



## Senate Committee on Financial Institutions and Sporting Heritage

*CR 24-045*

*Elk management*

*March 4, 2025*

Good morning, Chair Stafsholt and members of the Committee. My name is Scott Karel, and I am the Wildlife Management Rules and Regulation Specialist for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. With me today to help answer questions is Sam Jonas the Species Section Supervisor for the Wildlife Management Program. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, for informational purposes, on 24-045 related to elk management.

The proposed rule implements changes related to elk management and hunting regulations that are identified in the Department's 2024-2034 elk management plan. This plan was finalized by the department and approved at the August 2024 Natural Resources Board meeting.

Current rules establish two elk ranges that serve a dual purpose as elk management zones. They include the Clam Lake zone and the Black River zone. With this rule, the Clam Lake zone will now be identified as the Northern Zone and the Black River Zone will become the Central Zone. In addition to changing the names, this rule changes boundaries of these zones, delineates elk hunting units within both the Northern and Central Elk Ranges and creates hunting units adjacent to the Central Elk Range. The creation of hunting units, combined with an ability to specify the unit or group of units where an elk carcass tag is valid, will provide the ability to increase hunting pressure on elk in areas where conflict with elk is occurring or alternatively reduce hunting pressure in areas where biologically necessary. Hunters were previously allowed to harvest elk in any part of an elk management zone that is open to hunting.

This rule also expands both the north and central elk management zone boundaries. The boundary expansions allow for increased management opportunity where elk currently exist. This boundary expansion is not intended to expand the presence of elk into new areas if social acceptance does not support it.

The elk season is statutorily required to begin on the Saturday nearest October 15<sup>th</sup>. Under current rules it runs for thirty consecutive days and then reopens on the second Thursday in December and continues for nine consecutive days. This rule eliminates the closed period between the two hunting periods and instead offers a single, consecutive season which ends on the Sunday nearest December 15<sup>th</sup>. There was no biological reason to have a split season, and this will simplify the season framework for hunters and other outdoor recreationists.

Since reintroduction, the elk population has been managed using a numeric goal as a long-term population goal to guide management efforts. A numeric population goal offers less flexibility to manage elk herds based on what is actively occurring on the landscape and the resulting public sentiment, specifically elk nuisance and conflict levels. The new elk management plan proposes to

manage the elk population using adaptive management approach by adopting an objective-based approach. This adaptive management approach is based on social and biological metrics such as elk population trends, elk distribution, agricultural damage levels, public support, hunter harvest success and satisfaction, annual elk mortality, and economic benefits, and will be utilized to guide management decisions associated with each respective elk zone.

On behalf of the Department of Natural Resources, we would like to thank you for your time today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

RESOLUTION 1-2024

RE: SUPPORT FOR ELK DAMAGED PROPERTIES

WHEREAS, Jackson County passed Resolution 24-4-99, Re-Introduction of Elk (*Cervus canadensis*) to Jackson County after a lengthy discussion. Said Resolution indicated in part "the management plan will contain appropriate measures to minimize risks to agricultural interests, and control herd distribution;" and

WHEREAS, since that time, the elk have been re-introduced to Jackson County within the designated Black River Elk Range; however, damage to agricultural interests has steadily increased; and

WHEREAS, appraised elk damage has increased from \$153 in 2015 when the elk were first introduced to \$32,271 in 2023. These claimed amounts were from two (2) claimants in the Town of Knapp who received \$10,000 each, per Wis Statute 29.889(7)(b)4, even though their claims far exceeded this amount; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has attempted harassment of the elk, temporary fencing, permanent fencing, repellents, diversion crops and trapping re-location of elk to abate the damage to agricultural interests; and

WHEREAS, the sub-group in the Town of Knapp area continues to grow and has a near 1:1 ratio of bull to cow with approximately 60 – 70 elk with 20 – 25 estimated to calve in 2024, increasing this subgroup to 80 – 95; and

WHEREAS, approximately 330 acres of tillable land in the Town of Knapp has collected damage claims due to the elk and since a hunting season has now opened, Wis. Stat 29.889(7m)(a)(a) indicates "a person who receives wildlife damage abatement assistance or wildlife damage claim payments and any other person who owns, leases or controls the land where the wildlife damage occurred shall permit hunting of the type of wild animals causing the wildlife damage on that land and on contiguous land under the same ownership..."; and

WHEREAS residents have voiced concerns since 2015 about damage and most recently with the DNR at two meetings held in May and June 2024, regarding the requirement to allow public hunting on private property if abatement funds will be requested and due to this requirement, cash crop farming and other agricultural activities are already declining and will no longer occur in the Town of Knapp; and

WHEREAS crops will no longer be planted; therefore, the elk will move to better grazing areas, outside of the designated Black River Elk Range and into other

counties and far larger agricultural areas of Jackson County, some of which is beginning to occur already; and

WHEREAS, in the Town of Bear Bluff, a majority of the township is outside the Black River Elk Range; however, they have suffered elk damage. Residents outside of the Elk Range do not receive the same considerations, such as permanent fencing for their cranberry marshes at no cost and as crops are destroyed by the elk and no longer planted, the elk will move on to other desirable sources throughout the area; and


WHEREAS no consideration is given to the non-agricultural damage done by the elk, such as shredded maple trees for the sap, stripped fruit trees and blueberry bushes, broken saplings due to rubbing, an LP gas tank tipped over due to rubbing, picket and other fences destroyed, garden destruction; and


NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Knapp Board considers it inappropriate that the residents of the Town of Knapp incur excessive costs due to the reintroduction of the elk in the area and the inability to maintain their real and personal property as they see fit; and


NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of Knapp Board calls on the county and state oversight committees to investigate this and requests this matter be addressed by reducing the subgroup in the Town of Knapp area. In the alternative, require the Department of Natural Resources to offer a lease of agricultural fields to plant diversionary crops, resulting in the landowners maintaining their agricultural status and income; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to send a copy of this Resolution to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Legislators with a constituency within Jackson County, the Jackson County Board, other Municipalities within Jackson County, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Town of Knapp Board

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Goetzka, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Greg Goetzka, Supervisor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Linehan, Supervisor

ORIGINAL

RESOLUTION 57-12-2024

TO: Jackson County Board of Supervisors  
RE: Jackson County Elk Damage

WHEREAS, the Jackson County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution 24-4-99, Re-Introduction of Elk (*Cervus canadensis*) to Jackson County in April 1999. The resolution stated in part "... that the management plan will contain appropriate measures to minimize the risks to agricultural interests and control herd distribution", and

WHEREAS, in the past few years Jackson County Town officials and residents have expressed their concerns regarding the escalating damage caused to their crops and property, and

WHEREAS, Jackson County contracts the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Wildlife Services to provide services to assess wildlife damage, damage claims and damage abatement measures, and

WHEREAS, USDA-Wildlife Services has verified elk damage to crops that began occurring in 2015 once elk were released in Jackson County and the damage to agricultural crops has continued to increase since 2015 and has impacted over 330 acres, and

WHEREAS, the available wildlife damage program compensation limits have been exceeded and additional damage has occurred to property owners which is not currently reimbursable, and

WHEREAS, various damage abatement measures have been implemented since 2015 to mitigate the reoccurring damage, with only elk trapping/relocation and permanent fencing to protect crops being successful, and

WHEREAS, the recent Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Elk Management Plan proposes a continued increase in elk population and expansion of the elk range in Jackson County that would result in more wide-spread elk damage opportunities.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Jackson County Board of Supervisors hereby request help and assistance to decrease the continuing negative impact the elk are having on affected citizens and their property in Jackson County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources expeditiously implement effective methods and measures to decrease the elk damage and limit the monetary loss to our citizens, adequately compensate affected landowners and producers for their losses and prevent the potential for similar problems to occur throughout Jackson County.

