

2023 WHEP State Contest
Senior Wildlife Management Plan
Scenario

Mr. Dunklin is a conservationist who owns a successful duck hunting lodge which hosts duck hunters from late November through January during waterfowl hunting season. Although ducks are the focus of his business operation, Mr. Dunklin is immensely interested in conserving and protecting many species and declining habitats in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain.

Mr. Dunklin has decided to set aside a 70-acre reservoir to manage for a secretive marsh bird, the American bittern. Because it is so secretive, it is difficult to tell its population status in Arkansas and elsewhere. Many experts believe that their populations have declined due to habitat loss. Mr. Dunklin would like to establish habitat which attracts more American bitterns to his property.

Mr. Dunklin hired your team to develop a wildlife management plan for the American bittern along with redheads on this reservoir. He wants more redheads to stay in the area to complement his duck hunting business. He would also like the plan to include habitat improvements to increase the number of local largemouth bass which currently live in the reservoir.

He is willing to purchase and install whatever your team recommends, although he is opposed to stocking more fish. Include specific directions as to where you want any additions made. Be detailed in your plan and sketch map about what, when, where and how the habitat will be manipulated. Describe what habitat response you hope to achieve with your recommended management practices.

Mr. Dunklin specifically asked for your team's recommendation about whether hunters should hunt redheads and other waterfowl at the reservoir during hunting season, or whether the reservoir should be set aside as a rest area with no hunting as part of the plan's implementation. Provide reasons for your answer.

Lastly, he observed many raccoon tracks around the reservoir. He is concerned about their impact on species in the plan and wants the team to recommend ways to reduce their presence.

A satellite image of the reservoir is below. The border of this management area is the ground just outside the levee surrounding the reservoir. Feel free to ask the judges for clarification.



INSTRUCTIONS:

- **You have a maximum of 1 ½ hours to complete this team activity. Your plan will consist of three pages of paper, written on one side of each page.**
 - Write your management plan on one side of each of two pieces of paper (two pages maximum).
 - Draw a map on a third piece of paper and show your proposed wildlife habitat practices.
- Write the names of team members and ID codes on the back of each answer page.
- Use the headings as described in the WHEP handbook when writing your plan.
- Write neatly. If the judges cannot read handwriting, that portion will not be graded and points deducted.
- Use the extra sheets of paper in your packet to brainstorm ideas and draft your plan or map. Once you are finished, place an X or fold up scrap papers, so it will not be confused with the plan you are turning in.
- Turn in your management plan and other papers to the station monitor. Keep your pencil and clipboard.
- Use any remaining time to prepare for ***oral reasons***.
- Seniors are to stay together and eat lunch as a group in the designated area under the tent canopy. No talking to Juniors, adults or any non-contestants about the contest, as this could be considered cheating and grounds for dismissal from the contest.

SAFETY NOTES:

- Look where you place your feet.
- Watch for snakes, ticks, fire ants, wasps, and other critters.
- Watch for hidden holes.
- Walk portions of the area where easily accessible. Do not cross wet streams or deep ditches. Use the map to make an educated guess about specific habitat features.
- Keep in sight of the contest judges.
- There are no restrooms available at the site. If in dire need, ask to be driven back to the lodge where a restroom is available.