Elk Summit

April 5-6, 2004
Prosser, WA

FINAL REPORT

A contribution of the IUCN/SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group.

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Workshop photos courtesy of Ron Crouse.

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SECTION 1

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills population of Rocky Mountain elk is a wide-ranging natural herd that moves between private and public lands. During hunting season a large portion of the herd typically takes refuge on the Arid Lands Ecology (ALE) Unit of the Hanford Reach National Monument, which is closed to the public due to its research importance and ecological sensitivity and significance. In the Spring and early Summer, elk move back and forth between the ALE and adjacent private lands causing damage to agricultural crops (particularly wheat fields). Although herd size has been reduced from over 800 to approximately 500 animals over the last three years, the State of Washington has paid over $8,000.00 in 2000 to over $250,000.00 in 2002 to adjacent private landowners.

Multiple jurisdictions, agencies and intermingled land ownerships create complex management challenges. There are many ideas about how best to manage the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd. Interest stems from many areas, including recreational use, crop damage, Native American treaties, and population control for biological reasons. Some of these uses are compatible, but many are in conflict, at least in how they're applied. Interest and debate have become so intense that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decided to conduct a two-day workshop to look at management of this herd.

The Elk Summit was held at the Community Center of Prosser, on April 5-6, 2004. The goals of this workshop were three-fold: 1) establishment of open lines of communication among all parties with an interest in management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd; 2) sharing of updated facts, such as elk population numbers, habitat quality, and agricultural losses; and 3) identification of potential herd management actions that could be taken to reduce agricultural losses. There was no expectation that all issues would be resolved during this meeting but the organizers believed strongly that accomplishing the above goals would be of great value in the cooperative management of this elk herd.

The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) was invited to assist with the workshop. The CBSG, based at the Minnesota Zoo, is one of over 100 specialist groups within the Species Survival Commission, which is itself one of six commissions comprising the World Conservation Union. Founded in 1948 and headquartered in Switzerland, the World Conservation Union unites 980 government agencies and non-governmental organizations across 140 countries to address worldwide environmental issues. CBSG specializes in process design and facilitation of workshops to develop management plans for endangered species or conservation issue. CBSG workshops bring together all the stakeholders to find common ground and understanding on management of a species, a refuge, or an issue of ecological concern.

The Process

The process designed for this meeting began with tasks designed to increase appreciation of each other's perspectives and to focus people on problem analysis rather than solutions. Each participant was asked to introduce him or herself and to answer two questions: 1) What do you hope to accomplish in this workshop?; and 2) What is your personal vision for the future of the

Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd? Responses to question two indicated immediately that, although there was a great deal of frustration in the room and a definite need for more active management of the population exists, there is also almost unanimous appreciation for the elk and a desire to see the herd remain on the landscape. Answers to both introductory questions can be found in Appendix II of this document.

The first day was spent with participants divided into stakeholder groups. There were seven: hunting interests, adjacent landowners, tribal representatives, federal agencies, county representatives, state agencies and environmental interests. The purpose of the first task was to acknowledge, recognize and value the experiences that shape the way the different stakeholder groups feel today about management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd. Results of this exercise were presented in plenary session and can be found in Section Two of this report. Next we used the mind-mapping tool to identify key concerns related to management of the Yakima/ Rattlesnake Hills elk herd (see Section Three). A large number of clustered issues were generated and then each stakeholder group was given a different color set of dots and asked to prioritize the clusters of issues. The top priority issues were overwhelmingly those related to landowner concerns of damage from elk and from hunters. Because of the use of different colored dots for each group it was clear that this cluster of concerns was top priority to all groups in the room, not only to the landowner group. This revelation was important and helped to focus the work for the remainder of the workshop.

The next task was designed to help build a shared context of stakeholder concerns and priorities as well as to clarify needs versus solutions. Each stakeholder group was asked to prepare a written problem statement for the top priority issue or group of issues from their own perspective. Then, for each problem statement the question was asked: "What are your stakeholder group's needs in relation to solutions to this problem". Problems and needs statements, which were presented in plenary session, can be found in Section 4.

On day two, participants rearranged themselves into mixed groups, with at least one representative of each stakeholder group among the members of each mixed group, to brainstorm possible solutions to meet the needs expressed by each stakeholder group and to define the potential effects of each solution. Most of the second day was dedicated to this task and important discussions and relationship building took place in these mixed groups. The plenary reports from this session were long but some creative solutions were identified (see section 5). Everyone was asked to note, during the presentations, common ideas, interesting suggestions and areas where their stakeholder group might be able to take responsibility.

As soon as this plenary session ended, and with less than one hour left in the workshop, the participants reconvened in stakeholder groups to discuss what they had just heard and make commitments for concrete steps they would be willing to take to make progress towards solving the problems and meeting the needs identified during the workshop. This was an essential step during which real commitments were made that all stakeholders had wanted to hear and were now witness to. These commitments can be found in section 6. In response to a strong need for continued dialogue and information sharing, the FWS agreed to produce an e-bulletin which will be sent regularly to all workshop participants providing progress reports on the commitments people and groups made at the meeting.

While the problems are long-standing and complex and frustrations remain, at the close of the workshop there was a sense of hope that a resolution can be reached and that the agencies with responsibility for managing the elk herd are prepared to respond to the needs of the stakeholders.

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SECTION 2

Appreciation of the Past

Appreciation of the past

Purpose: To recognize and value the experiences that have led us to this point.

Workshop participants split into 7 stakeholder working groups: federal agencies, state agencies, county interests, landowners, tribal interests, hunting interests, and environmental interests. Each group took 10 minutes to write down their personal contributions, milestone and experiences over the past 50 years that have shaped the way they feel today about management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd. Then they discussed what they wrote and identified common elements that influence their stakeholder group's attitudes and responses to management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd.

State Interests Group

Group members: *Don Haad, Chuck Kohls, Jeff Tayer, Mike Livingston, Ron Skinnarland. Doug Flohr, Rocky Ross, Sean Carrell, Dan Newhouse, Lee Stream, Linda Luttrell*

State Responsibilities

- Preserve, protect, perpetuate wildlife
- Maintain relationship w/land owners, USFWS, and other state agencies
- Pay landowners for claims for wildlife damage
- Provide hunting recreation

Experiences

- Too much time and money has been spent on this issue
- Any progress toward a solution has been long at a standstill
- Damage in area surrounding ALE has gone way beyond a level that will be tolerated
- Compensation for crop damage has become too expensive a payout for the state, the size of damage claims now involves special request by legislative action
- Cost of this issue goes beyond economic, to damage relationships with a wide variety constituency (land owners, state & federal, agencies, tribes, hunters & environmentalists)

Federal Agencies Group

Agencies: *USFWS, Yakima Training Center, BLM, PNNL, DOE*

Group members: *Paula Call, Mike Ritter, Margaret Pounds, Greg Hughes, Mike Marxen, Jack Heisler, Ron Crouse, Dana Ward, Steve Wisness, Brett Tiller, Neal Hedges, John Musser, Dave Smith, Curtis Oman, Dan Haas*

Common Elements

- Hunting and Recreation
- Past experience that shapes view of today – frame of reference
- Looking for a successful solution to the situation – well aware of the problem and its history – motivated to do more
- Appreciation for other peoples point of view – understand stakeholder views and opinions
- Personal and professional interest
- Roles and responsibilities within agencies – bound by policy and regulation – have to work within certain guidelines
- Looking for solid scientific information to help manage herd – frustrated with misinformation in public/rumor control
- Individual and collective agency success to solution
- Past and current family ties to agriculture and natural resources
- Lengthy experience level
- Strong personal feelings about private land rights (in support of) and public access/use to public lands

Landowners Group

Group members: *Rich Nall, Bud Hamilton, Arva Whitney, Linda North, Janet Crawford, Glenda Miller, Rick Anderson, Fred Tull*

- Open up ALE
- Bear economic burden
- Driving thru fields
- Fencing
- Costs to police area
- Cattle loss – hunters shoot cattle
- Constant phone calls
- Hundreds of hours to administer WDFW public hunting programs
- Erosion problems
- Personal threats with weapons
- Habitat losses
- Lack of management of elk
- Hunting pressure
- Trespassing poaching Issues
- Only solution hunting
- Close general season
- Damage by hunters, animals

Tribal Interests

Group members: *Arlen Washines, Melvin Lucei, Rico Cruz, Pat Wyena, Jim Stepheson, Dan Lendeen, Aaron Kuntz, Thea Wolf, Jay McConnaughey*

Contributions/Milestones/Experiences

- Hanford experience
- Participation in elk transfers
- Elk damage assessments
- Work on establishing access rights to federal lands
- Dealing with poaching
- Existence of elk in the tribal record being in the area for many years longer than thought.

Common Elements

- Carrying on tradition and culture
- Fear of herd health (radioactive wastes from central Hanford)
- Wanting to develop a management plan within the tribes to create a better tribal understanding of population and herd health.
- Lack of recognition of tribal treaty rights
- General lack of law enforcement on ALE.
- Preservation of the land and its resources.

Hunting Interests Group

Group members: *Mike Estes, Howard Gardner, Paul Kison, Harold Heacock, Jim Shearer, Bruce Wagner, J. Pfeiffer, Burt Butler, Linda Smith*

Contributions, Milestones, and Experiences

- Clarified what would go on flip chart. Decided that common elements would go on flip chart.
- Came to find out who is in charge of the elk management issue. Fed and state both claim control but neither seems to be in charge. Dept. of Energy has been "king of the roost" for so long, can hunters ever get access to ALE.
- No single agency has control of the herd. Public access points are hard to define.
- Lifetime of hunting. Started when he was 10. Interested in wildlife management and wildlife per se. Concerned about loss of habitat.
- From a family of hunters. Came from Idaho where hunting is a form of tourism.
- From a family of hunters. Wants daughters to be able to enjoy wildlife on ALE and to hunt there.
- Never has had the experience to harvest an elk. Has seen 7 to 8 bulls at one time at Hanford and would like opportunity to harvest one. ALE is public land and should be open for everyone's enjoyment. He is a hunter since age 12, currently not physically able to hunt but wants opportunity.

- Born and raised at Prosser, hunted since teens. Knows the landowners but can't hunt on their land any more because others have messed it up for everyone. Wants a place for his children to view and hunt the elk. Landowner relationships have suffered due to elk management issues. Would like to have it opened up like when he was a kid.
- Has always enjoyed hunting and fishing. Lived around the country. This area's population is growing and opportunities to hunt will continue to diminish. Need to preserve hunting opportunities, especially on private land.
- Has been hunting for 55 years around Prosser with shotgun and rifle. So populated now that can't hunt just anywhere. Landowners were given elk tags for family and friends but he is local and doesn't have opportunity to fill elk tag. These are public resources and opportunity to hunt should be equal. Likes to go up on Rattlesnake and watch the elk. Elk stop at fence during hunting season, and won't come off. Trapping and netting injures elk and some have to be destroyed.
- Always interested in wildlife, domestic and wild. Hunted with her father as a child back east. Enthused with elk, didn't have them in Connecticut. Treasured photos of Brutus and an elk calf. Worked at PNNL with scientists who talked about elk and got her interest.
- First tracked elk on Rattlesnake in 1970 while chukar hunting. Saw the bull one time at 500 yards. No elk season but lots of fun to watch. Mixed emotions to hunting on ALE. May force elk off onto private land. Access to private land is a significant problem. State needs to pursue purchase of McWhorter property and other private properties. Like the prospects of local elk hunt with chance for big bulls.
- Hunting heritage. First goose hunt was with grandfather when 4 years. Have a hunting heritage. Believes in stewardship to conserve the resource for self, others, and future generations. Has hunting experiences in other states and Canada. We have similar to equal resources and can have quality experiences locally. Wildlife observation is equally important as hunting. Enjoyment of the critters is fun for a variety of people for a variety of reasons.
- There is no more land. Have to protect what we have. Use resource wisely. Need access to the land to enjoy the resources. Have to respect private landowners rights. Need to protect the resource and respect the land and build relationships with landowners and the agencies that are charged with the responsibility to protect the resources.

