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-3469

12/31/01

To:

DuWayne Johnsrud and members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee and
James Baumgart and members of the Senate Environmental Resources Committee

Dear Senator Baumgart and Representative Johnsrud:

Thank you for scheduling the January 2nd meeting to hear a proposal from the DNR regarding hunting elk. The return of this magnificent animal to Wisconsin is truly a great success. We who live in the Clam Lake area were very supportive to the effort to introduce elk back into our area.

We have just become aware of the December 27 announcement for the January 2 meeting, which does not provide us enough time to attend and provide in-depth input to the process. We have followed and participated in the entire reintroduction process from beginning to the present and because we now live in harmony with the elk we have an obvious deep interest in them and their future management. We ask that you institute a process that will give us an opportunity to be fully heard, either a second hearing with sufficient advance notice or keep the comment record open for 45 days. The Clam Lake elk are a tremendous asset to Wisconsin and to our area. We want the herd to continue to grow in numbers and to their management to be done right.

Some of our concerns about the elk are:

- We have seen or heard conflicting information about their current numbers. They have ranged from the more than 70 in your news release to 120. What is their number?
- What is the composition of the herd, i.e., the number of bulls and cows and their ages? It is clear from the literature that it is very important to have a good number of large bulls in a herd for optimal breeding success.
- The herd is becoming a tourist attraction and as the number of elk increases the opportunity to see them increases. People especially like to see large bulls. We want the "watchable wildlife" aspect of the elk program to continue to improve. In fact we would like the Forest Service to allow the development of one or more areas for elk viewing on their lands. We have a lot more people who come to our area throughout the year to enjoy the scenery and wildlife visually than to hunt. We believe that the recreation aspect of the elk program should be the top priority. There have been no complaints from local citizens that there are too many elk.
- The timing of any future hunting is very important because we have so many hunting seasons now. Just look at the complexity of the deer seasons alone. We do not want an elk season that conflicts seriously with other seasons. Michigan has a December elk hunt, which works well.

Sen. Baumgart
306 S.
Pat, the Martin
Hanson fax we
talked about
yesterday Scott

- The DNR currently has a lottery system for bear and turkey permits. Why is special lottery legislation needed for elk?
- There is no mention of the role of Native Americans in your news release. They are entitled to 50% of the wildlife in the treaty areas. If there were a season for 5 elk, would they get an additional 5 too?
- Would a hunt be for just bull elk or would it be for both bulls and cows? Harvesting just bulls, especially the large ones, would be a mistake.
- We are opposed to making any special elk hunting permits available to any organization for special raffles or auctions until the permit numbers reach at least 100 to the general public.

We believe that there needs to be more study before hunting begins and more time for the herd to increase in numbers. We sincerely want the reintroduction to be a success as it has been so far and to become a much larger public viewing opportunity. Thank you for listening and we anxiously will wait for your reply!

Sincerely,

Martin Hanson
Martin Hanson, Mellen

Richard Curtis
Rich Curtis, Clan Lake

B. C. LaFollette
Bronson C. LaFollette, Madison

Don Terry
Don Terry, Cable

Ralph H. Cornell
Ralph H. Cornell, Clan Lake

Morgan R. Peck
Morgan R. Peck, Highbridge

Barbara J. Kinton
Barbara J. Kinton, Highbridge

Méru Maznio J.
Méru Maznio, Cable

Barbara LaFollette
Barbara LaFollette, Madison

Neil Paulson
Neil Paulson, Drummond

Changes:

License Fees:

- Resident = \$41 was \$98 (same as Bear)
- Duplicate = \$13 (same as Bear)
- Non-resident = \$198 (same as Bear)
- Application fee = \$3 (same as everything else)

- No need for preference system ^{is not} needed because of the once in a lifetime permit (at least until there is enough permit).
→ No auction - raffle instead.

Non-resident tags:

- At 100 permits DNR must offer 1% to non-residents and may by rule give more if required.

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Permit:

- Limit to ~~year~~ the first year & combine w/#1 & increase in appl. fee

check w/in

- Should it be limited only to Wisconsin resident, or can RMEF sell to ~~anyone~~ nonresident?

→ Consult with DNR on how best to use funds.

check
4/5m

Damage payments for Elk:

- No payments until elk season is ⁱⁿ the code.
↳ Cap of \$50,000 for \$3 + then out of license fee.

Game Farms

- Eliminate this from the bill.

No

Car kills Elk

- Amend 29.347 (5) - Amend to include Elk.

Present: Sen. Baumgart, Hansen, Wisch, Schultz

Not present: Cowley

Suggest

⊗ Tighter language that will guarantee that money earned from RNE group fundraising from 1 permit must go toward Elk mgt. in Wisconsin.

Suggestions:

- Application fee = \$10 - others are \$3
- Possible increase in the license fee b/c its a one time hunt & if people want to hunt they can come up w/ the money.
- Require wearing Blaze orange.
- No Auction

⊕ This bill doesn't apply to game farm Elk b/c they are defined as farm-raised deer, in a different statute. (we can take out the deer-farm reference) IT is designed to stop someone from taking a wild Elk & placing it on a game farm.

Hansen

~~but~~ Hansen: opposed

↳ concerned about stopping the growth if we allow the hunt.

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

- Supports the hunt
- Supports receiving the license for ~~the~~ a state wide raffle.
- & will ~~be~~ have statewide raffle & not just a selective auction.

* Car Killed Elk
29397 (5) (New)