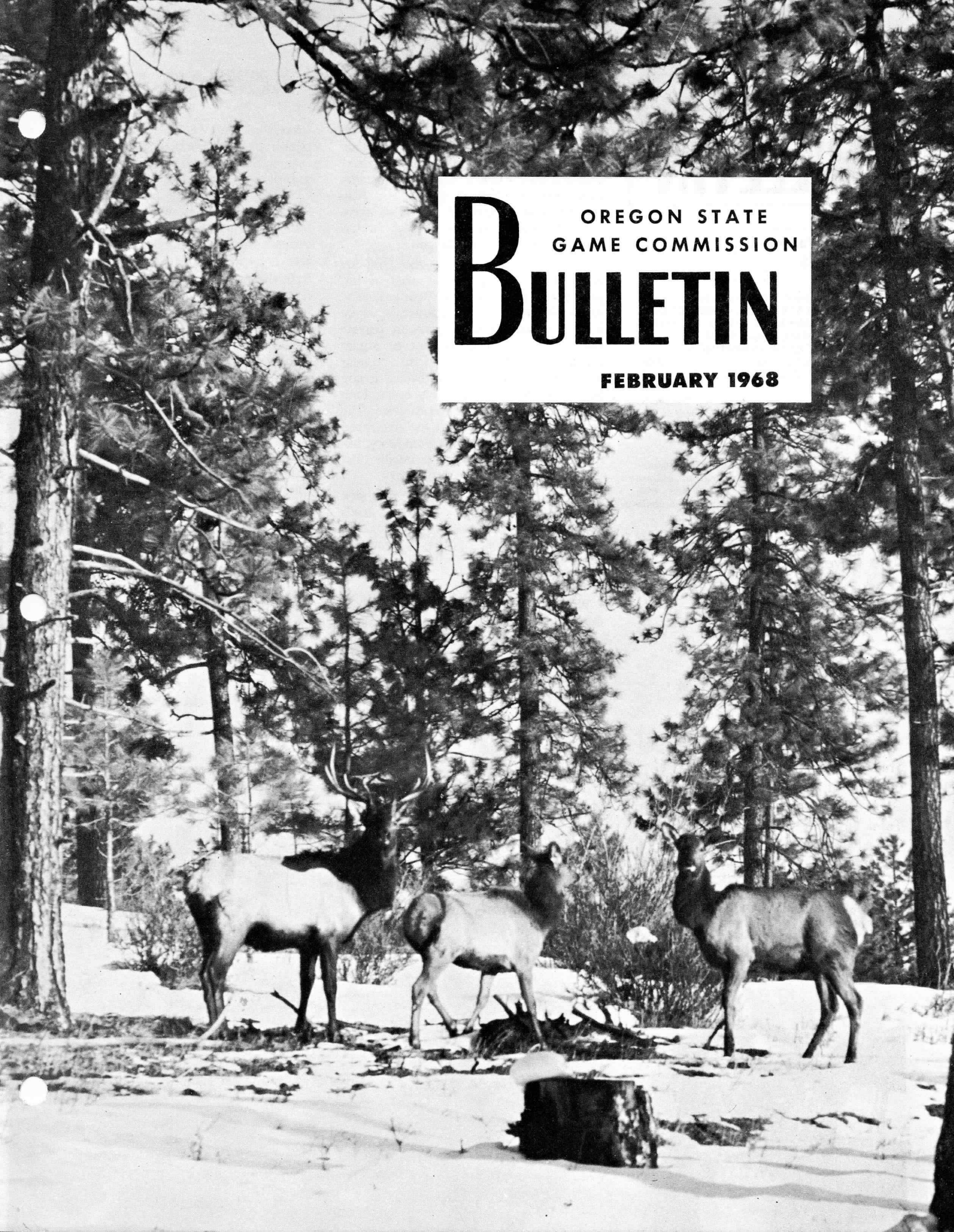

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The Cover

Rocky Mountain elk in the Wenaha Game Management Area. (Photo by Milt Guymon)

