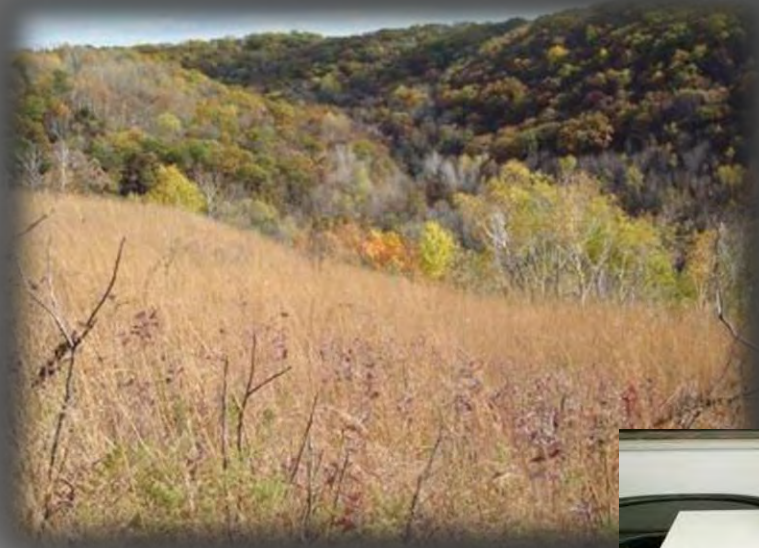




WI Elk Management Update



WI History



- Records in 50/72 counties
- Extirpated: 1868 - 1886



Elk Reintroductions

- Reintroduction efforts in 40 US states, Canadian provinces, and Mexico
- Between 1912-1967, 13,500 elk were used to establish herds



Elk Reintroductions

Population:

- Pre-settlement: 10 million
- 1920: 50-90,000
- 2010: 1.2 million+



HISTORIC
RANGE

CURRENT
RANGE



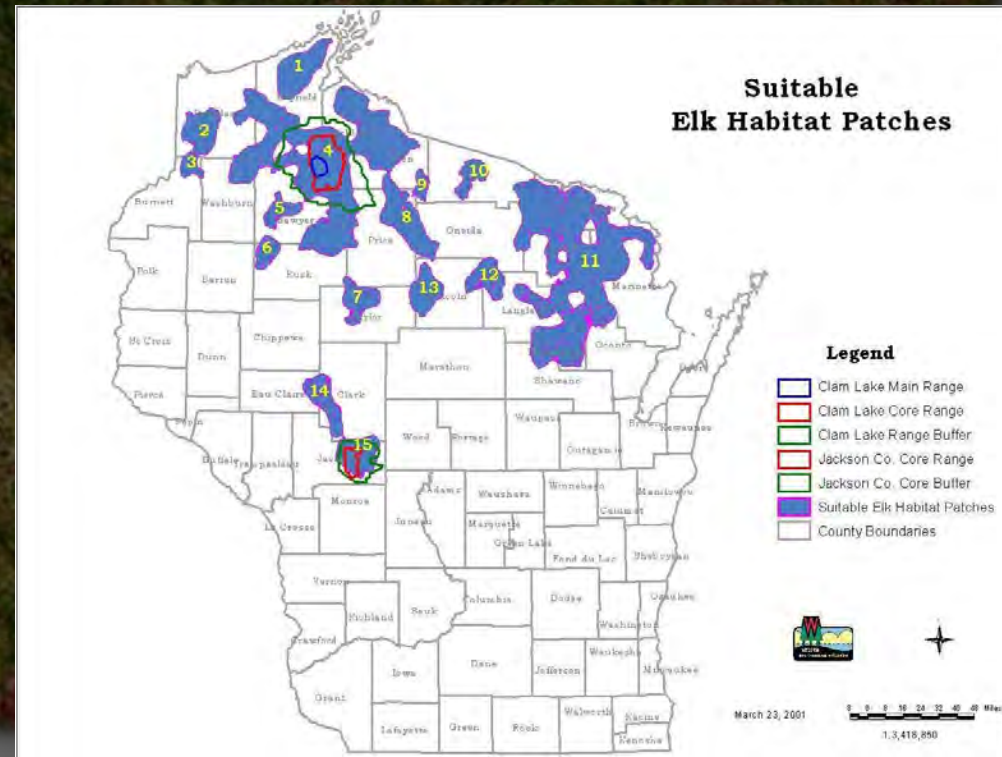
Wisconsin's first reintroduction

- 1932 – 15 elk released in Vilas County
- Extirpated by 1950's



Wisconsin's second reintroduction effort

- Feasibility Study ordered by state legislators and conducted by Wisconsin DNR (1990)
 - Elk, Moose, and Caribou
 - 9 potential locations
 - Bayfield peninsula
- DNR did not pursue this reintroduction
 - Lack of spring forage and water, insufficient acreage, lack of funding, local opposition



However....