Common Elements

- Hunting Heritage
- Enjoys Wildlife and Wildlife Observation
- Enjoys the outdoors
- Concerned about access issues (public and private land)
- Respect for property and owners rights
- Stewardship of wildlife resources
- Concerned about preserving recreational opportunities for future generations
- Support (scientific) management of wildlife and habitat
- All are local residents (within 30 miles)

Environmental Group

Group members: *Charlotte Reep, Mike Lilga, Rich Steele, Heidi Newsome, Gaylord Mink, Jon Lucas*

Contributions, Milestones, and Experiences

- Save the Reach Committee and effort
- Monument establishment/proclamation
- FAC
- Field trips to see ALE
- Educational tours
- ALE is an Icon of the Tri-Cities
- Spiritual value that it exists and is a refuge that is undisturbed
- ALE is a valued refuge for the elk and other wildlife
- Fight to have USFWS manage ALE
- Long-term work by Battelle on ALE biology
- ALE is only a small part of the entire river/Monument environment
- Numerous trips to see the river and resources for preservation and conservation
- Horseback hunting on areas south of Rattlesnake, Wahluke Slope, and other public lands
- Senate recognition for work on Hanford Reach preservation
- WEC award for conservation
- Valuable, delicate, fragile, unique environment
- New species of plants and insects found
- A microcosm of what was here before major disturbances
- Concern over public access (esp. hunting) because of probable impacts
- Potential to reintroduce species threatened elsewhere
- Worked on the Hanford site doing environmental monitoring; physical hazards; document biological resources
- Local history in area; appreciation of the natural environment
- TNC Biodiversity Inventory documented unique resources
- Forty years as research scientist; involved in establishment of biological monitoring on Hanford
- Wildlife videos, photography of various species in various settings
- Interest in video documentation of elk on ALE for education
- Wildlife is under pressure from habitat loss and degradation
- There should be places specifically for wildlife to exist in a natural state
- These few elk have been undergoing increasing pressure
- Concern that the issue is not about the welfare of elk, but only the welfare of humans and their use of elk
- No scientific data that demonstrate that elk are doing damage to ALE
- Crop damage from wildlife will never be eliminated
- Landowners can live with elk damage but cannot live with hunter damage because of the damage they do.

Commonalities

- ALE is biologically/ecologically unique
    - One of the largest intact shrub-steppe ecosystems in Washington
    - A unique natural legacy
- Decades of study and work to preserve and protect the area esp. ALE and river. Scientific value is high and benefits all.
- Native wildlife is under pressure from habitat loss and degradation and needs a place of refuge
- ALE is important as one part of the larger whole – the entire NM and region
- ALE has innate value just existing as it is and a spiritual value as well.
- Land access needs to be controlled to protect ALE resources.

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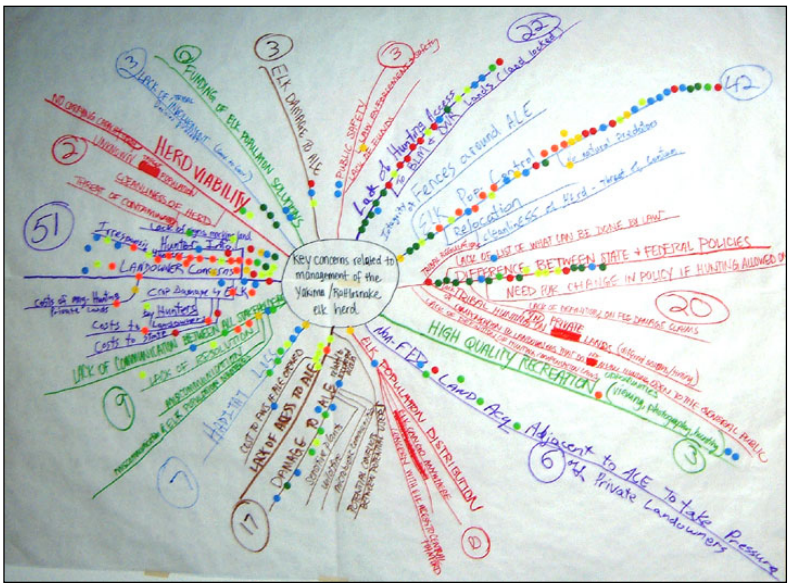


SECTION 3

Issue Generation and Prioritization

Issue generation and prioritization

Purpose: To build a shared context of our concerns and priorities.

In plenary, the group brainstormed key concerns related to management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake elk herd. These concerns were written on a large mind map for everyone to see. Next, the participants were each given three dots to put on their top priority concerns. The results were tallied, and are broken down below.

Top priority issues from mind map

(51 dots)
- Landowner concerns
- Irresponsible hunters, damage to private land
- Lack of signs marking ownership of land (state, private)
- Costs of managing hunting on private lands
- Crop damage by elk
- Costs to landowners
- Costs to state in reimbursing landowners

(42 dots)
- Elk Population Control
- No natural predators
- Relocation – relocating contaminated elk (central Hanford)
- Integrity of fences

(22 dots)
- Lack of hunting access to BLM and state lands because they're landlocked

(20 dots)
- Difference between state and federal policies
- Tribal regulations
- Lack of list of what can be done by law
- Need for change in policy if hunting allowed on ALE
- Lack of definition on fee damage claims
- Lack of Yakima Nation tribal hunting on private lands (different seasons/timing)
- Lack of definition of hunting compensation laws
- Compensation to landowners that do not allow hunting open to the general public

(17 dots)
- Lack of access to ALE
- Cost to FWS if ALE opened
- Damage to ALE related to increased access
  - Sensitive plants

- Wildfire
- Microbiotic communities
- Potential conflicts between potential users

(9 dots)
- Lack of communication between all stakeholders
- Lack of resolution
- Miscommunication
- Miscommunication of elk population numbers

(7 dots)
- Habitat loss

(6 dots)
- Non-federal land acquisition adjacent to ALE to take pressure off private landowners

(3 dots)
- Lack of Tribal involvement in the decision process (government to government)

(3 dots)
- Elk damage to ALE

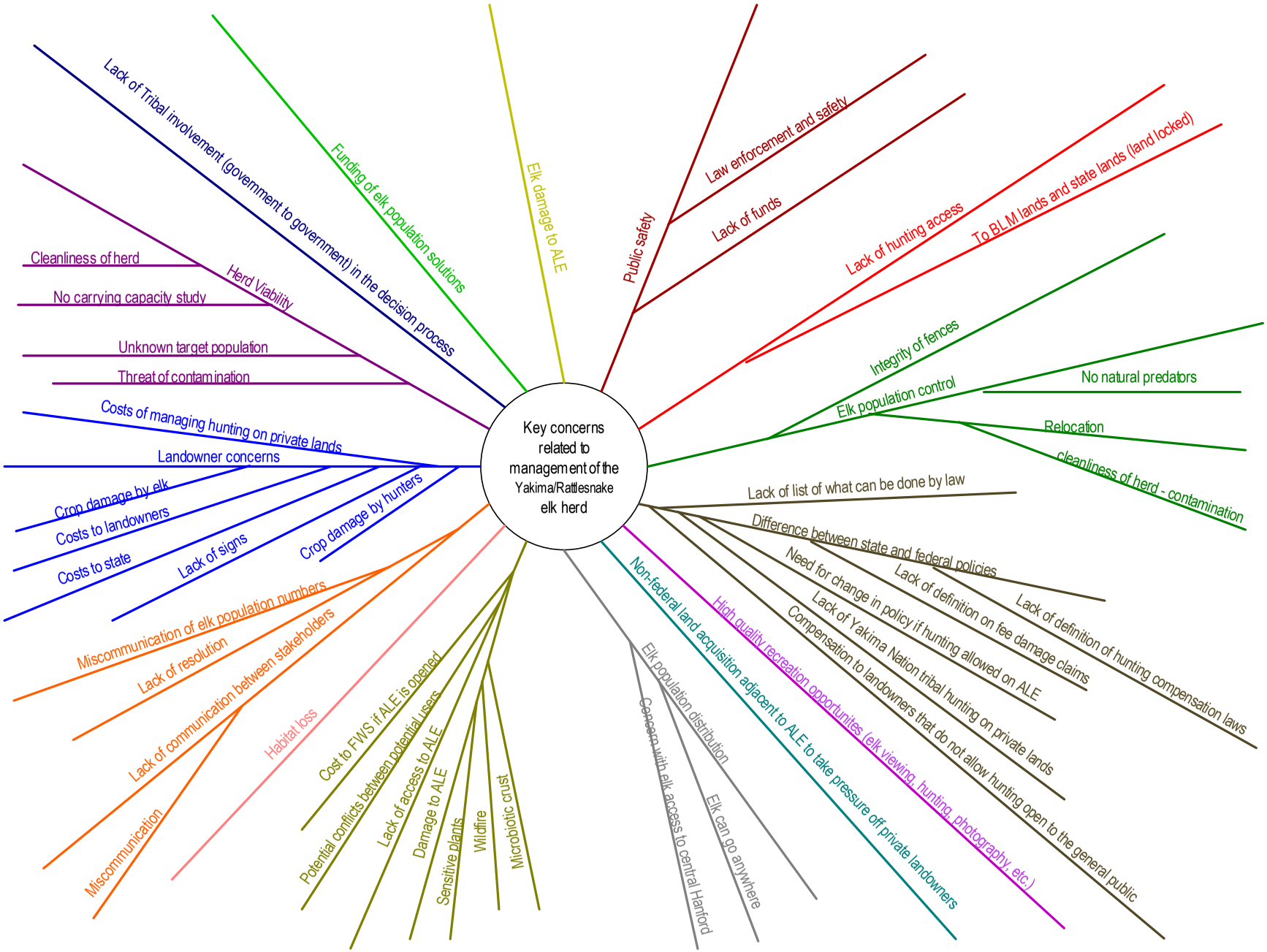
(3 dots)
- Public safety
- Law enforcement
- Lack of funds

(3 dots)
- High quality recreation opportunities (viewing, photography, hunting)

(2 dots)
- Elk Population Distribution
- Elk can go anywhere
- Concern with Elk access to central Hanford

(2 dots)
- Herd viability
- No carrying capacity study
- Unknown target population
- Cleanliness of herd
- Threat of contamination

(2 dots)
- Funding of Elk population solutions


Key concerns related to management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake elk herd
Lack of Tribal involvement (government to government) in the decision process
Funding of elk population solutions
Elk damage to ALE
Public safety
Law enforcement and safety
Lack of funds
Lack of hunting access
To BLM lands and state lands (land locked)
Integrity of fences
Elk population control
No natural predators
Relocation
cleanliness of herd - contamination
Lack of list of what can be done by law
Difference between state and federal policies
Lack of definition on fee damage claims
Lack of definition of hunting compensation laws
Need for change in policy if hunting allowed on ALE
Lack of Yakima Nation tribal hunting on private lands
Compensation to landowners that do not allow hunting open to the general public
High quality recreation opportunites (elk viewing, hunting, photography, etc.)
Non-federal land acquisition adjacent to ALE to take pressure off private landowners
Elk population distribution
Concern with elk access to central Hanford
Elk can go anywhere
Habitat loss
Cost to FWS if ALE is opened
Potential conflicts between potential users
Lack of access to ALE
Damage to ALE
Sensitive plants
Wildfire
Microbiotic crust
Miscommunication of elk population numbers
Lack of resolution
Lack of communication between stakeholders
Miscommunication
Herd Viability
Cleanliness of herd
No carrying capacity study
Unknown target population
Threat of contamination
Costs of managing hunting on private lands
Landowner concerns
Crop damage by elk
Costs to landowners
Costs to state
Lack of signs
Crop damage by hunters

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SECTION 4

Problems and Needs

Problems and Needs

Problem Statements

In stakeholder groups, using the "rule of 5 whys', the groups attempted to get at the root cause of the problems identified in the top priority issues on the mind map. This exercise resulted in a descriptive statement of why each is an issue of concern.

