

Lielupe floodplain meadows restricted Nature Reserve Summary of the Nature Management Plan

Lielupe floodplain meadows restricted Nature Reserve „Lielupes palieņu pļavas” is situated in the middle part of Latvia, on the territories of the Jelgava city and Ozolnieki and Jaunsvirlauka municipalities in Jelgava district. State importance level Nature Reserve was founded 1999, enlarged 2004 by adding another two floodplain meadows.

The aim of creating the Nature Reserve was to preserve the natural floodplain meadows on the banks of Lielupe River. This Nature Reserve is registered in Natura 2000 Site List (code LV0523100) since 2004 as important area for wild birds, wild plants protection and natural biotopes in Latvia. Area of the Lielupe floodplain meadows restricted Nature Reserve is 352 ha.

Latvian Nature Fund elaborated the Nature Management Plan in 2006 according to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers Nr. 234 (March 28th 2006.) „Regulations of the content and procedure of elaboration of Nature Management Plan to the specially protected territories”. Elaboration of the plan was done in the frameworks of the *LIFE Nature* “Restoration of the floodplain meadows in Latvia”. During the elaboration the additional research of the territory was made.

Necessity to renew the Nature Management Plan is predicted by the territorial changes in 2004 as well as some changes in legislation.

In the Nature Reserve 27 specially protected species of the wild animals and birds are found as well as two biotopes, mentioned in the Biotope Directive – Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels, code 6430 and Lowland hay meadows, code 6510. This Nature Reserve is important nesting place for plover and rest for migrating water bird. Main values in the Nature Reserve are the natural floodplain meadows providing the biotopes for great diversity of the bird.

The main task elaborating this plan is to coordinate the interests of the nature protection as priority, recreation and regional development, as well as preserving the values of the territory.

Nature Management Plan for Lielupe floodplain meadows restricted Nature Reserve is elaborated to next 10 years. This plan is also containing scientifically approved information about the natural values on the Nature Reserve territory and the main factors impacting it. Information in the Plan is concise, analyzed and summarized; reference list gives the link to the detailed sources. Cartographic materials in the Annexes of the Nature Management Plan are the property of the State Land Service of the Republic of Latvia.

Management measures included in the Nature Management Plan are divided in several groups. Administrative measures are marking visually and maintaining the borders of the Nature Reserve as well as making changes in existing territory planning. Measures for preserving biological diversity contain restoration of the floodplain meadows cutting off the bushes and maintaining by mowing or pasturing. Measures for developing recreational infrastructure are: installing the barriers, recreational facilities, observation platforms or towers, information stands. During the actions and measures for public education it is necessary to inform the possible visitors about the values and restrictions, featuring appropriate information in the Internet pages of the local municipalities. It is planned additionally to prepare and print the booklet and summary of the Nature Management Plan to spread it between the stakeholders. To maintain the meadows by pasturing it is planned to introduce the

wild horses. Monitoring measures include the assessment of the condition of rare and specially protected biotopes and monitoring of the recreational infrastructure.

Territory of the Nature Reserve is homogenous – more than 95 % of the territory size is natural floodplain meadows, managed in different way. Just smallest part is covered by buildings or yards. Therefore two functionally zones are defined in Nature Reserve – restricted area on the Pils island with all the typical biotopes of the floodplain meadows and neutral zone with constructions and yards.