BULLETIN HUNTER SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAM

Instructors Approved

Month of December	12
Total to Date	3,389

Students Trained

Month of December	241
Total to Date	119,694

Total Firearms Casualties for 1967

Fatal	14
Nonfatal	79

Wernald "Chris" Christianson, Game Commission district fishery biologist in Tillamook, was named "Kiwanian of the Year" by that city's Kiwanis chapter. The award was presented in January for outstanding club and civic activities carried on by Chris during the past year. He has been stationed in Tillamook since June of 1964.

UMPQUA RIVER ACCESS PLAN

THIS IS THE SECOND of a series of articles written to explain the statewide water access plans being prepared. These plans provide a "catalog" of specific needs for each stream system and help coordinate the efforts of numerous agencies interested in developing water-oriented recreation in Oregon.

Overall water access in the Umpqua River system is in general need of improvement to provide presently needed access and to assure future access where it is now subject to closure on private land. A considerable amount of angler pressure is now confined to popular holes, which become overcrowded during peak seasons. Between these holes, long stretches of the river are untouched. The bedrock nature of some of the streambed contributes to this crowding tendency, but a lack of adequate access (especially boat access) compounds the problem.

For clarity, the basin has been divided into four areas based upon access needs and geographical location. A general review of each area and its outstanding needs is summarized below.

Main Umpqua River

Most of the Umpqua between Gardiner and the forks is located near public roads, but the actual river frontage is in private ownership. Anglers must, therefore, rely mainly upon access that is subject to closure at the discretion of the owner. The area of principal access needs lies between Cleveland Rapids and Scottsburg where 80 miles of river is now served by only four boat ramps (one of which is publicly owned) and one public bank angling area.

In the Access Plan, ten boat ramps and ten bank angling sites are recommended to facilitate boat access and to distribute angler pressure. This portion of the Umpqua system receives heavy angler pressure from the Roseburg and Eugene areas during peak salmon and steelhead seasons.

Smith River

As a major tributary to the lower Umpqua River, 37 miles of Smith River were recommended for additional access development to utilize the fishery resources. The single ramp and three small parks on this stream provide the only public access at present. Twelve additional sites are recommended and the area from Smith River Falls to the head of tide is listed as having the most pressing need for angler access. Winter steelhead anglers find this six-mile stretch most productive but exceedingly difficult to reach. Three ramp

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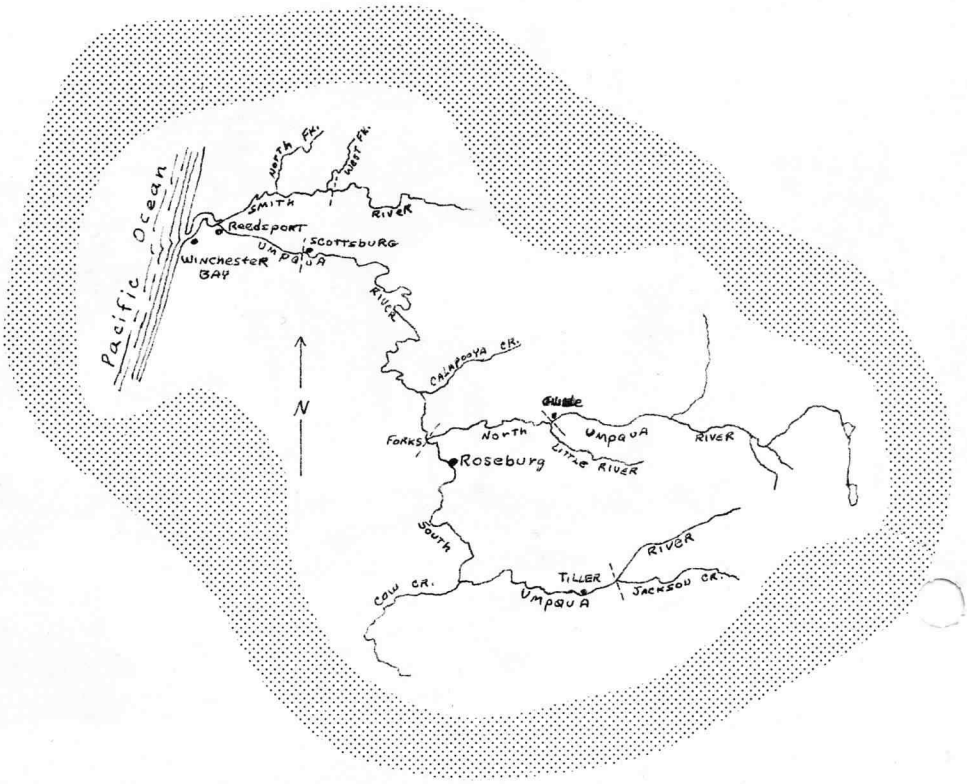
UMPQUA RIVER SYSTEM



