impact be of the establishment of a WMA on existing grazing activities in the area?

•What will be the impact of the proposed WMA and the new provincial parks on adjoining ALR land?

- Do we need a WMA?
- The area seems to be fine.
- Why do we need more rules and regulations when the government can't even enforce the existing rules and regulations?



•What will be the impact on recreation activities (ATV use, horse back riding, mountain biking, snowmobiling, motor biking) that currently take place within the area proposed for a WMA?

•Would the rules and regulations that apply to a WMA change over time? Would potential rule and regulations changes in the future result in the exclusion of existing recreational activities that would be allowed in the WMA?

Will vehicular access still be permitted into Boothman's Oxbow Provincial Park? The area is popular for swimming and day use activities.

The proposed WMA area is well used by local/regional residents for a variety of recreational activities. These must be allowed to continue in any future WMA.

•Dirt bikes and Quads are having a significant impact on the land base. They need to be controlled in terms of the areas they are allowed to use.

•Will there be restrictions on areas where dirt bikes and quads are permitted? If so, how will people know where they can ride their bikes/quads?



•The existing road access and hunting activities that occur in the proposed WMA should be allowed to continue.

•There has been a dramatic increase in the number of deer that reside and forage in the Grand Forks city limits. What is the impact of the wildlife fence along the north side of the highway on the movement of deer and other wildlife?

Hunting should be allowed to continue in the proposed WMA.



What is the impact of cattle grazing in the proposed WMA on wildlife and water quality?

•The current level of grazing activity found in the proposed WMA does not seem to change year to year despite changes in the range quality (forage, browse and water quality).

•Concern of the impact associated with land management activities in the WMA and provincial parks on adjoining private land.

•The WMA should not include private land.

The first management priority for the proposed WMA should be on protecting the wildlife. This must be put ahead of other issues such as recreational activities, hunting and grazing.



The Proposed Gilpin-Morrissey WMA Planning Process:

SUMMARY OF PRIORITIZED ISSUES

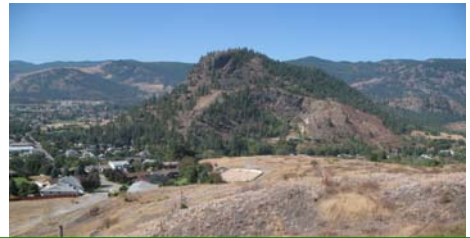
During the first workshop (Sept. 22) participants were each given 3 sticky paper dots and asked to place these dots beside their three most pressing issues/concerns that should/must be addressed in a management plan for the proposed WMA and for the provincial parks. Points below the main issues reflect further feedback (from Oct. 27 Workshop) on these issues and possible subject areas that the draft plan could expand upon.

In order of priority (from highest priority to lowest priority) as determined by the number of dots, these issues are:

1. Ensure access for recreational activities (ATV's, dirt bikes, mountain bikes, snowmobiles) in the proposed WMA.

An inventory is required to outline roads and trails that are used and where access might be restricted.

Citizen groups (i.e. Wilderness Watch) should be endorsed/encouraged within the proposed WMA.



2. Impacts of cattle grazing on natural habitat values (water, range, vegetation).

Weed management should be a priority in the draft WMA plan. Preserving watershed integrity should be in the forefront of all range management within the proposed WMA (riparian areas should be protected and cattle use restricted in sensitive areas).

Visual impact (as seen from the highway) of cattle should be addressed in the draft plan.

More monitoring is needed to provide insight into cattle impacts on habitat values. The draft plan should create strategies that improve habitat values.



3. Impact of a WMA on private land (access to and over private land, increased wildlife activities on private land, increase/decrease of employment opportunities in area that would be covered by a WMA).

Fencing of critical interface areas (to stop ungulate encroachment on private land) should be addressed in the draft WMA plan.

The Nature Trust Property...the draft WMA plan should address the issue of cattle grazing on this site.



4. Allow for the continuation of hunting in a WMA.

**Hunting restrictions are dealt with via seasonal allocations, quotas, and not part of a WMA planning process.*

5. Impacts of cattle grazing on wildlife.

This issue was merged with No. 2 (Impacts of cattle grazing on natural habitat values).



6. Adequate government resources to implement/monitor management plans.

The plan should address pine beetle management and use of prescribed fire.

The plan should reflect that there is little enforcement of access issues currently (due to lack of resources).

WMA plan should focus on understanding why there is a marked reduction in mule deer populations.

7. Impacts of wildlife on cattle grazing.

The draft plan should make it known that not all water quality issues are the fault of cattle grazing.

Gates and cattle control structures are often damaged by wildlife.