The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation reached another major milestone in 2011, notching its 6 millionth acre conserved. That means in less than three decades, passionate elk hunters have given their time and money to conserve enough prime habitat to cover Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Glacier, Yosemite, Rocky Mountain and Great Smoky Mountains national parks combined. The Elk Foundation works with federal, state, tribal and private partners to ensure each dollar does the most good. For every dollar we raise, we put $9 to work on the ground where it counts—forever protecting the most crucial elk habitat and improving essential forage, water, cover and open space. That habitat is spread all across elk country from southern Alaska to North Carolina.

Six million acres amounts to 608 acres conserved every day since 1984. That’s nearly one square mile of elk country per day for 27 years. That’s an incredible pace—and a massive block of country where cows can nurture the next generation of calves each spring and summer, where wild bulls will continue to fill the air with bugles come fall, and where all of them can find vital forage to carry them through the winter. So far, the Elk Foundation has completed more than 5,000 land protection and stewardship projects to make healthy habitat for America’s greatest game. Wherever there’s a wild elk herd, you can bet there’s an RMEF project nearby.

In 2011, the Elk Foundation forever protected almost 41,000 acres of the most critical habitat for elk and other wildlife. In addition, RMEF funded 220 stewardship projects to enhance habitat on nearly 112,000 acres across 19 states. On top of that, we helped restore wild, free-ranging elk to the Ozarks of southern Missouri after a 150-year absence.

RMEF volunteers, staff and members alike should be proud. And that wasn’t the only good news of the year: our membership has swelled to an all-time high of more than 184,000. That total, posted at the end of December, is 6,135 members more than year-end 2010. It is the fourth straight year that RMEF has set a new membership record.

We’re grateful for the growth, and we believe it’s a testament to the fact RMEF is becoming more relevant than ever. Elk country is more than a pretty landscape. It represents an entire lifestyle. And when an elk hunter’s way of life is threatened—as it is now with habitat loss, overgrown forests, too many wolves, shrinking hunting access and more—you can bet they’ll find a way to respond. Hunters, after all, have been championing wildlife since the very beginning.

Every early culture from the horn of Africa to the Arctic relied on hunting for their very sustenance and survival. Through the hunt they forged profound connections with the land and all it supports. They learned quickly that stewardship of the land went hand-in-hand with maintaining wildlife—and their own way of life.

Rooted in this same fundamental equation, leaders like Theodore Roosevelt and Aldo Leopold shaped a set of ideals in the first half of the 20th century that came to be known as the North American Model of Wildlife Management. They articulated the philosophy that all wildlife is held in a public trust and that ethical, regulated hunting is an integral cog in the wheel of abundant and sustainable wildlife. Simply put, the United States has the most successful wildlife management system in the world. Hunters and anglers have contributed more financial and physical support to that system than any other group of individuals.

Hunting Is Conservation. Today, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is encouraging everyone who supports hunting to take greater pride in our legacy. We honor all that the hunters who came before us have contributed to the recovery and long-term health of the wildlife we treasure. And we salute all that the hunters of today are doing to ensure that legacy endures.

Members of RMEF have gone above and beyond to support “boots on the ground” conservation. All of you who contribute your time, treasure and talents to grassroots conservation organizations like the Elk Foundation are proving every day that hunters truly are titans of conservation.

Hunting absolutely provides us with the world’s healthiest and most delicious meat, but it also honors our culture and gives us a deep-seeded connection with the land and wildlife. It is a natural and integral part of our lives. The more we hunt, the more we care about the habitat, the animals and the future of both. This is a vital part of our American heritage. We must celebrate it and keep it alive so we can keep driving to conserve the next million acres of great elk country. Thank you.
The mission of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife and their habitat.

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### Statement of Activities

**(thousands)**

#### Revenues
- Net special events: $8,028
- Net merchandise, royalty & advertising sales: 2,665
- Membership dues: 8,148
- Donations (excluding conservation easements): 5,550
- Conservation Easements: 24,079
- Land sales: 5,034
- Contract & grant revenue: 2,217
- Investment income: 140
- Other income (loss): 201

**Funds available for program & support services**: $56,062

#### Expenses
- Fundraising: 1,263
- Administration: 4,194
- Program services: 48,988

**Total expenses**: $54,445

**Increase in net assets**: $1,617

### Statement of Financial Position

**(thousands)**

#### Assets, Liabilities & Net Asset Summary
- **Current assets**: $12,524
- **Investments**: 11,157
- **Property & equipment, net of depreciation**: 25,923
- **Conservation land holdings**: 2,523
- **Other assets**: 1,942

**Total assets**: $54,069

- **Current liabilities**: 5,828
- **Planned gift liabilities, net of current portion**: 1,258
- **Long-term debt, net of current portion**: 3,365

**Total liabilities**: $10,451

- **Unrestricted net assets**: 19,437
- **Temporarily restricted net assets**: 17,076
- **Permanently restricted net assets**: 7,105

**Total net assets**: $43,618

**Total liabilities & net assets**: $54,069

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The information above is derived from the 2011 financial statements audited by Clark Nuber P.S. Complete audited statements can be seen at [www.rmef.org](http://www.rmef.org), or request a copy at (800)225-5355.

