

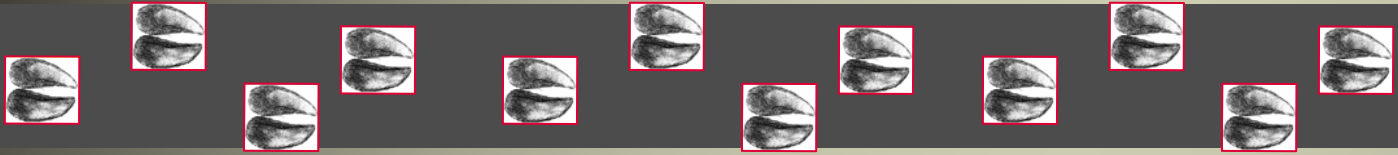


Clam Lake Elk Herd News

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Matt McKay

October through December 2008

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Current Status: We reported in Vol. 8, Issue 3 (as of September 30th) that we had 146 elk. Since then we documented 1 mortality of a marked animal (actually M239 was reported last issue as being killed by wolves at the end of September, but actually was killed October 2nd—since already accounted for last quarter it is not counted this quarter). Over the years there are few elk mortalities due to vehicle collisions that we do not hear about so we won't expand mortality beyond the 1 observed. This results in an estimate of 145 elk in the herd at the end of the 4th quarter. Loss of the marked animals and battery failures leave 72 elk with functioning collars.

Elk Health Issues: M239 was reported killed by wolves at the end of September—actually he was found killed on October 2nd. We received a call from the Sawyer County Sheriff's Dept. that a cow elk was hit and killed on STH 77 near Lower Clam Lake. We arrived at the site at 0800 hrs. to find F193 dead across the road from the easternmost receiving station. The motorist warning light was flashing less than 100 feet away. Furthermore, cow 193 had a blaze orange radio collar on her. This cow would have produced a dozen calves through her life and she was killed just after her first breeding season! Attention to caution signs, responsible speed, and close attention to road hazards are a responsibility of all motorists!

During this fall we expanded our collection of deer lymph nodes for CWD and Tuberculosis testing in the 18 counties of the Northern Region with collection of hunter killed white-tailed deer. Up to the start of the 2008 bow and gun deer seasons we had been collecting road killed and crop damage killed deer. A few counties reached their goals prior to the gun season, while Sawyer County and the rest of the Northern Region counties reached their goal of 500 deer soon after opening weekend of the gun deer season. Most samples have been processed with no positives observed; however, a few samples still remain unprocessed. They should all be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2009. Negative results will be good news for northern deer and northern elk! The success of gathering these samples could not have been accomplished without the cooperation and support of the many registration stations, car killed deer contractors, and venison processors who helped collect samples and the many thousands of Wisconsin deer hunters who allowed Department staff and cooperators to collect heads or tissue samples. They proved that maintenance of a healthy deer and elk herd is the responsibility of everyone.

Coming this Summer

Clam Lake Visitor Center

- Visitors will not only be able to get the latest maps and information on the Clam Lake Elk Herd, but also look for additional information such as lodging, dining, and camping in the surrounding area.
- Equipped with an interactive touch screen computer kiosk, visitors will be able to:
 - See elk videos & photos
 - Find elk and other wildlife viewing areas
 - Get ATV and snowmobile trail information
 - Obtain USFS and WI DNR information
 - Watch advertisements from local businesses

The possibilities are endless. More details on the Visitor Center in the second quarter update for 2009.



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 Nature has no mercy
 at all. "I'm going to
 snow. If you have on
 a bikini and no snow-
 shoes, that's tough.
 I'm going to snow
 anyway."

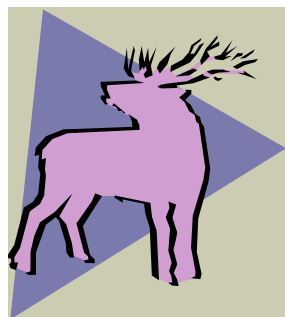
 Maya Angelou



Elk Research on the Clam Lake Herd: Still no word from Trina Weiland—apparently her graduate thesis on liver fluke and brain worm infestation of Clam Lake Elk is still pending. We will share those findings when they arrive.

Activity on the Elf Line forage improvement pilot study is on hold until the 2nd quarter of 2009. At that time we'll apply a nitrogen fertilizer and place exclosures for comparisons. Plant compositions will again be surveyed after calving season and again a year later. Results will determine whether we go forward and seek Forest Service approval for expanded applications.

Population Monitoring: During this quarter we made 864 telemetry location determinations and 1,872 telemetry mortality checks.



Public Education: During this quarter we gave 5 elk presentations to a total of 634 participants. We also gave 2 print and 1 radio interviews. During this quarter elk staff developed a combination text and video elk information display for major public gatherings. This display will inform thousands of visitors at dozens of events annually about Wisconsin's elk.

Partnerships: We continue to provide support to UWSP and USFS on their elk related projects. Elk project staff have provided input into the USFS's scoping into the "Twin Ghosts" project review. An official WDNR position has been formulated and delivered to the USFS with management options that would benefit elk. Furthermore, our partners from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation have also provided their input to the USFS on "Twin Ghosts" requesting management benefiting elk.

Upcoming Events: Elk Project staff will continue trapping and collaring elk. We hope to make major captures including collaring individuals from the Butternut group this season.

NEW!

Wild About Wisconsin Wapiti — Traveling Display

**For more information
 about elk, please contact:**

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Or on our Web Site at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/Elk/>



If you are interested in having this display at an educational, outdoor, sporting, youth, or banquet event near you, please contact us.