

Taos Country Club issues the following Press Release to clarify the circumstances that led to the New Mexico Game & Fish Department's determination to authorize an Elk Population Management Hunt on Taos Country Club property.

Taos Country Club is very aware that we share the habitat we have developed with the native wildlife.

Over the years a small number of elk reintroduced in the Taos County area south of Ranchos de Taos has grown into a substantial herd of elk numbering 40 to 50. The elk population grows every year.

During the fall, winter and spring seasons this large elk herd migrates nightly across State Road 68 and County Road 110 to onto the Taos Country Club property causing substantial damage and expense to the Golf Course.

However, in addition to the damage caused by the elk herd there is a substantial danger created to the motoring public when that herd of large animals nightly traverses the two unlit highways when cars are traveling an average of 60 - 65 miles per hour on the State Road and 35 - 40 miles per hour on County Road 110. There have been several incidents to date of collisions between vehicles and the elk but fortunately no injury or fatalities have yet occurred.

For several years the New Mexico Game & Fish Department has requested permission of Taos Country Club and the Taos Country Club Property Owner's Association to conduct an Elk Population Management Hunt on the Taos Country Club Golf Course.

The purpose of the hunt is to determine whether this hunt process can change "the herd mentality" such that the herd determines that it no longer safe for the herd to migrate across the highways to the Taos property.

For several years the New Mexico Game & Fish Department has been unable to devise a method other than this hunt to discourage this herd behavior. The New Mexico Game & Fish Department and Taos Country Club have tried other methods on site to deter these animals. None have been successful.

With the cooperation of the Taos County Club Property Owner's Association and the New Mexico Game & Fish Department hunt rules have been devised for archery hunters to have access to the Golf Course property to conduct the hunt during regulated times and with carefully regulated procedures to provide for the safety of our neighbors, residents and the hunters.

This is not a game hunt. It is hoped that a successful hunt will deter these animals and provide food to the local hunters involved.

For further information regarding the specifics of this Elk Population Management Hunt please feel free to contact New Mexico Game & Fish Department, ATTENTION: Robert Osborn, Assistant Chief Private Land Programs, 1 Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87507, 505-476-8098, email: [Robert.Osborn@state.nm.us](mailto:Robert.Osborn@state.nm.us)