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**2011 Financial Performance**

**Where Your Investment Goes**

**Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation**

![Pie chart showing the allocation of investment:]

- **Program Services**: 90%
- **Administration**: 8%
- **Fundraising**: 2%
The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation helped ensure the future of elk, other wildlife and their habitat with a great year of achievements through these programs.

**PERMANENT LAND PROTECTION**

Forever. That's how long we aim to keep elk country wild and open to the public. We achieve that through acquisitions, conservation easements, land exchanges, land and real estate donations and contributions.

**2011 TOTAL:** 21 land protection projects protected 40,952 acres of critical wildlife habitat in eight states.

**HABITAT STEWARDSHIP**

We work with federal, state, tribal and private partners to improve essential forage, water, cover and open space for wildlife.

**2011 TOTAL:** 220 habitat and wildlife stewardship projects enhanced 111,894 acres in 19 states.

**HUNTING HERITAGE & CONSERVATION EDUCATION**

The Elk Foundation's programs nurture a better understanding of the role people play in conserving elk, other wildlife and their habitat and the importance of our hunting heritage.

**2011 TOTAL:** 282 conservation outreach and hunting heritage projects reached more than 789,000 children and adults in 41 states. In addition, 38,716 people of all ages visited the Elk Country Visitor Center in Missoula.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The Elk Foundation's dedicated members hail from every state and province. Each year, they donate thousands of hours to help put on nearly 680 fundraising events that net millions of dollars. Members also volunteer for hundreds of dirt-under-the-fingernails projects, like pulling weeds, removing hazardous old fences and installing water guzzlers.

**2011 TOTAL:** 184,135 members all across North America stepped up to help keep elk country wild.

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**MONETARY INVESTMENT BY PROGRAM**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION

- Land Conservation: 66%
- Elk Restoration: 1%
- Stewardship Projects: 13%
- Conservation Education: 6%
- Membership: 14%
ALABAMA

Showing U.S. military men and women our appreciation for their service to our country by getting them into the great outdoors is something the Elk Foundation takes pride in. For example, in 2011 the foundation’s North Alabama Chapter hosted a deer hunting opportunity for four veterans from Alabama and Tennessee. Volunteers coordinated logistics, provided lodging, prepared meals and guided the hunters. This is the third year the chapter has offered the hunt.

ALASKA

Alaska Outdoor Kids! provides outdoor experiences for hundreds of youths and women who may not have the opportunity otherwise. The Elk Foundation is helping sponsor the effort, which is a partnership of the Outdoor Heritage Foundation of Alaska and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The program includes more than 200 young people engaged in the Youth Shooting League and 65 schools participating in the National Archery in the Schools Program. It also introduces young people to the outdoors and conservation through the Alaska Conservation Camp as well as the Youth Outdoor Days, which give young people a chance to learn shooting, archery and fishing along with camping and other outdoor skills. But it doesn’t stop there. The program hosts more than 20 Becoming an Outdoors-Woman programs in the state each year, involving everything from basic outdoors classes to a hunt on Kodiak Island. Elk Foundation funds helped provide supplies, NASP kits, targets and ammo for these various programs.

ARIZONA

Not all parents have the skills or experience to introduce their kids to hunting, shooting and the outdoors, and that’s where Youth Outdoors Unlimited and the Arizona Game and Fish Department come in. With funding assistance from the Elk Foundation and others, the partners held three junior hunter camps in 2011—including a predator hunter camp, small game hunter camp and antlerless elk hunter camp—to provide youths and their parents with hands-on instruction in tracking and calling game, shooting, safety and ethics, field dressing and skinning, and conservation. About 200 youths, parents and volunteers attended the camps. The Elk Foundation helped purchase supplies, and foundation volunteers pitched in to help with tracking and calling, retrieving game and cooking meals.

ARKANSAS

Most Americans are familiar with national parks. In 1972, Arkansas’ Buffalo River became our country’s first national river, now home-base to the state’s herd of 500 elk. Since the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission first restored elk in the early 1980s, state and federal agencies have worked hard to expand prime elk habitat outside of the Buffalo River bottomland. The Elk Foundation has been key to this effort over the past decade, helping fund projects to improve habitat for elk and other wildlife. In 2011 habitat managers completed prescribed burns and cleared new openings through “bush-hogging” across nearly 4,725 acres of forests and meadows. They also planted native vegetation on 438 acres, sprayed more than 10 acres of invasive weeds and planted trees on 5 acres. Wildlife managers say planting native warm-season grasses in particular is crucial to maintaining elk herd health.