JAN 10 12 00

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jackson County Land Conservation  
and Agriculture Committee

Ron Carney  
Ron Carney, Chair

Mike Kunes  
Mike Kunes, Vice-Chair

Jerrold Schmidt  
Jerrold Schmidt

Hoyt Strandberg  
Hoyt Strandberg

Brian Bethke  
Brian Bethke

Nathan Kling  
Nathan Kling

Jackson County Executive  
and Finance Committee

Jeff Amo  
Jeff Amo, Chair

Ron Carney  
Ron Carney, First Vice-Chair

John Higgins  
John Higgins, Second Vice-Chair

Garth Rolbiecki  
Garth Rolbiecki

Sarah Peloquin  
Sarah Peloquin

I HEREBY CERTIFY

RESOLUTION # 57-12-2024

WAS ADOPTED ON 12/16/2024

BY JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Cindy Altman

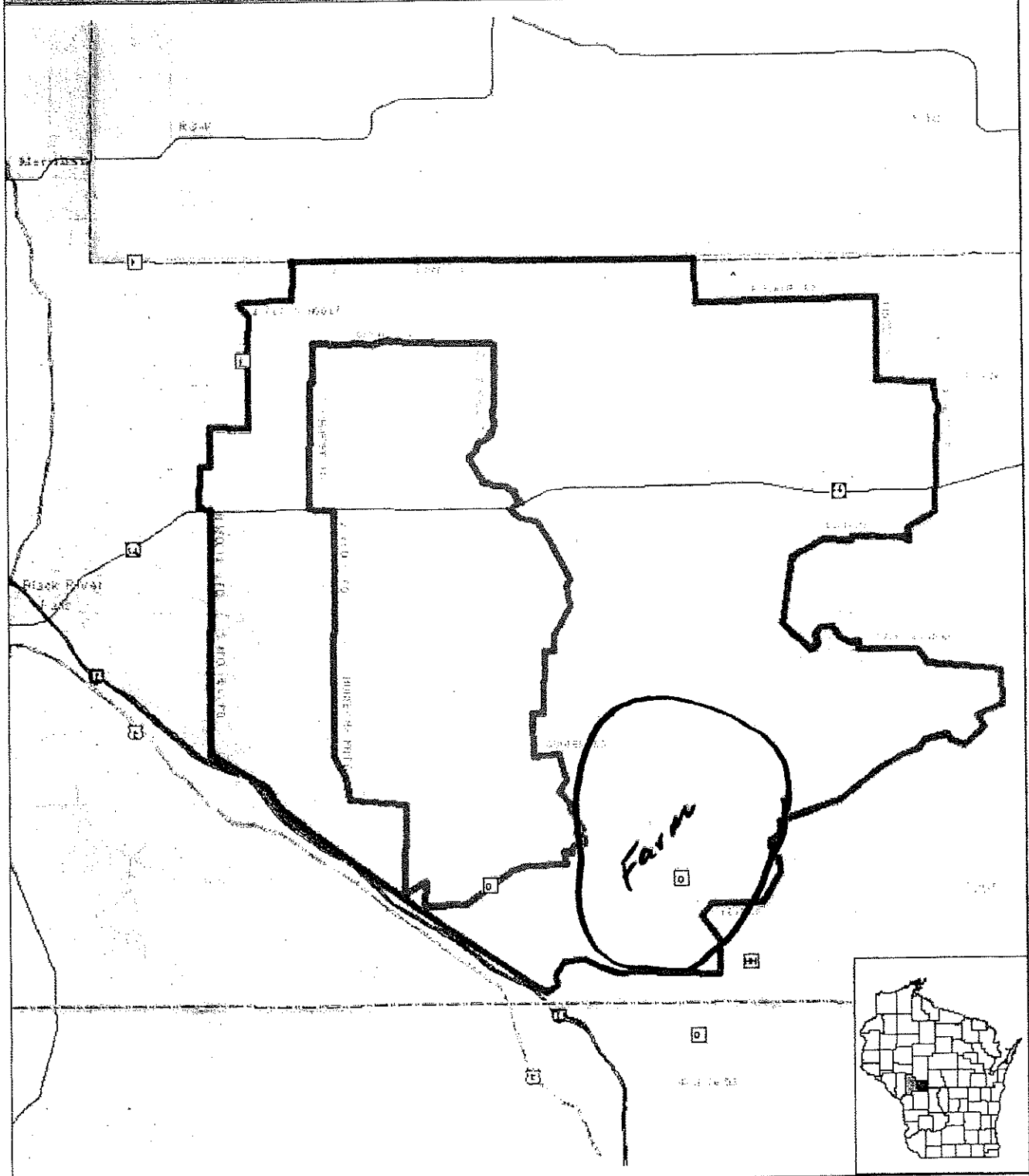
CINDY ALTMAN, JACKSON COUNTY CLERK

YES 19 NO 0

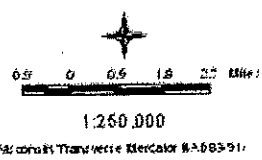
Elk resolutions	
ADAMS	Done
ALBION	Done
ALMA	Done
BEAR BLUFF	Done
BROCKWAY	No
CITY POINT	
CLEVELAND	
CURRAN	Done
FRANKLIN	
GARDEN VALLEY	
GARFIELD	
HIXTON	Done
IRVING	Done
KNAPP	Done
KOMENSKY	No
MANCHESTER	Done
MELROSE	
MILLSTON	No
NORTH BEND	
NORTHFIELD	
SPRINGFIELD	Done
V/ALMA CENTER	
V/HIXTON	
V/MELROSE	Done
V/MERRILLAN	Done
V/TAYLOR	Done
BLACK RIVER FALL	No

# Black River Elk Range

## Jackson County, Wisconsin



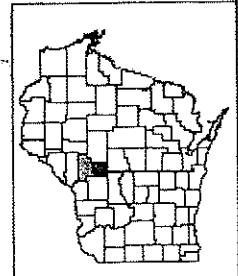
- Buffer Zone
- Core Range
- County Boundary
- Interstate Highway
- US Highway
- State Highway
- Local Road



March 1, 2001  
Copyright by WDHM/Corbin

- DNR Lands
- Jackson County Forest

The DNR Managed Lands database is a spatial representation of a March 1, 1996 map from the Bureau of Facilities and Lands (BLF) Oracle Land Records System and may include omissions and should not be interpreted as a legal representation of legal ownership boundaries.  
Request for information outside the agency should be referred to David W. Corbin at dcorbin@dnr.wisconsin.gov.











## **Jackson County Elk Herd – Agriculture and Property Damage**

### **Introduced Invasive Species issues**

- Have not been here since 1850's
- Landscape and land uses have changed
- Town of Knapp landowners – elk plan – ag damage – not considered

### **Eminent Domain**

- Ag land being used to feed the elk herd
- Changes the use of land
- Minimal if no compensation for losses
- Using Deer Damage program to force landowners to open private land to hunting

### **Hypocrisy of Elk Management Practices for land owners in the Elk Management Zone**

- Offering fencing at no cost to some ag operations and requiring other operations to show 5 years of damage, then only covering 75% of materials and labor, not land prep cost
- Telling farmers that leaving haybales in fields is considered feeding and must move
- Allowing a cow elk damage tag for Peasley's farm but not farmers in Knapp
- Paying two land owners to plant crops for the elk and not requiring that land to be open for public hunting; also, not willing to offer or make other land owners aware of this program.

### **Solution:**

- Remove the elk totally (not viable)
- Set up a program offering a ten-year contract to land owners in the elk management zone to rent their crop land for \$100 per acre to plant it into elk forage crops.
- This would help keep the elk in the management zone and replace the land owners' income that is being lost, but most importantly keep the land owners' property taxes in agricultural assessment.

**Scott Goetzka**

**Town of Knapp, Jackson County**

**Phone 608-343-4603**

**Email: woodsandmeadowclays@gmail.com**



# WISCONSIN WILDLIFE FEDERATION

213 North Main Street, Suite 100, PO Box 460; Poyette, WI 53955 • (608) 635-0600 • (800) 897-4161  
[www.wiwf.org](http://www.wiwf.org)

AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025

RE: Wisconsin Wildlife Federation Testimony on WI Elk Management (CR 20-045)

Hello Committee Chair Stafsholt and members of the committee,

My name is Cody Kamrowski, executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (WWF), we represent over 200 affiliated clubs, organizations and associations throughout the State of Wisconsin. I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony surrounding WWF's supportive position around the WI Elk Management (CR 20-045). Wisconsin elk management, and harvest has made significant progress and everyone engaged throughout this process should be proud of the work being done and is a testament to collaboration and partnership.

With unique populations such as this, adaptive management to manage elk populations statewide is essential and we as an organization support that management approach. This management approach further allows wildlife managers to adjust to human needs and conflicts such as economic, agriculture damages, and roadway safety while also complimenting the scientific and biological needs of the elk populations. The differences between habitat type, human population size, land use, as well as predator/prey dynamics are incredibly different between the two ranges and adaptive management allows for adjustment based on these factors.

