

Red Hill Elk Draft Management Plan Comments

Most recent comments are shown first. There are 48 comments.

Amy Strombotne *Unincorporated Boulder County*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #48*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

Further thoughts: Consider looking into whether the public would be in favor of a ballot measure to pay for wildlife habitat repair and recovery and non-lethal control of wildlife - instead of hunting. Do you really think you will get money from Colorado to pay for elk fencing along US36? If you do – how long will that take? You would have better luck getting money for wildlife habitat improvements and non-lethal wildlife control from the wildlife loving citizens of Boulder County instead. Please deny bow hunting in the foothills. It is not a reliable killing tool. Our citizens will be taking pictures of elk struggling around with arrows in their bodies. I remember an article in the local paper about folks who brought their kids up to Brainard Lake in hopes of catching a glimpse of a moose. Those families were subjected to the sight of a moose who had just been shot with an arrow come screaming out of the woods in pain and panic before he died. CPW said that was a 'good kill'. I would be furious if I had been forced to witness that. In letters to the editor over the years I have read about foothills residents who had mortally wounded deer with arrows sticking out of their bodies die on their property. Thinking that the silence of arrows creates a better experience for non-hunters does not take these realities into consideration. Ban the killing of coyotes in this area for at least the next few years to give coyotes a chance to rebuild their numbers. One landowner out here has boasted about killing 13 coyote last year. I live further south than that landowner and I used to hear coyotes every night, now I seldom hear them. A coyote may not be able to take down a grown elk but they must make things very uncomfortable for female elk and babies. And coyotes hunt at night, which is exactly the time that elk wonder onto farmlands. If we still had the coyote numbers out here that we used to have, wouldn't the elk be more concerned about staying away from coyotes than about raiding crops? Don't set hunting for an hour before sunrise to an hour after sunset. Panicked elk could end up crossing our roads and US36 in the dark. That is a very bad idea. The elk need time to settle down before dark, so hunting should end several hours before sunset. And what about the elk hunting license holders who FAIL Boulder County's skills test? Those folks STILL have a CPW license for this same area so they will now be hunting (with permission) on private lands surrounding our residential neighborhoods. I expect the same complaints from my neighborhoods as have been coming from the folks who live in the foothills and are forced to live with hunting on federal lands near their homes. One letter to the editor complained that hunters were shooting too close to their kid's school bus stop. Expanding where these kind of hunting mistakes will happen down here will not end well. So - If you and CPW intend to organize and encourage hunting on willing private lands in this area, then EVERY ONE of the hunters that you list on your hunter/private landowner connection website must also first pass Boulder County's skills tests. You should not be taking the most skilled hunters for yourselves and forcing local private landowners to deal with the lesser skills of other hunters. After all, your name is on this effort now. You should be extremely concerned about the skills of the hunters that you in effect, via your (or CPWs) private landowner-hunter connection list, will be recommending that private landowners call upon.

Kristi Scott Longmont

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #47*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Local commuter

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I come from a hunting family. I am generally a proponent of hunting and the positive effects that hunting can have on good, proper wildlife management. Philosophically, I believe that hunting is good for our planet. It is a superior source of protein, compared to how most people in this country get their meat. That said, I am very much opposed to this proposal. I am a member of the Altona Grange and have many friends and acquaintances that live in the area. I think this is an EXTREMELY dangerous area to allow hunting. PLEASE DO NOT implement this proposal.

Amy Strombotne *Unincorporated Boulder County*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #46*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

If you want to return management of the lands that Boulder County has recently purchased north of Nelson road to the way they had been managed when in private ownership, then simply allow your tenants to hunt elk on the lands they have leased to you. It

is a shame that some of the very tenants who sold their lands to Boulder County are now forbidden by Boulder County to hunt those lands to protect their crops - yet anyone from anywhere in the United States who scores a hunting license from CPW and passes your skills test can walk onto our tenants' leased land to hunt recreationally. Stop calling our lessees the 'caretakers' of county properties if you prohibit them from caring for those properties as they have done for generations. If tenants were allowed to hunt, they would probably hunt on their croplands. Elk might learn to avoid croplands. But you have opened up the entire county-owned land area north of Nelson to hunting. How will elk learn to avoid cropland when there is no relationship between hunting and cropland grazing? Allowing tenants to protect their crops by themselves is better public relations because this would NOT be recreational hunting, this would be crop protection hunting which has been going on in this area for generations. And Boulder County would have differentiated your hunting program from CPW's recreational programs. No matter how Staff wants to term their recreational hunting plan as not being a recreational hunting plan - what they propose is a recreational hunting plan exactly like all the rest of CPW's recreational hunting plans. Now if the elk problem has grown so much that more than a few elk need to die, why are you not limiting hunting on county lands to Boulder County residents and tenants only? CPW is required by law to award a hunting license to anyone in the USA who wins their lottery. You don't have to. Just like limiting hunting to those who pass your more stringent ability tests, you can limit hunting on County owned land to county residents only. I would think that county residents would have more knowledge of the area and just a bit more reason to respect their neighbors than someone who has driven in from out of state just for a hunting vacation. You could encourage donation of elk kills to Boulder County. You pick up, you pay to process, and you provide the meat to agencies in the county who will provide it to those in need. I see that as a much better look for Boulder County than allowing strangers to take from our lands for themselves. Boulder County is a leader in helping those among us who are in need. Then why give up this opportunity to provide meat, instead of giving the meat away for free? Hunters from outside Boulder County did not vote for and did not contribute taxes to buy those lands, and they are not paying Boulder County for the privilege of hunting the lands that Boulder County residents own. Your set of two hunting plans are slowly turning northern boulder county into a recreational hunting park. A recreational hunting park is NOT returning management of those lands back to the way they were when those lands were privately owned.

Margaret LeCompte *Boulder*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #45*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Other

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I am a member and an officer of the Altona Grange 127 on Nelson Road at 39th. I understand the need for some public hunting but oppose any hunting at all in high density residential areas, no matter what "extra safety measures" are implemented, and I oppose the use of the Hunter Exchange with Landowners Program (HELP). My past experience with elk herds and public hunting when I lived in western Oregon assures me that such practices encourage bad hunter behavior and increased pressure on reluctant landowners from hunters aggressively wanting to hunt on their property. The proposed period for hunting--6 days a week, and from August to January--also is too long a period for landowners and other organizations, such as the Grange, to suffer the risks and disruption that hunting would create. Please shorten and diminish the period of allowable hunting.