WALLOW WILDFIRE RELIEF—ARIZONA

In 2011, the Wallow Wildfire burned more than half-a-million acres of prime elk country in eastern Arizona, prompting the Arizona Game and Fish Department to propose emergency wildfire mitigation efforts. The Elk Foundation was happy to help out. The state’s 16 RMEF chapters raised and committed $75,000 to the effort, and these funds were matched by the national office in Missoula. Half the money helped supply livestock feed and hay to private landowners whose cattle, sheep and horse pastures were being grazed by about 2,200 displaced elk. The projects ultimately staved off the need to artificially feed the elk before summer monsoon rains arrived and green-up began. The other half of the funds provided native seed to help restore the area.
Califonia

The world’s smallest elk species should reap big benefits from a new land protection project in northern California. The Elk Foundation is working with landowners in Mendocino and Lake counties to place 65,261 contiguous acres in conservation easements, some of the best tule elk habitat left anywhere. In partnership with the California Wildlife Conservation Board and California Department of Fish and Game, the Elk Foundation and landowners signed off on Phase 1 in 2011, protecting 8,544 acres. The project is bordered on three sides by the Wild and Scenic Eel River system, forming a peninsula of pristine plant and wildlife habitat nearly nonexistent in this part of California. Developers have approached the landowners time and again to sell, and development has already occurred up to some of the property’s fencelines. The massive project not only secures vital wildlife habitat, but also encourages sustainable forestry and ranching—both vital to the economy in the area.

Colorado

A warm bed with a full cupboard right next door is an elk’s dream-come-true on winter range, and elk wintering along Reinecker Ridge in the James Mark Jones Wildlife Management Area are living that dream. Twelve hundred elk and 75 mule deer seek shelter on frigid nights in the bands of conifers and aspens found along the ridge, then meander down to the adjacent south-facing slopes during the day to feed. The Elk Foundation is helping the Colorado Division of Wildlife in its ongoing efforts to keep Reinecker Ridge attractive to elk and deer through a series of habitat enhancements. From March to May 2011, the partners mechanically treated 40 acres of declining aspen on 10 units ranging in size from 1.5 to 8 acres, snipping the stems during dormancy to stimulate aspen suckering during the growing season.

Connecticut

Giving urban kids the opportunity to explore the sport of archery can be difficult, especially if their archery equipment is haggard. Such was the scenario for participants of Wethersfield High School’s archery program. Years back, the creators of the program intended equipment to be replaced on a regular basis. Due to budget constraints, that hasn’t happened. The Elk Foundation knows archery equipment requires maintenance and occasional replacement. To help out, the Foundation gave the school’s archery program a State Grant to purchase new arrows, shooting gloves and targets for the 100 students in the archery program. Now, archery will continue to inspire urban high-school students to get excited about the sport, which has proven to boost the grades of shooters. Future hunters there can hone their skills on targets, and maybe one day go after big game.

Delaware

Wild elk haven’t been spotted in Delaware since early colonial times, but the Elk Foundation was more than happy to award a State Grant in 2011 to help support wetland restoration tours and conservation education at the Blackiston Wildlife Area. The program educates the public about the value of restoring forested wetlands and how waterfowl, aquatic furbearers, amphibians, reptiles and other organisms benefit from such conservation work. Impressed, the state Division of Fish and Wildlife’s Aquatic Resource Education Center and the DuPont Nature Center are taking advantage of the tours as well.

Willow Foothill

Anywhere from 100 to 300 Roosevelt’s elk use the 640-acre Willow Foothill property during the fall, winter and spring. Meanwhile, just north of the property subdivisions continue to creep closer. When the land came on the market in 2011, the Elk Foundation knew it needed to act to ensure it remained prime elk habitat. Now owned by the Foundation, the land will either be put under a conservation easement and sold to a conservation buyer or placed in public ownership. With only a single dirt road and very little infrastructure, Willow Foothill will forever remain a lonely place—just the way elk like it.
Florida
A disability should not prevent willing individuals from participating in outdoor activities, and that’s why the Elk Foundation provided a State Grant in 2011 to help American Disability Adventures (ADA) provide those opportunities. Through ADA, disabled individuals are given the chance to learn about and participate in hunting, fishing, camping and other outdoor recreational activities—all of which offer companionship, build confidence, and provide a shared sense of freedom and accomplishment.