Winter Management of Rocky Mountain Elk

By Will H. Brown, Northeast Regional Supervisor

TO MANY OF THE 47,000 Rocky Mountain elk hunters, the 23-day open season is the high point of the hunting year. This is as it should be, for the elk is the king of Oregon's big game animals and we are fortunate that anyone who wants to hunt them has this opportunity.

Elk hunters have increased at the rate of 3,800 per year for the past 10 years, while suitable habitat available for producing elk has decreased because of the encroachment of man's activities into the wild areas necessary for good elk production. Only the most intensive management methods can continue to produce elk in numbers that will provide the high quality recreation expected by the elk hunter.

One of the most serious threats to the future of Rocky Mountain elk herds is the construction of all-weather road networks on the winter ranges. The amount of low elevation lands suitable for winter range is limited. When big game animals are subjected to frequent harassment by men in motor vehicles, the use of prime winter range may be denied to them, and animals may perish under the stress of exhaustion and starvation. This may also be a factor on summer ranges, and many Oregon hunters are finding some of their old hunting grounds no longer productive because of intensive road development in the area.

Damage

Large concentrations of elk, wintering on private lands, are sometimes in conflict with use of the lands for agriculture. The Game Commission has developed a number of useful methods for handling these situations.

Sometimes the best solution is a late hunting season with a limited number of permits which will provide a continuous hazing action and drive the animals from the area. This method was used last year on the west side of the Baker Valley, on Indian Creek east of Elgin, and north of the Wenaha River at Troy. The most frequent problem is winter use by elk on haystacks. For this situation the Game Commission constructs wooden panels eight feet high and loans them to ranchers to protect haystacks that are receiving damage. Since the start of this program, approximately 45,000 panels have been issued to protect 3,200 haystacks in eastern Oregon.

In situations where high value crops are involved, a contract may be entered into with the landowner providing reimbursement for approximately half of the cost of a deer and elk proof fence. Twelve fences of this type were constructed in northeast Oregon in 1967.

Wenaha Area

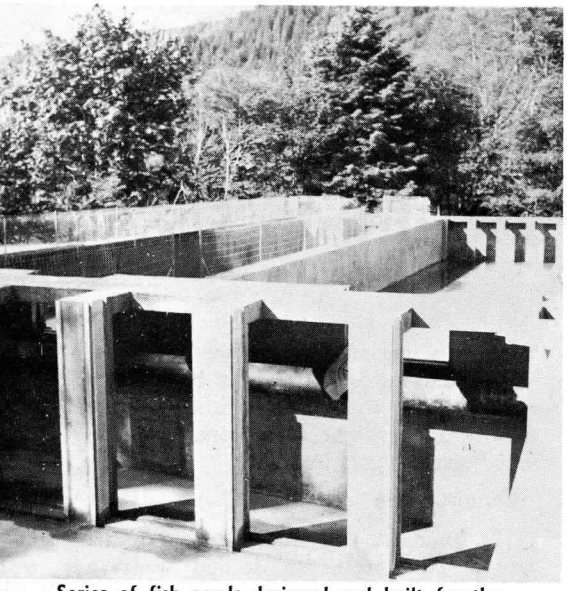
In some areas where a large number of elk concentrate on deeded lands in the winter and where adequate summer range is available on public lands, the answer may be acquisition of the winter

