Program Area: Wildlife Management

Subject: Wisconsin Elk Conflict Response Guidelines

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The purpose of this guidance is to provide standardized protocols and procedures to Wisconsin DNR staff to handle conflict situations that involve elk. Conflicts with elk may include the following: damage to growing and stored crops, damage to crop fields, dikes or beds, property damage, habituation to people, livestock and pet interactions, habituation to roadways, and car-elk collisions.

This draft guidance was developed by department staff and we will solicit comments on it for 21 days. All comments will be considered, revisions will be made to the guidance documents as needed, and final guidance will be made available to internal and external stakeholders.

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DRAFT Wisconsin Elk Conflict Response Guidelines

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
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I. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide standardized protocols and procedures to Wisconsin DNR staff to handle conflict situations that involve elk. Conflicts with elk may include the following: damage to growing and stored crops, damage to crop fields, dikes or beds, property damage, habituation to people, livestock and pet interactions, habituation to roadways, and car-elk collisions.

Agricultural damage situations are defined as events where agricultural producers are experiencing problems with elk causing damage to commercial seedlings or crops growing on agricultural land, damage to crops that have been harvested for sale or further use that have not been removed from the agricultural land, damage to orchard trees or nursery stock or damage to apiaries or livestock.

Nuisance situations are defined as non-agricultural damage events where elk are exhibiting behavior that is creating conflict with humans. Nuisance situations can be very broad and can also include or lead to agricultural damage situations. Common nuisance situations may include elk frequenting a road ditch, elk entering an urban area or elk negatively impacting personal property.

II. Outreach and Education

Pro-active outreach and education to stakeholders that may be impacted by nuisance elk behavior is imperative to provide stakeholders with an understanding of resources available to address conflicts with elk. The Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP) may provide damage prevention assistance and partial compensation to commercial agriculture producers when wild elk damage their crops. Education and outreach for the WDACP will occur through personal contact to growers and local agricultural organizations from DNR staff, the county and WDACP specialists, partners, and information available through the DNR website, press releases, media interviews and newsletters. Appendix 1 contains a list of the county contacts.

III. Communications

Communication is critical when elk are causing a problem, and is especially important in the event that an animal is euthanized. In all elk nuisance situations, the local WM staff responsible shall provide an email communication report to keep others informed of the situation. Required members of this internal communication include: Area and District WM and LE supervisors, County and Area LE supervisor, Big Game Section Chief, State Deer/Elk Ecologist, WM Health Section Chief and DNR spokesperson as appropriate. In a high risk situation or if an animal is euthanized, this list will also include Communications staff, the directors of WM and LE, and the Secretary's staff.

IV. Elk Management Responsibilities

Within the Wisconsin DNR, the Bureau of Wildlife Management (WM) has primary responsibility for the management of elk in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin DNR – Bureau of Law Enforcement (LE) will also respond to serious, time-sensitive nuisance elk complaints when WM staff is unable to respond in a timely manner. Agricultural elk damage that is covered under the WDACP will be addressed by USDA-Wildlife Services (WS) or county staff responsible for implementation of the WDACP. Complex or serious incidents are best resolved with coordination among WM, WS, LE and local law enforcement officials.

V. Responding to Reports of Elk Damaging Agricultural Crops

Under State Statute 29.889, producers experiencing problems with elk causing damage to commercial seedlings or crops growing on agricultural land, damage to crops that have been harvested for sale or further use but that have not been removed from the agricultural land, or damage to orchard trees, nursery stock, apiaries, or livestock are eligible for damage abatement assistance and partial compensation through the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP). Complaints eligible for assistance through the WDACP should be directed to the appropriate county WDACP staff for verification and response (see Appendix 1 for contact information). Response will be consistent with procedures detailed in county's WDACP Plan of Administration and Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program Technical Manual and Field Handbook. Copies of these documents can be obtained by contacting the DNR Wildlife Damage Specialist (Appendix A). County WDACP staff should consult with local DNR staff when determining the appropriate response.

Crop Damage Response Protocol

In the event that elk are damaging commercial agriculture crops, the following protocol will be used. Each report of elk damage to agriculture crops will be handled individually; therefore the following protocol will not be implemented step-by-step in every case. Situations may present themselves where only one or two procedures may be suitable based on the surrounding environment and conditions.