Georgia
Besides a providing mouthful of a name to pronounce, the Jones County 4-H Shooting Awareness Fun and Education Team provides youths with the knowledge and skills for a lifetime of recreation and the potential for a career in natural resources. The program stresses safety, ethics, personal responsibility and outdoor skills while promoting decision-making and personal goal-setting. Young people gain an appreciation of natural resources and wildlife. Having grown from just a handful of participants, the project now involves more than 50 youths interested in the outdoors but who haven’t had the opportunity to experience it. An Elk Foundation State Grant helped purchase practice shot shells, practice targets, shooting safety items and team shirts.

Idaho
Once a premier elk hunting destination, the Clearwater Basin is now home to a struggling elk herd due to predators and poor habitat. The Clearwater Basin Collaborative aims to change that—and resolve other land management issues and conflicts—by bringing diverse interests to the table to devise ways to improve environmental and rural economic conditions in the region. Elk Foundation funding in 2011 helped inventory and treat weeds, set prescribed burns, cut brush, improve watersheds and maintain trails across nearly 83,000 acres.

Illinois
The Illinois State Rifle Association customized a 16-foot trailer as a pop-out classroom, so instructors can travel the state teaching lessons on firearms and archery. Of course, they need some firepower for the participants, which is why the Elk Foundation recently donated funds to purchase three Savage Mark II .22 caliber target rifles, which are lightweight and easy to operate. The unit houses 10 rifles, 10 shotguns, three clay bird throwers and targets, 12 target stands, six archery setups and all the classroom literature to train 40 students at a time. The Mobile Training Unit teaches 1,500 to 2,000 students per year, and because of high demand, the State Rifle Association hopes to outfit another unit soon.

Indiana
The Terre Haute Parks and Recreation Department held its 30th Annual Kids’ Fishing Rodeo at Dobbs Memorial Park in 2011, where youths ages 2 to 15 competed. Prizes were awarded for catching the largest fish and for catching the most fish. An Elk Foundation grant helped cover the cost of fishing poles and tackle boxes for the winning catches. More than 150 kids from around the area came out for the event.

Hope-Sagle Land Exchange • Idaho
In 2011, following a decade of ground work, the Elk Foundation helped seal the deal on a land exchange, permanently securing 921 acres of elk and moose wintering range and public access overlooking Lake Pend Oreille in northern Idaho. Elk Foundation staff helped broker the exchange, and Elk Foundation volunteers in Idaho raised money to help cover project costs. Formerly owned by Stimson Lumber, the land is now part of the adjoining Idaho Panhandle National Forest. Not only did the project protect critical wildlife habitat in a scenic area that’s disappearing beneath summer homes, it also provides an ideal location for developing a new access point into the existing Idaho Panhandle National Forest trail system.

Conserving Elk Country
SAFE CHALLENGE • INDIANA
In September 2011, 72 youths and their families and 45 volunteers (including 25 from the Elk Foundation’s Indiana Chapter) gathered for Indiana’s first SAFE Challenge event at the Craig Family Camp. SAFE, or Shooting Access For Everyone, is the Elk Foundation program underwritten by Larry and Brenda Potterfield of MidwayUSA that makes it possible for any young person or novice shooter in America to learn firearm safety, the hunter’s role in conservation, shooting ethics and how to shoot a variety of firearms. The partners hosted 40 SAFE events in 22 states across the country in 2011, reaching 5,450 participants. After the Indiana event, one 8-year-old was overheard telling his grandfather that “today was the best day of my life. It was like paradise.”

IOWA
Forty-seven women ages 18 to 85 received hands-on instruction in shooting rifles, bows and handguns from members of the Elk Foundation’s River Bluffs Chapter at Iowa’s 2011 Becoming an Outdoors-Woman workshop. Each year, more than 80 weekend-long workshops are held across North America attracting more than 20,000 participants. The workshops introduce women to a variety of activities including hunting, shooting, fishing, canoeing, camping and cooking over a campfire. Iowa held its first workshop in 1994 and continues to hold one each fall, attracting women from all over Iowa as well and surrounding states.

KANSAS
Elk can test a farmer’s patience—and pocketbook—if they make a habit out of raiding crops. Damage complaints may in turn have dire consequences for the future growth of a herd. On the Fort Riley Army Base in northeast Kansas, the Elk Foundation has continued its long-standing commitment to give elk more to eat on the base and relieve pressure on surrounding agricultural lands. Project managers planted forage plots for wildlife that not only keep elk from depredating private fields, but also give the public a great location to see wildlife. A 2011 Elk Foundation grant paid for seeds and fertilizer.