We support the updated zone boundaries, renaming the existing ranges to Northern and Central as well as the hunting unit structure. These changes further allow for customized approaches when it comes to management, conflict, and harvest. WWF supports the updated zone boundaries. Although the Northern zone modification is small, those changes and considerations allow for easier hunter zone boundary identification as well as increased opportunity. For the Central zone, the expanded zone to further include potential human conflict areas as well as public lands is a change we support as well. WWF also supports the creation of hunting units specific to each management zone. This is incredibly important for grouping adjacent hunting permit allocations as well as structuring, targeting and managing units more specifically to their unique needs.

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation has been a longtime advocate of hunting rule and regulation simplification. In the management plan, there is the elimination of the current split season framework to a continuous season, which we are supportive of. With the increased prevalence of CWD on Wisconsin's landscape, we are supportive of updating rules on baiting and feeding to now include elk. These updates will further mitigate elk population health risks as well as ideally curbing vehicle collisions.

I want to thank the DNR, Wisconsin citizens and partners for their engagement to put together these various proposed changes to adjust to the needs of the elk as well as Wisconsinites. Thank you all for the time and opportunity.

Cody Kamrowski

**President:**

**Connie Polzin**  
6771 Firetower Rd  
Rhinclander, WI 54501  
715-360-3903  
[noisycreek71@yahoo.com](mailto:noisycreek71@yahoo.com)

**First Vice President:**

**Terri Roehrig**  
5588 County Rd H  
Mondovi, WI 54755  
920-540-2775  
[tlroehrig@yahoo.com](mailto:tlroehrig@yahoo.com)

**Second Vice President:**

**Mark Kakatsch**  
N2975 County Rd. EE  
Neosho, WI 53059  
414-688-8936  
[horicon69@gmail.com](mailto:horicon69@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:**

**David Verhage**  
1111 Chadwick Ct.  
Plover, WI 54467  
715-344-3497  
[DavidDebiV@charter.net](mailto:DavidDebiV@charter.net)

**Secretary:**

**Sam Johnson**  
10960 Straubhaar Rd.  
Blue Mounds, WI 53517  
608-807-8170  
[Sjohnson9@carthage.edu](mailto:Sjohnson9@carthage.edu)

**Past President:**

**Kevyn Quamme**  
W6970 Hwy B  
Dalton, WI 53926  
608-209-3872  
[kevynabc@gmail.com](mailto:kevynabc@gmail.com)

**Executive Director**

**Cody Kamrowski**  
N1601 Sandberg Rd.  
Melrose, WI 54642  
715-896-5445  
[cody@wiwf.org](mailto:cody@wiwf.org)

**Business Manager:**

**Lindsay Alt**  
PO Box 460  
Poyette, WI 53955  
608-635-0600  
[lindsay@wiwf.org](mailto:lindsay@wiwf.org)

March 4, 2025

## Testimony by Wisconsin's Green Fire on CR24-045 relating to elk management

Chair Stafsholt and members of the Committee on Financial Institutions and Sporting Heritage:

### **Wisconsin's Green Fire (WGF) supports CR24-045 relating to elk management.**

My name is Tom Hauge. I am co-chair of the Wildlife Work Group at WGF. WGF is a statewide organization that supports sound science in natural resources management. We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rules that support the new Elk Management Plan.

We support renaming existing elk ranges to the Northern and Central Elk Management Zones.

We support the proposed creation of elk hunting units within or adjacent to each management zone to allow for structured and targeted elk harvest statewide. The proposed rules would allow Units to be grouped with adjacent unit(s) for hunting permit allocation and provide for Unit specific harvest quotas, application, and carcass tags.

We support updating the zone boundaries for both herds. The Central Elk Zone will now include property owned by the Ho-Chunk Nation, as well as incorporate large blocks of public land with suitable habitat and include areas already being used by elk. The Northern Elk Zone will have a small modification to increase elk hunting opportunity in areas elk currently occupy and follow a more readily identifiable boundary than the current boundary.

We support using an adaptive management framework to manage elk populations statewide. This approach identifies metrics to gauge progress towards the population objectives. Metrics may include elk population trends, distribution of elk, agricultural damage levels and economic impacts to agricultural crops, nuisance and conflict trends, tribal engagement, hunter harvest success and satisfaction, economic benefits, and scientific developments.

We support simplifying the elk hunting season dates by eliminating the current split season framework and implementing a single, continuous season.

We support updating existing rules on baiting and feeding of deer to include elk. This is recommended with the goal of reducing elk-vehicle collisions and health risks associated with artificial feeding.

WGF appreciates the opportunity to comment on the new elk plan and encourages full support of the plan by the Senate.

Thank you,

Tom Hauge

Co-Chair, Wildlife Work Group,  
Wisconsin's Green Fire

Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Members of the Senate Committee on Financial Institutions and Sporting Heritage  
**FROM:** Jordan Lamb, on behalf of the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association  
**DATE:** March 4, 2025  
**RE:** Comments for Information Only on CR24-045, Relating to Elk Management

The Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association (WSCGA) represents 160 Wisconsin cranberry growers who farm in about 16 counties. Cranberries are Wisconsin's largest fruit crop, and our growers produce more than 60% of the nation's total cranberry crop. Wisconsin's cranberry industry provides more than 4,000 jobs for Wisconsin residents and has a \$350 million impact on the state's economy.

The WSCGA has been engaged and has provided extensive comments to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources throughout their history of reintroducing elk to the state of Wisconsin, which began in 1995 with the transfer of 25 animals from Michigan that were released into the Chequamegon-Nicolet State Forest near Clam Lake. An additional 140 animals were brought to Wisconsin from 2015 through 2019. It was during that time that the central herd around the Black River State Forest in Jackson County was established. A significant amount of Wisconsin's cranberries are grown in Jackson County and it is home to the Wisconsin Cranberry Research Station.

This administrative rule establishes an elk hunting season and affirms that the DNR will manage the elk population using Wisconsin's elk management plan. The current 2024-2034 Wisconsin Elk Management Plan, which was adopted in August of 2024, uses an adaptive management model rather than a numeric population goal to manage Wisconsin's elk population. We remain concerned that this management model may not adequately control the elk population as efficiently or effectively as managing to a particular population target.

Wisconsin cranberry growers support an elk hunt as a necessary management tool. We recognize the importance of controlling the elk population and believe hunting plays a key role in this effort. Additionally, the hunt enables growers to pursue wildlife damage claims through Wisconsin's Wildlife Damage and Abatement Program.

Elk pose a significant crop damage challenge for cranberry growers. They frequently wander beyond designated management zones and are naturally drawn to the landscape of Wisconsin's cranberry marshes. We appreciate the DNR's collaboration with growers to mitigate these issues through fencing and other non-lethal deterrents. Furthermore, we acknowledge and value the Department's responsiveness in incorporating agricultural concerns into the final Elk Management Plan, ensuring that economic impacts on farmers are considered within the adaptive management framework.

However, if the State of Wisconsin continues to expand the elk population and their geographic range, additional funding for crop damage compensation will be necessary. Simply put, more elk will result in more damage, leading to increased claims for wildlife-related agricultural losses, particularly for cranberry growers. Therefore, any adaptive management plan that proposes to grow the elk population or expand their habitat must also include a corresponding increase in funding for wildlife damage claims.



