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Organization:

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Comments: Please strongly consider the continuation of feeding elk on the Dell Creek and Forest Park feed grounds. Ceasing to do so without a detailed and scientific backed management plan for the fall out caused by dispersed elk, will have significant impacts. Some of these impacts include: competition for resources on the landscape including but not limited to browse that mule deer depend on for winter survival. With mule deer already at an all time population loss due to the devastating winter of '22-23; this would further impact the ability for mule deer to survive future winters regards of severity. Another impact would be that elk most likely would seek shelter and or feed along areas that they could access easier during winter months. This would including roadways increasing number of vehicle collisions and within or around agricultural producers. Numerous deterrent methods have proven futile in the past on private agricultural lands and Game and Fish reimbursement has been limited; thus causing economic hardships for those producers. It should be noted that from elk population counts the feed ground model has increased the elk population significantly since the 1920s. There is concern of disease, but as I see it the risk of disease seems to be marginal in relation to the population increases over the years with high numbers of healthy elk. Please strongly consider the renewal of these feed ground permits. The impact of not renewing these permits without a specific management plan will have drastic consequences to the elk themselves, other ungulates, the landscape, sportsman, and agricultural producers.