Eric & Jill Skokan *Longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #44*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Farmer/agricultural producer in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

We own private property(51st and Nelson) and are an Open Space agricultural tenant leasing the Platt property. We are in favor of public hunting, however, we would like to see the hunting distance from houses increased significantly. We would like to see the Platt property not be in the allowed hunting area. The Platt property(both North and South portions of it) is too close to residences, agricultural fields, and irrigation ditches/laterals. We, our children and staff work in agricultural crop fields, grazing areas, mesas, creekside, and along the many laterals and irrigation ditches. We are in these areas at all hours of the day(including before sunrise and after sunset). The Platt property and the irrigation lateral system that serves it has a diverse topography and dense vegetation areas that can lack good visibility of human activity. We would like hunters to be educated in the training process about where the irrigation ditches are located throughout the entire management area. Farmers and property owners could be working on the irrigation ditches anywhere at any time. We would like to be on the required Chick-in/Check-out Notifications list. Lastly, we think the riparian area along Likens Gulch of the Platt (and possibly Centennial) property is a good candidate for Elk Fencing.

Christine Lamoureux *Longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #43*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I live directly adjacent to the proposed hunting region. I work as a physician from home full time and it would be very disruptive to hear gunshots close to my home. Furthermore, I have children and pets for whom this would be disturbing and dangerous.

Katherine Mann *Boulder*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #42*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

Rob Ramey has vast experience in this area and has repeatedly stated that the public hunting plan is poorly researched and completely ineffective. Boulder County residents should be the only individuals who have input in this issue. Boulder county residents are the ones who pay taxes to support this county's open space resources.

Rob Ramey *Nederland*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #41*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I propose that the Boulder County Commissioners delay implementation of, or only allow continuation of, the Red Mountain and Rabbit Mountain Elk Management programs for no more than one year on the condition that during that time, an independent peer review of the program be conducted. After that, you can make an informed decision based on unbiased information, to discontinue or continue the program with (or without) modification. Amidst the crisis of our current SARS-CoV-2 epidemic, where the public is preoccupied with more immediate matters, this would be a reasonable and prudent course of action. I urge this course of action because in my professional opinion what the Open Space staff have presented to you and the public is a simplistic and partial presentation of information that purports success of their program, while dismissing constructive criticism, obvious shortcomings, and a lack of unbiased consideration of alternatives. Regrettably, Open Space and CPW staff, and POSAC, have chosen to resist the recommendation that an independent peer review be conducted even though it could lead to a more efficient and effective management program. It is apparent that they are unfamiliar with the numerous benefits of an independent peer review, namely that such scrutiny provides new ways of looking at the problem and additional, more effective ways of solving it. Having served as a peer reviewer of numerous wildlife programs and scientific journals for many years, I can attest to the fact that this is an uncomplicated process that can be completed at low cost (i.e. most peer reviewers do this pro-bono as they consider it part of their professional duty, however, a small honorarium can be appropriate). I have attached an example template of how such a review could be conducted. This course of action is also urged because I see a disturbing alternative: that Rabbit and Red Mountain plans are displacing non-exclusive public use and inclusive management of Open Space, with an ineffective, exclusive sport hunting program tailored to satisfy CPW's hunting clientele for a large portion of the year. (In the case of Red Mountain, it would be an exclusive use as the land is closed to all other public use.) While future management of Open Space land may need to include hunting, let's be sure that it works before committing our Open Space lands to it, over and above other alternatives for behavioral and population management, especially over the long-term. I use the term "ineffective" specifically because my review of the elk population and hunting harvest data downloaded from CPW's website, and discussion with CPW staff, reveal a fundamental problem: there is an elk overpopulation problem along the Front Range and hunter harvests are inadequate to keep it in check. In other words, the problem is much bigger than the two Open Space lands in question, and current hunter harvest quotas, even if filled, will only maintain the St. Vrain elk population at its current level, as well as its problems. Those include the economic damage of crop-raiding elk being endured by Boulder County farmers, automobile accidents on highway 36, and resource degradation on Open Space land. In a nutshell, that means that continuation of the current program will be touted as a permanent necessity, but in doing so, it will only perpetuate the problems. Alternative strategies are needed. And, for alternatives to be taken seriously by Open Space and CPW staff, you will need a peer review by qualified, independent subject experts. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of my comments. Feel free to contact me with any questions at your convenience. Rob Roy Ramey II, Ph.D. Wildlife Science International, Inc.

Laurie Lee *Longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #40*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

WE are abutters to Wolf Run & have the view that is posted above of the elk. I DEFINITELY OPPOSE any hunting for the following reasons: 1.Hunting on Rabbit Mountain pushed the elk into PRIVATE abutters land, creating more of a problem. 2.Hazing hasn't shown to be effective. 3.Hunting on Wolf Run/Centennial Estates/acquired Leukenins property even more surrounded by houses, the elk will be forced on Federal Table Mesa site & even MORE abutters who will be affected even more as they have produce trees, fields, etc. 4. No other methods has been tried. The DOW had put out this item to hunters who reported ENMASSE to this issue. WHO YOU SHOULD BE PAYING ATTENTION TO IS THE ABUTTERS!! Why not let us put in trails & we will walk on the properties in the season you want is to (Summer right, this land in your 2019 final purchase announcement said it was for many animals, including the elk rut & wintering here IN YOUR WORDS & PAID BY US TAXPAYERS NOT THE HUNTERS!! We abutters will maintain the trails if you like. 5. Buckshot rifles may take 15 ~elk/season, no study has been done to see that work elsewhere. You know from my testimony that high power rifles carry 4.5 miles, thru 6 inch walls. Even low-powered rifles carry 1 mile. WE DO NOT WANT THAT KIND OF FIREARMS BEING USED NEAR OUR LAND OR ON LAND THAT WE THE TAXPAYER PAID FOR. This will go into Op Ed Boulder Camera this weekend if I can! Sincerely Yours, Laurie Lee

doug lee *longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #39*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