**DNR Elk Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, December 12, 2024, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm**  
**Hilton Garden Inn Wausau – Salon C2**  
**Virtual Option through Zoom**

**Committee Members Present:**

Josh Spiegel – WDNR Sawyer County (NEZ) Wildlife Biologist  
Christina Kizewski – WDNR Jackson County (CEZ) Wildlife Biologist  
Scott Roepke – WDNR Black River Area Wildlife Supervisor  
Pat Beringer – WDNR Upper Chippewa Area Wildlife Supervisor  
Curt Rollman – Interim WDNR Wildlife Damage Specialist  
Jennifer Price-Tack – WDNR Office of Applied Sciences, Elk Research Scientist  
Dylan Belisle – WDNR Law Enforcement, Conservation Warden (virtual)  
Travis Bartnick – Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, Wildlife Biologist (virtual)  
Ron Weber – WDNR Forester  
Justin Boysen – USFS Chequamegon-Nicolet Forest, Wildlife Supervisor  
Rich Kirchmeyer – Wisconsin Bowhunters Association  
Brandon Bleuer – Ho-Chunk Nation, Wildlife Division Manager  
Dan Vandertie – Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation  
Jim Bible – Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association  
Jerrad Macholl – Wisconsin County Forest Association

**Committee Members Absent:**

Sam Jonas – WDNR Species Section Supervisor, Committee Sponsor  
Lindsey Long – WDNR Wildlife Veterinarian  
Randy Kunsman – Wisconsin Conservation Congress  
Scott Hygnstrom – UW Stevens Point, Professor of Wildlife Management  
Tyler Wetterau – Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Wisconsin Regional Director  
Dan Hirschert – USDA - Wildlife Services

**Other Agency and WDNR Staff Present:** Lydia Margenau – WDNR (virtual), Brooke VanHandel – WDNR, Scott Karel – WDNR, Cindy Altman – Jackson County Clerk, Gaylord Olson – Land Conservationist Jackson County, Nicole Schaefer – RMEF, Dave Terrall – USDA Wildlife Services

**Public:** Two members of the public and Wisconsin Outdoor News- Dean Bortz, attended in person, and one attended virtually.

**Meeting called to order by Josh Spiegel at 9:02 am and all people in attendance briefly introduced themselves.**

### **Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Charter Discussion/Approval (Spiegel/Kizewski)
3. Herd Updates (Kizewski/Spiegel)
  - a. 2024 Elk Hunt
  - b. 2024 Calf Captures and Mortalities
4. Damage Update (Rollman/Kizewski/Spiegel)
  - a. Current Enrollments, Abatement Efforts, and Conflicts
  - b. Future Options
5. 2024/2025 Winter Trapping Plans (Spiegel/Kizewski)
  - a. Winter Trapping/VIT/Assisted Dispersal Efforts
6. 2024 Elk Quota Setting (Price-Tack/Spiegel/Kizewski)
  - a. Population Projections
  - b. Hunting Season Structure, Zone-wide Quota Setting
  - c. Central Zone Cow Harvest Discussion
  - d. Public Comment on Quota Discussion
7. Break/Working Lunch
8. Public Comment – General
9. Partner Updates and Comments
10. Adjourn

### **Charter Discussion/Approval (Spiegel/Kizewski)**

Not much has changed since 2022 regarding the structure of the charter content, other than the addition of four new partner groups: USDA Wildlife Services, Wisconsin Cranberry Growers Association, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, and Wisconsin County Forest Association. There were no objections to the charter, and all was approved.

### **Herd Updates**

#### **Northern Elk Zone (Spiegel)**

The 2024 population estimate post calving was 356 (314-397) elk. The estimate is broken down to 80 (75-84) bulls, 184 (172-195) cows, and 92 (67-118) calves. Spiegel and Kizewski continue to work with OAS to ensure the most up to date information.

There have been 17 known elk mortalities in the Northern zone since 1/1/24. 6 of which were through legal hunter harvests (4 tribal, 2 state), 3 wolf predations, 3 unknowns, 2 drown, 1 vehicle collision, 1 calf

mortality by bear predation, and 1 illegal harvest. Of the hunter harvest, there was 1 immature and 5 mature bulls.

Project accomplishments in the NEZ include 14 harem surveys, Snapshot WI camera grid, 3 lure crop plantings, 3 elk related prescribed burns, 1 wildlife opening renovation, opening and trail maintenance mowing, 2 access projects completed, and hay produced from WDNR land for acclimation pen feeding this winter.

### **Central Elk Zone (Kizewski)**

The 2024 post-calving population estimate was 188 (164-208) elk. The estimate is broken down to 68 (64-71) bulls, 73 (69-78) cows, and 47 (31-59) calves.

There have been 15 known elk mortalities in the Central zone since 1/1/24. Five of which were through legal hunter harvests (4 state, 1 nuisance shooting permit issued), 3 vehicle collisions, 2 unknown, 2 stillborn calves, 1 likely wolf predation, 1 likely bear predation, and 1 poor health. There was no documented illegal harvest in 2024. Of the hunter harvested elk, there was 1 immature and 3 mature bulls out of the Millston area. The nuisance shooting permit was issued to harvest one cow.

Project accomplishments in the CEZ include herd level bull classifications, lure crop plantings, 3 elk related prescribed burns, forest opening management, private lands habitat (RMEF grant to match funds 1:1 with private landowners to increase elk habitat on private land, utilized almost 100 percent of the funds with 4-5 landowners in the Millston area), assisted dispersal pen reconstruction, and worked on landowner relations (to understand landowners experiencing nuisance conflict issues, build relationships, etc.).

## **VIT Deployment, Trapping, and Calf Searching Updates**

### **Northern Elk Zone (Spiegel)**

Winter 2023/24 saw 6 capture events conducted in the NEZ. Two took place in Clam Lake, two near Lake Namekagon, one in the Flambeau River State Forest, and one in Moose Lake. 41 total elk were captured: 4 bulls, 33 cows, 4 calves. 23 Vaginal Implant Transmitters (VITs) were deployed on cows of two years of age or older. No elk were relocated.

Spring calving season yielded 17 calves were collared during calf searching. 14 of these calves were found with VITs, 2 traditional searches, and 1 opportunistic capture. Out of the 17 calves collared, there were 3 mortalities including drowning, bear predation, and unknown health, as well as 6 other nonfunctional collars.

### **Central Elk Zone (Kizewski)**

Twelve capture events were conducted in the CEZ during the 2023/2024 winter. Five took place near Lake Wazee, three in Millston, and three in north Black River Falls. 54 total elk were captured: 3 bulls, 34 cows, and 17 calves. 24 VITs were deployed on pregnant cows. 30 elk were relocated with assisted dispersal.

During the 2024 calf searching efforts, 24 calves were collared. 26 total calves were located, but two of the calves were stillborn (1 VIT and 1 traditional). 10 of these calves were found with VITs and 16 of

them were traditional searches. Out of the 26 total calves, there were 5 mortalities (3 collared and 2 stillborn), 2 slipped collars, and 9 nonfunctional collars.

### **Damage Update (Rollman)**

Elk are covered under the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP). This includes agricultural crops, truck crops, stored crops, orchard trees, Christmas trees, nursery stock, and cover crop. Each county has the option to opt into the program. Currently, 59 counties are enrolled with USDA Wildlife Services, 11 counties are enrolled using county employees, and 2 counties are not in the program. The goal of the program is to avoid damage through methods including harassment, hunting, trapping and relocation, repellants, fencing, diversion crop, etc. 2024 abatement efforts consisted of diversion crop plantings, fencing (permanent and temporary), drone hazing, and one shooting permit. All counties within the elk management zones are enrolled with USDA-WS.

Diversion crop planting is currently in pilot status. The department is fully implementing this and hopes to get approved as an effective/permanent abatement tool through the damage program. The more we can attract elk away from a local agricultural community, the less damage will occur on their properties. Repellents were used in northern Wisconsin. Based on elk collar locations, elk moved out of the treated fields for about a week after treatment. However, repellent applications can be difficult due to weather conditions, crops outgrowing repellent coverage quickly especially for corn, and height of crop as it pertains to applying on the ground, as well as cost.

Kirchmeyer: Why was there a nuisance shooting permit issued?

Kizewski: Nuisance shooting permits are a tool in the management plan to address conflict and knew they would be issued for certain circumstances. A private landowner outside of the Black River Falls elk range had 20 elk on their property in early September. Being outside of the range the situation would not be able to be addressed through the state hunt). In winter 2023/2024, 16 elk were trapped and relocated from the property in which some returned, and additional elk joined. The landowner was experiencing damage on high value crop, so we received approval at leadership level to issue the nuisance shooting permit. The permit was filled three weeks after issuance. The landowner harvested one adult cow. Next steps are to outline additional /side boards for issuance of the shooting permits. In April, elk staff will present sideboards for committee review.

Schaefer: Do you require post-harvest testing on elk harvested with a shooting permit? Do you have an idea of effectiveness of the permit?

Kizewski: No biological samples were required with this nuisance shooting permit. The effects of a single antlerless harvest showed elk move away from that area for a week, however, have since transitioned back to that area and adjacent areas.

Spiegel: They will acclimate if they understand that it's a safe area, so if there is no threat, elk may return. That's why we need to implement multiple abatement tools, additively.

