



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

Elk Management in Skagit and Whatcom Counties

Amy Windrope
Fenner Yarborough

North Cascades elk herd

- Commonly referred to as Nooksack elk herd
- Current population of survey area~ 1,500
- Population objective 1,700-2,000
- Co-managed with Point Elliott Treaty Tribes



Elk have used the Skagit Valley since time immemorial and we have helped

- 1912 – 46 elk from Montana
- 1946 – 9 from King County, 6 from Yakima
- 1948 – 8 from Yakima County
- 2003 – 43 from Mt. St. Helens
- 2004 – 4 from Mt. St. Helens
- 2005 – 51 from Mt. St. Helens

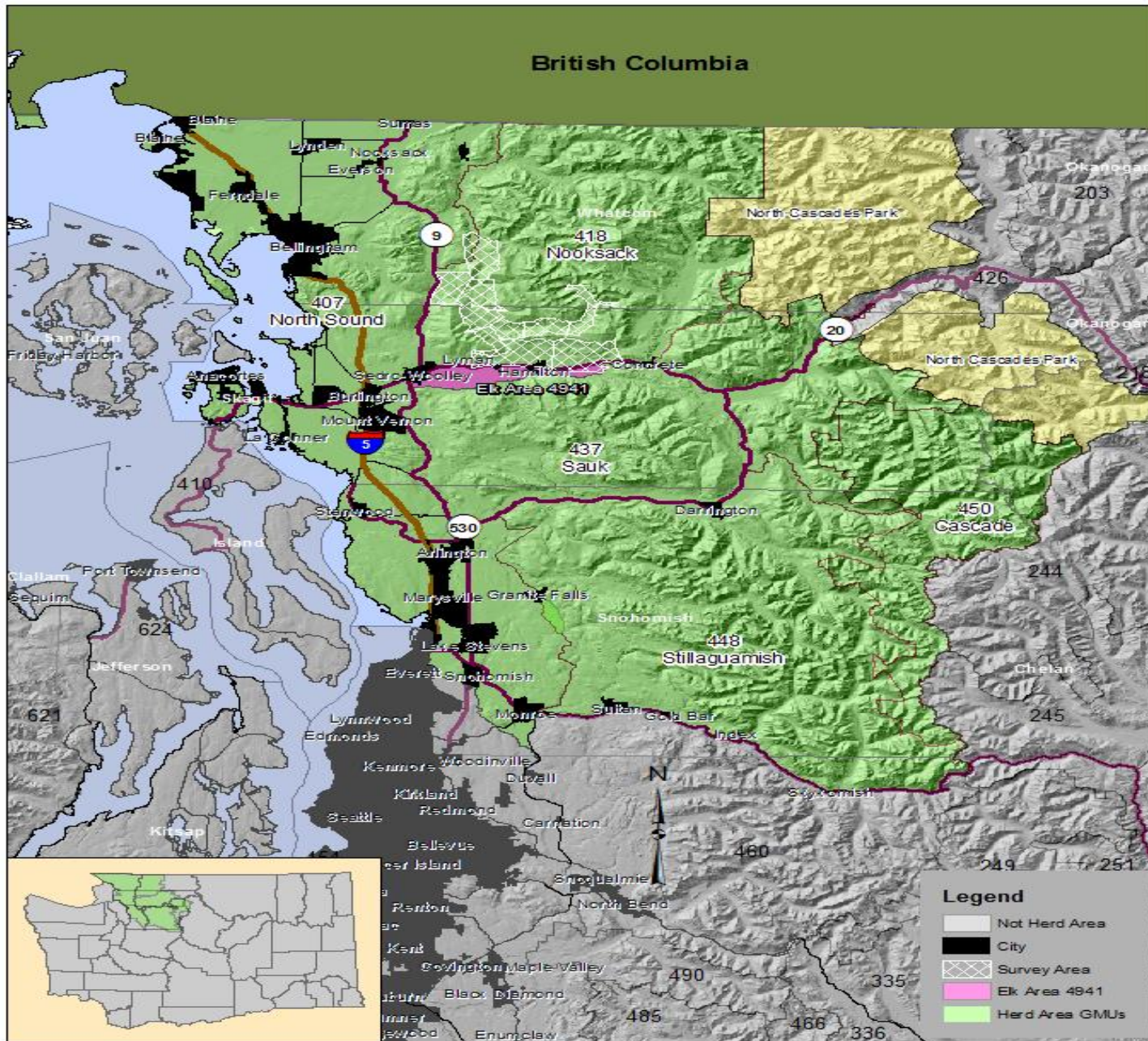


Herd management history

- Declined from a high of 1,400 – 2,000 in 1984 to only a few hundred in late 1990's
- Harvest moratorium 1997-2006
- Population augmentations
- Current population is expanding