- People experiencing elk problems or damage should first contact the county WDACP staff so the reported damages can be investigated and verified. Upon verification of elk damages WDACP staff will then notify the local DNR Wildlife Biologist.
- The producer will determine how much elk activity is tolerable and if they want damage abatement assistance provided through the WDACP.
- If the producer enrolls in the WDACP, WDACP staff will follow damage program procedures and recommend abatement for addressing the damages including but not limited to scare devises, pyro techniques, harassment, and temporary fencing.
- If standard non-lethal abatement methods are unsuccessful, live trap and relocation or chemical immobilization and relocation are alternative abatement methods. Chemically immobilizing problem elk can only be performed by persons trained in chemical immobilization and authorized by the Department.
- Failed attempts to scare, haze, trap, and immobilize the elk will result in having to use lethal means
- Prior to an established hunting season in Wisconsin, elk that have been euthanized may be donated to a local food pantry.
- Once elk hunting in Wisconsin is initiated, shooting permits may be available for landowners or hunter-generated lists will be used to remove problem animals as done with the bear program

VI. Elk Damage/Nuisance Abatement Response Options

There are a number of nuisance abatement and control options available to deal with elk causing agricultural damage or nuisance problems. A list of the most common options is provided below with a short summary describing the abatement technique. This is not an all-inclusive list. Other abatement methods/tools may be used for addressing conflicts with elk.

Abatement & Control - May include one or more of the following non-lethal and lethal methods:

- Technical assistance/education
- Scare devices
- Fencing (temporary or permanent)
- Hazing
- Trapping and relocating
- Chemical immobilization and relocating
- Shooting permits
- Euthanasia

1. Technical Assistance/Education – Technical assistance includes discussing the damage situation with the complainant and providing advice and recommendations on action they can undertake to resolve or minimize the conflict. It may also include inspection of the damage site when the circumstances warrant. Every effort should be made to resolve elk complaints through technical assistance. All recommended abatement methods and procedures shall be safe, effective and in compliance with all state federal laws and local ordinances.

2. Scare Devices - Scare devices such as pyrotechnic cannons, screamers, etc. could be recommended to discourage use of an area by elk.

3. Fencing - Fencing may be temporary or permanent. Temporary fencing may include electric fencing or plastic barrier fencing and is intended to be a short-term abatement tool. Permanent fencing is 8-foot high, high tensile woven wire fencing and is intended to be a long term solution for resolving damages. Contracts for permanent fences require the producer to maintain the fence for 15 years.

Permanent fencing may be used in situations where the fence is deemed cost effective by the county WDACP staff. This may include situations involving apple orchards, cranberry operations, stored crops and other high value specialty crops. Permanent fencing is not available for non-agricultural damage situations.

4. Hazing – Hazing is deliberate and planned disturbance of an animal to move it from a less desirable to a more desirable location. Hazing by agency personnel and private landowners, as authorized by the Department, may be used to disperse elk from areas where they are in conflict with people. Hazing must be performed in a manner that minimizes the likelihood of injury or extreme stress on the elk.

5. Trapping and relocation - Trapping and relocation may be used in situations where it is likely that removing the elk from the conflict area and relocating the elk to a more suitable area. Trapping may only be performed by Department staff or other agencies and organizations working under agreement with the Department.

6. Chemical Immobilization - Every attempt should be made to resolve conflicts without using immobilizing drugs. However, in some situations the use of immobilization drugs may be necessary and useful for removing individual nuisance elk. ***Immobilizing drugs must be used with extreme caution and in accordance to DNR policy***. Only DNR employees trained and certified by the DNR Wildlife Health Team or certified WS employees may use immobilization drugs.

7. Shooting Permits - If non-lethal abatement measures fail to resolve the damage issue, elk shooting permits may be issued to landowners by the local WM staff. Shooting permits may be issued for both nuisance and agriculture damage situations.

Agriculture Damage Elk Shooting Permits

- Agriculture Damage Elk Shooting Permits may be issued per criteria in WI Administrative Code and consistent with WDACP procedures.

Nuisance Elk Shooting Permits Issuance:

- Nuisance elk shooting permits may be issued in extraordinary situations where non-lethal abatement methods have proven to be ineffective. Nuisance Elk Shooting Permits must be issued using form number 2300-109, "Landowner/Lessee Authorization to Remove or Destroy Animals Causing Damage or Nuisance Application and Permit." Unlike Agriculture Damage Elk Shooting Permits, the $1,000 damage threshold does not apply to Nuisance Permits.
- Permit conditions: The maximum number of elk authorized for removal shall be limited to two animals, unless the local WM staff has gotten approval for additional animals from the Big Game section chief. If an elk hunting season is being held at the time, the applicant's land must be open to the public for elk hunting access. All elk injured or killed under the authority of a shooting permit must be reported to the Department within 24 hours. All elk carcasses must be turned over to the Department.