Bible: Are there any states that are fencing big tracks of land and fencing the elk in? It would be reasonable to research how many elk we want in Jackson County, and then fence about 20,000-30,000 acres.

Karel: There are several issues with this, but the biggest are that it would be a constitutional issue and the economic impact. After the CWD rule, when deer farms had to be double fenced, you were looking at millions of dollars for an eight-foot double fence. A project like that would cost hundreds of millions.

Kirchmeyer: What is our population goal?

Kizewski: 220 is the next population range category within the management plan where we begin incorporating a "maintain" objective. Currently we are in an "increase" objective, however the rate of increase and location of elk play a large role.

### **2024/2025 Winter Trapping Plans**

#### **Northern Zone Proposed Winter Capture 24/25 (Spiegel)**

There are four objectives set for the 24/25 winter capture. One is to relocate 20-25 elk from Butternut, where 30-40 elk currently reside. Butternut animals would be hard released in the core of the Flambeau River State Forest. Department plans to recollar 30% of the local cow/calf group for long term monitoring (there are no current GPS collars on this group). Bulls will be collared opportunistically. The second objective is to relocate 20-25 elk from Highbridge, where 30-35 elk currently reside. Release would occur from an acclimation pen in Clam Lake. Staff are planning to recollar 30% of the local cow/calf group for long term monitoring, and collar bulls opportunistically. The third objective is to deploy up to 35 VITs in the Northern Elk Zone for calf capturing in spring 2025. The fourth objective is to relocate 3-4 adult cow elk near Ojibwa to an acclimation pen in Clam Lake. They are currently outside of our management zone, not farm from a large ag community, and want them to be productive within the herd.

#### **Central Zone Proposed Winter Capture 24/25 (Kizewski)**

There are five objectives set for the 24/25 winter capture. One is to relocate 30 elk from northern Black River Falls. We will distribute them across two assisted dispersal pens, and a subset of collared animals will be hard released. We will utilize this capture towards our VIT goals if applicable. Our second objective is to relocate 25-30 elk from the Millston area. We will distribute them across 3 assisted dispersal pens, and a subset of collared animals will be hard released if proven successful. We will utilize this group for our VIT goals as well. Our third objective is to deploy up to 25 VITs and an additional 10 collars across the Central Elk Zone. Our fourth and fifth objectives are to collar bulls opportunistically and to capture calves in the spring of 2025.

### **2024 Elk Quota Setting (Price-Tack/Spiegel/Kizewski)**

#### **Northern Elk Zone**

The designated population model rules are as follows :

1. The total population has increased by 10% over the previous 2 years.
2. The total number of bulls exceeds 72
3. There are a minimum of 40 bulls: 100 cows
4. The number of mature bulls exceeds 38

### Northern elk quota projections

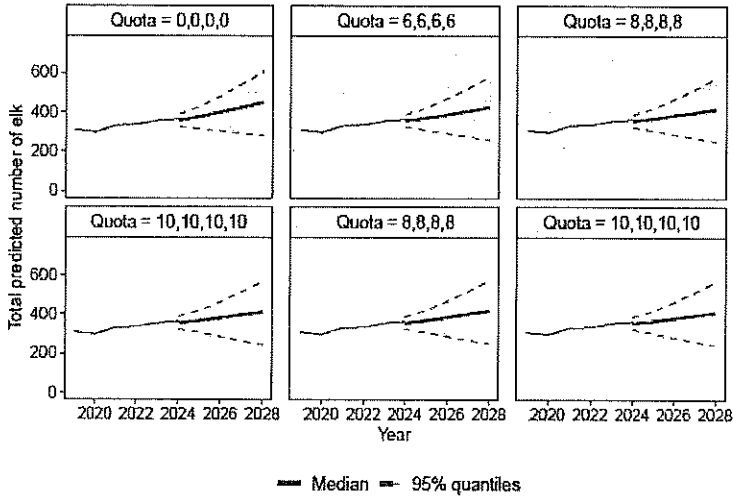


Figure 2: Total number of post-calving elk projected under each quota scenario

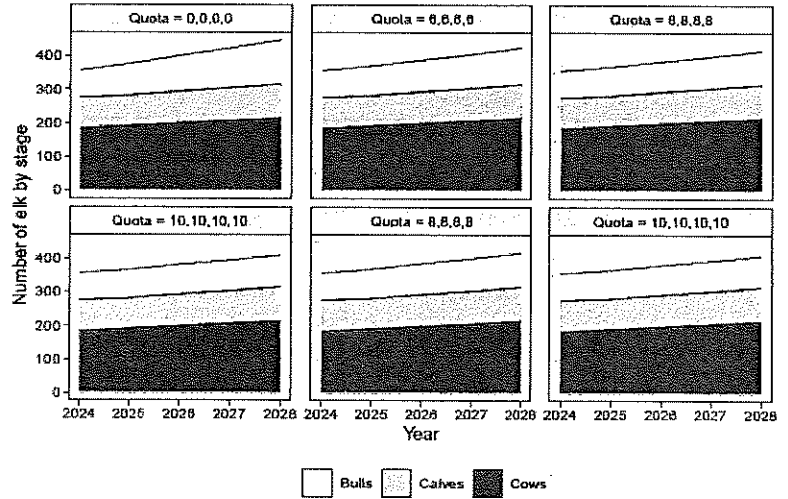


Figure 3: Post-calving population projection by stage

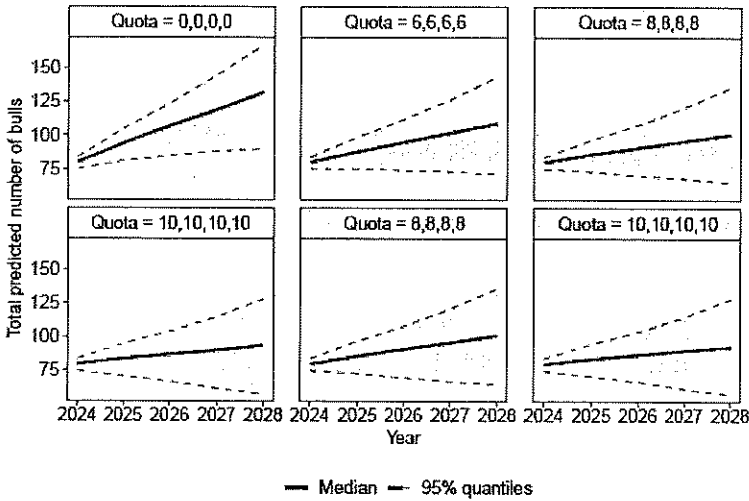


Figure 4: Total number of post-calving bulls projected under each quota scenario

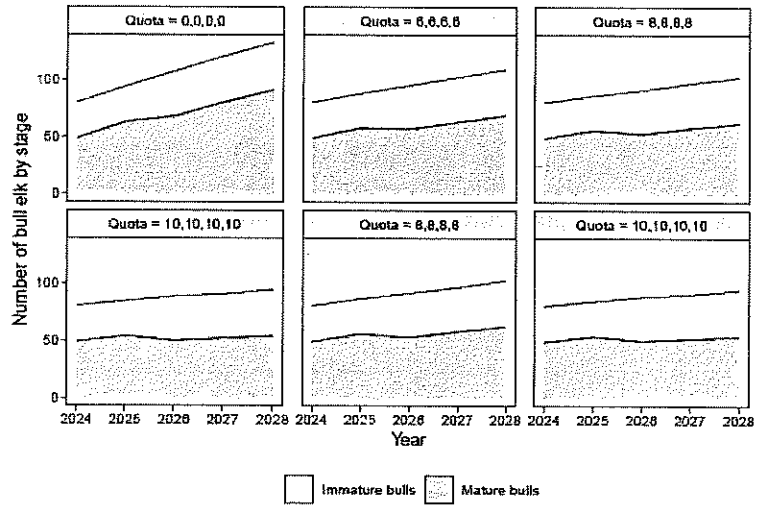


Figure 5: Post-calving age distribution of bulls projected under each quota scenario

## Central Elk Zone

The designated population model rules are as follows:

1. The total population has increased by 10% over the previous 2 years.
2. The total number of bulls exceeds 47
3. There are a minimum of 40 bulls: 100 cows
4. The number of mature bulls exceeds 26