(Continued on Page 6)

Cost of deer and elk proof fences to protect high value crops may be shared by the Game Commission if landowner has entered into a fencing contract.

To prevent erosion, gabions reinforce the bank of Rock Creek (North Umpqua River). Rock Creek Hatchery buildings are in the background.

Interior of fishery research laboratory near Corvallis.



Series of fish ponds designed and built for the Cedar Creek Hatchery in Tillamook County.

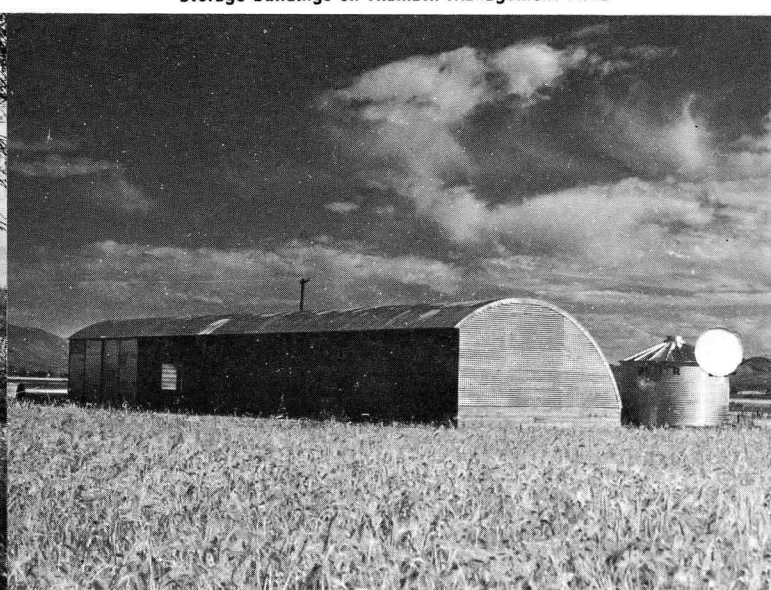
Engineering for Fish and Game

Fish ponds, fishways, fish screens, dikes, dams, logjams, water controls, boat ramps, parking areas, residences, fish hatchery buildings, storage buildings, machine sheds, office buildings, laboratories, garages, wells, roads, boat ramps, retaining walls, refrigeration plants, fish counting stations, a cable car even . . . these all require attention of the engineering section of the Game Commission.

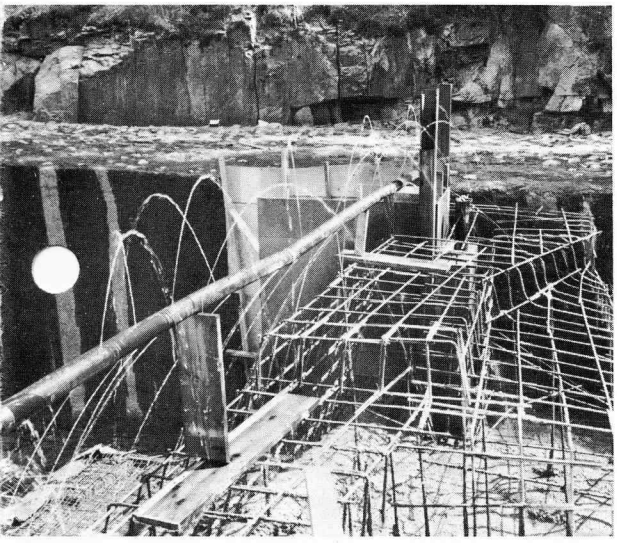
Practically each time the Commission initiates a new project, whether it be a fishing impoundment, hatchery, big game or waterfowl management area, access development, or passage for fish, the engineers are among the first to be called into the picture for advice and assistance. The accompanying photographs depict just a few of these activities.