8. Euthanizing Elk – Similar to shooting permits, euthanizing an elk should be considered only after non-lethal methods have failed or the elk poses an immediate threat to human health and safety, or is showing signs of significant illness or injuries.

If time allows, prior to euthanasia the District WM supervisor, District Warden, Big Game Section Chief, Wildlife Health Veterinarian and Wildlife Health Section Chief should be consulted. Depending upon the circumstances, euthanasia of a nuisance elk may generate significant public and media attention and consideration should be given to the following:

- Method of euthanasia
- Equipment needs
- Staffing needs
- Crowd safety measures
- Final disposition of the carcass
- Public speaking points on the situation

VII. Additional Resources to Help Address Nuisance Elk Situations

DNR and WS staff has agreed that hazing is the preferred alternative for dealing with most nuisance elk situations or elk outside the designated elk range. WS staff has pyrotechnics available to use when and where it is deemed appropriate. These devices are shot from a pistol and discharged into the air and in close proximity to the elk. Other tools that staff may use to provide aversive conditioning include paintball guns with clear paintballs and pepper gel.

In addition to the resources offered by WS, some local law enforcement agencies may have access to non-lethal options, including rubber bullets and bean bag rounds. If the officer or their

agency deems it appropriate, law enforcement officers may utilize these tools as a hazing technique.

Elk are likely to attract attention from the public, especially when visible from a public roadway. Possible public safety concerns in these situations are more likely caused by the people viewing the elk (i.e. traffic congestion) and not generally due to a threat posed directly by the elk. It will continue to be important for all agencies to reinforce that the public needs to act responsibly on public roadways with the safety of other motorists in mind. Local law enforcement agencies are encouraged to provide traffic control, if needed, as they would for any other safety related traffic issue. It is recognized that lengthy traffic control details are not always feasible or easily staffed; therefore, calling DNR and WS for assistance or deploying hazing techniques is justifiable.

VIII. Nuisance Elk Incident Response Ratings

The following criteria have been created to categorize elk complaints and incidents on an assessment of the particular situation in order to consistently apply management actions within the Clam Lake Elk Range and Black River Elk Range. It is understood that not all elk complaints/incidents will fit neatly into a single category. Each situation is unique and calls for the use of "best judgment" on the part of all agencies involved in the response. Upon receiving a report of an elk related incident, authorized DNR staff or the appropriate responding agency should classify the situation into one of the following categories. Upon receiving a report of an elk incident, records of such incidents will be tracked by local WM staff. WM will be the lead decision maker, and in consultation with local LE will determine the risk rating.

High Risk Situation: A situation will be considered high risk if elk present an imminent threat to human health and safety. If hazing the animal is not a viable option and the situation has been determined to be a High Risk Situation, local law enforcement and DNR personnel are authorized to euthanize the elk by gunshot, which is recognized as a viable option per "AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals." As past experience has demonstrated, euthanasia can become a controversial issue with the public. To promote transparency and cooperative decision-making processes, non-DNR law enforcement officers should attempt to contact the appropriate local DNR WM representative or LE prior to making a decision to euthanize an elk.

Examples of High Risk Situations include:

- *Elk has attacked or injured a person.*
- *Elk is displaying unprovoked aggressive behavior towards people.*
- *Elk is sick or injured and unable to leave the area and poses an immediate threat to human health and safety.*
- *Elk is in an urban area and unable to find an escape route and poses an immediate threat to human health and safety.*

Medium Risk Situation*:* Medium risk situations do not present an immediate threat to human health and safety but have the potential to escalate into a high-risk situation based upon the proximity of the animal to humans or elk are causing damage to personal property. Local law enforcement agencies and/or DNR WM and/or LE will likely have been called to the scene or made aware of an ongoing situation of concern. Non-lethal control, in particular hazing, is preferred to lethal control. If the situation escalates to a High Risk Situation, refer to above guidance.

Examples of Medium Risk Situations include:

- *Elk is habituated to people or reluctant to leave location but not aggressive.*
- *Elk is observed along roadways and causing traffic congestion and causing potential for direct or secondary traffic crashes.*
- *Elk has damaged or entered un-occupied structures (barn, sheds, etc), but is no longer on-site.*
- *Elk is near or in an urban area and an escape route exists.*
- *Elk are damaging dykes, rubbing trees, or causing other damage to personal property*

***Low Risk Situation**:* Low risk situations occur when an elk is exhibiting normal behavior and is not considered a threat to public safety or personal property but may be of concern to the reporting individual. Elk acting normally, but outside the designated elk range would also fall into the low risk category. A high level of communication between agencies is encouraged in order to provide situational awareness and tracking of the animal's movement through affected jurisdictions.