## Population Projections – Central Elk Zone

### Central elk quota projections

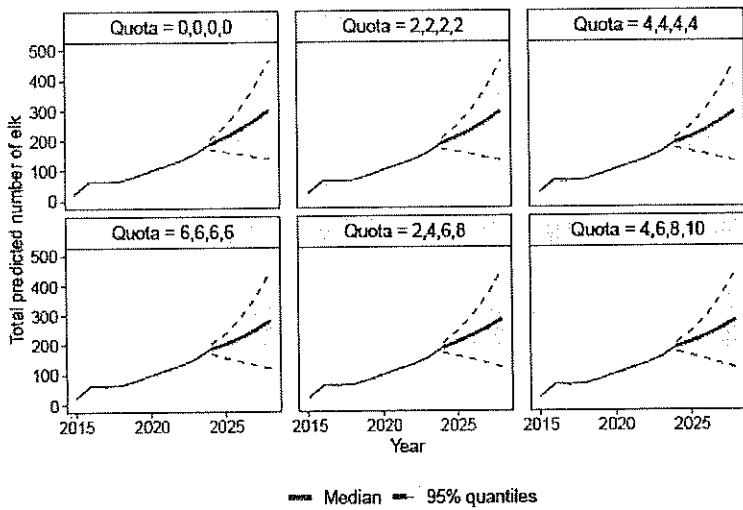


Figure 2: Total number of post-calving elk projected under each quota scenario

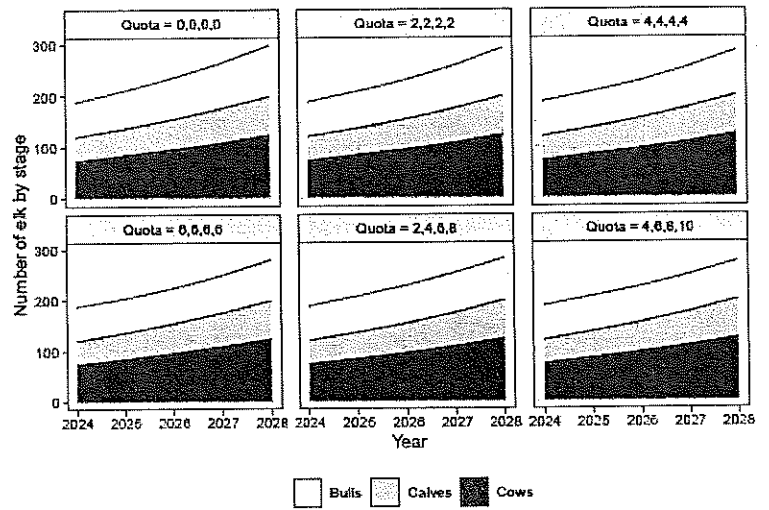


Figure 3: Post-calving population projection by stage

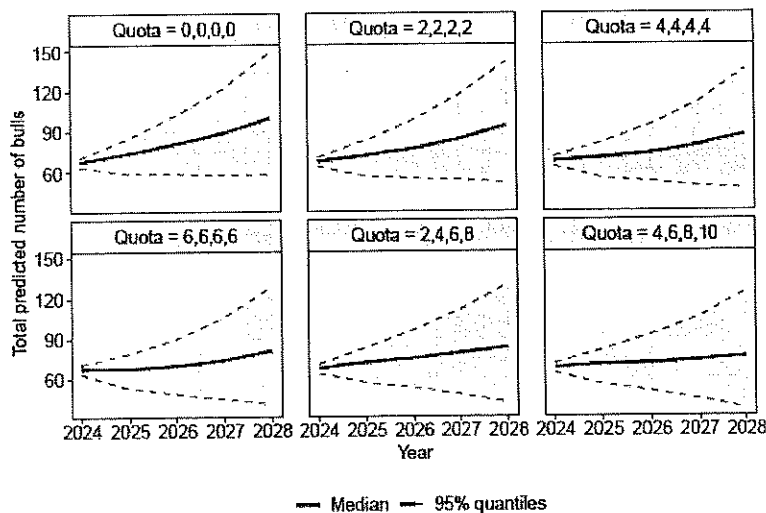


Figure 4: Total number of post-calving bulls projected under each quota scenario

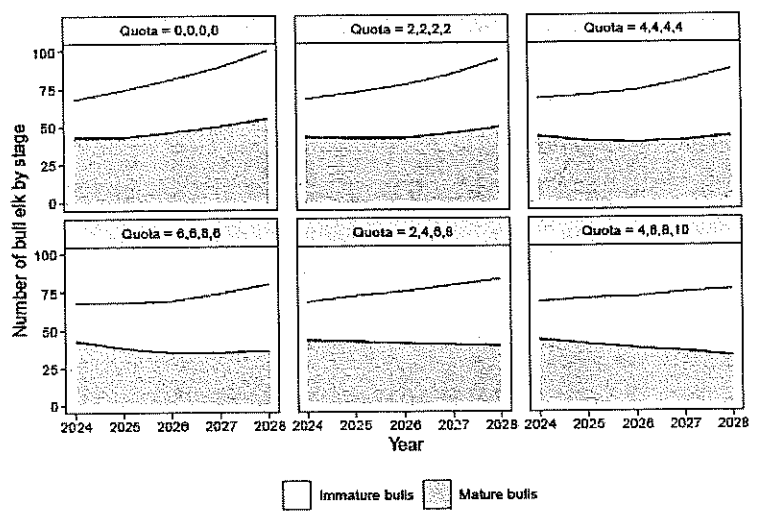


Figure 5: Post-calving age distribution of bulls projected under each quota scenario

Kirchmeyer: By reducing adult bulls, how fast are you losing productivity?

Price-Tack: We cannot say that with certainty, but looking at quotas we are ensuring bull to cow ratios that would not reduce productivity.

Bartnick: Do you have information on pregnancy rates from last year's trapping efforts?

Spiegel: Out of 33 cow elk in northern WI, 23 were pregnant. Long-term estimates, 90 percent of 3-year-old and older, 50 percent of 2-year-old. We are right on par with that. Our field ultrasound units can take a reading on females quickly.

Karel: We have a rule that is very close to being complete, but we cannot abide by this until the rule comes into effect. Effective date may be April (best case) or around June 1, unless legislature objects/requests modifications, then it's going to be longer than that. If approved, management zone boundary expansions and the continuous hunting season will be in effect for the fall hunting season.

### Harvest Discussion/Quota Setting

#### **Northern Herd**

- State and tribal harvest is similar overall, apart from 2020 when tribes did not participate.
- Every year average over 25,000 applications, statewide. 17,000+ for the Northern Elk Zone in 2024.
- Future years goal is to provide draw statistics and information for each hunting unit available during application period.
- Tribal harvest fairly steady, state-licensed hunter success has varied year by year.
- Bull class harvest by year varies greatly by year.
- Bull class harvest by license, tribal hunters more opportunistic, license hunters more mature bulls.
- Harvest by land type, 9 percent on private land, 91 percent on public land
- Total harvest by bull class, 32 (60 percent) mature, 14 (27 percent) immature, 7 (13 percent) juvenile.
- 2024 post calving population estimate for Northern Zone is 356 elk. All indications from calving season, harvest season, and harem surveys appear to be in line with population projections for Northern Zone.

Schaefer: Are you seeing trends in mortality?

Spiegel: Environmental factors are the biggest key (winter severity), not much change outside of winter conditions, which also contributes to winter predation. Elk are starting to utilize new areas of the management zone, elk are beginning to disperse due to silvicultural practices and regeneration, but general trends are constant.

Schaefer: Is there any info on post-harvest testing that was done that would attribute to disease management or genetics?

Spiegel: We do pull genetic samples but have not done anything to look at genetics comparatively, that will take generations (20-30 years on genetic dispersals), CWD sample collected, no positive samples or concerns in northern zone. Other tissue samples are save in archive for assessment in



the future. WDNR is looking to collaborate with eastern elk states to analyze health samples. Hunter harvested samples are collected as a baseline sample, as they are assumed to be healthy. Nothing stood out with harvested elk, they all look great, healthy, no concerns at this time.

Spiegel: Northern zone quota must be divisible by 2 as Ceded Territory treaty rights allows for tribal governments to declare up to 50 percent of quota.

Bartnick: Concerned with quota setting process, now tasked with setting these without important info that we would have in March or April (winter severity index, etc.) we know that environmental factors drive herd production in the north, and we don't know what the conditions will be like in the next 3-4 months, should we keep the quota more conservative to continue with our objectives/consider the uncertainty?