State Agency Group

Priority 1. Landowner Concerns
Large numbers of elk leave the ALE to forage on private lands during spring/summer

Why is this an issue?
- Because they cause agricultural damage (especially dry land wheat, but also rangeland and irrigated agriculture) through bedding, trampling, foraging and tracking

Why is this an issue?
- Because the state is required to reimburse landowners for damage (High cost in time and budget)

Why is this an issue?
- Requires state to liberalize seasons
- Which causes hunter/landowner conflicts
- Which causes problems between state and stakeholders
- Which strains the states relationships with all stakeholders

The "real issue": Crop damage by elk has prohibitive costs to the state and landowners and strains relationships between all stakeholders.

Priority 2. Elk Population Control
Few predators to control the herd growth

Why is this an issue?
- Because of the high rate of population growth

Why is this an issue?
- When the population exceeded 350 they began to move off ALE
- Because some population dynamic (food, better food, more space) causes elk to move off ALE
- That's a problem because it causes damage to either cropland, rangeland on private lands and ALE itself

The "real issue": Lack of sufficient population control leads to an ever increasing herd that in turn leads to landowner concerns above.

Priority 3. Lack of Hunting Access
No access to ALE and limited access to private and other public lands

- That's an issue because it limits human predation on the elk herd
- That's an issue because we can't effectively manage the herd to reach the population objective of <350
- That's an issue because we have long inefficient hunting seasons
- That's an issue because it creates frustration among hunters and landowners
- That's a problem because landowners close their lands

The "real issue": Lack of hunting access permits the population to grow to the point of causing unmanageable levels and causes landowner problems.

Priority 4. Difference between state and federal policies
State has authority to regulate harvest, but the federal government controls access

- That's a problem because the elk seek refuge on ALE
- That's a problem because we can not harvest enough elk to reach the population objective within the Yakima Elk Herd Plan

The "real issue": That's a problem because we cannot harvest enough elk to reach the population objective within the Yakima Elk Herd Plan.

Lack of definition of hunting compensation laws: public hunting access is not clearly defined under state law to determine who receives crop damage payments.

Federal Agencies Group

Elk Population Control (42) of Rattlesnake Herd
There is a need to control the Rattlesnake Hills herd to minimize damage to resources across the herd's entire range.

- Why – causing damage to monument – causing depredation – exceeding carrying capacity
- Why – costing money to state and landowners
- Why – RCW (state of Washington) allows payment of damage that exceeds acceptable level.
- Why – don't have control over population (or minimal) – fencing, natural predators, hunting seasons are ineffective, conflicting missions of federal, state, county and local
- Why – damage caused by elk on private lands adjacent to ALE and on ALE
- Why – difficulty in managing a herd that is not always within our scope of accountability
- Why – we are told by proclamation to protect resources on federal property
- Why – contamination issues boil down to a lack of education and knowledge – DOE says it is not an issue because of known scientific knowledge – it's a perception issue
- Why – human health and safety issue – movement across highways to central Hanford and other areas (Hwy 24)

- Why – to maintain a healthy viable herd that is protective of public and private lands
    - To be good neighbors
    - To form strong partnerships

Lack of Hunting Access (22)
Ability to control the Rattlesnake Herd via hunting is limited due to lack of access to certain federal and private lands.
- Why – a good portion of the public land (ALE) is currently closed to the public for hunting
- Why – other access to public land are not allowed because of crossing of private land – land locked lands (BLM, state-owned lands)
- Why – it lessens the effectiveness of hunting as a management tool
- Why – private landowner cost associated with allowing hunting

Landowner Concerns (51)
Too much crop damage by the Rattlesnake herd and property damage by hunters
- Why – crop damage by elk and property damage by hunters
- Why – elk like wheat (and other crops) and elk get habituated to wheat
- Why – hunting on private lands is not managed as close as when on other lands
- Why – some hunters lack appreciation and respect of private property rights – a lack of information and education on where hunting is allowed
- Why – lack a available land open to hunting
- Why – elk prefer a high calorie diet versus natural lands – crops v. rangeland

Difference between State and Federal Policies (20)
- Why – different missions
- Why – Is this really an issue???
- Why – Could this be a solution that isn't being looked at – for example the tribal implications
- Why – federal policy is still being developed so it makes it difficult to anticipate what to do – the Hanford Comprehensive Conservation Plan – Environmental Impact Statement process is in the works
- Why – An analysis needs to be done to find what we can and can't do on federal lands because of the different jurisdictions
- Why – Look at opportunities – not differences, try to be creative
- Why – The FWS has population control tools that we used that do not include hunting – trap and relocate
- Why – there is a false perception that because we have different missions we cannot solve the problem – we need to capitalize on each others' strengths
- Why – Are our missions really different? We are all tasked with managing our respective resources

There are different missions that restrict/limit/enhance/modify/influence our tools in our tool box.

We have limited our ability by not understanding what management actions are possible under different missions.

Landowner Group

Landowner concerns

- Irresponsible hunters
    - Hunters are uneducated about where they can hunt
    - Lack of respect to our property
    - Trespassing
    - Liability
    - Dangerous
    - Too much pressure
- If state wants to post their land they can

Too many elk

Problem: causes crop damage, property damage (range, resource, fences), hunting pressure from all over, accident liabilities (cars),

- Solutions to Reduce herd
    - Hunting on the ALE, reduction teams, hazing into kill areas, birth control, relocate, increased hunting (increase hunting on public lands, land owners tags), two tags (two cow, bull)

Too many hunters

Problem: The increase of request and trespassing of public hunters, liabilities, time and costs to manage hunting

- Solution to reduce hunters
    - Education
    - More enforcement (higher penalties for trespassing)
    - No public seasons
    - Make 372 written permission only on landowners lands

Tribal Interests Group

1. Land Owner Concerns

   Crop damage by elk needs to be minimized or eliminated

   Why?
   - Because land owners incur financial losses
     a. Fence damage
     b. Loss of crops
   - Because the state must pay depredation costs

   Why?
   - Because it effects the financial livelihood of land owners
   - The state budget will not always be there

Real Issue: Landowners do not want to bear the responsibility of managing hunters.

2. Lack of Hunting Access
   Policies need to be instituted to address the needs of all hunter and other user groups.
   Why
   - Because without implementation of policies there will be no access to these public and private lands, and the elk herd remains unchecked.

Real Issue: No serious policy issue dialogue between federal, state, and tribal governments.

3. Elk Population Control
   Elk population needs to be controlled at a yet to be determined target level.
   Why?
   - Do not want herd to exceed carrying capacity.
     a. Disease control

   Why?
   - Interference with other tribal and cultural resources

Real Issue: Maintain integrity of ecosystem and cultural resources.

4. Difference Between State and Federal Policies
   Same as number two.

Hunting Interests Group

Issue: Landowner Concerns
Damage: Crop Damage, Field Damage, Damage to Fences, Damage to Equipment

Why is this an issue?
- It is an issue because of loss of income. Crop damage is a superficial indication of potential damage to soil. Damage could be caused by animals or humans. Damage must be repaired which takes equipment, time, and dollars. More fundamental is that there is no more soil; landowner has to protect the soil from wind or water erosion. Damage to fences or open gates can allow livestock to escape. Landowners become aggravated.

Why is this an issue?
- Landowners become stressed, less tolerant to public contact, potential health problems, frustrated with cost and time of repairs that should not have been needed.

Why is this an issue?
- Because landowners will likely deny access to law abiding hunters.

Why is this an issue?
- Because hunters lose access and the opportunity to hunt.

Issue: Lack of Signs

Why is this an issue?
- The public needs to be able to identify which land is privately owned so they can show respect for the landowner and ask permission to hunt?

Why is this an issue?
- Because the public (hunter) needs written landowner permission to trespass on private land.

Why is this an issue?
- Trespassing on private land can lead to confrontations between the landowner and the public, can lead to involvement of law enforcement personnel, and to potential citations for trespass.

Issue: Cost to the state of reimbursing landowners for crop damage

Why is this an issue?
- Because it costs taxpayers and license holders money.

Why is this an issue?
- License fees could be reduced or the money could be used for land acquisition, habitat, game law enforcement, or other WDFW needs.

Issue: Cost of managing hunting on private land?

Why is this an issue?
- Because landowner time and WDFW staff time is spent to coordinate activities to authorize and control hunters?

Why is this an issue?
- Because it ultimately costs the hunter.

Issue: Elk population control

Why is this an issue?
- Elk eat the crops, damage the fields, and compete with grazing animals on rangeland. Elk are more likely to leave ALE when populations are high because more forage is needed to sustain the larger number of animals. Herds can exceed the carrying capacity of the land. The elk compete with other species for the available food. Over-grazing can cause permanent damage to sensitive ecosystems. Herds will disperse (satellite bulls) off of ALE to establish new herds. Possible safety issues with migrating animals crossing highways, leading to vehicle accidents.

Why is this an issue?
- Permanent damage could permanently reduce the carrying capacity of the area. Noxious weeds are more likely to be introduced on over-grazed land. More crop damage as elk leave ALE to find food.

Why is this an issue?
- More damage claims, landowner issues, and the never-ending problem continues.

Issue: Natural Predators
There are no natural predators in significant numbers in the HRNM area?

Why is this an issue?
- Because elk populations will not be controlled by predators.

Why is this an issue?
- Because human intervention is required to control the elk herd population.

Issue: Relocation

Why is this an issue?
- Lack of public acceptance.

Why is this an issue?
- Bad PR because of the cost, injury to animals being trapped and relocated, possible abortion of calves in transported cows, loss of elk to predators after relocation, high harvest of relocated elk by Native American hunters. (Herd control by relocation is at the expense of hunting opportunity.)

Issue: Integrity of Fences

Why is this an issue?
- Because regular barbed wire doesn't stop elk.

Why is this an issue?
- Because a taller heavier fence would be required, stretching approximately 55 miles would be required to keep the elk off of private land on the south side of Rattlesnake Mountain. This would be a high expense.

Why is this an issue?
- Because it is not a viable alternative for controlling elk movement.

Lack of hunting access

Why is this an issue?
- Due to the public trust doctrine, elk are in the public domain and belong to the citizens of the state. Hunters expect that they will be afforded an opportunity to hunt elk during reasonable seasons with reasonable restrictions.