Examples of Low Risk Situations include:

- *An elk is observed walking through a residential yard.*
- *An elk is reported crossing a road.*
- *An elk is feeding or loafing in a rural area away from roadways with minimal potential for human conflict and leaves when approached by vehicles or people.*
- *An elk is observed during the day, reluctant to leave location but not aggressive (such as a cow-calf situation).*
- *One or more elk have established themselves outside the boundaries of the Clam Lake or Black River Elk Range.*

IX. Staff Responsibilities for Responding to Nuisance Elk

Whenever possible all elk complaints shall be directed to the USDA-WS toll free number (800) 433-0663 for screening and assignment of an initial response level rating. Directing all calls to one location assures consistency and efficiency in responding to nuisance elk conflicts. For situations assigned as initial response rating of High or Medium Risk, USDA-WS should contact the local WM staff, LE or WM supervisor immediately to assure immediate assistance and action is provided.

The following are general guidelines for responding to nuisance elk incidents:

High and Medium Risk Situations: *Immediate site visit is required.*

- If initial complaint is received by WS or partner (USFS, tribes, etc), they will contact the appropriate WM staff or LE to respond.
- If the initial complaint is received by a DNR staff member, WM and LE staff should be contacted immediately to respond. Local law enforcement agencies may need to be called for immediate response, depending upon the situation.
- When a WM staff member receives the initial complaint, they shall respond to the incident. The WM staff member shall attempt to notify their immediate supervisor and local DNR warden so they are aware of the situation as soon as practical.
- If a DNR warden received the initial complaint they will immediately contact WM to identify who can respond. If WM cannot immediately respond, then the DNR warden shall respond to the incident. Once they respond and assess the situation they shall

attempt to notify their immediate supervisor and the local WM staff and WM supervisor so they are aware of the situation and to consult on the immediate appropriate response.

- Once WM or LE has responded to the incident, other DNR staff does not need to respond to the site unless assistance is requested by the responding individual.
- In situations where multiple individuals respond to a high risk situation, DNR district or area WM supervisors shall have primary decision making responsibility, followed sequentially by local WM biologists and LE. All responders shall work cooperatively to resolve the conflict.
- Once local WM or LE personnel have determined that it is a high risk situation and hazing the animal or other non-lethal options are not viable, local law enforcement and DNR personnel are authorized to euthanize the elk by gunshot or lethal injection.
- If the responding individuals are not certified and properly equipped to euthanize or immobilize the elk they shall request assistance from the closest agency individuals that are appropriately certified and equipped.
- Crowd management is recommended in situations that occur in public places. Efforts should be made to diffuse any crowd that may have formed, to minimize risk to the animal and the public in general. Crowd management is primarily the responsibility of the local law enforcement departments. If local law enforcement staff is not on site, they should be contacted immediately for assistance.
- In the event that an elk in a high-risk situation must be euthanized and the necessary DNR contacts are aware of next steps, DNR staff should consider public safety and public perception of this outcome. If members of the public or news media are present, staff should use talking points (Appendix C) relative to nuisance animal situations and triage any spectators to a location out of sight to speak further with DNR staff.
- If the elk is no longer at the site, DNR staff will consult to determine the appropriate response.

Low Risk Situations: All instances that are determined not to be high or medium risk situations. WS shall provide technical assistance to the caller. If complainant would like additional assistance or follow-up, WS should provide the complainant's information to the appropriate WM staff member for follow-up. The complaint and response shall then be documented and reported to the Area and Regional WM supervisors, as well as Central Office Big Game Section staff.

X. Carcass Care and Disposition

DNR will attempt to recover and salvage the entire carcass for health testing within 24 hours. The elk should be loaded with entrails intact on a trailer and hauled to the DNR Black River Falls, Park Falls or Spooner offices to be refrigerated. If DNR staff is not available when the elk dies, staff should be contacted as soon as possible to arrange for loading and transporting the animal. The final decision on disposition of recovered elk that are euthanized or die and are not originating from the Kentucky elk translocation shall be made within applicable statutes and Department policy. The final disposition of the elk carcass shall be made in consultation with the DNR District WM supervisor, District LE supervisor and Wildlife Health Section Chief or Veterinarian following established protocol.

