



USVEMG Regular Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2009

<http://www.snoqualmievalleyelk.org>

Regular Meeting called to order on Wednesday November 18, 2009, at 6:30 P.M. by President, David Willson. An introduction of newcomers, Directors and Officers was requested by David.

Elk Origins and Direction Special Presentation

Russell Link gave a presentation on the elk origins, growth and direction, in our valley and hunting area 4601. A similar presentation was made to Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust.

- Jim Gildersleve counted about 200 elk at Meadowbrook farm and 32 on private property located by Three Forks Park. Mountain Meadows area had another 75 were counted by the pond is in the South and another 50 to 60 around the back portion of the 300 acres property. The Latch property had a count of 6-8 cows. Jim added "The majority of elk sited were cows, no big bulls."
- His presentations prior to this group showed most concerns surrounded various safety issues.
- East Transect Area elk numbers about 300 and up to 350 in 2008.
- 10 elk have been collared for tracking. Radio collars provided to USVEMG by the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe.
- Talk included his community elk work as well as the origin, background plus mission of the USVEMG.
- Wildlife corridor and habitat development efforts were also discussed.
- Elk harvest (hunting) data in GMU area 460 shows an upward trend of harvested three point or better bulls from 2001 to 2008.
- Area 4601 created to help reduce the number of elk creating damage in Snoqualmie and North Bend and to move them to the Middle Fork and the North Forks of the Snoqualmie River with the hopes that some would slip back into additional forest area habitat. The
- Efforts will include working with the Forest Service and Hancock property owners on relocation of some of the elk.
- Recapped that 17 (special) +25 (Master) special permits issued this year.
- Snoqualmie Valley trail may be used a way for elk to move in and out of the Valley.
- 2009 hunting data result is not yet available.

Special Permits

Russell would like to double the number of special permits (shown in parentheses below) as a result of the low number of successful results in 2009. The Master Hunter permit number could remain the same. The increase in numbers of elk taken could be up to 8 or 12. The 2009 results are not in since the deadline is not until Jan 31 and the majority report in the last week. The increase could be divided as:

- 5 (10) Modern Firearms (antlerless)
- 5 (14) Muzzleloader (antlerless)
- 7 (14) archery (antlerless) in 4601



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- 25 Master Hunter Damage Permits

A second option would do away the special permits and increase the 25 Damage permits to 50 (double numbers) as well as any 4601 boundary adjustments.

Letters were read to the group expressing thoughts on expanding hunting area 4601 and on expanding the Special or Master hunter permits.

A discussion took place regarding the hunting permits, challenges, and thoughts around this issue. Jim added that he estimates that maybe 11 or 12 elk may have been harvested this year from the special permits. He added that our elk are smart and change their patterns explaining that the first two Master Hunters got two cows within the first ten hours while the second two took over 100 hours to find them again.

Most elk are located in the Meadowbrook Farm and Three Forks area. Currently the Mountain Meadows property owner does not allow hunting on their property, no hunting is permitted on the Meadowbrook Farm land, and no hunting is allowed on the 350 acre King County Three Forks Park (established for wildlife conservation and habitat preservation). All of these connected parcels are prime forage areas and safe refuges for our elk.

Russell summarized that from this session it appears that the permits would be increased in some way with more discussion to take place at the Elk Management Committee meeting. In addition they will continue to review expanding area 4601.

Committee Reports

Elk Management Committee

Bob Stoky mentioned that a meeting will be held tomorrow in order to discuss the matter of adjusting the area 4601 boundary. They also plan to discuss trapping, baiting, and DOT funding up to \$15k and maybe \$12k more. Collars are ordered with a delivery time of 8 to 12 weeks. GPS collars last one to two years, while UHF collars last three years or more.

Tom Kemp spoke on telemetry training classes coming up now that hunting season that has closed.

Fundraising activity report by Jim Gildersleeve:

- Received comments on first two submissions and he is working on making updates to those applications and will be sending the updates off in the next week.
- Collecting information to collect an ALEA grant application.

Public Awareness, Education and Outreach Committee

Kalli Willson informed the group of Rebecca's last day with WDFW and the group thanked her for her work. She has offered to stay on as a volunteer with the group.

- In the next month is making a proposal to the Snoqualmie valley School Board.
- Continues to work on the GPS tracking student relay.
- Website updated by David Bach. He would like to have more posts about what we are doing.



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Land and People Management Committee

Maura Callahan recapped the last Land and People Committee meeting held.

