

# **Summary of Selected Portions - 1988 Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge Coordinated Resource Management Plan**

In 1988, Oaks Bottom became Portland's first officially designated wildlife refuge. The City adopted a Management Plan written by Oaks Bottom Coordinated Resource Management Group.

- **Major Resource Uses in the Planning Area**
  - Passive recreation
  - Wildlife habitat development
  - Bird watching
  - Hiking
  - Cycling
  - Public education programs
  - Audubon Society field trips
  
- **Major Habitat Problems Identified in the Report**
  - Siltation leading to willow encroachment
  - Willow encroachment infilling of emergent wetlands
  - Exotic species
  - Pest animal species – dogs & cats are problematic for nesting waterfowl
  - Wetland habitat diversity – expanse of reed canary grass in emergent wetland
  - Lack of ability to control water regime – ability to control water regime was mentioned as essential to improve:
    - vector control efforts
    - pest management (mosquitoes)
    - control of exotic species
    - vegetative diversity
  - Water quality
  - Fire control
  - Soil erosion

- **Vision**
  - Increase vegetative diversity
    - Swamp wetland
      - The issue with the swamp wetland is the willow invasion. The tool identified in the report to assist in the control of the willows was a WCS. The WCS was also identified as improving vector control
      - Revegetation/habitat enhancement
      - Purple loosestrife control
      - Willow control. Short term control used was cutting, higher water regime was identified as being favored for long term control
    - Emergent wetland
      - Issue with emergent wetland is the reed canary grass. Control of WSE was identified a help to eradicate some of the reed canary grass. Additional ponds connected with channels were identified as a means to improve wildlife diversification & to improve combating mosquitoes.

The plan included an implementation schedule which focused on improvements to the site which enhance wetland habitat elements, aid in vector control & allow the non-intrusive forms of recreation to the refuge.

Improvements listed to further efforts in:

1. Water quality improvements/quantity control
  - Swamp wetland – control water to increase habitat diversity, & to control floodwater for mosquito control
2. Revegetation/vegetative diversity
  - Develop plan to increase wapato in swamp & emergent wetlands
  - Develop plan to control purple loosestrife, willow, blackberry, clematis in swamp wetland & bluff

The proposed construction of a water control structure just upstream of the railroad berm culvert was to be designed to accommodate broad-based water management objectives, inhibiting the growth of nuisance vegetation while enhancing wildlife habitat, as well as allowing for the specific objective of controlling floodplain mosquitoes (*Aedes vexans*) (Rogers 1994). The structure was intended to allow year-round retention of about 100 acres of aquatic habitat in the bottomlands. It was thought that without the structure, much of the wetland and aquatic habitat might transition to emergent marsh & riparian woodland.

Construction of the WCS to control the timing, depth and duration of inundation to increase open water and wetland habitat by reducing invasion of willow (*Salix* spp.), reed canary grass and purple loosestrife, was thought to be the tool best suited for meeting multiple management objectives.