#1 I love seeing the elk throughout the year, especially in the rut. #2 I understand that the numbers are too high and a solution needs to be found. Public hunting is clearly inefficient at doing this. Get sharp shooters in here and cull the herd starting in the most damaging area first. Learn from rabbit mountain. Many elk simply relocate which doesn't actually solve the problem, again it's inefficient. #3 public hunting is needlessly dangerous for me and my neighbors. Hunters may want to take advantage of this need, but there are other ways of accomplishing the task. Sharpshooters can take larger numbers (which is needed) and the meat can be given/taken to those in need. Again, look at the numbers for rabbit mountain, where did those other elk go? #4 I'd prefer that a better solution than shooting is found, but I recognize that the process has been going on for a while and I'm late. Besides, I'm sure that any other method is much more expensive. #5 Due to the virus, I think that this decision deadline should be push back and allow a better solution to found. We see flexibility in other processes, we should be exercising that here as well.

Liese Foust *Loveland*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #38*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Farmer/agricultural producer in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

I work at a barn that borders the land that would be adjacent to the hunting and it's a big concern around horses. Not only can the horses get shot by a stray bullet but they can get spooked and frighten and panic and hurt themselves. Some of the horses that board the space are very expensive and all of them are extremely loved. I'd would prefer that the space be opened up to allow equestrian riding on it instead of hunting. I am not typically against hunting in general however when it comes close to horse properties it is a very big concern.

Kenneth Altshuler *Longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #37*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

The information presented by County in the Draft Management Plan IS MISLEADING: 1) County's use of dots does NOT show an explosion in population, but rather the movements a 4 elk taken over some unreported time increments. County claims that based on the large number of dots in the region that there has been an explosion of elk population. However, each color dot = one animal collar. Hence, 4 animals = ALL of the dot activity on the area of interest. It makes it look like there are tons of elk, but it is a few elk taken over a frequent period of time. The more frequently the same elk is counted, the more dots. The data is misleading trying to make you believe that there are tons of elk everywhere when actually all you need to do is count the same elk more frequently. 2) County claims hunting is working at Rabbit Mountain to reduce population. WRONG! Less than 30 elk were taken

per year over 4 years - it was actually around 100 elk killed. Elk reproduce every year once they become 2 years old. The herd went from 360 elk to 120 elk, so they claim it is working. THE MATH DOESN'T ADD UP. Between 125-200 elk are missing???? Where did they go? Hunting may be working if it means it is driving them elsewhere. 3) County claims the Red Hill Herd Elk population suddenly exploded from 200 elk to 400 elk in the last year or two. Did they breed that fast? THE MATH SHOWS THAT CANNOT BE TRUE. Strange how the Red Hill Elk herd grew by about the number of elk missing from the Rabbit Mountain Elk herd. 4) If the elk get smart to hunting (because they will and County knows it), what's to say they simply won't migrate to Table Mountain Federal Land? 5) County claims hunting behind our homes in the 1 mile by 1 mile open field will be safe. Based on what evidence? We need a better plan.

Kenneth Altshuler *Longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #36*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I am concerned about the safety and well-being of my children and pets on our property. I believe that the proposed 100-150 yard safety zone between properties is ridiculously small. I used to run 100 yards in a little over 10 seconds. Deployment of DEADLY FIREARMS should be no less than 500 yards from our children, pets and horses and preferably 1000 yards pointing in the opposite direction. How will such proposed close quarters spook horseback riders? Last meeting County proposed hunting from August to October, now it is August to Jan 31. No one living along this corridor EVER got a letter or notice. NO ONE! I am only aware of this by word of mouth as are my neighbors. This proposal is half-baked and needs to be better hashed out with far more participation from those that are immediately effected by hunting up to our property lines. No one I have spoken to agrees with present plan. Please do not pass this and demand that there needs to be involvement from the immediate community!

Linda Foust *Longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #35*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I am requesting that there not be hunting on the open space which is adjacent to 4157 Nelson Road. I have horses on the property and there are grave risks for horses and children (and adults) who ride often in the pastures. Hunters with high powered rifles often can kill horses/ humans by mistake because of the long range of the rifles or at a distance mistake one animal for another. This would totally put all landowners at risk in this area. There must be another way to safely mitigate the elk overpopulation

Brittany Foust *Longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #34*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Farmer/agricultural producer in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I have horses on a property that the management area. My concern is having hunters be able to be close to the property fence line that shares a border with OSMP. My concern is that my horses and livestock could be injured or harmed by hunters who are not paying attention. Growing up with deer hunting in the Southeast we had many friends lose horses to hunters shooting at deer or shooting across the Property lines and killing the horses. I would much rather have the open space property be opened up to equestrians to be able to ride on and have access too. If there must be hunting, have a designated hunting season and have hunters mandated to stay 1/4-1/2 mile away from property lines.

Mina Altshuler *Longmont*

Mar 27, 2020 *Comment #33*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

Hi, I'm Mina Altshuler and I live right next to the proposed hunting ground. I disagree that hunting on this land is the best option. I am worried for the possible harm of people or dogs on nearby properties. I am concerned about bullets on residential land. I am nervous that if we start hunting then it will never stop because the plan to only hunt for 5 years is not feasible and I don't think that we should have a hunting culture in our open space. Instead I suggest that we put in a residential trail to haze the elk and I'm sure many people would agree that would be great! Or optionally we could do a culling once a couple of months which would be less dangerous, faster, more efficient, and most beneficial to the health of the elk and our precious open space. Thank you for reading this and I hope that you take this under consideration. -Mina Altshuler (10 grade)

Anita Moss *Boulder*

Mar 26, 2020 *Comment #32*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

Don't extend the Rabbit Mt. elk management plan to elk on Red Hill without unbiased peer review. Dr. Rob Ramey, a Boulder wildlife ecologist experienced in science based resource management, is available for consultation. Ignoring the opportunity to work with experts outside the biased CPW will likely (once again) result in failure - failure reminiscent of CPW's chronic wasting disease fiasco. Dr. Charles Southwick, a world renowned ecologist offered to help the CPW with their plan for chronic wasting disease. Dr. Southwick was ignored. Ultimately, CPW's Mike Miller had to publicly admit the project failure. Time to learn from past mistakes. Require unbiased peer review! Note: CPW employees, to be ethical, should identify themselves when posting comments - -- Especially when posting twice.

