

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

April 8, 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 be leaving promptly at 8 PM.

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 March, 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

Committee Reports:

Public Awareness, Education and Outreach Committee: Report by Kalli Willson.

- The EMG made the front page of the Valley Record. More volunteers are needed. Contact Kalli at Elk_Edu@yahoo.com for details.
- Brianna and Rebecca from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife updated the group on their education and outreach activities inside the schools.
 1. They've been working with the 5th graders at Snoqualmie Elementary and the Nick Kurka's students at Mt Si High. There will be a field day for the children.
 2. The home school field trip is expected to have 40 participants.
 3. There have been concerns among the teachers due to the coverage in the papers and the heavy coverage of the hunting aspect. The teachers want to be sure that all aspects of the stakeholders are represented.
 4. There was discussion by the membership around the general disappointment with some of the recent articles. There is an acknowledgment that the less flashy parts of the group such as habitat enhancement and the scientific studies will be less covered, even though these make up the largest part of the work by the group.

- Kalli should be the public face of the EMG. All press inquiries should go through her.

Land and People Management Committee: Report by Sonny Paz.

- Sonny updated the group on his activities related to habitat enhancement. One of the goals of the Group is to encourage the elk to spread out more, relieving the burden on the valley floor. This item coincides with the Forest Services goals around wilderness boundary expansion in the Pratt River Drainage (Management Area 14). This process could take anywhere from 2 to 5 years to implement. This Forest Service initiative is before the US House as HR 1769 and the Senate as S 721.
- There was much discussion around the ideal habitat for elk and how to increase awareness as to what that habitat entails, as well as how it coincides with other habitats and initiatives.

Elk Control and Management Committee:

- The WDFW issued the EMG a Scientific Collection Permit. There have been 5 elk collared with the 6th darted during the meeting. There are many places in the valley that elk have overbrowsed their preferred winter forage to the point where the vegetation has died. Even their alternate forage has been overbrowsed.
- 4 of the 5 collared cows are too thin. The only one that has enough girth did not have a calf last year. The physical condition of the elk is fairly poor overall, they are now subject to lice to where their hair is falling out. Lice are normal, but the severity of the infestation is directly proportionate to the health of the herd.
- There are many subgroups within the subherds. The readings gathered so far indicate that previous suppositions about elk movement were incorrect. Their pattern of movement is very different from expected.
- Harold Erland went over the methodology used for tracking and triangulating the location of the elk. The positions plotted have an error of +/- 200yards, which is very accurate for this type of telemetry
- A volunteer has created a program that will allow for the plotting and tracking of the collared elk. There is another individual who is creating a piece of equipment that will allow for the entering of data in the field which allows for an on-site sanity check.
- The scientific samples are gathered during the 20-25 minutes that the elk is under anesthesia. The drugs being used are used during veterinary procedures for up to 6 hours with no ill effects. David Vale's (Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Wildlife Biologist) goal is to have the

elk up and fully revived no more than 30 minutes after the drug takes effect.

- The triangulation will be taken twice a week. It's expected that this will give migration patterns and identify preferred browsing areas.
- There was much discussion around the equipment used and the safety of the collaring activity. The groups have all been isolated from the darting activity with only David Vales involved with the medications. The group is only involved in the sample collection.
- Volunteers are requested to help with the telemetry and radio sighting of the collared animals.

Steering Committee:

- The Memorandum of Understanding was rejected by the Muckleshoot Tribe as the EMG is not yet a legal entity. However, the Tribe has decided to follow the MoU in good faith until the EMG has legal standing.
- Work on creating the EMG non-profit organization continues. The incorporation paperwork is ready to go to the Secretary of State to register the EMG. The Bylaws are currently under review, with approval to be voted upon at the May meeting. Position fulfillment will take place once the non-profit status is underway. The 503(c) application is currently being developed.

***Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 P.M., with small group discussion continuing on after adjournment.

March meeting minutes transcribed and summarized by Dianna Phillips.