Water control on the Sauvie Island Management Area. Efficient manipulation of water is important in the operation of a waterfowl area.

Storage buildings on Klamath Management Area.



(Above) Construction of Jubilee Meadows impoundment was started last summer. This northeastern Oregon lake is now filling with water and will be stocked with trout this year. (Right) Trillium Lake below Mt. Hood had its dam reconstructed in 1960 and has been a popular lake ever since. Both lakes are on national forest land and recreational facilities are provided by the U. S. Forest Service.

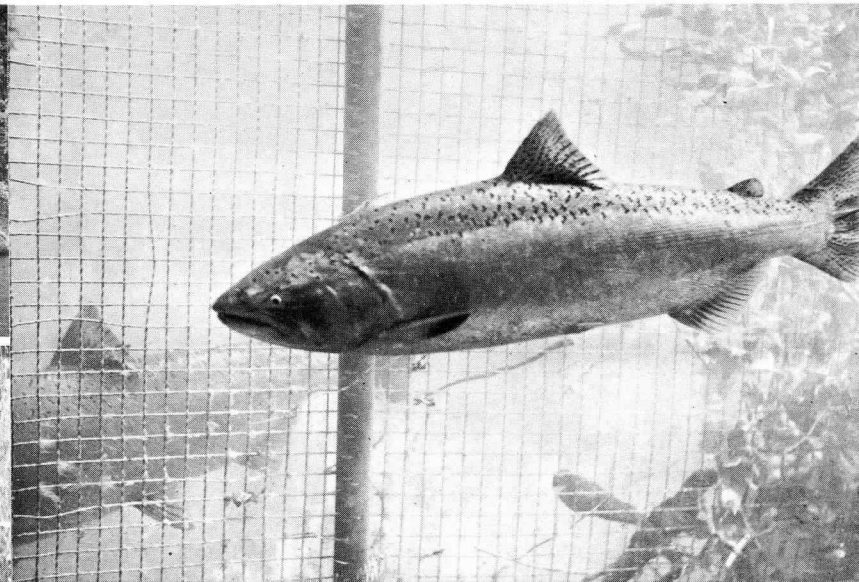


Repairing fishway over Steamboat Falls in the North Umpqua River.

Removing logjams in coastal streams to keep fish passage open is a continuing project. This is in the Oxbow Burn area of Smith River (Douglas County).

Fish screen in Rogue River area. Commission manufactures screens at its plant at the Wilson Management Area near Corvallis.

At the viewing station in the Winchester Dam fish ladder, people can watch fish, like this chinook salmon, going upstream.



Winter Management Rocky Mountain Elk

(Continued from Page 3)

range to be managed primarily for deer and elk.

The Wenaha Game Management Area, located in northern Wallowa County near Troy, was the first purchase of this type in Oregon and was initiated in 1953. The area consists of benchlands and steep slopes at the confluence of the Wenaha and Grande Ronde Rivers. Of the 17,659 acres proposed for purchase, 10,510 acres have been acquired to date.

Marginal farmlands have been planted to permanent pasture and hay crops. Hay is stored in barns for emergency winter feeding. Grain and legume plots are planted for upland game birds. Elk, whitetail and mule deer concentrate on the benches and south facing slopes throughout the winter and spring, and a sizable herd remains through the summer. Hunting is allowed for all game species during the general open seasons.

During the winters of 1962 through 1965, 338 elk were trapped and marked. The purpose is to determine the migration pattern and summer range of the Wenaha elk herd. The study indicates that most of these animals summer on the Umatilla National Forest within 20 miles to the west of the trap sites. A total of 46 marked animals has been reported killed during the hunting seasons but many can still be observed, and the study is continuing.