Test Testerson *Denver*

Mar 26, 2020 *Comment #31*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Other

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

This is just a test comment

Janet George *Longmont*

Mar 25, 2020 *Comment #30*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: Yes

Hunting Methods Supported: Archery Muzzleloader Shotgun slug Rifle

Comments:

The Red Hill Elk Management Plan is well done and relies on peer reviewed literature, professional judgement, and the first hand experiences gained while implementing the Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain Elk and Vegetation Management Plan. It is wise that staff included the adaptive management criteria that if shotgun, muzzleloader and archery methods do not achieve needed results rifles will be considered. Data shows that all of these methods are equally safe and hunting accidents are exceedingly rare. Bravo to Boulder County staff and commissioners for taking an approach to managing the elk herd that is supported by science, data, experience, and sustainable ecosystem management. Please approve the Red Hill Elk Management Plan as written.

Alex Barber *Boulder*

Mar 25, 2020 *Comment #29*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

I don't believe that there should be hunting on Open Space land. Other methods should be explored to disperse this herd.

Kate Sparks *Boulder*

Mar 25, 2020 *Comment #28*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

I do not support public hunting in Boulder. Or Boulder County. There are plenty of places more remote and safer to the general public than Red Hill. Your hunting plans have not decreased the herd size and is neither safe nor sound. Please send hunters away from people, towns and kids. It's the responsible thing to do. Thank you, Kate Sparks

Sarah Bornhijm *Boulder*

Mar 25, 2020 *Comment #27*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

Absolutely no hunting on tax payer supported Open Space.

Marcia Barber *Boulder*

Mar 24, 2020 *Comment #26*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

Boulder County Open Space was never intended to become closed to the taxpayers who fund it, and open to hunters, most of whom do not live in Boulder County, as a private hunting ground! In addition no local respected independent biologists and wildlife ecologists have been consulted by BCOS or the County Commissioners to deal with the over abundance of elk on county open space. Our University of Colorado Boulder and CSU have world class biologists which BCOS has chosen not to contact. The elk migration specialist, Arthur Middleton has also not been consulted. Instead BCOS has relied on CPW which is in effect a hunting organization whose management of wildlife issues is skewed by the fact that they receive 80% of their funding comes from hunters. In the past when C PW was in charge of Chronic Wasting Disease their solution was to indiscriminately kill thousands of animals resulting in a famously failed effort to control the disease and also resulting in the killing of thousands of healthy animals. The wildlife Commissioners eventually halted the project declaring it a failure. So now Boulder County Open Space is turning once again to CPW whose hunting efforts of three years have done little to control the over population of elk on Rabbit Mountain and now presumably will have the same results on Red Mountain. The idea that this effort will force the elk to migrate when there has been no proof presented that there is anywhere for the elk to migrate to is a fantasy concocted by CPW to gain hunting access to our Open Space Properties. Furthermore there has been no explanation by CPW when repeatedly asked why they are continuing to issue hunting licenses in these two areas for the predators, Mountain lions and bears, that might help to reduce the elk populations. Elk migrate uphill or west in the summer and downhill in the winter. Hunting them in the fall and early winter to try to convince them to go against their instincts and migrate west seems to be foolish. CPW does have several existing funds to offer monetary assistance to farmers to fence their crops to protect them from the elk. As far as private property owners complaining about their gardens and trees being eaten by the elk, we have lived in the foothills for decades and have always had to fence our gardens and trees so the elk and deer do not eat them. The CPW plan has no peer review. After three years of using our County Open Space for their experiment which has only scattered, has not forced the elk to migrate, and has resulted in fewer dead elk than one mountain lion taking an elk a week by itself, it is time to look at other options that might be more successful more creative and less disruptive to the use of Open Space by the very people who pay for it.

CRAIG WRIGHT *Louisville*

Mar 23, 2020 *Comment #25*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: Yes

Hunting Methods Supported: Archery Muzzleloader Shotgun slug

Comments:

Hunting is a reasonable way to cull elk herds with little public expense. Concerns of nearby land owners should be taken into consideration and appropriate buffers created, however assuming this continues to be a non-rifle hunt the danger posed to nearby residents is minimal. By state law all hunters are required to take a hunter safety course and are trained in proper use of firearms. Of particular significance to this discussion is one of the very basic rules that hunters be aware of their backstop before firing.

Carl Mackey *Boulder*

Mar 20, 2020 *Comment #24*

Affected by Herd: No

User Group: Hunter

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: Yes

Hunting Methods Supported: Archery Muzzleloader Shotgun slug

Comments:

My opinion is that hunting is an important tool in the tool box of activities for managing this elk herd.

Mike Echery *Louisville*

Mar 15, 2020 *Comment #23*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: Yes

Hunting Methods Supported: Archery Muzzleloader Rifle

Comments:

Allowing limited and managed hunting in a well defined area on off hours like Ron Stewart hunt I believe can be a successful way to help manage the size of the herd and encourage the herd to return west to open space areas and desired areas to reduce conflict. It is important to do this in a manner that doesn't affect neighbors and is safe and well managed. The Ron Stewart property is a good example. We have had encounters with elk and vehicles along 36 and if unmanaged more accidents and fatalities are likely to occur. Thanks for allowing the input.

Renee Nowicki *Longmont*

Mar 08, 2020 *Comment #22*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

We love the Elk! They beautify and enhance the living experience we come out here to enjoy. I have been out here for 4 years and have never had anyone in my neighborhood, farmers included complain, only adore and appreciate them. The entire heard will be in front of my house at times and I can not observe any damage. The only damage I see is FROM PRAIRIE DOGS. I would be irate if hunters were across from my house shooting guns. We have dogs, livestock and families to protect and wildlife to enjoy that we DON'T WANT DISTURBED. Stay away from our Elk herds. If you want to protect the environment then start controlling human population growth in our area; stop building 4 story apartment buildings, stop clearing more natural areas that you are claiming to protect, for multi unit housing which is diverting our most valuable agricultural resource, water, to support additional infrastructure and allowing for the population growth that is clogging our inadequate highways and roads. People come here because its Colorado!! Where we are fortunate enough to still see a deer or elk. Add more highway patrol to US 36 and Nelson Road during peak traffic times and reduce the speed limit, please don't shoot elk.