Why is this an issue?

- Because access to private land is becoming more limited. Also, access to public land is not always assured because it is landlocked because the government has not provided access easements.

Issue: Access to federal and state (BLM) land that is land locked

Why is this an issue?

- Because the public does not have access to public land for hunting opportunity. Increased access could increase elk hunting pressure to push the elk back to ALE and increase harvest, which would help control elk herd population.

Why is this an issue?

- Because the elk population will have to be controlled by more expensive methods.

Issue: Differences between state and federal policies

Why is this an issue?

- Because there is no easy way to resolve differences.

Why is this an issue?

- Because it is difficult or seemingly impossible to agree to and implement solutions to problems.

Why is this an issue?

- Because it takes a very long time and tremendous resources to reach consensus (use the CCP and the Elk Summit as examples).

Why is this an issue?

- Because the public becomes frustrated working through a slow and cumbersome process, not knowing who to believe and what rules to follow.

Issue: Tribal Regulations

Why is this an issue?

- Because there is no state or federal (WDFW or FWS) control over tribal harvest.

Why is this an issue?

- No data on hunting activity and population reduction (no harvest report data).

Why is this an issue?

- Because elk herd managers do not have the complete set of numbers on the impacts of hunting on herd population.

Lack of list of what can be done by law

Why is this an issue?
- Limits the rate of progress on resolution of problems

Why is this an issue?
- Lack of public understanding and acceptance of the rules

Issue: Need for change in policy if hunting allowed on ALE
Present policy change needed if hunting allowed on ALE

Why is this an issue?
- Requires adoption of CCP

Environmental Interests Group

Issue: Landowner concerns
Why? Crop damage by elk and hunters
Why? Loss of revenue for the damaged crop

Problem: Irresponsible hunters damage private land
Why? Economic loss, emotional stress, dangerous interaction, legal liability

Problem: Lack of signs marking ownership of land
Why? Interested hunters cannot determine where it is legal to hunt.
Why? Insufficient information is provided

Problem: Elk cause damage to crops.
Why? Landowners are growing wheat adjacent to elk habitat
Why? Wheat is more attractive than cheatgrass and they have been habituated to crops
Why? Because there isn't enough quality habitat – bunchgrasses etc.

Problem: Costs to state in reimbursing landowners
Why? Limited budget
Why? Diverts money from other important wildlife management activities

Issue: Elk population control
Why? Assumption has been made that reducing the population will solve the problem of crop damage
Why? It is unknown whether the current elk population is causing damage to resources to ALE

Problem: No natural predators
Why? Population is not controlled by natural mechanisms
Why? Not a fully functioning ecosystem

Problem: Compensation to landowners that do not allow hunting open to the general public
Why? State law does not define public hunting

State reimbursement of damage claims diverts limited funds from other important wildlife/habitat enforcement activities.

ALE alone is not a totally naturally functioning ecosystem; it lacks predators and has low levels of natural mortality

It is unknown whether the current elk population is causing damage to resources to ALE

State law does not define public hunting. There appear to be loopholes in the law allowing landowners to receive compensation without providing public hunting. Landowners should not receive compensation without providing general public hunting access.

County Interests Group

Landowner concerns
Damage to personal assets and property
Non-recoverable financial costs to property owners

Elk populations
More animals = more impacts
Fewer animals = fewer impacts

Hunter access
More and better access = fewer animals = less impacts

Bureaucracy
Dissimilar rules and regulations create confusion and stagnation
Lack of control/responsibility means lack of decision-making ability and will.

Needs Statements

In stakeholder working groups, participants identified their needs in relation to the solution for each problem statement identified above.

State Agency Group

Problem 1: Crop damage by elk has prohibitive costs to the state and landowners and strains relationships between all stakeholders

Needs:

1. Need less elk on private land during critical agricultural periods
2. Need to be able to harvest elk efficiently enough so we do not have an extended hunting season
3. The state needs damage to be significantly reduced, by decreasing the size of the elk herd, so that WDFW's need to pay money to landowners for crop damage will be reduced
4. We need agreement on options between WDFW, USFWS, landowners, and conservation groups to eliminate crop damage
5. The state needs public support to deal with problem animals during the crop damage period
6. The state needs the landowners back as an elk management partner
7. The state needs the federal agencies (USFWS, DOE) as a partner in elk management

Problem 2: Lack of sufficient population control leads to an ever-increasing herd that in turn leads to the Priority #1 (landowner concerns)

Needs:

1. The state needs the landowners back as an elk management partner
2. The state needs the federal agencies (USFWS, DOE) as a partner in elk management
3. We need land access to implement proven tools to control the population
4. We need the ability to manage for a sustainable herd that is less than 350 elk

Problem 3: Lack of hunting access permits the population to grow to the point of causing unmanageable levels and causes landowner concerns (same as Problem 1)

Problem 4: Difference between state and federal policies -- We cannot harvest enough elk to reach the population objective within the Yakima Elk Herd Plan

Needs:

1. We need to reconcile the general concept of a wildlife refuge with the realities of managing elk

Federal Agencies Group

Problem 1: The ability to control the elk herd via hunting is limited due to the lack of access to certain federal and private lands.

Needs:
1. Access to land locked federal lands
2. Identification of land ownership boundaries (on the ground and in widely distributed written materials, i.e. published in state regulations)
3. Need an approved plan to consider hunting on ALE
4. Need cooperation from private landowners for access

Problem 2: There is a need to manage the Rattlesnake Hills elk herd to minimize damage to the resources across the herd's entire range.

Needs:
1. Need stakeholder buy-in for implementation measures
2. Begin herd reduction process (short-term)
3. Need a place to relocate elk (short-term)
4. More about herd dynamics so that optimize implementation measures. Need to do routine studies, plans, and long-term implementation measures simultaneously.
5. Need an approved plan

Problem 3: Collectively have option to manage the elk herd however we have not historically understood or coordinated our options.

Needs:
1. Complete planning process and NEPA coverage
2. Coordinated implementation of available options
3. What are each agencies "realistic" options
4. Identify supporting roles of each agency
5. Identify policy gaps

Problem 4: There is too much crop damage by the elk herd and too much property damage by hunters

Needs:
1. Information system for hunters
2. Management options that reduce damage to private lands
3. Establish and maintain relationships so that we can coordinate management plans
4. Improved hunter education
5. Increased law enforcement

Landowner Group

Goal: Reduce and manage elk herd to level we can live with

Problem 1: Too many elk cause damage to our crops, pastures, property and environment

Needs:
1. Significantly decrease size of elk herd to point at which claims are reduced. This will require all agencies to use all available tools.
2. Short-term: hazing of elk back onto monument in order to decrease crop damage during growing season.

Problem 2: Too many hunters result in property damage, personal endangerment, liability and risks to hunters.

Needs:
1. Safe landowner managed hunting on private lands
2. Public to be educated on what private land means and on property rights
3. Enforcement of hunting regulations and private property rights
4. Effective communication between landowners and WDFW to get help we need to control the hunters

Tribal Interests Group

Problem 1: Damage to tribal cultural resources needs to be minimized.

Needs
1. A well monitored hunting program for Native Americans on the ALE reserve year round, when the need arises.

2. Need the state to negotiate an agreement with the tribes to allow private landowners to invite Native Americans to hunt on their lands whenever the need arises.

Problem 2: The policies now in place don't allow the tribes to exercise their rights.

Needs:
1. Better communication between federal, state, and tribal governments, and education on tribal rights to the general public as well as government agencies.

Problem 3: Elk population needs to be controlled at a yet to be determined target level.

Needs:

1. Need the state to negotiate an agreement with the tribes to allow private landowners to invite Native Americans to hunt on their lands whenever the need arises.

Hunting Interests Group

Problem 1: Hunters have no access to ALE, no access to landlocked public lands, and very limited access to private lands to hunt elk.

Needs:

1. Hunters need access to ALE to hunt elk.
2. Hunters need access to landlocked public land in the proximity of the HRNM.
3. Hunters need increased access to private lands in proximity to the HRNM to hunt elk.

Problem 2: Private landowners experience economic loss and mental stress from the crop, soil and fence damage, and vandalism caused by elk and elk hunters.
Why is this an issue - Elk move off ALE onto private lands
Why is this an issue – May not be enough forage on ALE
Why is this an issue – May be too many elk on ALE
Why is this an issue - Insufficient harvest/removal of elk

Needs:

1. Hunters need the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in cooperation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, to open ALE to hunting to reduce the elk population to the carrying capacity of ALE and sustain it at that level.

Problem 3: The WDFW reimburses landowners for elk caused crop damage.
Why is this an issue? License fees and tax dollars are used to pay the damage claims.
Why is this an issue? Unpopular with hunters because it diverts funds that could be used for wildlife management.

Needs:

1. We need the involved agencies (WDFW, USFWS) to manage the elk herd to reduce or eliminate payments for damage claims.

Problem 4: The elk population on ALE has exceeded the carrying capacity and moves off ALE for forage.

Needs:

1. Hunters need the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in cooperation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, to reduce the elk population to the carrying capacity of ALE and sustain it at that level (one option may be to open ALE to hunting).

Problem 5: Lack of signs or maps that identify land ownership.
Why is this an issue: Hunters need the information to avoid trespass and to identify public lands where hunting is allowed.

Needs:

1. Hunters need property ownership to be clearly identified by signs or maps.
2. Hunters need public land identified by signage.

Environmental Interests

Problem 1: Assumption has been made that reducing the population will solve the problem of crop damage. It is unknown whether the current elk population is causing damage to resources of ALE. Population distribution off of ALE is the problem

Needs:

1. Protect good habitat on ALE
   - study potential damage from elk to ALE resources
2. Protect good habitat off the Monument
3. Provide additional habitat off ALE
   - public and private lands
4. Evaluate the target population level of <350 to determine if this level will solve the problem of crop damage
5. Provide hunter access to BLM and DNR lands (~28,000 ac)
6. Identify "problem animals" – those that cause damage (habituation)
7. Evaluate the affects of hunting regulations on elk herd growth

Problem 2: Elk Population Control.

Needs:

1. Need to resolve crop damage problem without opening ALE to hunting
2. Need to further investigate hazing
3. Identify problem animals and focus control on these rather than entire herd
4. Need to identify impact of habitat improvement on luring elk away from crops

Problem 3: State reimbursement of damage claims diverts limited funds from other important wildlife/habitat enforcement activities.

Needs:

1. Investigate use of different funds to pay damages
2. Identify where damage claims are, i.e., are there claims made on leased lands?

Problem 4: State law does not define public hunting.

Needs**:**

1. Look at state policy to see how public hunting is defined
2. Create a definition of public hunting

Problem 5: Irresponsible hunters prevent landowners from wanting to offer public hunting opportunities on their lands and on leased lands

Needs:

1. Increased law enforcement and quicker response to hunter violations
2. Clarify laws
3. Programs to encourage responsible hunting
4. State management of a program to organize public hunting on private/BLM/DNR lands

Problem 6: ALE alone is not a totally naturally functioning ecosystem; it lacks predators and there are few levels of natural mortality.

County Interests Group

Problem 1: Landowners are experiencing property damage by both elk and hunters.

Need:

1. Response/solution to constituents' concerns:

Problem 2: Lack of communication between agencies

Need:

1. Better coordination and collaboration among land managers and regulators, most notably the state and federal agencies in this case.

Problem 3:"Elk Population" as a stand-alone issue, is not directly a County issue, and therefore the County has no *needs* associated with the issue.