State ownership of a substantial portion of this winter range has made it possible to maintain a large and healthy herd of elk that can take full advantage of the good summer range available on adjacent national forest lands. Without the project, elk numbers would have to be reduced to a point where they would not do excessive damage to hay and grain crops on private lands, which would be the only place for them to feed.

Although hunting for big game and upland game is permitted throughout the general open seasons, travel by motor vehicles is allowed only on the main access roads. This gives the sportsman an opportunity to hunt on foot without competing with noisy cars, trail scooters, and snowmobiles. It also gives the animals a chance to rest during the closed season. Harassment by these vehicles exhausts the animals and may drive them from the game management area.

Bridge Creek Area

The most recent big game winter range acquisition is the Bridge Creek Game Management Area started in 1962. Of the 15,375 acres proposed for purchase, 7,300 acres have been acquired to date. The area is located south of Ukiah in Umatilla County and consists of benchlands between Camas Creek and the North Fork of the John Day River. It joins the Umatilla National Forest on the east and Ukiah-Dale State Park on the west.

Elk and mule deer are the primary species to benefit from this project. Grouse, mountain quail, chukar and Hungarian partridge are also abundant. Wild turkeys were trapped from the White River vicinity and released on Bridge Creek in 1965.

Hunting is permitted during the general open season for big game and upland game birds. Two new camp sites are being developed and recreational use is heavy during the hunting seasons. Motor vehicles are not allowed in the area from December 1 until May 1 as the open terrain makes it easy to drive elk from the winter range with snowmobiles.

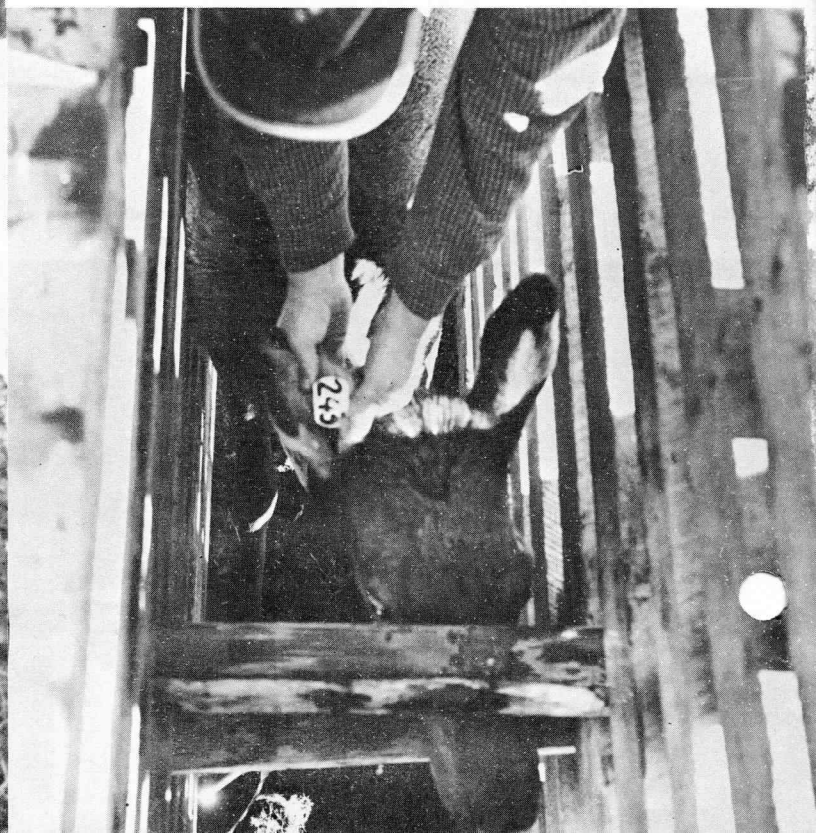
The more productive soils on the bench have been seeded to pasture grasses, legumes, and shrubs. They are now producing many times the foliage that was formerly present. Clumps of lodgepole pine have been planted to provide shelter for the elk during winter storms. Ponds and springs have been developed to give better distribution of animals and game birds.