Kathleen Cassaday *Longmont*

Mar 05, 2020 *Comment #21*

Affected by Herd: No

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: Yes

Hunting Methods Supported: Archery Rifle

Comments:

richard hageman *longmont*

Mar 04, 2020 *Comment #20*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: Yes

Hunting Methods Supported: Rifle

Comments:

I think it is about time you start managing the problem that has been going on for too long. The elk herd keeps growing, the accidents on 36 getting more numerous every year. The fact they are hitting my hay stored outside. Not to mention the fence damage that has to be addressed weekly throughout the winter months. And while you are at it get a handle on your Prairie Dogs. The cost of control is getting prohibitive. You have acquired all this land you should start managing it so it is not a detriment to your ag neighbors. You want to preserve ag quit being a liability. Sincerely yours Richard Hageman

Gordon Hardman Longmont

Mar 04, 2020 *Comment #19*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

There are five houses in the subdivision around Pointe View Drive on the west side of US36. The management area I see on the map appears to come right up to our property lines. There is no set back at all which is very scary. There should be consideration of such a set back. Perhaps half a mile to a mile? In general I am opposed to massacring the elk because drivers on 36 don't take the posted signs about wild life seriously. There is absolutely no open water on the west side of 36, including Heil Ranch. There is water on the east side. Has it been studied whether they are crossing in order to get water? If so perhaps developing some accessible water in the Heil Ranch valley either on the north or south ends would mitigate this? We have been affected by deer and elk and have erected an electric fence around our vegetable garden, and solved the problem, so we have no issue with the elk. Apart from deer we are also affected by mountain lions, bobcats and bears- I hope there are no plans to "manage" them! I would support studying limited fencing and an underpass for the elk to use- I have seen this done on other Colorado roads and highways.

Natalie Gelatt Longmont

Feb 29, 2020 *Comment #18*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

There are 7 houses at 3743 Nelson Rd and the property line is adjacent to a section of Boulder County open space. We have the elk on our property but it hasn't negatively affected us. I feel that it is important to cull the herd. My two biggest concerns are that we are in danger of being shot by a wayward bullet when we walk on our property!!! Can you guarantee that there will be no shooting accidents? Also, the hunting season you propose is way too long from August to January.

Jeff Hiebert Lyons

Feb 28, 2020 *Comment #17*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Local commuter

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I spent my college years studying wildlife management. There is a problem with our discussion on managing elk at Rabbit Mtn and Red Hill. It is an old, biblical idea that we have dominion over the beasts. We were taught in school that wildlife management is not done on what is best for the individual but for what is best for the population. Language in this plan is used in a way that objectifies the individual, we call killing elk harvesting, like they are pumpkins in our garden. As an ecologist, I understand the need to balance the natural equation especially when humans have put the system out of balance, but it should be done in a way that is ethical and provides for the just treatment of the individual. This plan treats elk like they are objects for our manipulation. Elk have herd structure, they have leaders, they form bonds, they pass along knowledge from generation to generation. They feel fear and work to avoid being killed. Who is to say if they feel grief but they will work to protect their young. I do not mind hunting them and eating them. I do mind that we put away our hearts and forget about the justice deserved to the individual and at the very least pay respect to these individuals instead of rooting for their death. We are intentionally traumatizing a family group of animals because they have sought refuge on open space. Of course, this is one of the main reasons for creating open space is a refuge from development and reduced human impact. Humanity has a history of turning living beings into objects to "manage" them and it is wrong and we cannot rationalize it by calling it wildlife management and that we know what is best. This is especially wrong when it is done because of money. The driving reason for this plan is the \$60k that the State is paying out in game damage claims. If you look at the 5-acres that are being impacted by the elk we see minimal impacts, especially considering the impacts of building parking lots, trail systems and the subdivisions and agriculture activities within eye-sight distance. The Mountain Mahogany ecosystem is not the delicate Willow Carr ecosystem that is so heavily impacted in areas such as RMNP and

Yellowstone, the elk are not keeping vegetation from regenerating and impacting the whole ecosystem. In fact, disturbance in the mahogany ecosystem may be beneficial because of its resistance to fire and as is plainly visible it become a monolith of vegetation without disturbance. We are not observing any ecological issues with the Red Hill herd. I also believe we are acting short-sighted in saying these animals are not acting "naturally" because they are not migrating, it feels like an excuse. Elk were on the plains in this ecosystem not too long ago. Our knowledge of their behavior is limited to after their reintroduction and it is not too far of reach to think that elk that inhabited the plains not so long ago did not have much different migratory behavior than the pronghorn, bison and deer. So I ask is it worth it to cause this much trauma to another group of living beings? Is it okay that 6-8 elk were shot and ran off and were not retrieved since this started, were they injured, how much did they suffer? What happens when individuals of the herd are killed, how does this effect the herd? How much trauma and injury and panic caused to these animals is worth a field of corn? For \$60k a lot of electric fencing could be put up to protect the cornfield. We need to do something different, wildlife managers do not get a pass when acting with cruelty in our society.

Fiona Collins *Longmont*

Feb 27, 2020 *Comment #16*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

I am totally opposed to this plan. We have lived here for well over a decade and probably seen the elk a couple of times each year. I cannot fathom how this could be considered acceptable in an area with homes. Hunters would be a danger to the residents and their animals in this area, not to mention any other wildlife. There are potential issues with mistaken identity and stray bullets. Secondly, who wants to listen to bullets being fired several months of the year. We all, presumably, chose to live in the (until now bullet-free) countryside and if you live here you can expect wildlife. Reducing the herd to 25 is not culling it is a massacre. The elk have posed no problem to us and I see no reason to reduce the herd. It is interesting that of the recent comments I just read, the only one that appeared to be supportive of this plan was a hunter. Thank you.