XI. Elk Presence and Tolerance Outside the Elk Range

The Clam Lake Elk Range (Fig. 1) and Black River Elk Range (Fig. 2) have been established to designate areas most able to support elk herds and exclude significant agricultural lands. There

are, however, areas just outside these ranges (within 2-3 miles) that elk have utilized where they don't pose an immediate threat of causing a nuisance or damage situation.

Based on the nuisance risk rating outlined in Section VIII, elk outside the designated elk ranges will be handled according to their risk level, or based on any agricultural damage they may be causing. Those posing a high or medium nuisance risk situation or causing agricultural damage will be dealt with immediately according to the measures outlined. If those measures fail, the offending animal(s) may be euthanized as a last resort. For the Black River Herd, the Department may trap and relocate the animal(s) to the Clam Lake Elk Range for re-acclimation and release before considering use of euthanization. Such relocation will only be considered if Jackson County retains its status as being free from CWD or other ungulate diseases of significant concern.

Animals outside the elk range within 3 miles of the range boundary, and categorized as a low risk situation and not causing agricultural damage will be allowed to remain in their chosen area for up to 2 weeks to provide them with an opportunity to return to the elk range on their own. During that time, radio telemetry tracking and landowner contacts will be conducted to monitor and assess any changes to the risk factors over time. In the event that the elk do not return to the designated elk range within the 2 week timeframe, appropriate methods will be used to remove them from the area. In addition, during the 2 week time period if risk levels increase to medium/high or the elk cause agricultural damage, DNR staff will act as quickly as possible to address the situation through abatement measures.

Fig. 1. Clam Lake Elk Range

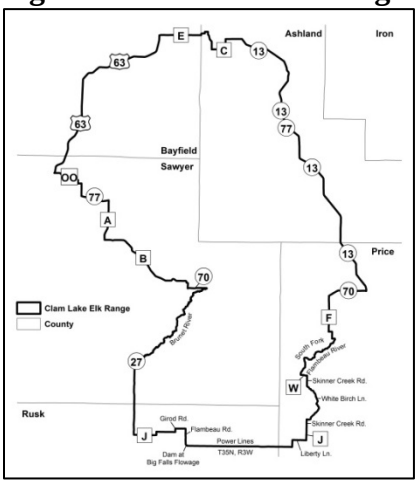
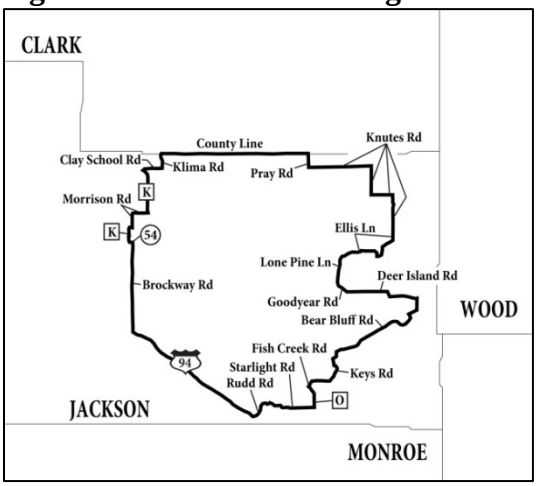


Fig. 2. Black River Elk Range



Appendix A

Local DNR Staff Contacts

2016 Black River Falls DNR Elk Staff

Name	***Title***	***Cell Phone***	***Office or Personal***
Kris Johansen	WM Supervisor	608-396-1062	715-431-0433
Scott Roepke	WM Biologist	715-896-4947	715-284-1403
Scott Krultz	WM Technician	715-214-5047	715-284-1419
Kurt Haas	Warden - BRF	715-299-0680	715-284-1421
Robin Barnhardt	Warden Supervisor	715-299-0564	

2016 Clam Lake DNR Elk Staff

Name	***Title***	***Cell Phone***	***Office or Personal***
Mike Zeckmeister	WM Supervisor	715-216-0924	715-635-4090
Laine Stowell	WM Biologist	715-563-9997	715-634-7467
Josh Spiegel	WM Technician	715-558-0648	715-634-7464
Rick Peters	Warden – Hayward	715-645-0050	
Tom Heisler	Warden - Winter	715-492-4240	715-266-2032
Russ Fell	Warden Supervisor	715-645-0050	