- Wisconsin Elk Study Committee (WESCO) formed
- DNR and US Forest Service authorized UW-SP to pursue the reintroduction in 1994
- Great Divide district of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
 - Good elk habitat, public land, little agriculture, local support



Release site

- 38% hardwoods
- 26 % aspen
- 18% pine/spruce
- 11% swamp
- 3% open

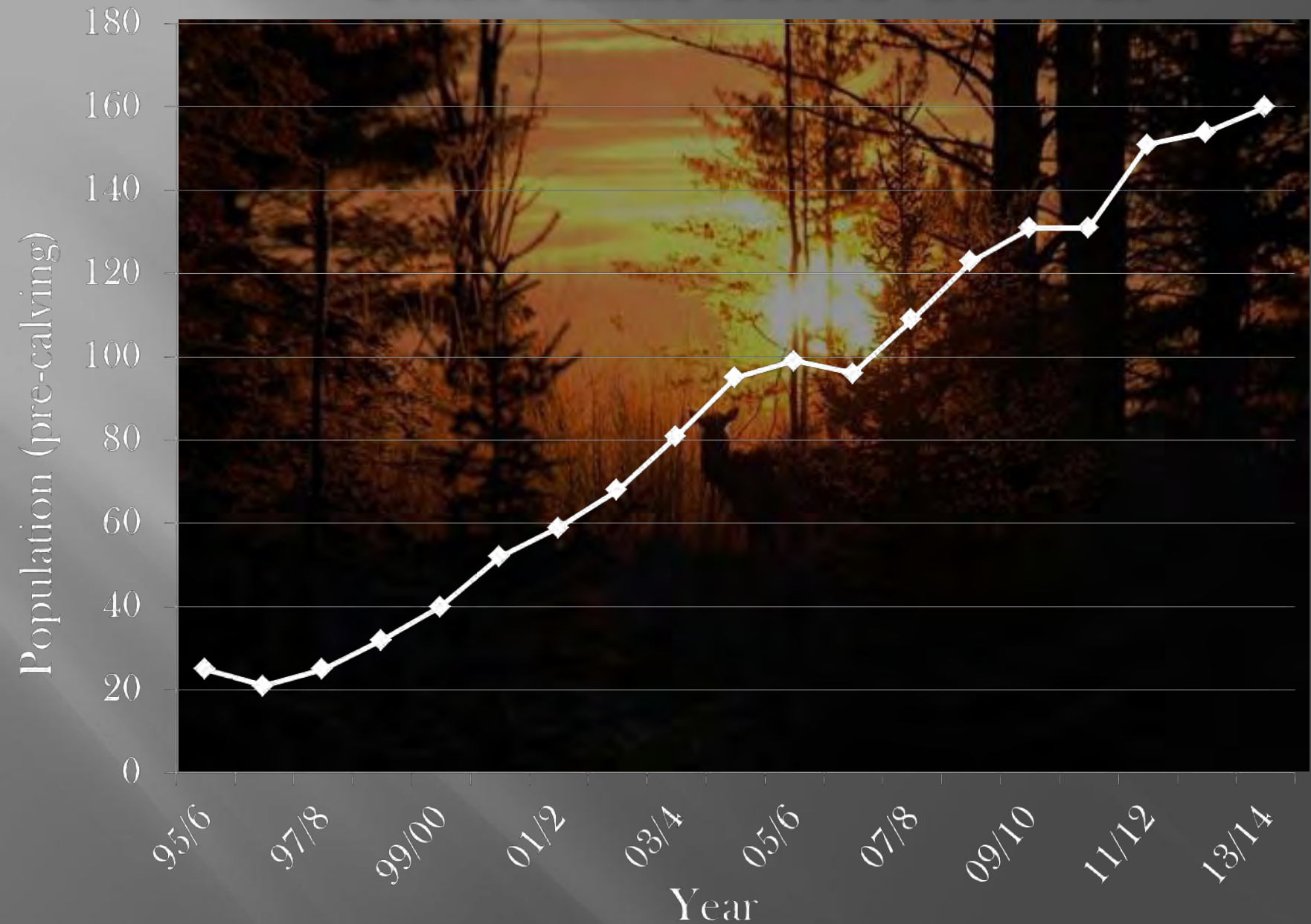


Elk return to Wisconsin!

- 25 elk (7 bulls, 18 cows) acquired from Michigan
 - Disease history, logistics, source habitat, and administrative procedures
- Released in May, 1995



Clam Lake Herd Growth





Elk Mortalities (1995-2012)

Cause	Total
Wolves	71 (38%)
Vehicles	27 (15%)
Bear	25 (14%)
Drowning	5
Poor health	7
Brain worm	4
Liver fluke	4
Poaching	3
Winter severity	3
Other	36
Total	185