John Davis *Longmont*

Feb 27, 2020 *Comment #15*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

I support culling and managing the Red Hill Elk Herd. I have been affected by this herd and know that my neighbors have, too. However, public harvest should not be anywhere near private land. It's too dangerous and I would not be comfortable walking with my grandchildren on private property near hunters--even those with short-range weapons. I support professional culling within limited areas. As a compromise, I would support limited public harvest IF AND ONLY IF there is a very wide buffer around private and publicly accessible land in the harvest area. Even better would be keeping any hunting west of US 36 and away from local trails.

Mike Rosehoff *Longmont*

Feb 26, 2020 *Comment #14*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

NO TRESPASSING citations will be issued by state and local law enforcement officials and should include mandatory confiscation of firearms along with detention in Boulder County jail without bail prior to hearings and court appearances. The County's program will not take away Private Property rights and TRESPASSING citations will be issued.

Christine Barnett *Longmont*

Feb 26, 2020 *Comment #13*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

My family and I live in a neighborhood that is affected by the elk, although they have not made their way onto our property yet. Gunshots from public hunters would not be a welcome sound to the neighborhood. However, my main concern is the safety of my children, family, and neighbors. If hunting were to be allowed we would feel much safer having professional sharpshooters cull the herd quickly and humanely. Thank-you.

Julie neway Longmont

Feb 25, 2020 *Comment #12*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I have lived here on Nelson road for the past 30 years and often see the beautiful elk in the open field behind our row of houses. I realize that elk crossing Hwy 36 could be a problem, but not any more than the deer that have caused a couple of car accidents in our family. Drive slower and advise people to keep their eyes open. Maybe erect a deer/elk fence? Letting hunters randomly wander the open space to cull the herd at any time that suits them is not only dangerous but disturbing to those of us who moved here for the peace. IF Boulder county feels the herd MUST be reduced, then at least hire professionals and do it during a short period of time (not over a multi month period) and alert residents when this will happen so we won't accidentally be hit by stray bullets and can maybe take our vacations during that time.

Jean-Jacques Joris Longmont

Feb 25, 2020 *Comment #11*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Farmer/agricultural producer in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

On several occasions, the elks have grazed on our 65-acre farm, located just East of Table Mountain, along 55th st., usually after our 2nd grass-alfalfa cutting in late September, sometimes in late spring and winter. Consequently, we have protected our hay barn with metal fences. Over the past 12 months, several hunters have asked for permission to shoot elks in our fields, an offer we have consistently and politely declined. We have cows, sheep, horses, and llamas grazing our fields. Our property is surrounded by dwellings, and we receive many visitors on a daily basis to our equine-assisted psychotherapy center. We want to preserve the healing and peaceful atmosphere of our neighborhood. We therefore absolutely refuse to grant hunters access to our land. Any individual who shoots an elk on our fields or tries to enter our property will be considered a trespasser and treated accordingly.

Justin Neway Longmont

Feb 25, 2020 *Comment #10*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

I live adjacent to the area in question, and I support using the right method to reduce the population of Elk to a more sustainable level that minimizes damage to the ecosystem. The most important thing is to avoid tragedy, mishaps, invasions of privacy, and property damage from non-professionals hunting in a relatively densely populated area. I think the Red Hill herd spillage into adjacent areas is different the situation with the Rabbit Mt. Herd, so the management plan for the Red hill herd should be different too. Hunting by sport enthusiasts is dangerous, invasive and will most likely cause invasion of privacy issues and property damage in the more densely populated area involved. I think it would be better to use trained wildlife sharp-shooters to cull the herd. This would be safer, less expensive, less disruptive, and less costly in the long run. The problem should be solved safely, quickly, and efficiently to reduce the damage occurring to the residents adjacent to the area.

Ray Bovet Longmont

Feb 24, 2020 *Comment #9*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Farmer/agricultural producer in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

After a helpful discussion with Dave Hoerath this afternoon I would like to add to my previous comments. Specifically it is essential that the Department of Commerce deals with the large number of elk who now live much or all of the year on Table Mountain. We

frequently see them up there at the end of the afternoon and it seems they are scoping out which unfortunate landowner's property they will attack next. The only way to reduce the predations of the elk on the entire area surrounding Table Mountain is to deal with them there. Neither culling nor hunting can be done very effectively in the patchwork of large and small land holdings that surround Table Mountain. But culling seems particularly appropriate on Table Mountain itself and would be very effective in reducing or eliminating the problem of elk damage in our neighborhood!

Clive Jones *Longmont*

Feb 24, 2020 *Comment #8*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

The idea of public hunting on the open space behind the residential properties along Nelson Road is exceedingly dangerous. My family and grandkids could be hit by a bullet fired from the Open Space - even if the hunter was not aiming specifically at my house. Someone could be out walking on the pasture, in the garden, and so forth. This is not a proper scientific herd management approach. The herd may need to be culled, but that is far preferable to declaring open season on the population alongside this Open Space strip.

Kenneth Altshuler *Longmont*

Feb 24, 2020 *Comment #7*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

After reading the comments, it is pretty clear - "commuter" means hunter with a vested interest to hunt. Let's be clear - hunters are generally folks that do not live in the Red Hill Elk region. The people that actually live in the region and who are affected by the elk herd in a negative way are almost unanimously in favor of SHARP SHOOTING. A hunt that lasts for 6 months long over a 5 year period, though appealing to hunters, is NOT going to solve the present issue for those suffering from elk herd damage. Worse, those elk will mostly flood into 'safe zones' and actually be pushed into the properties south of Nelson Rd. worsening the problem for those concerned. If Boulder County is serious about responding to people harmed by the elk herd, they need to step up to the plate and do a quick and major culling. I am certain many of the neighbors are willing to help and some will even contribute to this effort financially if only asked.

Kenneth Altshuler *Longmont*

Feb 24, 2020 *Comment #6*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

I am apposed to hunting in this region north of Nelson and east of HWY 36. I believe that it is too tight an area with residents and horses to seriously consider allowing hunters in that region. Not only is the area essentially completely flanked with residential properties, it is a wide open field. I also believe that the county needs to do a better job of soliciting opinions of those living in the region. The neighbors that I spoke with do not even know that this is happening. Please allow more time and improve the effort to reach out to the community that will be impacted by this decision. I am happy to help spread awareness and together I am sure we can find an optimal solution.