KENTUCKY
Most of Kentucky’s 10,000 elk live and thrive on reclaimed strip-mine lands, yet research about how best to reclaim these areas for wildlife isn’t well catalogued. In 2011, the Appalachian Wildlife Foundation contracted with the University of Tennessee to review all previously published and unpublished data and research results to create a summary that describes everything that is known of wildlife-friendly reclamation in the Eastern U.S. and Texas. This “one stop shop” will be available as a reference for regulators, wildlife agencies and wildlife conservation groups to develop techniques that benefit wildlife on mine sites. The Elk Foundation helped fund the research and publication costs.
Maine
It’s never too early to teach youngsters marksmanship and gun safety, and that’s why Silverton Sporting Ranch, with help from an Elk Foundation State Grant, offers a free, one-day youth gun-handling and safety event. Held in September, it offers the opportunity for participants to complete a five-station sporting clays course. As in previous years, Elk Foundation volunteers assisted with tending the traps and supervising kids while shooting. Cabela’s provided gift cards, hats and targets.

Maryland
The Old Line State may once again echo with the bugles of wild, free-ranging elk if a study launched in 2011 shows wapiti can thrive alongside residents and farmers in the western part of the state. Eastern elk once roamed throughout Maryland, but herds were killed off by 1850. Last year the Elk Foundation joined forces with the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen’s Foundation and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to research the feasibility of restoring elk to the state. A $125,000 Elk Foundation grant is helping to fund a habitat assessment, economic impact analysis and public opinion survey. The study will run for more than a year, after which the DNR will fully evaluate the results before making any decisions.

Massachusetts
More than 6,200 people from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Vermont invaded tiny Sturbridge (population 10,000) in September to attend the Division of Wildlife’s 15th Annual Massachusetts Outdoor Expo. A family event, its main goal was to get children interested in wildlife and the outdoors. Activities included firearm safety, trap shooting, .22 target shooting, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, wild game-meat tasting, rock climbing, fly-casting and birdhouse building. The Elk Foundation co-sponsored the event, and a volunteer-manned booth provided information about the Pennsylvania elk program.

Michigan
Not every school has its own National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) yet, but the Outdoor Discovery Center Macatawa Greenway (ODCMG) figured out a way to bring archery to the schools with a traveling archery program. Based on NASP curriculum, the Michigan Mobile Marksmanship Training Unit introduces youths in 4th through 10th grades to the sport and teaches the cultural history of archery through target shooting. The unit is available to local school groups, community groups, home school students, scouts, youth groups and special needs groups. In 2011, upwards of 330 kids participated, about 100 of them considered to be at-risk youths. An Elk Foundation grant helped purchase three Genesis bows, targets and an arrow net.

Missouri
Missourians got to say “welcome home,” after a 150-year absence, to 34 wild elk in May 2011 after a trailer brought the herd from Kentucky and released them into a holding pen at the Peck Ranch Conservation Area. Following an acclimation period, the elk—including five new calves—were released into the wild in June to roam the rugged hills and valleys of the 346-square-mile elk restoration zone spanning parts of Shannon, Carter and Reynolds counties. The Missouri Department of Conservation plans to release up to 150 elk in the future, as well as hold a limited hunting season once the herd is well-established to help manage its size. The Elk Foundation provided $300,000 for trapping, disease testing and transportation costs, while RMEF members played a huge role in returning elk to Missouri, including spending countless hours calling and writing state legislators to get their support for the reintroduction. Many were also on hand to help prepare the release site and construct the holding pens on the Peck Ranch.
MINNESOTA
A few hundred wild elk roam the Land of 10,000 Lakes, and to make sure their habitat is in top form, the Elk Foundation helped fund a seeding, fertilizing and mowing project on 49 acres at the Grygla and Wapiti wildlife management areas in 2011. Habitat maintenance will help produce good forage for elk and other wildlife, hopefully keeping the elk herd on public lands and away from private croplands where they tend to get into trouble.

MISSISSIPPI
Lewisburg High School (LHS) in Olive Branch, Mississippi, knows all too well how difficult it can be to teach students about archery safety and marksmanship without proper equipment. A member of the vaunted National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP), LHS has scratched by for some time with little to no funding. To help cover its expenses and allow LHS to continue its archery program, the Elk Foundation gave a grant to purchase arrows and shooting supplies. This will allow the 24 students on the Lewisburg team to keep aiming for the bull’s-eye in their competitions against other high-school teams throughout Mississippi.

MISSOURI
With elk restored in 2011, Missourians are naturally curious about their newest wild neighbor, prompting the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to purchase two Wild About Elk Education Trunks from the Elk Foundation to provide educational tools for youths and the public. The Elk Foundation assembled the kits, which contain antlers, hides and fun activities designed to help kids and adults learn about elk biology, habitats and conservation. DNR will use the trunks in school classrooms, youth programs, sports shows and conservation events.