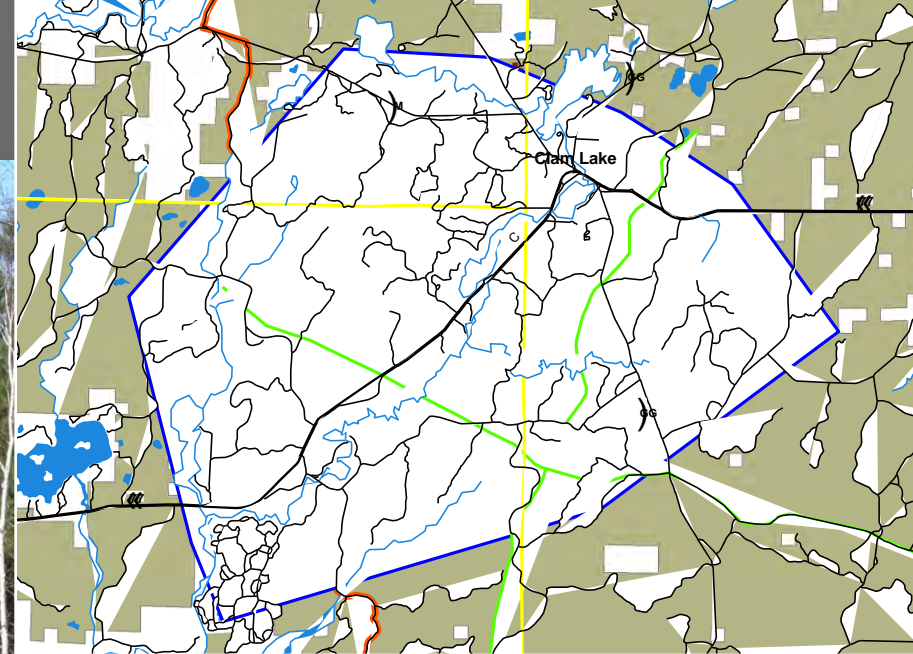
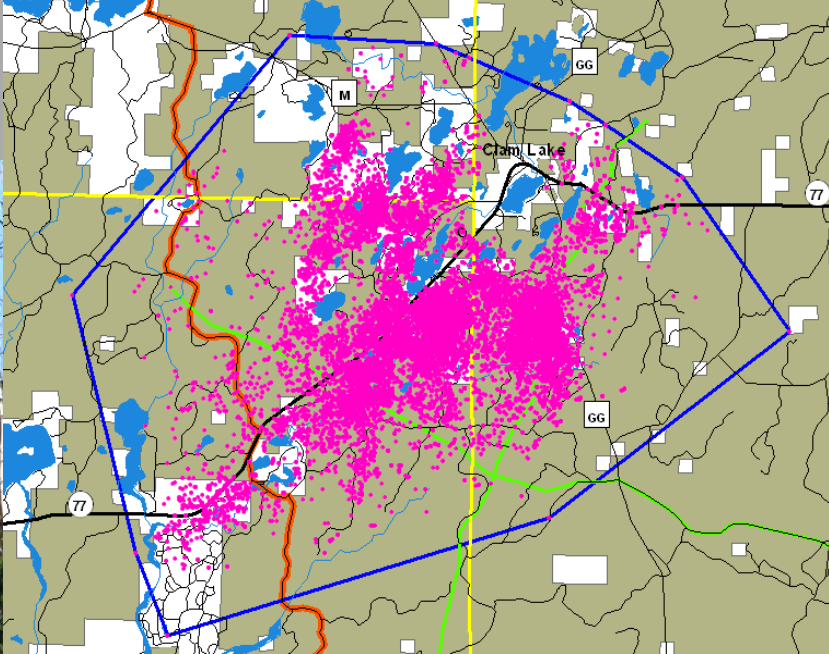
Current Management

- Intensive radio-collaring, monitoring, and research
- Habitat improvements
- Public outreach and education



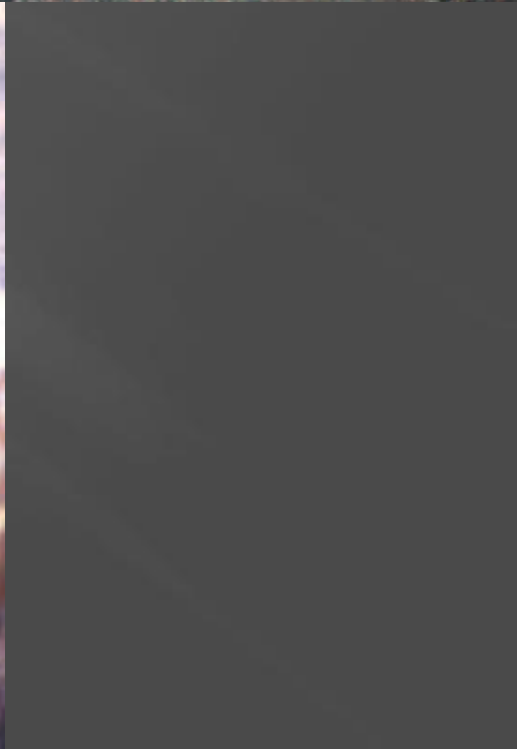
What We've Learned in 18 Years

- Aspen/open forage is critical
 - Large predators have impacted herd growth
 - Wisconsin elk move very short distances
 - Need for stronger genetic variation
 - Local economies have benefitted
 - Value of strong partnerships
- 
- A large elk with impressive, multi-tined antlers stands in a lush green forest. The elk is facing slightly to the right but looking towards the camera. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees, creating a natural, wooded setting. The lighting is soft, suggesting a forest environment.











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