A long history of overgrazing had re-

(Continued on Page 7)

Typical trap used to corral elk for marking purposes.

Captured elk receives a numbered ear tag.



Winter Management Rocky Mountain Elk

(Continued from Page 6)

duced the more palatable and productive grasses to a very low level. The first step in restoring the production on the sites too rough to reseed was the removal of all livestock use until the better native grasses could recover the ground with a vigorous stand. When this had been achieved, a neighboring rancher was allowed under a lease to graze the benchland. Cattle are turned on after the grass has matured and set seed, then are moved from one pasture to another so that each receives only light to moderate use. Elk will seek out the pastures that have been lightly grazed by cattle to remove the coarser growth of grass in preference to ungrazed or overgrazed areas. A substantial increase of elk use has occurred on the management area since this grazing program has been established.

Horseback census routes are ridden at regular intervals from late fall until early spring to gather information on the number of animals present and to study the distribution pattern.

Two elk traps have been constructed and animals will be ear-tagged and marked for later identification on the summer and fall ranges. An understanding of the summer and fall distribution of a herd is helpful in making long range plans for good winter range management.

Cooperation

Intensive habitat improvement practices can be applied to state-owned lands developed primarily for elk winter range, but obviously this can only affect a small percentage of the lands needed to winter Oregon's big game herds. Realizing this, the Oregon Game Commission has cooperated with federal land management agencies on projects that will benefit big game on winter ranges.

Many thousands of dollars have been spent on legume seed to be planted by the U. S. Forest Service on new burns created by forest fires such as the Moore Flat and Lostine fires in Wallowa County, or the Anthony Lake fire in Baker and Union Counties. Preferred browse plants such as bitterbrush, squaw apple, and four wing saltbrush are seeded on range rehabilitation projects.

Approximately 10 percent of one 1,300-acre Bureau of Land Management grass seeding project on the Keating winter range in Baker County was seeded to browse species in 1967. Another large program of fencing and seeding is under way on the Bureau's lands in Murderer's Creek area of Grant County.

Field of reseeded grass in the Wenaha Management Area.

Other Activities

Salt is put out on the lower summer ranges in the spring to draw big game animals away from the winter ranges as early as possible. The sooner the animals can be induced to leave the winter range, the more foliage will be available the following winter. Salt is purchased in truckload lots directly from mines. Most of it is dropped from airplanes in order to get good distribution. Some is put out later in the season by truck or pack string. Most salting is done on public lands, on sheep ranges, or ranges not used by cattle. Indiscriminate placement of salt on cattle ranges could disrupt the planned grazing pattern. Salt can sometimes be used effectively to draw elk away from private lands where they may be doing damage.

A very important segment of winter elk management is the gathering of information on the status of the herds. This activity is divided into two parts. Herd composition, expressed as the number of bulls per 100 cows and the number of calves per 100 cows, is obtained from numerous horseback and snowshoe routes in midwinter. A total of 4,516 Rocky Mountain elk was classified in 1966 to indicate that there were 9 bulls and 49 calves per 100 cows remaining after the 1965 hunting season.

Winter elk census is aimed at determining an increase or decrease in the number of elk in the herds. This work is done after the elk start to concentrate on open slopes in late winter and spring. Permanent routes are established for horseback and airplane coverage and are run in the same way each year. The data is expressed in elk per mile of travel. In 1966, there were 8,524 Rocky Mountain elk counted on 1,535 miles of winter census routes for an average of 5.5 elk per census mile. This is identical to the previous year's average.

Since winter is the most critical time for Rocky Mountain elk, it is important that all phases of winter management receive careful attention if these grand game animals are to survive and provide good hunting.