MONTANA
The wild lands surrounding the East and West Forks of the Bitterroot River used to offer some of the best elk hunting in Montana. But elk numbers have plummeted from 1,900 in the West Fork in 2005 to 750 today. In the East Fork an estimated 3,000 elk still persist, down from 3,500 in 2005. Unfortunately, calf recruitment there has dropped from a healthy 30 calves per 100 cows down to an unsustainable 15 per 100. Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks suspects that wolves and other predators are playing the biggest role in the decline, combined with deteriorating habitat quality in some areas and subdivision on winter range. In 2011, wildlife biologists began collaring and tracking 40 cow elk as part of a three-year study to first map the cows’ winter migration routes and spring calving grounds, then radio-tag the calves once they’re born. By following the calves, biologists aim to determine how many die, the cause of death, the time of year and location. The Elk Foundation contributed $30,800 to the study.

MONTANA
An ongoing project to protect key habitat and secure public access reached 1,480 acres along central Montana’s Tenderfoot Creek. A coalition of partners including the Elk Foundation, Bair Ranch Foundation, Tenderfoot Trust and U.S. Forest Service placed two tracts totaling 320 acres into public ownership in 2011, which will be incorporated into the Lewis and Clark National Forest. Tenderfoot Creek is a tributary of the scenic Smith River, a famous blue-ribbon trout fishery nestled in a towering limestone canyon. Tenderfoot Creek cascades down 3,200 feet of elevation through the classic elk country of the Little Belt Mountains, home to hundreds of elk, mule deer, moose, black bears and a host of other wildlife. The project’s first phase in 2010 conveyed 1,160 acres to the national forest. All together, 8,200 acres are planned for the Tenderfoot project, helping to shore up checkerboard ownership patterns between the area’s private and public landowners.
The Elk Foundation and U.S. Forest Service marked 25 years of partnering for elk country in 2011, and to celebrate the two collaborated on a children’s book titled, *The Wild Life of Elk*. The book follows the species through the seasons and centuries. It explores the many habitats in which elk thrive, the growth cycle of their antlers, the intricacies of their social structure, how they defend themselves during fights with rivals and attacking predators, and how they have adapted to survive brutal winters and blistering heat. The book also follows elk through history and shows the many ways that humans have depended on the species.

**NEBRASKA**

In May 2011, Elk Foundation volunteers replaced a half-mile of an old, woven-wire boundary fence between Fort Robinson State Park and the Soldier Creek Wilderness. People came from five states to make it easier for deer, elk and bighorn sheep to migrate safely between habitats and to reduce fence damage. After pulling the old wire and poles, the crew pounded in new posts and stapled new wire. Because elk calves and bighorn lambs have difficulty going under or over woven fences, the team installed a smooth bottom wire 16 inches above the ground for the animals to slide under, and then strung the top wire at 42 inches. Originally planning for a three-day project, the enthusiastic group was able to pull off the work in a day and a half.

**NEVADA**

Called the “loneliest highway in America,” U.S. Route 50 crosses the northern tier of the White Pine Mountains. This range is famous for its ancient bristlecone pines but is actually named after the limber pines. In some spots, though, it might as well have been named after pinyons and junipers, which have all but taken over to the detriment of elk and other species. The Elk Foundation, U.S. Forest Service and Nevada Department of Wildlife aim to ensure this famouswapiti-rich range won’t be renamed anytime soon. In 2011, Elk Foundation funds assisted in clearing more than 1,000 acres of invading pinyon-juniper to help sustain the mountain and sagebrush habitat that has defined this area and supported mule deer and elk for millennia. Crews targeted young trees, spreading the slash as mulch to promote growth of forbs by trapping soil moisture. Pinyons and junipers may eventually return, but with projects such as this, they won’t take over.

**NEW MEXICO**

Once again the Elk Foundation stepped up to help the Gila National Forest with its ambitious effort to treat some 95,000 acres of habitat in Area 74—home to more than 20,000 elk—through prescribed burning and mechanical thinning over a 10-year period. Fire suppression has changed the ecosystem here, allowing forests to grow decadent to the extent that tree diseases and insect infestations are widespread. The potential for extreme wildfires has land managers concerned. The increase in grasses, forbs and browse from the 3,384 acres burned in 2011 should aid mule deer, turkeys and black bears, as well as northern goshawks and other rare species—not to mention the bugling bulls aplenty that entice elk hunters in this wild corner of New Mexico.

**CATHEDRAL CANYON • NEVADA**

The picturesque granite outcrops of Cathedral Canyon stand high above the grasses and forbs beneath, making for heavenly elk summer range—except for the lack of water. To address this, the Elk Foundation and U.S. Forest Service partnered in 2011 to install two 1,800-guzzlers and a water collection apron. The guzzlers work in tandem so that rain and snowmelt are funneled down a rubber apron into the first guzzler, which, if full, will overflow into the second guzzler. The partners also constructed a four-strand fence with treated corner posts around the collection skirt and placed a pipe-rail fence around the tanks to prevent damage from livestock and wild horses. Elk Foundation Ely Chapter volunteers provided free labor to install the guzzlers.
New York

Since 2001, the Conservation Alliance of New York’s Venison Donation Program has supplied hunter-harvested ground venison, as well as purchased ground beef, to food pantries across Ostego and Delaware counties. Nearly 30 tons of meat have been distributed to needy families over the past decade. The Elk Foundation is a sponsor of the program, and in 2011 awarded a State Grant to help cover processing costs.