- Scientific permit expires in April of 2010 and we need to have 2009 study data in order to reapply.
- Russell awarded a WDFW service award for his work with this group and they recognized us as the only "Proactive" Elk group in the state.
- Will not publish elk data on State maps as a result of the issue that was raised in the last meeting.
- HWY 202 is a class 4 hwy which has a maximum speed limit of 45 MPH. Has a letter to both cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie in order to request a traffic study.
- Will reduce vegetation alongside of 202 to increase sight of elk along the roadway to reduce collisions.
- Goals: Road Safety, Wildlife Corridor and increase elk habitat outside of town.
- Next meeting is Tuesday December 1.

Overview of Draft EIS Wolf Management Plan

Wolves are in Washington State (Washington's first fully confirmed wolf pack was discovered in Okanogan County in July 2008, and the second was found in Pend Oreille County in July 2009¹). They are listed as an endangered species in Washington State, yet were delisted under federal law in 2009. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has published a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) titled: *Wolf Conservation and Management Plan for Washington*². They are accepting comments up to January 8, 2010 on this plan. A group discussion took place in order to form a statement to manage a wolf population in this valley.

- Background information was included on the backside of the agenda and read to the group.
- Wolves may push the elk herds into less suitable habitat and create a further decline as outlined in Harold's study results.
- Translocation of wolf's policy discussed and a group consensus was they should not be brought into our area by this method. They should be allowed to naturally migrate here, estimated at approximately five years.
- David Vail added that the group should focus on ensuring our management options are firmly in place and we have flexibility to accomplish the elk population and safety goals of the group.
- After further discussion the group agreed to form a sub group for the purpose of forming an USVEMG statement and present to the body for consideration.

Recess

Board Role Call

Present

President: David Willson; Vice President: Jim Gildersleeve Treasurer: Ryan Kolodejchuk; Secretary: Gary Fancher; Joe Merclich, Harold Erland, Tim McBride, Sam Metzler, Maura Callahan, David Bach; Phil Cassidy, Don Hacherl, Dianna Phillips.

Absent

Mark Belaire, Matt Campbell, Scott Stringfellow, Nels Melgaard, Dave Battey.

¹ http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/gray_wolf/.

² http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/gray_wolf/mgmt_plan.html



1) Treasurers Report

Ryan provided that the balance in the account is \$1477.93. Three new members joined for a total of 37 USVEMG members.

Gary made a motion to approve the report and Don seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

2) Minutes of the October 2009 Meeting minutes

Jim made the motion to approve the minutes and Sam seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

3) Renaming of the Elk Management Committee.

A First reading of the proposal to rename the Elk Management Committee as Elk Management and Research Committee in Bylaws section 8.1 was introduced and outlined by David Willson.

Jim made a motion and Maura seconded the motion to rename the Elk Management Committee as Elk Research Committee. After discussion the motion was withdrawn.

Don made a motion to rename the Elk Management Committee to "Elk Research and Management Committee" and Joe seconded. After further discussion the motion passed.

- a. This is an update to the Bylaws and requires a second reading and notification at the next meeting.

4) Discussion to form a statement and review process, for the EMG response to the Draft EIS Wolf Management Plan.

Phil made the motion that we should create a statement to be sent to the State DFW. Jim seconded the motion.

Tim made a motion that the group should submit a comment letter that identifies our concerns over the management, control, and public safety associated with wolves in our valley. That this statement be draft and reviewed by officers in email for input and approval and to have it completed by December 23. The Review of the statement is to be conducted by email and a majority of the quorum approving the statement prior to be sending out. Joe seconded.

After discussion the motion passed as Amended.

5) Discussion about volunteer checklist form.

Prototype volunteer safety checklist submitted by USVEMG Director Tim McBride. The group reviewed the form. David Willson made a motion to table this discussion.

- a. Tom was asked to provide his edits and produce a prototype for the next meeting.



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6) EMG Website Documentation Policy

- a. Discussion about website purpose, design, and document submittal policy.
- b. The Public Awareness, Education and Outreach Committee is charged with maintaining the website and communicating the group's public activities and can interact with each committee chair on group news and events. Sensitive information such as phone numbers, group's budget, addresses of elk collaring location and techniques, study results and elk telemetry data during hunting times require Board approval. Any noteworthy information can be approved by the president.
- c. Gary made a motion and Joe seconded.
- d. After further discussion the motion was unanimous approved.

December meeting has been canceled.

Next meeting is January 13, 2010.

Good of the Order

The groups discussed bringing in snacks on a rotating basis. The group agreed and the following have volunteered:

- January: Ryan
- February: Mora
- March: Joe and Sam

Meeting Adjourned 9:30 PM

Next Meeting: January 13, 2010

November 14, 2009, meeting minutes prepared by USVEMG Secretary Gary Fancher.

Signature

Date