

## **Nature Reserve „Burgas pļavas”**

### **Summary of the Nature Management Plan**

Nature Reserve “Burgas pļavas” was established 2004 by the regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers (Nr. 266/ 08.04.2004) and its size is 183 ha. The main aim creating the Nature Reserve in Valka region, Valka municipality (picture 1) was to preserve the biotope 6450 (Northern Boreal alluvial meadows), mentioned in EC Biotope directive Annex I and bird species like Great Snipe (*Gallinago media*) and Corncrake (*Crex crex*), mentioned in the Bird directive Annex I. This nature reserve is situated in North Vidzeme Biosphere reserve. Main part of the land belongs to the private owner (97 %). Nature Reserve is also registered in Natura 2000 Site List under territory code 5326 and its borders match with Important Bird Site “Burgas pļavas” (code LV082).

During the elaboration of the Nature Management Plan additional inventory of biological values as well as hydrological and soil researches are done.

In Nature Reserve one can meet four biotopes from Biotope Directive Annex I: Northern Boreal alluvial meadows 6450(157, 1 ha), Lowland hay meadows 6510(2,8 ha), Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-siltladen soils 6410(0,8 ha) and Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels 6430(2,3 ha) as well as 2 specially protected plant species and 16 specially protected bird species, 15 of them are mentioned in Bird Directive Annex I.

The highest importance of this Nature Reserve is to protect the floodplain meadows and nesting ground for bird species like Great Snipe (12 –18 couples) and Corncrake (15 – 25 couples). With this the following aim is set up long-term management of this territory: to keep the prevalence of floodplain meadows and to encourage the land owners to manage their lands. To reach this aim, there are also a number of short-term aims:

1) borders of the Nature Reserve are recognizable visually and use of the land according to the territory planning of the Valka municipality is ensuring preservation of the natural values here

2) open floodplain meadows are occupying at least 151 ha and the populations of the specially protected bird species nesting in restricted area are remaining at least as instant value

3) at least 20ha of the scrubby and overgrown floodplain meadows are renowned

4) impact of the land amelioration ditches to the hydrology situation in restricted area is reduced

5) information about the numeral changes of the bird populations after the managing measures in floodplain meadows as well as the information about the situation in preservation of the species, mentioned in EC Biotope directive Annex I and Bird directive Annex I is collected

6) stakeholders and society are informed about the values in the Nature Reserve and measures to preserve and manage, supportive financial sources are used (chapter III).

In the Nature Management Plan following measures are provided as priority to restore and manage the floodplain meadows: cutting out of the bushes, initial and following regular mowing or pasturing. Within the framework of the project *LIFE Nature* “Restoration of the floodplain meadows” regular mowing and cutting of the bushes in Nature Reserve has started again. Also it is planned to mark visually the

territory of the Nature Reserve, to prepare the shorter version of the Nature Management Plan, to print the booklet and to install the information stand. To restore natural hydrologic regime in floodplain meadows it is advisable to create the special dam on the ditches or to fill them up. To assess the efficiency of the management measures, it is planned to do inventory of the specially protected nesting bird species as well as measuring of the water level and throughput rate of the Seda River. Planned management measures are described in chapter IV.

It is not necessary to elaborate a special zoning by function in the Nature Reserve.

The Nature management plan is created in according to the project LIFE04NAT/LV/000198 “Renewal of the floodplain meadows for EU species and biotopes” and in cooperation with GEF/UNDP project “Protection of the biological diversity in North Vidzeme Biosphere reserve”. Nature Management Plan is elaborated by Latvian Nature Fund, according to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers Nr.234 „Regulations of the content and procedure of elaboration of nature management plan to the specially protected territories”. Elaboration and editing of the nature management plan was administrated by Liene Salmiņa.

Nature Management Plan is accepted by Valka municipality council. Last meeting of the supervision group took place 19<sup>th</sup> January 2007. Members of the group confirmed completion of the elaboration of the Nature Management Plan. (IV)