Suzanne Webel *Longmont*

Feb 24, 2020 *Comment #5*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Farmer/agricultural producer in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

I am truly disappointed in the Draft Red Hill Elk Management Plan. I will be out of town for the POSAC meeting on Feb 27 so I am reaching out to you directly with this email and will also post my comments on the Red Hill Elk Management Plan website. My family owns and manages an 80-acre farm on the east flank of Table Mountain, where we have lived happily elk-free for more than

25 years. We raise certified weed-free hay and board a few horses. We planted more than 700 trees 25 years ago and have nurtured them, pruned them, watered them, mulched them, fertilized them, and loved them, and they in turn have provided privacy, shade, and bird habitat, as well as fruit, for us. The hay fields were a mess of rocks and weeds when we bought this land, but over the years we have nurtured it back into beautiful, irrigated, and productive acreage. And then the elk showed up. This year alone we have had more than 125 elk rampaging back and forth across our farm and destroying everything in sight: they have stripped the bark off more than 50 trees, broken many more, bashed their way through our livestock fences, devastated the hay crop in the field, and jumped over a high gate to trash the hay inside our hay barn, making much of it unsuitable for our horses and our customers. They also ate our entire apple and pear crop. We love elk, but they do not belong here and they are causing unacceptable damage to our property and our way of life. CPW will attest to the fact that I have been deeply and proactively involved in elk-mitigation efforts on our farm, all of which have been unsuccessful. And I have been faithfully participating (or trying to participate) in the development of an equitable Red Hill Elk Management Plan. Unfortunately, however, this Draft Plan is deeply deficient. 1) The map on P4, Fig. 1 is titled "Red Hill Elk Management Area" -- but the actual "Red Hill Elk Management [Hunting] Area" on P18 Fig 6 is much smaller. BCPOS has numerous properties south and east of Table Mountain, including Lagerman/Imel and Haystack Mountain, which are all being overrun with elk. If you do not include the entire area shown on Fig. 1 AND you do not manage the elk in the entire area -- not just in the little light blue boxes on Fig 6 -- you will be setting yourselves up for failure. This is not Rabbit Mountain. When I mentioned my concern about the small size of the actual proposed elk management area I got a lot of head-nodding agreement from staff -- yet now the draft has been released and nothing has changed. If you only address elk in the narrow band between the north end of Table Mountain and Heil Valley Ranch, you will be doing nothing whatsoever to ameliorate our dire predicament here on the east and south sides of Table Mountain. We need your help in solving this problem which is not of our making. 2) You need to get a commitment from the US Department of Commerce to become an active partner in the process. To date they have said this is not their problem, but it's their elk (and yours) and without their cooperation this management process will fail. 3) Your Draft document treats neighbors whose properties have been ruined by the Red Hill elk as an afterthought, as in "oh-by-the-way-we're-supposed-to-mention-continuing-outreach-to-the-neighbors." You haven't "reached out" to us at all, and you haven't included us as stakeholders or "partners" in your process. Indeed, many of us feel that you have barely tolerated our input only because you have to show you've had various public meetings. The comments you captured in your Draft Plan were only from one recent open house, which was stacked (as were the comments captured online) with hunters who don't even live in Boulder County; whereas comments from truly aggrieved neighbors, including myself both before and after the open house, have gone unrecorded and untallied. Your Draft Plan mostly denies that our elk damage is real, calling our fruit and pine and willow trees mere "ornamentals," ignoring our extensive fence and other real property damage including irrigation infrastructure, and refusing to compensate us for the vast amounts of time it takes to repair the heartbreaking damage these elk have caused. Your natural resources are valuable and irreplaceable but ours, apparently, are merely incidental. 4) Your Draft Plan is shockingly biased toward hunting as the only solution to this urgent problem. Of course it is, since that is CPW's mission and they have hijacked the entire process both at Rabbit Mountain and now here. Hunting is not an efficient or quick "magic bullet" to control an out-of-control elk population. Even when 32 Special Hunting Licenses were issued to neighbors (myself included) for an extended hunting season in 2019-2020, only three elk were harvested. And that's when the elk were "naive" (not expecting to be hunted). A big reason the hunters were unsuccessful is that hunting is only allowed from dawn to dusk, and these elk have become completely nocturnal. So, no -- hunting is not the magic bullet its proponents claim it to be. Is it a tool? -- sure, but ONLY in conjunction with other methods of control. 5) All other means of elk management are, however, dismissed out of hand in your Draft Plan report. For example, to prevent elk-car crashes on Hwy 36 CDOT tried posting a few signs and a speed-reduction area but never enforced it and then abandoned the attempt, claiming it was unsuccessful in changing driver behavior. Now, they say, huge and expensive overpasses or underpasses will be necessary to prevent future crashes. Yet a simple system of having collared elk transmit a beam or a frequency to activate flashing signs on the roads when they are present was not even tried here. Instead, we are treated to some desultory arguments about why they won't work or are too expensive. But they are successful in other jurisdictions, so why not at least try it here? It's a lot cheaper than crashes, and a lot cheaper than the \$3 million for some huge engineering projects. 6) Your Draft Plan admits that its hunting plan would displace the depredations of these elk from your lands to ours with the rationale that this would "enable harvest on private land surrounding open space" (P9). Hey, wait! Our neighborhood is a mosaic of small holdings, medium-sized farms, and other open space, with some owners who don't want hunting on their places, others who are concerned about their safety, and still others who feel -- rightly -- that you are forcing us to accept the burden of even more elk damage and even more hunting in an attempt to eradicate this enormous scourge. At our own expense, of course, so it can be "less expensive" for you. That is a completely upside-down, unfair proposition. 7) The Draft Plan finds every possible excuse, no matter how farfetched or inaccurate, to dismiss culling. After correctly describing culling as "[mostly] done at night with suppressed weapons by professional sharpshooters in an efficient, condensed time period..." the very next sentence contradicts this statement by opining that "[this] method of culling may or may not be the case with this elk population" but gives no reasons why it would or would not be the case here. The rest of this section repeatedly introduces doubts about costs and techniques and "unknowns" and "constraints" which would "likely drive costs higher"... and "could very well lead to not meeting harvest goals" (P12). This argument is completely bogus, as I have spoken at length with Tony DeNicola, the White Buffalo professional culling expert quoted in this document, and it was I who directed BCPOS staff to talk with him. The section goes on to state that "there is currently no procedure in Colorado for applying and implementing a contracted culling plan." Really?? Rocky Mountain National Park conducted just such a plan in Colorado and it was extremely successful. That's Federal land and Table Mountain is Federal land. Culling is quick, quiet, humane, safe, effective, and cost-effective (especially when compared to alternatives), and can be done at night, unlike hunting -- an especially important consideration since the Red Hill herd is nocturnal. The final bogus reason for staff's