Panels like these may be borrowed by ranchers from the Game Commission to protect haystacks from elk damage in the winter.

Umpqua River Access

(Continued from Page 2)

sites are recommended to provide boat access into this preferred area.

North Umpqua River

Access needs on the North Umpqua River are confined primarily to the 21-mile stretch of river from Winchester Dam to the mouth of Little River at Glide. This section was reopened to boat angling in 1966 after many years of restriction to this type of access. The area is somewhat remotely located from public roads and would best be served by boat access at key locations with considerable potential existing for steelhead and salmon angling. Four ramp sites are recommended in the Access Plan to facilitate one-day drift trips for experienced boaters.

Douglas County Parks Department recently developed a ramp at Whistlers Bend Park as the first step in providing boat access to this splendid section of river.

South Umpqua River

The South Umpqua is the least developed area of this system. Five parks provide limited bank access on the 81 miles of river from the forks to Jackson Creek above Tiller, but the stream has no developed boat access. The river receives only moderate pressure on its winter steelhead and stocked trout but has good potential for future salmon runs if water quality can be improved by proposed reservoirs. A few anglers that launch boats at undeveloped sites in the Canyonville and Roseburg areas presently enjoy excellent success on winter steelhead. It is in these two areas that four ramp sites are recommended with highest priority. An additional 16 access sites are planned for the stream to provide optimum access for anglers well into the future.

While the main purpose of the Master Access Plan is to coordinate the efforts of agencies in developing water access with matching funds from Land and Water Funds, in practice the reports are being used as a guide for recreation development by many agencies regardless of funding. The net result is that anglers and other water recreationists are being provided with ever increasing and better access to the streams and waterways of the state. - - *Douglas Taylor*

The Red-Shafted Flicker

THE RED-SHAFTED FLICKER is the most common and widely distributed woodpecker in the west, ranging from the Great Plains west to the shores of the Pacific and from southeastern Alaska south to Guatemala. Over much of this territory it is a year-round resident, withdrawing from the more northern parts and high mountains only during severe winters.

In Oregon the flicker is a wide-ranging species, inhabiting many types of open country and wooded areas in all parts of the state. It is most abundant about farms and cut-over woodlands, but it is also a common sight on lawns and in parks in urban areas.

Flickers are brown-backed woodpeckers, somewhat larger than a robin, with a white rump patch, black tail, and light underparts spotted with black. A conspicuous red moustache is worn by the male while in the female the mark is buff colored. When the bird is in flight, the bright red undersurface of flight and tail feathers becomes visible. From this coloration and the distinctive call notes of "flicker-flicker-flicker" the common name of red-shafted flicker was derived.

In the spring the male flicker announces the selection of a breeding territory with a loud resounding tattoo which he beats out with regularity on a hollow tree, telephone pole, or other sounding board. He sometimes uses a loose shingle or metal flashing on a house as a drum and delights himself with the efficiency of his early morning efforts, often to the extreme annoyance of the occupants.

Normally flickers nest in holes which they have excavated high in a dead tree or close to the ground in a rotten stump. Natural cavities and bird houses are also utilized but when these preferred sites are unavailable, this resourceful bird will select such unnatural locations as a steep dirt bank, gate post, side of a building, or even a haystack in which to excavate a home. Six to eight white eggs are normally laid on chips or material left during construction of the nest.

The flicker is the carpenter of the bird world and without its help many cavity-nesting species would be without homes. Bluebirds, tree swallows, sparrow hawks, small owls, and several other species, which are unable to do their own excavating, are almost entirely dependent upon the flicker for nest holes.

Unlike other woodpeckers which feed almost entirely in trees, the flicker spends much of its time foraging on the ground. Ants constitute nearly half the food supply, with beetles, grasshoppers, and other injurious insects also taken when available. Berries and fruits are eaten in season, and acorns and weed seeds provide the winter staples. - - *C. E. Kebbe*

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