



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Theodore Roosevelt
National Park

PO Box 7
Medora, ND 58645

701-623-4466 phone
701-623-4840 fax
www.nps.gov/thro

Theodore Roosevelt National Park News Release

Immediate Release

Eileen Andes 701-623-4466

Date: June 7, 2010

Record of Decision Signed on Elk Management Plan

A Record of Decision has been signed for Theodore Roosevelt National Park's Elk Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. The Record of Decision, signed by Midwest Regional Director Ernest Quintana on June 4, signals the end of the planning process for elk management and allows the park to move forward with its selected alternative.

The selected alternative is for park employees to lead teams of up to 4 volunteer shooters to reduce the elk herd in the South Unit of the park. The park may also use other methods if the volunteer effort is unsuccessful in reducing the elk numbers sufficiently to meet annual reduction objectives.

Skilled volunteers using firearms will work as members of teams and will be supervised and directed in the field by NPS personnel. All personnel equipped with firearms will have the appropriate skills and proficiencies for wildlife removal and volunteers will need to meet a number of requirements including a demonstrated level of firearm proficiency established by the park. Because the work will be strenuous, under challenging field conditions, the volunteers will also be screened for fitness.

"This is not a controlled hunt so no tags will be issued," said Superintendent Valerie Naylor. "The selected alternative implements a team approach to elk reduction and teams will be expected to efficiently and safely remove elk while keeping in mind this is a National Park. It will be difficult but rewarding work with long hours in rough terrain and varied weather conditions."

Implementation of reduction actions in the field could begin as early as mid-October of 2010 and run through January. Once the final application procedures are developed, the public will be notified as to how to apply.

"We have been getting many questions from the public about the reduction effort and about opportunities to volunteer," said Naylor. "Now that the Record of Decision has been signed, we will be finalizing the requirements and protocols for members of the public who wish to volunteer to reduce elk in the park."

An annual aerial survey conducted in February showed the number of elk in the park to be approximately 950. Although the park objective for elk in the South Unit is 200 - 400, the higher numbers are not currently causing measureable changes in the park vegetation or environment.

The full text of the Record of Decision is available on-line at www.nps.gov/thro/naturescience/elk-management.

--NPS--

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.