

**Upper Snoqualmie Valley Elk Management Group
(USVEMG) Meeting**

March 11, 2009

<http://www.snoqualmievalleyelk.org>

Meeting called to order at 6:35 P.M. by Jim Gildersleeve. Welcome to all. Jim summarized agenda items for this evening. Attendee roster was circulated. It was noted that Russell Link would not be attending.

Introductions: No formal round table introduction, name tags provided. Meeting facilitated by Jim Gildersleeve. New attendees were asked to introduce themselves. The minutes of the February, 2009 meeting were distributed via e-mail for review and to allow for additional commentary. Minutes were approved as submitted.

Key Agenda Items:

- Committee reports
- Approve additions pertaining to the Snoqualmie Valley Sub Herd in the updated North Rainier Herd Plan Outline
- Endorse the Scientific Collections Permit and implementing plan
- Presentation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Upper Snoqualmie Valley Elk Management Group and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe regarding studies of elk in the upper Snoqualmie Valley.
- Consider job tasks for an intern for the period of April through September 2009
- Approve in concept incorporation and registering as a non-profit organization. Nominate officers.

Committee Reports:

- **Elk Control and Management Committee:**
The SCP was presented by Harold Erland and passed around for review. The current goal is to collar four cows before April 15. This plan has not yet been approved by the WDFW. David Vales will be taking the lead with the darting. The initial four will not be from Meadowbrook Farm as there is less known about the other local sub herds. This collaring and census taking will have direct bearing on

the hunting permit approval process used by the WDFW. Telemetry data will be gathered twice a week, volunteers are requested.

Gathered scientific data will be useful to many different entities, including the Muckleshoot Tribe, WDFW and WDOT. It will also assist with understanding studying causes of mortality in the herd.

Questions from the membership:

Q: What was the final decision on how elk would be darted?

A: Elk will be baited and darted from blinds near the bait sites. There was too much cost and risk associated with aerial darting.

Q: Will there be hunting permits granted for 2009?

A: It appears at this time that that the permits will appear in the 2009- 2011 publication. The size of 4601 was reduced as discussed in February and the amended proposal looks to be likely to be approved in April.

Q: Who will pay for the collars and how much do they cost?

A: Collars are \$290 each. David Vales has agreed to front the group the collars, see discussion of the MOU later. The WDFW has agreed to provide two and Harold believes that he can get two more before the darting will take place in April. This will allow for data gathering all summer and training of volunteers before the next proposed darting session. There is a plan for public funding and incorporation of the group in the works.

Q: What is the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundations involvement in this effort?

A: Advisory at this time. The cities and state entities that may be using the gathered will be approached for funding. Funding discussion was curtailed as it applies to later agenda items.

- **Public Awareness, Education and Outreach Committee:** Report by Kalli Willson. A handout was distributed (attachment available upon request).
- Mt Si High School horticulture teacher Nick Kurka and WDFW's Rebecca took 9 students on a field trip with Harold Erland and Chris Moszeter to view elk impacted areas. They discussed stakeholder perspectives.

- Mr Kurka's students will partner with the 5th grade students at Snoqualmie Elementary as mentors. The high school students will lead a field trip for the 5th graders.
- Home school students are interested in participating in a field trip as well. Volunteers are needed to lead this activity. Contact Kalli at Elk_Edu@yahoo.com for details.
- Discussion of the purchase and use "Elk Trunks" with manipulatives for school children are taking place. These trunks are very expensive, so contents may be replicated instead of purchasing directly from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.
- Harold Erland and Kalli Willson gave a presentation to the local Kiwanis club. This presentation was covered by the Sno Valley Star.
- The reactivation of 1- 800- ELK-HERD is being planned. This is a long- term activity, as data collection and correlation is labor intensive.
- Committee members are continuing work to create a brochure with remediation options for those adversely impacted by elk.
- Planning is in the works for a teacher- oriented section of the website.
- Committee members are working with WDFW on including the Snoqualmie Valley herd in the North Rainier Elk Herd Plan.
- Committees are asked to submit items of interest to be posted on the website.

Land and People Management Committee:

- David Kimmet was unable to attend, so Jim gave an overview. Central Washington University staff been contacted to assist with collecting local public opinions and their analysis. The website has more detail about this sort of activity in Oregon.

Steering Committee:

- The remaining agenda covers the majority of what the Steering Committee covered.