Elk Summit

April 5-6, 2004
Prosser, WA

SECTION 5

Strategies and Initiatives

Strategies and Initiatives

Purpose: To develop potential solutions for each of the high priority problems related to management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd.

First of all, the working groups re-shuffled so that there was a representative of each stakeholder group in each of the newly formed working groups. Participants reviewed the common themes from the problem and needs presentations, representing their stakeholder group. Next, they took each top priority problem one at a time and brainstormed strategies and initiatives to achieve sustainable, cooperative solutions. In addition, the potential effects, both positive and negative, of each proposed solution were identified and discussed in plenary presentations.

Group 1

Group members: *Ron Crouse, Frank Brock, Jim Stephenson, Sean Carrell, Rich Nall, Burt Butler, Howard Gardner, John Musser, Heidi Newsome*

Issue 1: Landowner concerns

Needs summary

County perspective (*Frank*) – Regarding landowner damage and private property rights, the county wants to satisfy its constituents, but hunters and conservationists are also constituents. The county's need is to resolve the conflicts among constituents.
Lack of hunter access is an issue
Lack of communication between agencies and public, and between agencies

Tribal (*Jim*) – Need Tribal access for hunting as a treaty right
Need for state agreement for tribal hunting access on private lands when private landowners have a need. Need to protect other cultural and tribal resources from damage from too many elk.

Private landowners (*Rich*) – Too many elk cause damage to crops.
Need to reduce damage to a level that landowners can live with.

Hunters (*Burt*) – We are concerned about the economic loss to landowners for crops.
Need to open ALE to hunting.
Needs greater access to hunt.

Federal agency (*John*) – Too much crop damage by elk, too much damage by hunters to property. We need an information system for hunters, education for hunters, and increased law enforcement. Management options to reduce elk numbers should be encompassing of all options. We need increased communication and establishment of relationships.

State (*Sean*) – Crop damage and relationships with the stakeholders are our main problems. We need to increase access to elk hunting and increase communications with other agencies and stakeholders.

Environmental interests (*Heidi*) – Discussed the assumption of whether reducing the herd alone would solve the damage problem. We need to evaluate the herd level and target problem animals for removal.

Brainstorming of solutions:

Reduce Damage (both from elk and from hunters)

- Decrease population of elk
- Sterilization of individuals of the herd
- Keep elk off private property
  - hazing
  - fencing
- Make public lands more attractive to elk
  - Adding wells – water sources for elk
- Guided or controlled hunts (to reduce property damage)

Better Coordination and communication:

- Coordination of hunting and land availability.
  - Communications to hunter regarding access.
  - A regional coordinator to organize land access and hunters.
- Quarterly meetings between stakeholders
- Change public to limited entry hunt or lottery hunt instead of general hunt throughout unit
  - If limited entry – information could be targeted to specific hunters that have permits
- Create a website for the regional area that hosts information (who will host?)
- Hunter education – emphasize private property rights
- Advanced hunter education program –increase it
- Add hunter education refresher course for all hunters every 10 years
- Provide tribal hunters for private land owners that are experiencing damages/or for private landowners that need assistance at different times, and also for tribal members that have needs for ceremonial foods for funerals, etc.

Protection of Cultural Resources (medicinal plans)/Ecological integrity from damage from elk

- Define the term damage (what will be tolerated)
- Evaluate if any damage from elk is occurring
- Site-specific impacts may occur
- Monitoring of potential impacts

Hunter Information

- Establish a regional hunting coordinator (as above) to organize land access and hunters
  - Communications on what lands are open to hunting
  - Lists of landowners that want hunting and additional regulations on their land (to coordinator)
  - Landowner needs to know who is on his land so that he can follow up in damage
  - List of Landowners that want to be contacted
- Hunter education to be more detailed than synopsis of regulations
- Specific course for hunters within this specific unit
- Enforce the attendance at the course
- Use only advanced hunter education people to hunt public lands
- Lottery or drawing to hunt in ALE and educate only those that get a permit
- Tribal hunters information provided to landowners – so that landowners have access to tribal hunters at times outside of season – Tribal members can get information on landowners that want their assistance

Law enforcement

- More officers
- Cooperative pooling of existing officers from WDFW, USFWS, BLM, County, Tribal, etc.
- Details to area of additional officers during hunting seasons (emphasis on patrols)

Need to identify what the realistic agency options are

- Research to determine what are the legal options for WDFW and USFWS

Issue 2: Elk Population Control

Summary of needs:

Hunters: Need is to have a hunting season on ALE.

Conservation: Need to evaluate not only population level but also distribution of animals on landscape in time and space.

State: Re-establish and maintain partnerships for elk management, maintain a sustainable (socially and biologically) herd for all parties, and implement proven tools to control population.

Federal: Begin herd reduction process in short term, need an approved plan, need a place to relocate elk (may be a solution), and need stakeholder buy-in on implementation plans.

Tribal: Desire to harvest excess animals.

Brainstorming of solutions:

Habitat Protection

- Habitat improvements to attract elk/switch distribution patterns
  - Evaluate if water is limiting
  - Install food plots – on private lands and public lands
  - CRP (Conservation reserve lands)
- Hazing program during critical seasons
- Birth control

Hunting on ALE

- Controlled permit type hunt
- Guided hunts
- Establish a certain number that should be harvested and limit only to that number of animals
- Agency led hunt
- Tribal hunting on ALE
- Approved hunting plan
- Open only small part of ALE
- Limited tribal hunt during season on private lands to move elk back
- Hazing onto private lands during hunting season
- Aside (concern over the hunting program administration – "should be done right")

Short-term reduction:

- Elk trapping and relocation (Need locations to take elk to)
- Birth control
- Hot spot hunts
- Lethal control = agency hunting
- Enlist USDA Wildlife Services to control animals
- Need well planned communication of options considered to public and media

Issue: Lack of hunting access

Summary of needs:

- Cooperation with private to access landlocked public lands
- Identify ownership boundaries
- Need access to ALE to hunt elk
- Need access to private lands to hunt elk
- Greater access for tribes to access traditional hunting areas

Brainstorming of solutions

Establish state program similar to Montana

- "Block management" program – private landowners are paid by state for hunter access – depending on either number of hunters and number of days hunted (research the MT program)

Landowners do not support public hunting

- Want only hunt by permission and controlled access hunting.
- Landowners want to control who hunts on their land.
- Landowners want to control land access to their lands.
- Landowners may charge to hunt.

Additional landowner preference permits to landowners

Controlled draw hunts on other lands

Establish hunting on ALE and other pubic lands

Frustration on government approval of hunting plans

The word hunting refers to both tribal hunting and general public hunting

Pros and cons to suggested solutions

Solution	Pros	Cons
Hazing to assist harvest (Haze into hunters)	• Reduces population • Moves animals off crops	• Public perception • Injuries to elk • Illegal • Could increase crop damage
Relocation	• Enhancing other herds in state • Immediate herd reduction • Large numbers can be removed at once • Animals can selected to remove	• Tribes would rather use tribal treaty rights to harvest animals than see them moved out of ceded area (without first having access to hunt) • Expensive • Stressful to animals • Damage to habitat • Contamination across species (genetic or disease = note: animals are tested for disease prior to removal, and are also tested for contaminants) • Need place to take animals for release
Controlled hunts (no general season) Change season from general to permit or controlled	• Increase harvest rates over what they are now • Harvest can be regulated	• Increased management • Increased law enforcement is needed

hunt only	for numbers removed (and number of bulls and cows) • Reduce hunter/landowner conflicts • Controlled access to lands (ALE) • Reduces damage from the hunters • Target audience for information • Provide recreation • Increased safety	• Potential damage from hunters • Selects one recreational use over other uses
Animal Damage Control Hunt/agency kill	• Precise removal of target animals (number and sex ratio) • Donate meat to organizations in need • Low cost	• Socially unacceptable • Takes away recreational opportunity
Landowner permits	• Acceptable to landowners • Increased harvest outside of hunting season • Reduces damage from hunters	• Not available to all interested parties (Public, Tribal members, Etc.)
Regional Coordinator position	• Limits landowners having to contact hunters/decrease annoyance • Can organize hunters and landowners • Could facilitate education of hunters and decrease damage from hunters to private property • Tribal hunters could be coordinated with landowners to harvest in other times of year	• Currently landowners don't see this as a need – they control the access and hunters they want on their land • New position has costs

Group 2

Group members: *Paul Kison, Rick Leaumont, Jeff Tayer, Harold Heacock, Dave Smith, Jean Robert, Aaron Kuntz, Ron Skinnarland, Paula Call*

Issue 1 – Landowner Concerns:

Solutions	Pros	Cons
Build Fence around ALE	• Hard barrier between problem and land owners • Immediate visual that something is being done • Nearly eliminate damage on private lands	• Cost • Negative biological impacts (i.e. connectivity) • Maintenance • Increased impacts inside the ALE • Reduce public hunting opportunities off of ALE
Hire Private Lands Hunt Coordinator	• Burden off of landowner • Improve quality of hunt • Weed out bad hunters • Documentation trail of use	• Cost to agency • Landowner reduces control • Increase cost to hunter • All landowners may not participate
Damage Deposit for Hunters	• Provides certainty of protection	• More administration
Hazing	• Efficient and effective • Reduces landowner damage	• Become used to it-harder to move changes behavioral pattern • Labor intensive • Expensive
Public Hunting Access to BLM and DNR lands	• Provides greater hunting opportunities • Relieves landowners of pubic inundation • Potentially increased harvest	• Have to cross private lands/infringe on private lands • More hunters could impact harvest through displacement • Increase hunter densities on limited land base • Reduce quality of hunt
Private Lands Wildlife Area	• Maximize landowner creativity • More liberalized season outside normal hunting regulations	• Moratorium on PLWA • Conflict between historical use groups • Potential impacts to wildlife imbalance

	• Incentive for having wildlife • Increased interaction between landowners and State to meet wildlife mgmt. objectives	through meeting needs of hunters • Does not allow inclusion of public lands
Pay landowners to grow forage plots	• Income source to off-set wildlife damage to private landowners • Draw wildlife to huntable area • Could draw money from multiple sources (CRP) to accomplish • Money comes upfront to landowner instead of 1 year later	• Cost/funding source • Reduces cropping flexibility for landowner • Change distribution of wildlife
Interagency Law Enforcement/Interagency Staff Cooperation	• Increased coverage of area • Increased public interaction with LE and reduce landowner confrontations	• Paradigm that Fed Law Enforcement is not welcome on private lands for enforcement • Reduce law enforcement on Refuge • Additional staffing needed
State Negotiate with Tribes and others and private land owners (by invite) for non-typical hunt season depredation hunts	• Expanding time period that hunting pressure would be available for increased harvest • Tribes would have additional opportunity to exercise treaty rights	• Non-tribal hunter could be perceived as receiving preference over others • Formal agreement between State, Tribes, landowners
Implement a bull harvest on private lands around sensitive crop times	• Reduce herd • Encourage elk to go back to ALE • Move elk during sensitive times • Wouldn't be killing cows with calves at side	• Would have to change rules through rule-making process • Difficult to do for summer 2004
Limiting hunt to antlerless		
Government hunt	• Would reduce population in a manner that would not impact the resources as would other hunting activities	