State Wildlife Damage Specialist

Brad Koele	608-576-3914	715-356-5211 ext. 234

Appendix B

USDA –WS Districts and Contact Information

2016 Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program county contacts		
County	**County Contact**	**Phone Number**
Adams	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Ashland	David Schultz	715-682-7187
Barron	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Bayfield	David Schultz	715-682-7187
Brown	Jon Bechle	920-391-4620
Buffalo	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Burnett	Cindy Blonk	715-349-2186
Calumet	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Chippewa	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Clark	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Columbia	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Crawford	Greg Cerven	608-875-5813
Dane	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Dodge	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Door	Greg Coulthurst	920-746-2214
Douglas	David Schultz	715-682-7187
Dunn	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Eau Claire	Chad Berge	715-839-4785
Florence	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Fond du Lac	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Forest	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Grant	Greg Cerven	608-875-5813
Green	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Green Lake	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Iowa	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Iron	David Schultz	715-682-7187
Jackson	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-

		4514
Jefferson	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Juneau	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Kenosha	Not in program	Not in program
Kewaunee	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
La Crosse	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Lafayette	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Langlade	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Lincoln	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Manitowoc	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Marathon	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Marinette	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Marquette	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Menominee	Not in program	Not in program
Milwaukee	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Monroe	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Oconto	Chad Trudel	920-834-7151
Oneida	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Outagamie	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Ozaukee	Jeff Bell	262-284-8274
Pepin	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Pierce	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Polk	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Portage	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Price	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Racine	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Richland	Greg Cerven	608-875-5813

Rock	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Rusk	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
St. Croix	Cindy Blonk	715-349-2186
Sauk	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Sawyer	Tim Seidel	715-634-6463
Shawano	Blake Schuebel	715-526-4633
Sheboygan	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Taylor	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Trempealeau	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Vernon	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Vilas	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Walworth	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Washburn	USDA-Rhinelander	1-800-228-1368* or 715-369-5221
Washington	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Waukesha	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Waupaca	Greg Peterson	715-258-6245
Waushara	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Winnebago	USDA-Waupun	1-800-433-0663* or 920-324-4514
Wood	Tracy Arnold	715-421-8475

Appendix C

Nuisance Elk Situation Talking Points

Background

- The Department attempts to minimize human/elk conflicts by explaining ways to coexist with elk and providing direct assistance for elk complaints.

Nuisance Elk

- The Department follows standardized protocols and procedures to handle agricultural damage or nuisance situations that involve elk.

- Conflicts with elk may be agricultural or non-ag in nature, and can include the following:
    - Agricultural damage to crops
    - Property damage
    - Habituation to people, livestock and pets
    - Habituation to roadways
    - Car/elk collisions
    - Elk entering an urban area

Ways to Deal with Nuisance Elk

- Wisconsin DNR has primary responsibility for the management of elk in Wisconsin, often working in partnership with USDA-APHIS-WS and local law enforcement to assist with nuisance elk complaints.

- Most routine complaints are handled by providing technical advice or through hazing or relocation, but more complicated issues may require additional action, including:
    - Technical Assistance/Education
    - Abatement & Control
    - Scare Devices
    - Fencing
    - Trapping and relocation
    - Chemical Immobilization
    - Shooting Permits

- More complex or serious nuisance wildlife incidents typically involve DNR wildlife staff, conservation wardens, USDA-WS staff and local law enforcement officials.

Euthanasia

- In high risk situations involving elk, euthanasia may be required to ensure the safety of the public.

- Examples of High Risk Situations include:

- Elk has attacked or injured a person

- Elk is displaying unprovoked aggressive behavior towards people

- Elk is sick or injured and unable to leave the area and poses an immediate threat to human health and safety

- Elk is in an urban area and unable to find an escape route and poses an immediate threat to human health and safety

- The shooting of any elk would be authorized by the Department.

- Euthanasia would target highly-habituated elk that have been persistently causing nuisance problems and safety concerns.

- Any elk euthanized will be processed for donation to local food pantries and for educational use by the Department.

Moving Forward

- Pro-active outreach and education to stakeholders who may be impacted by nuisance elk behavior is a very important part of avoiding nuisance elk conflicts, and the Department works hard to provide an understanding of resources available to address conflicts with elk.

- The Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP) provides damage prevention assistance and partial compensation to commercial agriculture producers when wild elk damage their crops. This program is funded through surcharges on license fees and revenues from the sale of bonus antlerless deer permits.

- If you observe an abnormal situation that involves a wild animal, please report your observation to the DNR hotline at 1-800-847-9367.