Vandertie: We are harvesting bulls not cows. We can remove bulls without impacting the population too much. We can make a recommendation today, but would we be able to decrease it in spring depending on the severity of winter?

Spiegel: No. Once the quota is approved overwinter we are locked in for 2025. Setting a quota is the maximum harvest from a legal aspect, we have to understand that hunter success may not be 100 percent, even though we assume it would be 100. As it pertains to winter conditions, it takes a substantially harder winter to effect elk, versus winter impacts to deer.

Kirchmeyer: The policy team discusses and approves quota at the NRB meeting, if there was a large winter loss, you could testify in front of the NRB to adjust the quota.

Karel: The NRB receives the elk quota as an informational item and does not approve it.

Spiegel: When transition to hunting units, we will be offering a specific bull quota in their unit of interest, and that application period opens March 1, so we want to be as transparent as possible with hunters entering the drawing. The committee recommends a quota, it is provided to the Wildlife Leadership Team, they accept or provide alternate quota, DNR Administration approves or provides an alternate quota and it is presented to the NRB as an informational item mid-February. This timeline allows for increased information by the March 1 application period. We used to set quota during application time frame.

Macholl: We should offer as many as we can at a responsible level to maintain a healthy growth rate. Motion to continue with 8-bull quota in the north.

Kirchmeyer: Second

Motion passes with unanimous support

No public comment

### **Central Herd**

Kirchmeyer: Any concern with the harvest in the same area?

Kizewski: No concern currently; high bull:cow ratio across the central herd, as such each sub-group has a surplus of bulls, currently. If there were a scenario where multiple years of target harvest to one sub-group, it may be a concern.

The projection model was established last year, and what we are seeing from a field aspect is matching up with Jen's projection. Bulls are classified by juvenile, immature, and mature. In 2024 there were 63 uniquely identified bulls compared to 47 in 2023.

#### Cow and calf observations from the field

- Millston 65 (70 total)
- Wazee 27 (30 total)
- Other 10 plus (does not consider non collared)

#### Recruitment

- 47 calves (31-59)
- 26 births (24 collared) 50%
- 5 known mortalities
- 81% survival to date (LTA=88% n=59) (we have yet to hit harsh winter conditions this year)

#### Quota

- 100% success rate in 3 days
- All 4 bulls harvested in Millston.
- Antlerless considerations
- Wazee subgroup crosses boundary of old Black River Falls elk range, opportunities will be increased with zone expansion because that subgroup spends most of its time adjacent to the Black River Elk Range boundary.

#### Antlerless harvest considerations to be made:

- In statute, elk is an elk, it is once in a lifetime tag regardless of antlered or antlerless.
- Our customer service licensing program have not yet identified what it would look like to incorporate an antlerless option into our GoWild programming for the application process, so programming may hinder the ability to offer an antlerless harvest for 2025 season.

Terrell: Maybe we consider slowing down the population increase in the CEZ to avoid landowner damage.

Spiegel: We don't want to get to the point where we issue 25 tags and the next two years we have to issue 5 tags. We want to avoid big swings annually to keep the population constant. Terrell: If we keep harvest low now, it may help that curve later on.

Schaefer: How could the shooting permits impact the quota setting for bulls and cows, just so we do not see any dramatic population affects?

Spiegel: Where we are right now and continuing into the future, we will know what we issued for the year of. We had one shooting permit issued this year, whether or not we have the ability to issue the antlerless harvest, we can use that information in the quota setting process. If we are not able to hold a antlerless harvest, then we may lean more heavily on the shooting permits.

Kirchmeyer: If GoWild cannot implement of antlerless tags this year, will that proposal for antlerless tags be voided?

Spiegel: Yes, if GoWild cannot accompany the programming needed in time, we will not be able to have an antlerless elk harvest in 2025.

Kizewski: If the committee wants to recommend a quota for an antlerless harvest, the recommendation should be made regardless of programming limitations.

Vandertie: Even if you offer a cow tag, how will that entice hunters to apply when it is a once in a lifetime hunt? Maybe if you have a problem with the cows, the permits should go to the landowners (other states offer to local landowners, to increase popularity of the hunt or benefit landowners that are impacted by the number of elk in their area).

Kizewski: People may apply because they recognize their odds of drawing an antlerless tag might be higher than a bull tag.

Roepke: If we are looking at antlerless harvest, making it open to public creates opportunity to state residents and does not privatize antlerless harvest through shooting permits, solely. Perhaps there are benefits to this committee being proactive and setting an antlerless quota while we iron out shooting permit sideboards.

Spiegel: If this committee recommends 5 antlerless elk quota, we only need 5 people to apply to fill those tags.

Kirchmeyer: Motion to recommend a 2025 antlerless elk quota of 5 in the central elk zone.

Seconded

Public comment: Will Peasley- With a 15% growth rate in the CEZ annually, agricultural concerns increase. Where is the herd growing? In the forest, I support that, but as a landowner, this growth is not good. Shooting permits would be issued where the damage is occurring, where a hunting tag could be utilized anywhere due to lack of units.

Macholl: With the absence of hunting units, can you require private vs public land harvest?

Karel: No, that can only be done with antlerless deer.

Vandertie: There is a small amount for the state to gain from an antlerless hunt. You have more to gain from local people needing shooting permits. I am against public hunting for cows. If issues continue, shooting permits should be used to control the population.

Macholl: To manage more effectively through the use of hunting units, I vote no for public hunting of antlerless elk. Shooting permits should be utilized with the caveat that we could accidentally kill twice the number of cows that we want to (eventually retracts vote of no).

Kizewski: Issuing an elk shooting permit is a stepwise process and general requires extraordinary situation. At times, additional abatement measures are preferred to be implemented before a shooting permit is issued.

Spiegel: Shooting permits and in-season antlerless elk are two different management tools, which can coexist in a given year. Shooting permits and in-season antlerless elk permits are independent of each other but can be discussed together during decision making.

Kirchmeyer: We are working in present time when setting quotas. We can't determine how many if any shooting permits may be issued in the future.

Bleuer: Concerned with antlerless harvest, at least in 2025, since hunting zones are not in place. Not a management tool because you can't dictate where that harvest is occurring.

Schaefer: If the population supports the hunt, and that's part of the management plan and goal, and the population supports a hunt and will continue to increase, then we should do that. I would feel better if we did have hunting units, but maybe we just start with a lower quota for 2025.

Bleuer: Will we have flexibility in unit harvest if all the cows are harvested in the same area?

Kizewski: Yes, we could set a quota in each unit or set the quota at 0 if need desired.

Central Antlerless Quota Vote: 11 support, 4 oppose, 2 abstain – motion carries and committee chairs will present antlerless quota recommendation to the wildlife leadership team and continue discussions with customer service on application options.

Central zone bull quota

Kirchmeyer Motion: 4 bull-quota

Weber: Second

Public comment: Will Peasley - This quota is not high enough.

4 Bull Quota motion retracted.

Vandertie motion: 6 bull-quota

Second

Motion did not pass vote.

Kirchmeyer Motion: 4 bull quota

Weber: Second

Central Bull Quota Vote: 9 support, 6 oppose, – Motion Carries and committee chairs will present quota recommendation to the wildlife leadership team

### **Public Comment**

Will Peasley - Issue with elk on property, so much damage cannot plant corn this upcoming year. We are worried there will be a publicity issue with elk in WI. Why did farmers with \$10,000 worth of damage not get an ag tag? Any farm with damage should receive a shooting permit to defend their livelihood. Should not issue a hunting season if the farmers cannot shoot elk on their property.

Spiegel: Elk hunting is in state statute, and we have to honor state statute. If other abatement tools are identified as effective options, shooting permits may not be issued.

Karel: We cannot change the statute, WDNR does not advocate for legislature changes as an administrative policy.

Roepke: We will be developing policy for how and when we issue shooting permits, hoping to have this drafted for April meeting and have shooting permits available for 2025 growing season.

No other public comments

### **Research updates and prioritization.**

Refine methods to help determine population size and distribution annually.

- Always improving population and projection models (currently)
- Revise projection model to include cow harvest (could look at based on discussion today)

Investigate effectiveness of new damage abatement techniques.

Estimate the economic impact of elk on local businesses and communities surrounding the elk management zones.

