Appendix 1. Interview Guide

**Interview Guide**

Elk in Northern California: Costs, Benefits, and Perceptions

**Format and Process** – This will be a semi-structured interview 30 min to 1 hour. Based on the interviewee’s responses, there may be some topical diversions from the guide. However, the larger themes and objectives of the interview will remain the same.

**Recording** - The interview will be recorded for future transcription (if participants consent) and some notes will be taken during the interviews. The recorded interviews will be secured according to the confidentiality and data security procedures outlined in section 13 of this IRB protocol.

**Research Question** – The objective of this research is to understand and describe the conflicts and benefits that elk bring to land owners and other stakeholders in northern California.

1) What are the economic implications of elk-induced infrastructural damage and competition with livestock for forage on rangeland? What are the other costs and benefits of elk (monetary or non-monetary)?

2) Does elk hunting provide significant revenue to landowners?

The rationale for engaging in this line of research is that it will help land owners, policy makers, wildlife managers, and the general public to better understand elk-human interactions and find solutions to elk-related problems.

**Personnel and Property Characteristics**

Are you an:

- Owner/Operator?
- Lessee?

What are the Main Activities on your ranch and percentage of income from each? Average over past 5 years.

- Livestock production
- Fee hunting
- Crop/hay production
Timber production

Investment property – Capital Gains

Other, such as:
Mineral leases
Cell tower leases
Firewood sale
Bird watching
Horse training
Bed and Breakfast
Events - weddings, etc.

What land area of the property is engaged in each productive activity (percent or absolute values)?

**Presence of Elk**

Do you have elk on your property? If yes,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th># of elk on property</th>
<th>average # of days per season elk spend on property (# of days out of 90)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring (Mar, Apr, May)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer (Jun, Jul, Aug)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall (Sept, Oct, Nov)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Is elk activity focused in any particular area of the property, or dispersed widely across the majority of the property? If it is focused on one area, where on the property is it focused, and what are the habitat attributes of that area?

**Livestock Factors**

What is the stocking rate of livestock?

Do elk occupy the same areas as livestock?

Has the presence of elk negatively affected livestock herd health? If yes, how?

**Elk-Induced Economic Losses**

Do elk interfere with your operation?

Do elk cause economic losses to your operation? If so, how? Can you estimate the cost of elk-induced economic losses?

Do elk on your property consume forage that is intended for livestock? Can you quantify how much time you think elk spend foraging on your property? Given a mature elk is .6 AUMs, can you estimate the number of AUMs consumed by elk?

Do elk cause damage to infrastructure?

Are there any other ways in which elk interfere with your operation?

Damage to crops?

Other?

**Mitigation Practices**

Do you engage in practices designed to deter or mitigate elk damage? If so, what?
Elk Hunting and Management

Do you derive benefits from elk hunting on your land?

Are you able to get sufficient elk tags for hunting on your property?

Do you have a fee hunting operation: why or why not?

If you don’t have fee hunting

- Prefer to keep hunting and/or recreation on ranch for family and friends
- Don’t like the idea of hunting
- Don't want hunters on the ranch
- Too much risk of an injury, accident, or lawsuit
- Loss of privacy
- Don't want to deal with the hassle
- Ranch not big enough for fee hunting
- Not enough wildlife numbers or species
- Income won't offset costs
- Don't need added income
- Difficulty getting hunters
- Other

If you do have fee hunting

- Increased income?
- It’s what the land is meant for
- Hunters help maintain aspects of the property, infrastructure maintenance etc.
- Prevent hunters from asking for free hunts
- Trespass control
- Offset forage loss or property damage made by wildlife
- Public relations benefits
Are you involved in a cooperative agreement with neighbors to manage elk or other wildlife? Do you do predator control?

Harvest

Do you track the harvests of elk on the ranch?

If so,

Quantity harvested

Do you track the characteristics of harvested elk?

B&C score?

Antler characteristics?

Weight

Age

Do you have sex ratio goals in place? If so, do tag allocations limit your acquisition of these goals?

Do you have age structure goals in place?

If not,

Do you have harvest guidelines/rules? If yes,

How do you set harvest guidelines/rules?

Allow hunters to set rules

Use experience and knowledge of area to set harvest

Use population counts to estimate population and set harvest

Proportion of total elk population harvested over previous 5 and 10 years?

Hunting Enterprise Characteristics (if they have one)
Lease Type: circle all that apply.
- Day/ Multi-day
- Season
- year-round
- multi-year

Do you use an outfitter to manage your hunting?

Do you offer hunting based on:
- Single Species
- Multiple species
- Direct payment for animal harvested

Do you have a corporate entity or a group of private individuals leasing the hunting rights?
- Corporate
- Private individuals
- Other

Number of paying hunters?

Number of hunters allowed to hunt for free? Including yourself, family and friends.

Other Elk Benefits and Costs
Are there non-monetary benefits to having elk on your land? Intrinsic value?
Other value?
Are elk a net benefit, net liability, or neutral for your property?
- A. Benefit
- B. Liability
C. Neutral

Are there circumstances where you could see elk becoming a net benefit due to changes in policies? If so what would they be?

**Personal Background**

Ranch is only source of income / Have outside job

How long has property been in family?

How long have you managed the property?