Trap and relocate		
Clarify rights of property owners vs. lessees		
Immuno-contraception (birth control)		
Acquisition by willing seller/buyers		
Conservation easements		
Identifying problem animals		
Manage activity on ALE during key times (both haze on to private lands and keep elk on ALE depending upon the season and need)	• Would reduce elk damage on private lands-would assist with increasing elk harvest on lands adjacent to ALE	• May hamper some time sensitive necessary mgmt. actions • Would increase workload to coordinate
Ale Habitat improvement (spring development-feeding)	• Conscious distribution of elk to desirable (less sensitive) locations	• Potential damage to ALE from concentrating elk at springs • Increased cost in facilities and maintenance (spring development)
Improved information for hunters		
Master hunter program		
Habitat improvements on all land ownerships		
Providing financial incentives for hunting		
Public hunting on ALE	• Would increase the harvest • Would make hunting on private lands more effective • Would provide more egalitarian access • Would result in better elk distribution • Could reduce threat to public safety from crossing highway from reduced population • Could reduce the potential damage that the elk may be doing to ALE	• Opens the door to hunting with the potential that it could start out tightly controlled and evolve over the years into a less controlled and more impacting hunt • Hunting would increase wildlife disturbance and noxious weeds invasion • Wildlife and native plants need a refuge where they will not be harvested • Once opened, the expectation that the

	ALE • Would provide a potentially very high quality hunting experience	ALE would serve as a recreational hunting area would remain • A hunt program would increase expense to FWS • Could distribute elk to areas where they are not wanted • Could increase risks to public safety from crossing the highway
Public hunting on McGee Riverlands Unit	• Would help with population control • Environmental community would not be nearly as concerned about this area as they are with ALE • Could use the Midway road as a jumpoff spot from which hunters could walk in. A walk-in hunt would limit the amount of "damage" from hunters • Interesting side note - this area used to be opened for hunting during the 70s and 80s – DOE then closed it	• Potential impact to Umptanum desert buckwheat population • Increased cost of administering a new hunt here

Issue 2: Population Control

Solutions	Pros	Cons
State Negotiating with Tribes and landowners		
Trap and Relocate	• very effective for reducing herd numbers quickly • positive benefits to recipients • can be very cost effective in comparison to managing a hunt	• very stressful to animals • disagrees that this strategy is less costly than managing a hunt program (WDFW) • viewed as inhumane by some sectors of the public; overall a

	program (FWS) • considered positive when you're using as a herd augmentation tool	publicly visible and politically sensitive action • difficult to find suitable locations for elk • safety issues with the use of aircraft; labor intensive
Birth Control		
Government Hunt		
Tribal Hunting		
Public Hunting (e.g.Rich. Rod and Gun Club)		
Government Supervised Hunting		
Special permits for ALE		
Increased/effective hunt on private lands (right hunters/right time)		
Elk transplant relocation areas identified		
Herding to the gun		
Introduce predators		
Learn more about herd dynamics (distribution)		
Manage water sources (springs and seeps)		
Open McGee Riverlands		

Issue 3: Lack of hunting access

Solutions	**Pros**	**Cons**
Open Ale		
Provide incentives		
Establish easements to public lands		
Educate hunters on public lands and private land boundaries		
Identification and mapping of properties (landownership boundaries)		
Open McGee Riverlands		
Hunt coordinator		
Enhance forage		

opportunities on McGee		
Land acquisition, trades, blocking of federal lands		
Tribal access to open and unclaimed lands (BLM/DNR)		
Buy access easements to private lands (conservation easements)		
CRP land expansion		

Issue 4: Federal and State Policy reconciliation and illumination

Solutions	**Pros**	**Cons**
Identify all possible available mgmt options through existing policy and laws. Identify short term mgmt. actions, long term actions, and areas where additional analyses is needed to increase mgmt. options		
Activities governed by NEPA/Public regulatory side need to be coordinated, with each agency committing to share the responsibility in implementing available mgmt. actions soon		
Clarify Tribal rights to hunt and factor associated potential hunting rights into the coordinated management strategies to control the herd		
Ensure that all Tribal, federal and state agencies are engaged including Tribal, BLM, DOE, USFWS, BOR, YTC, WDFW, and WDNR		

GROUP 3

Group members: *Bud Hamilton (Landowner), Charlotte Reep (Environmental), Thea Wolf (Tribal), Dan Haas (Federal), Mike Marxen (Federal), Mike Livingston (State), John Pfeiffer (Hunter)*

Issue: Hunter Access

Solutions

A controlled /limited hunt on ALE

- Hunt that protects tribal and monument resources (e.g., fragile soils, sensitive vegetation) limited to walking etc.
- Adaptive management guided.
- Varied by population and year (conducted on an as needed basis only).
- Coordinate with private and other public land hunting explore use of guides, permits, lottery, tribes, sports groups.
- All regulated by government officials.
- Make DNR and BLM scattered tracts more accessible to public hunting.

Impacts (Potential positive and negative)

- Tribal rights
- Wild fire
- Dispersal of elk w/in or off monument
- Dispersal of elk into Central Hanford
- Reduction of elk numbers
- Spread noxious weeds
- Management cost
- Eliminates elk refuge
- Law enforcement
- Research natural area management

Issue: Population Control

Solutions

Birth control, relocation, hunting (controlled public), hazing on to currently huntable lands, government shoot, more aggressive shoots (1st tag cow, 2nd bull), damage permits, landowner access permits, preference permits, stronger focus on cow hunts, target lead or problem elk.

Birth Control (Long-term)

- Expensive, annual on-going effort, effective if you can track animals

Relocation (Short-term)

- Expensive

- Where do you put them?
- Harm to animals
- Can augment other populations
- Reduces the need to "open" ALE
- Impacts to resources/habitat
- Mixed success in augmenting other herds
- Bull elk could help tribes

Hazing (From ALE to open areas) (short-term and long-term)
- Potential to push them too far (irrigated zone)
- Socially unacceptable to some groups
- Effects unknown (needs to be tested)
- An intermittent tool, which could be used infrequently over the long-term
- Could be extremely effective if conducted/coordinated correctly
- Noise could conflict/disrupt other users and species

Government Shoot (on ALE) (short-term and long-term)
- Precludes public
- Animal donated to food shelters, tribes, etc.
- Inexpensive
- Effective in reducing numbers
- Socially controversial

Issue: Landowner Concerns

(Overrun by hunters and elk)

Solutions

Hunters
- Personal touch between every hunter and WDFW for all who wish to hunt in GMU 372, i.e., WDFW creates and distributes to all who want to hunt GMU372 an information packet distributed at field offices, license sales outlets etc. Goal would be to educate hunters to the private property rights and open public lands.
- Sportsman groups (Richland Rod & Gun Club) trained to support enforcement for trespass issues ("Eyes in the Woods" program)
- Two copy written permission to reduce trespass (Each hunter carries a written letter and puts one in their vehicle dash so that enforcement and volunteers can identify that they have permission to hunt on the land)
- Raise trespassing fines
- Fence ALE
- Publicize enforcement cases
- Create higher profile for enforcement
- Cross deputization – State authority to enforce on federal land and vice versa for federal authorities off refuge lands

Too many elk
- Fence
- Hazing elk from private land to ALE

Group 4

Issue 1. Land Owner concerns

Need: more/better access to harvest elk

Solution	Pros	Cons
Access to land-locked state land	• more hunter access/opportunity • more harvest • potentially less damage to crops • public gets to use public land	• more trespass due to more private/public land interface • potentially more crop damage when elk are pushed off public land • safety issues too many guns on limited lands • fires • more resources $ needed for enforcement • monetary costs for identifying access and to get easements, signs
Access to land-locked federal land	• more hunter access/opportunity	• increase land owner problems
Access to ALE	• more hunter opportunity • more harvest • potentially less damage to crops • public gets to use public land • largest piece of contiguous public land – this is why the ALE is more important to open that land-locked areas • population goals achieved • more revenue for state (add this everywhere there is increased access	• potential resource damage including cultural resources • interference with on-going research • elk get pushed to central Hanford • elk vehicle collision on hwy 240 • no refuge remaining for elk • loss of spiritual values • vandalism of infrastructure • increased costs to manage program

Purchase private lands for public access – corridor between YTC and monument. Consolidate tracts of checkerboards to have one larger piece	• Easier to manage large blocks, may decrease number of hunters on private lands, better options for good elk habitat development, redistribution of elk population	• who pays for land and management, lack of willing sellers/traders, this may not resolve the problem

Notes:

- Access to private lands already occurs as land owners permits
- Better Hunter education, draw permit only to limit hunters. We agree that there needs to be better hunter education on open lands, private lands, if you don't have permission to hunt private lands don't buy a license. **We all agreed on this but did not want to devote too much time to this.**

Issue 2: Population control

Need: establish and maintain manageable population (ALE vs. entire Yakima/Rattlesnake herd)

Solutions	**Pros**	**Cons**
Barriers- contain the herd on ALE	• keeps animals where you want them • low maintenance • limit damage claims • hunters trespass improved	• disruption of migration • high initial cost • increase fire hazard weed accumulation • aesthetics • reduces herd variability
Relocation of Elk	• reduces population • elk can survive this option • reliable option to remove large numbers in a short period of time versus hunting • decreased resource damage • good for tribes • help recover elk populations elsewhere in the state • net gunning is most cost effective relocation option • could result in less crop damage	• expense and time • stress to animals • no willing recipient • is it sustainable? • could result in more crop damage (forced onto private lands)

We discussed whether herd health might be dependent on agricultural crops. Can ALE support elk year round? Fence may reduce nutritional status.

Hunting Solutions

Solution	**Pros**	**Cons**
Government hunt	• reduce resource damage • achieve population goal • efficient • reduced hunter management, use by tribes	• public perception • less public hunt opportunity • takes away a treaty right
2 tag system	• increases overall harvest • targets cows • would land-owners like this?	• could restrict bull harvest
Tribal hunting only	• year round control • same general pros as government hunt	• No public opportunity • current land status of ALE does not allow
Controlled public hunting	• additional public opportunity • generate revenue for state • cost effective population control • positive public relations	• possible resource damage • elk move to central Hanford • more elk on private land (both good and bad depending on the time of year) • elk movement across highways.
Partition the ALE, open part of it to public	• monitor resource damage • damage if present is limited • current unit boundaries exist	• potential resource damage including cultural resources • interference with on-going research • elk get pushed to central Hanford • elk vehicle collision on hwy 240 • no refuge remaining for elk • loss of spiritual values • vandalism of infrastructure • increased costs to manage program
Establish ¼ to ½ mile federal/private "killzone" along ALE boundary	• more opportunity • limit resource damage	• unlikely compliance by all landowners • hard to manage, effectiveness unknown

Other solutions

Solution	Pros	Cons
Kill'em all	• no damage to crops/resources • problem eliminated	• not acceptable to public • loss of hunting/viewing recreation • loss of revenue • potential conflict with proclamation
Introduce Predators	• natural biological solution • additional wildlife viewing • cost effective	• predators straying from Monument • would strangle federal process
Designate part of elk herd as "surplus" and harvest periodically to submanagement levels (similar to salmon)	• Provide hunter opportunity, only periodic seasons (less resource damage, costs)	• Variable Revenue

Group 5

Group members*: Jim Shearer (Hunter Interests), Greg Hughes (USFWS HRNM), Steve Wisness (US DOE-RL), Arva Whitney (Property/Land Owner Interests), Rico Cruz (CTUIR Tribal Interests), Doug Flohr (WDFW, Enforcement), Linda North (Property/Land Owner Interests), Gaylord Mink (Environmental Interests), Janet Crawford (Property/Land Owner Interests)*

Issue: Hunting Access

Solutions:

- Implement "Eyes of the Woods Program", an education and training tool to get data from hunters, aid to enforcement.
- Improve communication and education to hunters on hunting etiquette, access requirements, safety, etc., agency regulations. Develop maps & provide better signage, brochures
- Access at proper time and place.
- Partnership between land owner and environmental groups (e.g., habitat improvement)
- Implement F&W "Private Land" Program to provide incentive to land owners.
- Meetings with hunters prior to hunting season to educate them.
- Utilize USFWS Comprehensive Plan (CCP) Process (NEPA EIS) to determine if and how hunting would be allowed on ALE.