- Russell Link asked the Committee to come up with ideas for how to utilize 150 hours of intern time from April through September 2009. Please send suggestions to the committee.

Old Business :

North Rainier Herd Plan Outline:

The group was asked to approve the additions to the Snoqualmie Valley Sub Herd in the new North Rainier Herd Plan Outline. This WDFW plan is updated every five years and Russell Link is updating the plan this year. Few members had read the entirety of the outline. Those members that had read the outline were asked for conceptual approval. Conceptual approval was granted with the provision that this document is subject to revision over the summer.

This outline is on the website for review. Russell remains open to comments, as this document is not scheduled for finalization until this fall, with data additions to be made later.

New Business :

Endorse Scientific Collections Permit (SCP) and Implementing Plan:

The SCP was presented during the committee reports. The plan will be presented on the web site after the meeting. The plan will be implemented under the supervision of a trained biologist (David Vales) and has been approved by the WDFW veterinarian. WDFW will also be performing a detailed review of the plan before implementation can occur. Initial collaring of four cows is planned to complete by April 15, 2009, to ensure that the least stress is placed upon pregnant cows. Calving does not start until June, so this will allow for sufficient time for recovery.

Questions from the membership:

Q: Why will a tooth be pulled during collaring?

A: In addition to collaring the elk, additional data will be collected for later analysis. This data collection is part of the standard practice during collaring. Taking a tooth allows the age of the animal to be accurately determined and is part of the aging, mortality and health assessment of the herd. This allows a biologist to determine the overall stress level on the herd. There has never been a study on the Snoqualmie herd.

The membership was informally asked to approve the plan, and did so.

Present MOU between EMG and Muckleshoot Indian Tribe:

This document came out of discussions between Jim Gildersleve and David Vales around the provision of equipment by the Muckleshoot Tribe for the

EMG to collar and track the herd as soon as possible, since the EMG has no budget at this time. Jim read the agreement paragraph of the MOU to the group (attachment available on request).

The primary purpose of the MOU is to allow the EMG to start collaring before the group starts gathering money. David Vales has also agreed to dart the first four animals free of charge. Necessary equipment will be reimbursed or provided for "in kind". Subsequent darting will require that the EMG pay for the drug supplies. David Vales is the only one certified to do the darting of the elk at this time using the drug carfentanil.

Discussion by the membership

- There was concern from the membership that the EMG not get too far into debt with the Tribe. The membership feels that as soon as is possible, all collars should be paid for up front, with no debt incurred.
- It was noted that the Muckleshoot Tribe may be interested in using the data gathered to increase the number of cow or bull permits. The Tribe has their own hunting permitting process. The tribe has closed area 460 voluntarily, but the data may show that the area could be opened to the Tribes. This may have the benefit of spreading the elk through more of the 460 area. There may be some area available for habitat restoration, which will further encourage dispersion.
- Invoicing of the equipment will reflect the current value, taking into account depreciation on used equipment. It is assumed that all collars will be viable for a full 3 year span as normal for battery life. The expected price of all equipment, including receivers, is approximately \$450 per elk.
- Fund gathering is not expected to be a problem as Jim has already been approached by several potential donors.
- David Vales will continue to be the EMGs contact for darting going forward, with the possibility of an alternate. The data gathered by the EMG will be valuable to the Muckleshoot and will justify David's continued involvement.

A motion was presented to approve the MOU, pursuant to legal review. The motion passed.

Consider approving incorporation and registering as a non-profit entity:

The WDFW is no longer able to fund the activities of the EMG to the extent that the group requires. The plan for collaring 50 animals is going to prove a large expense. The number was chosen to allow for better gathering of population data. This will also allow for better gathering of mortality data.

The City Administrator for North Bend has been volunteered to assist with guiding the group through the incorporation process and applying for non-profit status.

Nominations were taken for founding officers of the EMG. Nominations will remain open through the next meeting.

Current Nominees:

President: David Willson

Vice President: Joe Merclich

Treasurer: Ryan Kolodejchuk

Secretary: Dianna Phillips

***Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 P.M.

March meeting minutes transcribed and summarized by Dianna Phillips.

Attachments available upon request, contact Russell Link

Linkrel@dfw.wa.gov :

1. North Rainier Elk Herd Plan Outline draft 2/10/2009
2. Public Awareness, Education and Outreach Committee update 3/11/2009
3. MOU between EMG and Muckleshoot Tribe