North Carolina

Great Smoky Mountains National Park lifted the “experimental” status of its restored elk herd in 2011, clearing the way for permanent management of elk in the park. Elk were extirpated from the region some 200 years ago. In a release funded by the Elk Foundation, the first elk stepped foot in the park in 2001, and today the herd is healthy at about 140 animals. Research indicates that the population is sustainable, has minimal impacts on the park’s resources and human-elk conflicts are manageable. Going forward, the park’s objective is to maintain a self-sustaining elk population within its boundaries with minimal impacts to the park’s other resources. Elk have been a popular addition and have boosted the local economy though increased tourism. In fact, the Cataloochee Valley, where elk were originally released, now receives about twice the visitation than it did prior to elk restoration.

North Dakota

The Mooreton Sportsman’s Club Youth Mentoring Program offers kids 16 and under who have successfully completed their hunter safety course the chance to take it to the next level before they venture into the field. Throughout the summer of 2011, around 30 youths were given one-on-one instruction on range and trapshooting etiquette, gun safety, shooting positions, point-of-aim, follow-through and sight picture. Elk Foundation funds helped purchase shells and clay targets, and volunteers from RMEF’s Bois-de-Sioux Chapter served as mentors, range workers, scorekeepers and cooks.

East Magdalena • New Mexico

Hills around East Magdalena used to be choked by a solid green blanket of overgrown pinyon pine, juniper, ponderosa pine and mountain mahogany. But the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), with Elk Foundation funding, is making this habitat more wildlife friendly through a multi-year restoration effort that aims to treat 10,725 acres of woody vegetation across 31,000 acres. In 2011, the BLM thinned about 267 acres—creating some 70 open patches across a 1,206-acre mosaic. Habitat managers are focusing this work on ridges, canyon bottoms and meadows historically used by elk and other wildlife. Thinning the water-hogging conifers will offer more sunlight and moisture to grasses and forbs on the ground—a benefit not only to elk, but mule deer, Merriam’s turkeys, black bears and Mexican spotted owls as well.
O H I O
Southeast of Canton in the beautiful rolling hills adjacent to Leesville Lake, young people and their parents gathered for the Youth Outdoor Camp put on by the Lake and Trails Organization and sponsored in part by the Elk Foundation. Upwards of 120 participants, ages 10-17, tried their hand at a number of outdoor skills. The camp is a four-year program. The goal for freshman is to obtain their Hunter Safety Certificate. Sophomores learn primitive living techniques, survival skills, watercraft safety, taxidermy, waterfowl hunting techniques and trapping. Third year students earn their Boater Safety Certificate and practice advanced shooting and archery, while the fourth year students get to participate in more advanced shooting instruction, high ropes clinic and advanced cooking. In addition, there is a pheasant hunt with trained field dogs and a deer-processing clinic.

O K L A H O M A
Prescribed burning is almost always a homerun for wildlife, especially in areas so choked with trees that not much grows on the ground for animals to eat. In 2011, managers at the Pushmataha Wildlife Management Area (WMA) attempted to curb this problem by burning 10,555 acres as part of a decade-old program to enhance habitat for elk, deer, turkeys, quail and a variety of migratory songbirds. In reality, biologists have been researching the vegetative response to fire frequency here for 30 years. Opening up the canopy allows more sunlight to reach the forest floor, which increases the production of native grasses and forbs and reduces woody vegetation. An Elk Foundation grant helped purchase aerial ignition materials for the burns. The WMA plans to burn additional acreage in 2012, and then implement a rotational burn program to maintain the newly restored ecosystem.

O R E G O N
In 2007, the Egley Wildfire burned 140,000 acres of public and private lands in the Blue Mountains. Since 2009, the Elk Foundation has awarded a handful of grants to the Malheur National Forest to help with rehabilitation efforts in the area, including rebuilding guzzlers, treating weeds, fencing aspen stands and revegetating roads created or reopened during wildfire suppression efforts. Elk Foundation funds helped make as many as a dozen guzzler repairs in 2011, plus manually treated seven acres of noxious weeds, seeded 100 acres and closed 35 miles of roads—all in an effort to improve conditions for the coveted Blue Mountains elk herd, as well as the mule deer, rabbits and pygmy owls that call this region home.
Pennsylvania
Far-sighted, conservation-minded landowners George and Irene Windolph permanently protected their 454-acre wildlife oasis near Nordmont through a donated conservation easement with the Elk Foundation in 2011. The move ensures the land will always be much like it is today—retired farmlands and well-managed forestlands with abundant populations of wildlife including deer, turkeys and bears. The couple has also worked hard to acquire the majority of the mineral rights. The Elk Foundation will hold the easement and monitor provisions annually.