Issue: Land Owner Concerns (also WDFW concerns)

Solutions:
- Improved law enforcement between WDFW, USFWS, State Patrol, Tribal, Sheriff and Private Land owners.
- Improved hazing and coordination with WDFW, USFWS, Conservation Groups, Hunting Groups and Landowners (site-specific).

Issue: Population Control:

Solutions:
- Native American access for population control on private land at optimum times. Also allow tribal rights to be exercised for ceremonies and subsistence purposes.
- Land Owner preference permits (no limits).
- Landowner damage access permits, more flexibility from WDFW (current: 200 statewide, 100 Yakima Region, 50 local).
- Food plots on private land (incentivized by the State).
- Primary focus on problem animal groups.
- Cougars are present and taking some animals.
- Accurate harvest reporting from all parties – Tribes, Private, State, Feds, hunters
- Accurate surveys of elk by WDFW/USFWS, as per statewide model protocols.
- Expanded Yakima Training Center (YTC) hunting/harvest (particularly cows).

Issue: Federal and State Policy:

Solutions:
- Flexibility in WDFW program damage permits by the Commission.

Group 6

Group members: *Rich Steele (environmental), Glenda Miller (landowner), Jay McConnaughey (tribal), Bruce Wagner (hunting), Lee Stream (state), Jack Heisler (federal).*

Issue: Landowner Concerns:

Problem 1: Reduce the elk herd

Solutions:
- Tribal access to private and public lands.
- Hunter access to harvest elk on private and public lands.
- Trap and relocate.
- Contraceptive

- Agency lethal removal
- Develop research/adaptive management on forage carrying capacity

Problem 2: Too many hunters, Irresponsible hunters, economic loss, emotional stress

Solutions:
- Landowners need to be aware of what rights they have when leasing public land and/or under CRP agreements
- Need to know where hunters can hunt on private and DNR land
- Improve information systems for hunters and all recreational user groups
- Provide additional law enforcement (higher fines, cooperative law enforcement, funding)
- Additional hunter education specific to hunting around ALE to effectively decrease hunter damage and harvest elk.

Problem 3: Damage to tribal cultural resources need to be minimized (foods and medicinal plants, sensitive cultural sites)

Solutions:
- Tribal access to private and public lands and ALE.
- Agreements between tribes and state to enable hunting on private lands upon invitation.

Problem 4: Crop damage by elk and hunters

Solutions
- Hazing
- Elk fence
- Develop food plots to attract elk away from crops
- Lease private lands to attract elk
- Acquire private lands adjacent to ALE from willing sellers
- Shoot elk while causing crop damage
- Hunting season for bulls only while causing crop damage

Issue 2: Federal and State Policy

Problems
- Collectively have options to manage elk herd however, we have not historically understood or coordinated those options
- Policies (CCP and NEPA) need to be instituted to address the needs of all user groups
- Difference between state and federal policies – we cannot harvest enough elk to reach the population objectives within the Yakima herd plan
- Lack of communication between the state and federal governments and the public

Solutions
- Meaningful dialogue between federal, state, and tribal policy makers
- Meaningful dialogue between above mentioned entities and the public
- Expedite CCP and NEPA for the Hanford Reach National Monument
- Reconcile general concept of a wildlife refuge with the realities of elk management
- Allow hunting on ALE

Issue 3: Lack of Hunting Access

Solutions
- Private landowners need to allow access to state and federal landlocked lands
- Open hunting on ALE
- Identify ownership (maps, signs, etc.)
- County maps that detail state, federal, and private lands that are open to hunting
- State produced maps to show better information
- Tribal hunting access
- Meaningful dialogue between federal, state, and tribal policy makers
- Tribal hunting per invite on private land

Issue 4: Elk Population Control

Problem: Tribe elk population needs to be controlled, and we need to determine target population of elk. State defines population objective of <350.

Solutions
- Conduct a foraging impact study that more clearly defines target herd level
- Hunters currently replace natural predators in controlling elk herd size and distribution
- Provide a place to relocate the elk
- Provide elk fence around ALE
- Conduct elk population census and monitor elk harvest to know when population objectives are met

Group 7

Group members: *John McIntosh (WDFW), Don Hand (WDFW), Jon Lucas (Environmental Perspective), Melvin Lucei (Tribal Interests), Curtis Oman (USFWS), Rick Anderson (Landowner), Linda Smith (Backcountry horseman/ hunters), Fred Tull (Landowner)*

Issue: Elk Population Control

Needs: Control of agricultural crop damage

Short-term solutions

Solution	**Pros**	**Cons**
Aerial hazing	• was successful pushing them further off into ALE	• might cause damage to Ale if hazed from private lands • costs • USFWS won't allow aerial hazing deep into the monument by state
Terrestrial hazing	• is not as effective	
Artificial predator scent		• might become habituated to scents such as cougar • already used to humans in certain areas
Relocation	• tribes would be interested in getting elk	• costs and manpower intensive • pushes problem to other area • might cause future problems • relieve health issues first

Notes:

- elk might come off earlier this year due to winter crop damage – winter wheat was not germinated and spring wheat planting is underway
- fire in 2000 might have helped keep elk on ALE for a few years because of changed food source (less sagebrush and more cheatgrass)

Long-term solutions

Solution	Pros	Cons
Settling of differences between state and federal authority issues		WA AG opinion limits the states options on ALE
Agency lethal removal, done by either department of service selected staff, shooting of lead animals, done either on private or public, public acceptability	• could be short term or long term solutions	• hunters would want access to the hunts
Elk fencing - private ownership, state ownership, federal ownership	• would work well	• problems with installation between state and landowners • fencing would cost 3-4 million

		• landowners want fence to be shared equally • would hinder seasonal movement
Hunting all across unit #372 ALE area mostly private lands wildlife management areas	• permit hunting • youth hunts • changing hunting seasons • tribal hunts • bag limits	•
Study on ALE whether or not there are negative impacts on the monument	• might change public opinions on elk herd	•

Issue: Federal and State Policy Concerns

*Solution***:** change policy of federal government to allow hunting on monument

Elk Summit

April 5-6, 2004
Prosser, WA

SECTION 6

Commitments and Next Steps

Stakeholder group commitments

In the last task of the workshop, participants were challenged to make commitments towards solving the problems identified over the past two days. Stakeholder groups were reconvened and asked to discuss what concrete steps they were willing to agree to take in order to: 1) improve the lines of communication among the people with a stake in the management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd; 2) address the concerns of adjacent landowners regarding the damage to their crops due to increased numbers of elk and hunters; and 3) control of the elk population. Each group presented their commitments in plenary and were asked to add a time line for implementation of their action when possible.

State Commitments

1. Request the development of a Private Lands Wildlife Management Area (PLWMA) **within the next 60 days**
2. Request the development of a spring/summer bull hunt to target problem animals for the **spring/summer 2005**
3. Herding and Hazing **spring/summer 2004**
4. Joint law enforcement between WDFW and USFWS beginning **summer 2004**
5. Develop a hunter information packet to be delivered through a web site and hard copy at selected license sellers and regional and field offices, Benton County Office to be distributed by **August 2004 hunting season**
6. Commit to a hotspot hunt in **2004**
7. Commit to organizing/supervising hunters on a controlled hunt on ALE depending on the USFWS **as soon as possible**.
8. Issue and supervise landowner access permits **on-going**.
9. Provide training for the "eyes in the woods" program **on-going.**
10. If all else fails, request funds to build a fence—**to be determined.**
11. Provide assistance to trap and remove elk as a short term solution – **within 60 days**
12. Continue to seek interested sellers to acquire more public land – on-going – probably could **report back within 60 days**
13. Hunter Information Packet: Maps showing private and public land. Most of GMU372 is private land.

Federal Commitments

<u>USFWS</u>

1. Assist (mainly WDFW) with Information, Assimilation, and Distribution prior to hunting season – description of lands open and accessible to hunting -- assemble information package w/ all stakeholders
2. Law enforcement coordination
3. Hazing Coordination – on – yes /off - ? (from agricultural to monument) – help WDFW fund operation and will provide in kind services

4. Trap and relocation – at appropriate times - if needed and if interested – if there is a willing recipient
5. Aerial surveys – cost share w/ state - **September**
6. Better line of communication between agency and landowners – periodic landowner visits **starting in May**
7. Look at full range of options in management plan for elk population control on ALE

DOE/PNNL
1. Assist w/ USFWS #1
2. Contaminant related information – assist with relocation efforts

BLM
1. Assist w/ USFWS #1,2
2. Provide information w/ scatter tracts and access to limited access site
3. Explore option of signing scatter tracts

Yakima Training Center (not present during Day 2 of meeting)
1. Increasing cow harvest on YTC in cold creek drainage this year

Landowner Commitments

1. Willing to continue harvesting animals and allowing hunting on private land if we see implementation of elk population control efforts by state and federal agencies on ALE.
2. We are willing to continue dialog with agencies to implement plans that include the landowners.
3. We strongly support hunter education, particularly a packet that includes language stating that the majority of unit 372 is privately owned, permission is required and maps showing public and private land designations.

Tribal Commitments

1. Yakima tribe will work with the state to develop tribal hunting on private lands by invitation only.
2. Tribes will continue to work with DOE and USFW on establishing co-management of the Hanford Reach National Monument emphasizing treaty resources.
3. Cooperatively work with DOE and other government agencies to offer training and general knowledge to government agencies and the general public on tribal rights, policies, consultation and cultural tradition.

Hunter Commitments

1. Promote and participate in "Eyes of the Woods" to help landowners and law enforcement agencies.
2. Support and work with agencies in establishment of controlled hunts on ALE including special hunter education programs for Unit 372.
3. Encourage hunters to complete the Master Hunter Program.

Environmental Interests Commitments

1. Make a video of elk activities in the area for educational purposes
2. We will make a map based on state data listing the amount and location of damage claims for each of the years 2000-2003. This map will assist in pinpointing where the management efforts should be focused.

County Interests Commitments

1. We can help coordinate and facilitate efforts on this issue from the local level
2. We can provide and distribute maps, records, and other information that we have that will be useful.
3. We can actively support the management and regulatory agencies that are the decision-makers in this process.
4. We will continue to support and be a liaison for our local residents and property owners.

Next steps

1. Workshop Report will be distributed in 3 weeks
2. Jeff Tayer will write a memo to his boss describing this workshop and the commitments he's made.
3. State will communicate with FWS and work together to fulfill their joint commitments
4. Within 60 days, get back together to determine short-term solutions.
5. Keep updating this group with accomplishments and progress (FWS)
6. Legislature will collaborate with this group and keep their feet to the fire to ensure implementation of commitments and follow up.
7. Will schedule "Eyes in the Woods" class as soon as people request it.
8. Landowners want to be kept informed of the progress.
9. Suggestion: a letter to go out regularly to update everyone on progress (FWS agreed to keep stakeholder informed).