dismissing professional culling -- that it is "counter to the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (Organ et al. 2012)" -- conveniently does not disclose the fact that the NAMWC is a hunter-advocacy organization. Google it for yourself. Of course they'd oppose culling, because they're all about promoting hunting, but that doesn't mean we should. 8) The Draft Plan's eloquent support for "Public Harvest" falls short. Is the objective to incentivize the elk into migrating, or is the objective really to provide hunting opportunities on public land? At Rabbit Mountain we have experienced stunning mission creep, morphing from getting those elk to resume migrating to justifying ever more hunting as the end goal. The same so-called citation for the pro-hunting argument here, as at Rabbit Mountain, is the very same hunter-advocacy outfit North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (Organ et al, 2012) which waxes poetic about hunting because of course they do, but again, that doesn't mean we should. 9) All other alternatives to hunting are similarly dismissed with superficial, preconceived-agenda arguments. Hazing? Nope. Fencing? Mostly nope, except to help certain favored small produce gardens. Smelly sprays? May or may not be effective. Trails? Nary a mention, in spite of my having tried to bring it up several times. I'd like to have a serious community conversation about the use of trails to shape wildlife movements. If staff claims that trails inconvenience wildlife so we shouldn't have trails on open space (citing, for example, the mere existence of the Picture Rock Trail at Heil Valley Ranch as the driver for the elk moving eastward, a concept that is dubious at best), and our stated goal is to inconvenience this wildlife into migrating clear outta here, then we should embrace trails as a win/win, non-consumptive method of doing so and we should build a few well-designed, sustainable trails in this neighborhood that people could enjoy as well. If there is no justification for worrying about trails displacing wildlife, we should be able to move forward with some other long-delayed trail projects around the County. You can't have it both ways. Conceptual trail alignments in this area have been on the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan for decades with no progress, which is a travesty. As you can imagine, I have a trail plan that would accomplish all these objectives and I would be happy to share it with you, unless The Fix Is Already In to rubber stamp this hunting plan for BCPOS Closed Space. Is it? 10) The Draft Plan discusses enhancing elk habitat, such as improving ponds, vegetation, and cover. Wait, what??? -- if we improve their habitat that will only serve to bring more elk! This is not a serious solution for anything other than creating yet more hunting opportunities. 11) The Draft Plan proposes implementing "Wildlife Movement Facilitation" projects such as building huge new overpasses and underpasses. Please, NO! They will just serve to bring more elk into our neighborhood! Why would BCPOS/CPW even consider such an outrageously idiotic idea? -- oh, wait, of course! let's bring in more elk so that there will be more elk for hunters to keep shooting into the future! 12) Staff has referred to managing the Red Hill elk herd as an "intractable problem" yet they act as if they are uncomfortably marching to someone's orders to come up with a plan, any plan, even a bad plan. Whose orders might those be? Summary: I am not against hunting, and I agreed to let hunters on my farm this year in a desperate but unsuccessful attempt to motivate these hundreds of elk to vacate my premises. But I believe culling and trails are much better alternatives that ALSO deserve to be implemented here. Unfortunately, there has been no serious discussion of alternatives to hunting and, similarly, no serious attempt to bring neighborhood stakeholders to the table. Until those things take place I am firmly against the Draft Red Hill Elk [Hunting] Management Plan as it stands. I urge you -- POSAC and BOCC -- to direct staff to get it right. We have no time to lose. Thank you for your consideration and as always I welcome any opportunity to speak with you directly to find solutions we can all live with. Suzanne

Ray Bovet Longmont

Feb 24, 2020 *Comment #4*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Farmer/agricultural producer in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: No

Comments:

The discussion points to the purchase of Heil Valley Ranch and the subsequent reduction of hunting there as the cause of the infestation of elk experienced by those of us who live in the area around Table Mountain. Since BCPOS caused this problem for us, your plan should consider our pain and explicitly help us get rid of the elk that are making our lives miserable. But the plan you are proposing focuses entirely on reducing impacts to Open Space properties northwest of Table Mountain. While it is possible that your hunting plan will reduce levels of elk in the area overall, it is also possible that the impact on landowners in our neighborhood will increase if more elk decide to move east to avoid the hunters. Therefore, I believe you should expand the size of your management area to include all of Table Mountain and the area south and east to the Diagonal Highway. And you should incorporate other methods to manage the elk, such as culling, fencing, and trails. Finally, providing realtime access to the elk collar data so that landowners can be forewarned when the elk herd is approaching their property would enable us to reduce property damage.

Joe Thiltgen Longmont

Feb 24, 2020 *Comment #3*

Affected by Herd: No

User Group: Hunter

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: Yes

Hunting Methods Supported: Muzzleloader Shotgun slug Rifle

Comments:

Wendy Hawley *Longmont*

Feb 23, 2020 *Comment #2*

Affected by Herd: NO

User Group: Boulder County resident

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

The continued use of open space for hunting is disturbing. The report itself says that hunting is part of a long-term strategy, even after the initial population numbers have been reduced. None of these plans have a clear exit strategy, so it seems we are committing to indefinitely hosting hunting activities on open space not as an emergency measure but as an end-all solution.

Lynn Leathers *Longmont*

Feb 22, 2020 *Comment #1*

Affected by Herd: Yes

User Group: Adjacent neighbor in the management area

Support Public Hunting as Outlined in Plan: NO

Comments:

How about relocating the herd when they do not migrate up to the mountains for the summer. Re-establishing habitat where we WANT them to be.