

## THREAT LEVEL

### IDAHO FISH & GAME

#### Secure (S5):

widespread, abundant, and secure within the jurisdiction



## CALL TO ACTION

- ▶ Protect important habitats and migration routes
- ▶ Continue research on migration routes
- ▶ Reduce vehicle accidents leading to injury and mortality



## Elk

### *Cervus canadensis*

Photo Credit: idfg.idaho.gov

## OVERVIEW

Elk are abundant across Idaho. They face significant threats from human development, especially roads and vehicle accidents. Elk migration is based on snow depth and food availability. As snowpack decreases and winters become warmer, migration timing and routes may be altered. Research on migration patterns should continue, and measures should be established to ensure migration routes and seasonal ranges are protected.

## CONSERVATION CONSIDERATIONS

### VULNERABILITY RANKING

#### CLIMATE

LOW - MODERATE

#### NON-CLIMATE

MODERATE

#### CONFIDENCE

MODERATE

Physiological, phenological, or ecological factors to consider when planning conservation projects:

- ▶ Elk rely on snowpack depth and timing of snowmelt for migration
- ▶ A diverse diet makes it easy to adapt to changes in vegetation

### Vulnerability Rankings Methodology

*These priority species have been assessed for climate and non-climate vulnerability using a process adapted from the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's Methodology for ranking the Climate Change Vulnerability of Species. WDFW's approach includes rating each species' climate sensitivity and exposure. These two rankings are then averaged for a climate vulnerability ranking. The Tribe developed a non-climate vulnerability ranking to capture species' relative risk and adaptability to factors such as human-caused development, predator/prey relationships, or low population numbers. Confidence rankings were assessed based on the availability of scientific research.*

# KEY THREATS

## Habitat Modification

One of the greatest threats elk face is human development and human interactions. Expanding roads and development in forested areas lead to increased human and elk interactions, such as increased traffic and road collisions.

## Climate Change

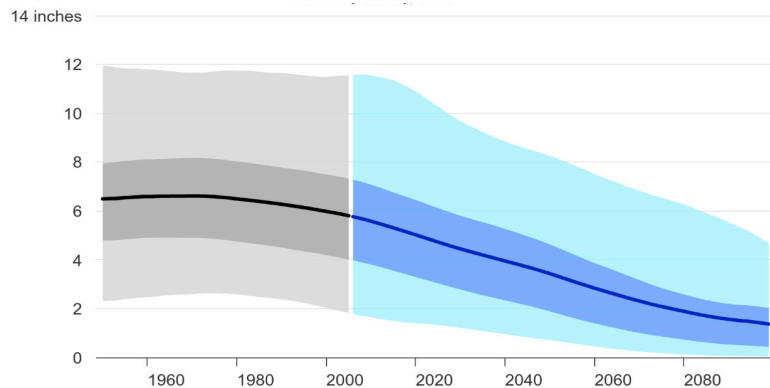
- ▶ The timing of spring migration is dependent on snowmelt. Large swings in snowpack and other weather events could lead to significant changes in migration routes.
- ▶ More frequent wildfires will fragment habitat and disrupt migration routes, while drought may threaten food sources.

## Hunting and Disease

- ▶ Elk are threatened by various diseases, which can lead to slow population growth and high mortality rates.
- ▶ Elk are also considered a prized big game species for hunters. Unregulated and excessive hunting can greatly reduce population size.

## DEC-JAN-FEB SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT

BOUNDARY COUNTY, ID



## JUN-JUL-AUG MAX TEMPERATURE

BOUNDARY COUNTY, ID

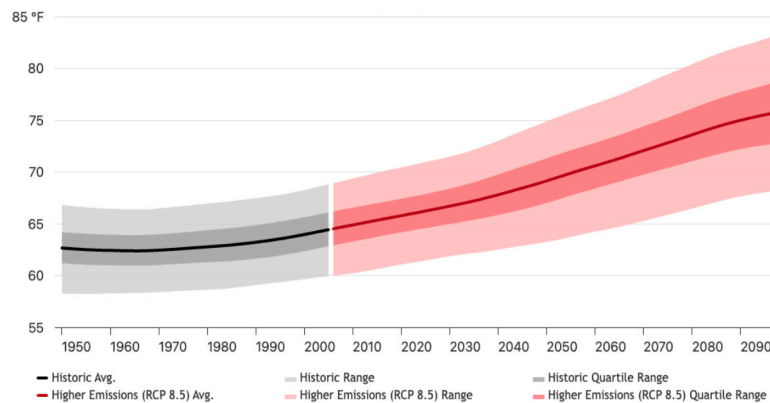
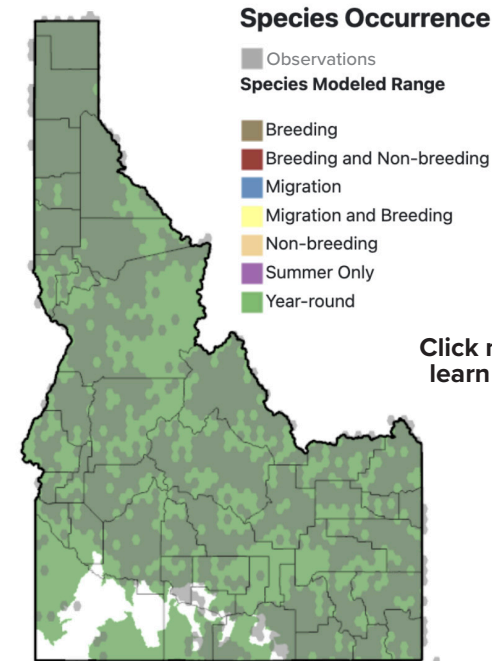


Photo Credit: Ginger Holser, wdfw.wa.gov



Click map to learn more

Source: idfg.idaho.gov

## REFERENCES

Snowpack chart: Hegewisch, K.C., Abatzoglou, J.T., 'Future Time Series' web tool. Climate Toolbox (<https://climatetoolbox.org/>) accessed Apr. 23 2025.

Temperature chart: Hegewisch, K.C., Abatzoglou, J.T., 'Future Time Series' web tool. Climate Toolbox (<https://climatetoolbox.org/>) accessed on Mar. 18 2025.

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"NatureServe Explorer 2.0." Explorer.natureserve.org, explorer.natureserve.org. Accessed 6 October 2025.

**PRIORITY AT-RISK SPECIES**  
KOOTENAI TRIBE OF IDAHO