Elk Summit

April 5-6, 2004
Prosser, WA

APPENDIX I.

Workshop Participants

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Elk Summit

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APPENDIX II.

Participant Introductions

Participant Introductions

Question 1: What do you hope to accomplish in this workshop?

1. To hear new ideas.
2. Develop a comprehensive range of management options for the Rattlesnake elk herd for incorporation into the Monument's CCP.
3. Gather info to take back to Tribe so they can make informed decisions relative to the management of natural resources at Hanford.
4. To listen and understand the views of other participants and ensure tribal access to the Monument to exercise reserved Treaty rights.
5. Find a workable solution to herd management that is satisfactory to the hunters in the area and landowners.
6. How to manage this elk herd! Involves ideas and issues. II am familiar with but currently no agreement by all parties on what outcomes and methods of management should be.
7. Gain a better understanding of the elk situation and find ways that BCM can contribute to management.
8. A thorough understanding of the issues and the perspectives of others to lead to creation of an effective elk management plan for the Rattlesnake Hills elk herd.
9. Gather information to help future management of BLM lands in the Rattlesnake Hills.
10. Learn about the problems and proposed solutions associated with management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake elk herd.
11. To heave everyone's comments, issues, and ideas to help understand the full extent of the problems and seek short and long-term solutions.
12. To learn and discuss the full range of ideas on management of the Rattlesnake Hills elk herd and to lie the basis for a path forward fro elk conservation.
13. A resolution to the on-going elk conflicts.
14. Find a management plan/solution where farmers will not suffer the economic damage done by the elk in recent years, but the state taxpayers will not have to bear the expenses of crop damage.
15. Better understanding, assist in balanced/achievable path forward for success. Includes hunting to control herd numbers. Personal interest in not developing more urban areas.
16. I want to learn more about the problem and keep informed of decisions made, also contact some individuals that can help me with semi-unrelated personal issues regarding hunting and management of resources.
17. Obtain better understanding of elk management in the Yakima/Rattlesnake hills area.
18. A better understanding of the issue.
19. Gain an understanding of the issues surrounding elk management and talk with other stakeholders.
20. I hope to gather a good amount of new knowledge and understanding on this issue.
21. Get better understanding of all sides of elk issue.
22. Hope to see a healthy herd and keep disease away.
23. Participate in the process.

24. To have public access to the ALE, for WDFW to manage the elk herd through the WA wildlife damage permit program.
25. Open the ALE to hunting.
26. Development of workable plan for management of the Monument elk herd consistent with other management directions of the Monument and concern of adjacent property owners.
27. Develop recommendations toward elk management plan that include responsibilities for each of the affected organizations that have responsibilities managing the elk herd.
28. Understand a timeline that will follow this meeting for subsequent policy decisions and actions.
29. To see that the elk herd is maintained at a reasonable level. For the satisfaction of the public, landowners and state, federal agencies.
30. To come away with solutions for all interested parties permitting all public members to enjoy the areas in question opening the total area for enjoyment for all.
31. Meaningful dialog that results in continuing cooperation between landowners, federal and state wildlife agencies and solutions.
32. Cooperative solutions for population control.
33. Public and local governments goals and ideas for elk herd so CTUIR can "partner" with these needs to ensure the civic membership's rights. Find best alternative work with CCP.
34. Come to understand and concerns of the animal.
35. A workable plan for all agencies.
36. Partnership in decisions.
37. To try to come up with workable solutions to the problem.
38. Reach an agreement for herd management that is realistic and equitable for landowners and involved agencies.
39. Get the elk out of our fields. Our farms were there long before the elk.
40. Remove elk from our farmland.
41. Get rid of the herd of elk that keeps damaging our crops.
42. A whole lot more than has been accomplished before today – not much hope.
43. A better understanding of government help and intervention and farmer alternatives (rights) to the elk problem on Rattlesnake private lands.
44. Open up hunting on ALE. Hope to see state and federal work together.
45. Create open lines of communication to resolve issues related to the Hanford elk herd.
46. Get a full understanding of the issues and concerns that relate to the Hanford elk issue.
47. Identify the soundest biologically and socially accepted management options that will eliminate crop damage.
48. Not only documenting a range of actions and solutions but what effects will these actions have on resources and people.
49. A better understanding of the elk management issue by interaction with stakeholders and to contribute to management solutions.
50. Identify management options that ensure the viability of the elk while minimizing irreversible impacts.

51. I want to listen to the perspectives and ideas from the others in the room and take those back with me as I work in developing the Monument's CCP and step-down plans.
52. Community consensus for management of elk for wildlife resources.
53. As a manager trainee, to learn from all participants to assist me in future Fish and Wildlife management decisions.
54. I hope to see the Yakima Nation exercise its treaty rights concerning harvest of elk from the ALE elk herd.
55. To listen and learn more about the elk herd, the problems, and help develop effective solutions.
56. Consensus action plan that reduces or eliminates crop damage, has elk herd numbers moving toward the herd goal while protecting sensitive resources on the ALE.
57. To find out what each entity can input to achieve results.
58. I want to learn and understand all the issues involved in the proper management of the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd.
59. An acceptable solution to over population of elk that will/can be used for other overpopulations should/when they occur on the ALE.
60. To define some viable solutions to herd management problems.
61. Help develop a program to control elk number on ALE.
62. I'm interested in exactly what the folks in this room want to do about the elk on ALE.
63. Identify management plan for ALE that meets needs of agencies and users.
64. Identify herd management issues. Especially in upper Yakima area.
65. A solution to the elk population problem.
66. To open up area to hunt for local people.
67. Provide technical assistance to participants of this summit.
68. Hear from all stakeholders as to what they would like to see happen with this elk herd.

Question 2: What is your personal vision for the future of the Yakima/Rattlesnake Hills elk herd?

1. To conserve this unique group of animals that use shrub-steppe ecosystem
2. A sustainable herd that provides benefits to a wide range of user groups while protecting ecological integrity of all land ownerships.
3. Monument will be known as an area that will have a self-sustaining herd of elk.
4. To see a sustainable Rattlesnake Hills elk herd population.
5. Maintain the elk herd to assure extreme measures are not taken to eliminate the habitat or herd from future generations. I have watched the herd grow for the past 30 years and want an appropriate management plan to assure maintenance of the elk herd.
6. Sustainable population of elk on Rattlesnake Hills that has a population level that minimizes damage to private landowners.
7. I would like the elk herd to be viewed as a resource rather than a problem.

8. A sustainable healthy huntable elk population that is properly managed without significant adverse impact to property owners (farmers and ranchers) or to the habitat on the Monument.
9. Sustainable population that is within the carrying capacity of the land.
10. My vision is for an elk herd that can be managed with the various interests of regional stakeholders in mind.
11. A sustainable elk herd that is in harmony and protective of the human and natural ecosystems of the area.
12. I would like to see a sustainable elk herd for the enjoyment and benefit of the hunter, nature watcher and farmer/rancher.
13. A reduction in numbers to avoid the elk leaving the Monument.
14. A healthy herd that is controlled to point they do not infringe on surrounding agricultural lands.
15. A balanced comprehensive long-term plan and goals to protect/achieve as many interests as possible starting with private landowners.
16. WA Dept. of F&W be allowed to manage the herd, by hunting (drawing, special permit, whatever) by the citizens of WA. Just like other parts of the herd in other parts of the state.
17. Sustainable elk populations for various uses.
18. A manageable herd that provides opportunities for the public to enjoy and does not burden landowners or government agencies with damages.
19. Be able to sustain the herd for all groups while eliminating damage to landowners' property
20. I hope to see a healthy and stable population.
21. Small herd management to provide hunting opportunities with encroaching on private landowners. See quick resolution of political problems that are compatible with scientific resolution of elk issues.
22. I want the elk herd to survive.
23. Healthy, sustainable herd managed with landowner/landscape and habitat considerations in mind.
24. To have public access to the Monument.
25. Eliminate the herd.
26. Support controllable, permit hunting to manage the elk population to minimize damage to the lands of the Monument.
27. A sustainable elk population managed to provide hunting opportunities for current and future generations, with little as possible damage to ALE and adjacent private lands.
28. Maintain the herd while respecting the real tangible costs to land owners and offering public access for hunting.
29. Settlement of a long conservative issue.
30. To open the area for all participating public and private groups to where there are no manipulations by using the elk herd for personal gain, but to work together as one group for the most good of all.
31. Sustainable recreational opportunities across all lands decreasing no landowner damage complaints greater respect for understanding private landowner issues.
32. *blank*

33. Preservation – cleanliness/contamination-free population. Population – restore other herds throughout the Northwest.
34. To be able to see an ongoing source of food for the coming generations.
35. Elk maintained in the area, not moved to other locations. Plantings to help with their feed source for health of elk. Open for hunting to control elk numbers.
36. Cooperation and responsibility of management by all stakeholder groups.
37. I'm not sure on the answers. We need to try to get some solutions before things get out of hand.
38. *blank*
39. Get rid of the elk on private land.
40. Smaller herd and off the private land!
41. Get rid of the herd.
42. That they all stay on the ALE unit.
43. How can the elk be managed to the best interest for all concerned? Conservation and farmers.
44. Stop the increase in the elk herd.
45. Maintain a sustainable population of elk in the Rattlesnake Hills area, while reducing crop damage to private landowners.
46. As a land manager, and as a hunter, to develop a plan that results in a manageable elk herd that provides public recreation and minimizes conflict.
47. A well-managed herd that provides recreational opportunities and does not cause crop damage on private property or damage to the resources of the Monument.
48. A balanced solution that everyone can live with.
49. For the elk herd to be healthy and to be a good fit into the existing and future land conditions.
50. Elk are free to migrate freely across their range and have a place of refuge on ALE.
51. I would like to see the herd remain on the landscape level that is acceptable to the stakeholders in the room.
52. That the proper balance be defined as best as possible as part of a process for integrating man, nature and wildlife.
53. Sustain a viable population that all stakeholders can agree upon.
54. I would like to see continuation of a viable, huntable elk herd, with little agricultural damage and opportunities for all groups to harvest elk.
55. The herd is managed in a way that preserves it as one of the resources on the Monument and limits its negative impacts off the Monument.
56. A herd that is stable in numbers, not causing crop damage and producing hunting and non-hunting recreation.
57. A smaller more easily managed herd.
58. I would like a solution to this problem that allows proper management of the elk herd without destroying the fragile ecosystem.
59. Maintain a program that will eliminate damages to private lands and the ALE.
60. My personal vision is to control the size of the herd through carefully monitored (controlled) hunting.
61. A controlled herd that does not infringe on private property rights.

62. I'm interested in having a healthy population of elk on ALE that will support hunting on public lands. We need to acquire more public lands. I do not or should say I haven't made up my mind on hunting elk on ALE.
63. Control of elk herd size through controlled permit hunting.
64. Adjust management of elk to recognize the relationship of herd habitat with grazing rights and leases of cattlemen.
65. To be a herd that is managed for future generations to see and enjoy.
66. To keep under control the population of the elk.
67. Continued existence of elk, landowners, state, and federal management entities on the Rattlesnake hills.
68. Sustainability for all of the various publics involved. See positive benefits from this elk herd.

Elk Summit

April 5-6, 2004
Prosser, WA

Appendix III.

Workshop Presentations