- Impacts, mainly ag damage, should be looked into but has not occurred yet (it is timely)

Bleuer: Would like to see this supported and done, balancing elk on the landscape and the impacts of businesses. Develop strategies to address CWD response for elk.

Project on the books is in the pilot stages of aerial surveys

- Used in other states.
- Is it feasible, and what would it need to look like to help inform elk management?

Ongoing projects

- Elk habitat use work
  - o Partnerships with UW Madison and internal work
  - o Can share results of ongoing research more extensively at Spring Elk Advisory Committee meeting.

### **Partner Updates and Comments**

Bartnick: Successful Ojibwe elk hunters in the Ceded Territory. Ceremonial elk camp set up in September. Despite the above average temperatures, some chose to go out and hunt, others waited for cooler weather. All 4 harvested elk by October 21. Looking forward to assisting with any opportunities with winter trapping efforts.

Kirchmeyer: Thanks for the opportunity for a spot at the table to help contribute with elk management.

Schaefer: Enjoyed involvement, looking forward to 2025 with volunteer involvement and habitat enhancement.

Boysen: Awarded RMEF grant, which will fund a summer intern for habitat work. 5 large habitat openings projects coming online. Involved with timber harvesting, fire breaks, which have all been a big lift. Working on ground disturbance in these openings.

Bleuer: Habitat work, large fire break project seeded this spring. Tribal youth group that has trail cameras on this project to help monitor the elk. Funding for brush management and forest openings.

Vandertie: We need to get \$10,000 limit raised. Any possible way I can be included in meetings with landowners to hear concerns as a member of the farm bureau?

Kizewski: After the new year, we will gather another landowner meeting in mid-January, will keep you informed on date and location.

Macholl: Wisconsin County Forest Association focus is usually timber industry, elk involved in that, have heard nothing but positive things. Look forward to more opening work in the future.

Terrell: Work with landowners in northern and central herd areas. Drone footage example, not all abatement tools are permanent, but they can be effective. Willing to try any new research with us. Wildlife Services fully staffed in specialists, Josh Spangler is Rusk/Sawyer specialist now and will be dealing with some of these issues.

Spiegel: Would you be okay listing name, seat/stakeholder, and email contact on WDNR website to connect with the public better?

No concerns from committee

Spiegel: Late spring/early summer will be the next committee meeting. Will be scheduled at the end of winter.

Kizewski: We will keep committee updated on division decisions on quota recommendations.

**Adjourn** 3:05pm

## Bruce, Cory

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**From:** Rep.Mursau  
**Sent:** Monday, March 3, 2025 1:20 PM  
**To:** Sen.Stafsholt; Sen.Jagler; Sen.Testin; Sen.Dassler-Alfheim; Sen.HabushSinykin  
**Cc:** Konkel, Sharlene; Henning, Anna  
**Subject:** Clearinghouse Rule 24-045  
**Attachments:** 25-03-04\_PH\_SSC\_Financial\_Insti.pdf; DNR Elk Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes December 2024.pdf

Committee Members,

Tomorrow, you are holding a public hearing on CR 24-045, related to Elk Management. At the request of Jerome Donohoe, President Wisconsin Commercial Deer and Elk Farmers Association, I am forwarding the attached email and provided information. Mr. Donohoe isn't able to attend tomorrow because he is attending a research committee meeting at the same time in Milwaukee.

Please feel free to reach out to Mr. Donohoe with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Mursau

---

**From:** Jerome Donohoe <ag\_o3@earthlink.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 28, 2025 5:44 PM  
**To:** Mursau, Jeff <Jeff.Mursau@legis.wisconsin.gov>;

## PUBLIC HEARING

Committee on Financial Institutions and Sporting Heritage

The committee will hold a public hearing on the following items at the time specified below: Tuesday, March 4, 2025

Jeff, I have a research Committee meeting here in Milwaukee during the time of this upcoming meeting in the attached notice of a public hearing. If you can get this email and attachments pertaining to our Association input and concerns to all members of this committee would be appreciated.

I have attached the last meeting minutes of the DNR Elk Advisory Committee meeting minutes for this committee's review and action for relief. I have highlighted passages for particular alarming concerns relating to the DNR's elk and whitetail deer management here in Wisconsin. These multiple concerns covers not only the wild elk and whitetail deer herds but that of our Elk and Whitetail deer Farmers here in Wisconsin as well.

Some of these concerns that questions to be put to the DNR for answers seeking changes to these dangerous practices. These deleterious practices if continued facilitates increasing risks that continues to put the states elk and whitetail deer population and our Elk and Whitetail Farmer producers at serious risk of disease transmission relating to Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) or other untested diseases on the landscape.

1. Elk that become a nuisance or are involved in agricultural crop damage are dealt with in various ways in both main herds of elk in Wisconsin.

A. Nuisance elk are managed by several different practices to eliminate the nuisance. In most cases if these practices fail to produce results a portion of these elk are captured and relocated in a different part of the state geographically. This partial relocation practice leaves other elk behind to continue the nuisance.

B. Crop damage elk again are managed by several different practices to reduce a farmers crop damage. One type of practice most employed is referred to as a diversion or lure crop planting.

1. What is the complete definition and practice used for all diversion or lure crop planting that are used in managing Elk in Wisconsin? (beans, corn ....other).
2. What is the complete process in managing nuisance and crop damage elk when it comes to capture and relocation procedures' of moving elk to a new location for release?
3. How long are elk held behind a fence that are captured for relocating elsewhere because of either nuisance or crop damage issues?
4. If elk are held behind a fence for any peiord of time before release, how are these animals cared for for food ,water and health care?
5. Are any captured elk sampled and held for any kind of diseases before release into a new area?
6. How are elk managed that stray outside of the current elk range?
7. Who decides where elk to be relocated to a different geographical are of the state?

In this video link Will Peasley, an organic dairy farmer has to deal with crop damage from wild elk on his farm. DNR doesn't seem to interested in helping out the situation by crop damage criteria set by the DNR to mitigate anything of crop damage where the farmer continues to loose?

<https://www.facebook.com/peasleydairyfarm/videos/1526967511287057/>

Jeff, these questions are just a few that our Elk and Whitetail Industry here in Wisconsin have a grave concern about these practices of artificial feeding (planting beans, corn ... other) and relocations due to nuisance / crop damage elk here in this state. When the DNR can artificially feed or freely move elk around the state from CWD affected counties to other CWD affected AND non CWD affected counties is very concerning. With no health care or testing of any wild elk destined for and released to an unknown location increases to risk of disease transmission to other parts of the state where these diseases are currently not present.

For years our farmers have and continue to put up with the DNR facilitating placing CWD carcass collection dumpsters and CWD head collection kiosks within close proximity of our Elk and Whitetail farmer producers. This practice continues every year with increased placements across the state. This increased practice continues to substantially put our farms at risk.

As Wisconsin's elk herd grows beyond today's population numbers these relocation are guaranteed to become a more frequent event if we are at moving 100+ elk today to keep the peace.

With these continued movement practices when CWD comes to the wild elk herd will movement continue? Will the DNR tell anyone when an elk tests positive to blame it on our Farmer producers?

Something is seriously wrong here when an agency cannot walk the talk about controlling CWD in our state with continued wild elk movement around the state at will.



If the committee may have any other questions or request for information please have them contact myself.

Thank you, Jerome

Jerome Donohue  
President Wisconsin Commercial Deer and Elk Farmers Association (WCDEFA)  
2020 N. 53rd st  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208  
414-699-9332  
[ag\\_o3@earthlink.net](mailto:ag_o3@earthlink.net)

**From:** [WI Legislature Notification System](#)  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2025 5:12 AM  
**To:** [ag\\_o3@earthlink.net](mailto:ag_o3@earthlink.net)  
**Subject:** WI Legislature Notification

You requested to be notified of the following legislative activities:

**Subject subscriptions:** Based on the keyword: "Sporting Heritage"

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**Committee:** [Financial Institutions and Sporting Heritage Schedule](#)  
*Senators: Stafsholt (Chair), Jagler (Vice Chair), Testin, Dassler-Alfheim, Habush Sinykin*

- 2/19/2025: [Scheduled a Public Hearing](#) on CR24-045-SEN, CR23-047-SEN

To change or stop email notifications to [ag\\_o3@earthlink.net](mailto:ag_o3@earthlink.net), please go to the [Notify website](#).