British Columbia



0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Miles

Elk Damage Information

Jan 1 – Dec 31

Skagit Elk Year	Total of all Damage Complaints	Total Commercial Producer Complaints	Total Number of Complaints Eligible for Claim	Total Number of Claims Submitted by Producer to WDFW	Total Number of Kill Permits and Damage Prevention Permits Issued to Landowners	Total Number of Elk Harvested by Landowners
2015	48	19	1	1	30	25
2016	64	24	2	0	40	24
2017	78	31	2	0	52	34
2018	63	23	1	0	66	30
2019-YTD	23	14	0	-	-	-

Elk Related Agricultural Conflicts

- 2013 – present – managed by Conflict Program
- 2015 - 2018 – # of damage permits increased each year
- 2018 – 66 permits issues with landowner harvest of 30

What is happening in the community



Recent Efforts

- Increased community and stakeholder involvement and communication about elk management, conservation, ecological sustainability, and social tolerance
- WDFW provided 85,794 linear feet of fencing materials to participating landowners
- Increased Co-manager discussions regarding damage issues



2019-2020 Action Plan

- Issue damage permits pre-emptively to qualifying landowners
- Revised compensation forms and Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement process
- Landowner access fees
- Hoof disease removals
- Discussions with WDOT on signage, speed limits, outreach, etc.
- Mapping tools - Swinomish
- Targeted neighborhood management

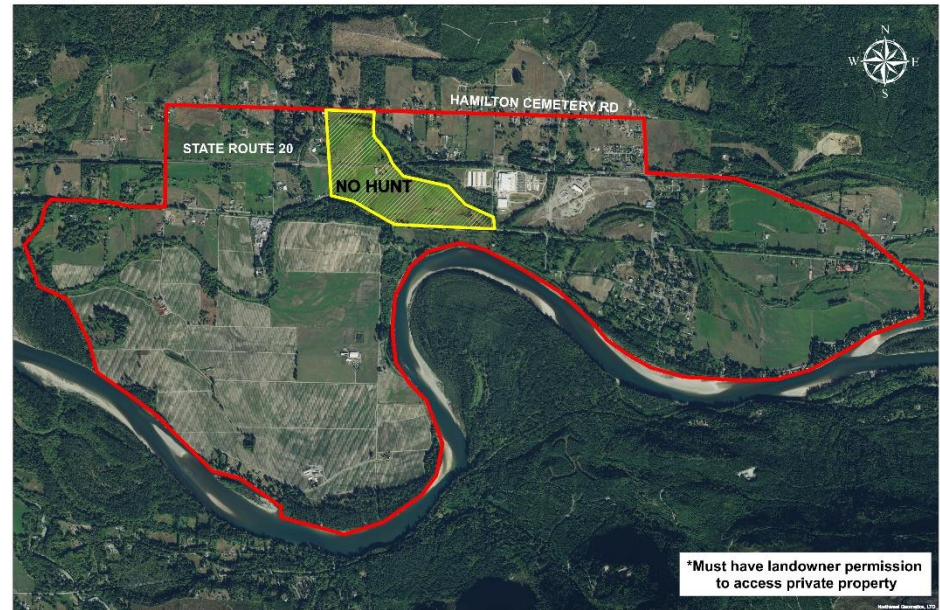


Targeted Neighborhood Management

- Identify resident elk groups in agricultural areas
- Increased pressure
- Non-lethal techniques
- DPCA's and access across multiple properties
- Landowner permission and cooperation in neighborhood efforts
- Tribal participation



2019-20 Hamilton Hunt Area
Master Hunter, Kill Permits & Damage Prevention Permits



2019-2020 Metrics

- Reduce number of elk damage complaints from 2018 levels in designated neighborhoods
- Majority of damage harvest occurs in targeted neighborhoods
- Increase number of requests to Tribes to participate in neighborhood hazing or harvest
- Respond to limping elk reports within 7 days with timely removal if TAHD is suspected (per protocol)
- Increase outreach and include collision report phone number in all press articles