South Carolina
Thirty mobility impaired and wounded veterans from throughout the southeastern U.S., and as far away as Ohio, along with wounded warriors from the Fort Gordon Veterans Hospital in Augusta, Georgia, were given the opportunity to hunt deer and hogs on the U.S. Department of Energy’s 150,000-acre Savannah River Site (SRS) site. This marks the 11th season of the mobility impaired hunt at SRS. The Elk Foundation’s Savannah River Chapter members raffled two rifles to raise proceeds for the two-day event, as well as assisted with the hunts.

South Dakota
There has never been a radio-collared elk calf in the Black Hills—until now. Custer State Park hosts nearly 2,000 elk, but the herd is struggling, and biologists want to know why. The Elk Foundation is helping the state fund a study to determine the cause of the herd’s decline, so biologists can adapt their management to ensure a future for the elk in this legendary park. Elk Foundation funds bought radio collars, which biologists fitted to calf and cow elk to study movement, nutritional condition, reproduction and calf survival.

Tennessee
High school students don’t mind heading back to class during their summer break for the Tennessee Outdoors Youth Summit (TOYS) hosted by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency at the Montgomery County Shooting Complex. During this week-long event, participants receive hands-on instruction in hunting, trapping, archery, shooting, boating, camping, photography, plant identification, forestry, water quality, and wildlife and fisheries biology. They are even given the opportunity to gain certification in some of the programs. Elk Foundation volunteers from the Warioto Chapter were on hand in 2011 to teach marksmanship and educate students about the Elk Foundation’s work and the North American Wildlife Conservation Model.

State Game Land #311 • Pennsylvania
Decades ago, coal mining on what is now State Game Land #311 left behind a barren and damaged landscape nearly uninhabitable to wildlife. But the Elk Foundation, Pennsylvania Game Commission and Pennsylvania Bureau of Mine Reclamation have been working to reverse that. The latest effort in 2011 created 42 acres of new wildlife forage openings by preparing the soil with wood fibers and lime, then seeding and fertilizing it with high-quality clovers, legumes and grasses. The work was done in August and September, and by November, turkeys, deer, bears and other wildlife—including 170 elk—could be seen feasting on the lush growth.
Introducing kids to the outdoors is always a treat. Hidden Acres east of Dallas specializes in that very thing. With a State Grant from the Elk Foundation, Hidden Acres launched an archery program at its camp. The grant paid for six bows, arrows and target equipment. In addition, Hidden Acres was able to train five volunteers in archery instruction. This allowed 270 kids, grades 3 to 6—200 of them considered at-risk youths—to learn and practice archery, many for the first time. Last year, Hidden Acres upgraded its archery program with the purchase of five more bows and seven wrist-rocket slingshots, along with supporting equipment. Two of the bows were “minis,” allowing younger kids to try their hand at archery.

The streamside meadows, sagebrush flats and woodlands of the Book Cliffs grow exceptional trophy elk and mule deer, thanks in part to a long-standing partnership between the Elk Foundation and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR), who have teamed up on a number of projects over the years to keep wildlife habitat in tip-top shape. And 2011 was no exception: the partners lopped and scattered encroaching pinyon-juniper on more than 700 acres of big game summer and year-round range on Rock Springs and Cherry mesas, rejuvenated nearly 65 acres of sagebrush habitat in the Big Park area, and constructed a five new guzzlers at the Two Waters Wildlife Management Area to provide additional water sources for elk, mule deer and bison. DWR recently restored a herd of bison to the Book Cliffs, and managers hope the habitat work will help to minimize bison-livestock conflicts.

The Elk Foundation’s Mountain Empire Chapter hosted a SAFE Challenge event for youths ages 10-18 in Grayson, Carroll, Wythe and Smyth counties in 2011. SAFE, or Shooting Access For Everyone, is the Elk Foundation program underwritten by Larry and Brenda Potterfield of MidwayUSA that makes it possible for any young person or novice shooter in America to learn firearm safety, the hunter’s role in conservation, shooting ethics and how to shoot a variety of firearms. The chapter coordinated with Boy Scout troops, Girl Scout troops, 4-H chapters and schools to cover educational materials and instruction, then rounded it out by hosting a one-day shooting event at the New River Wildlife Conservation Club shooting range in Fries. Each participant received a t-shirt, hat and lunch, plus a SAFE Challenge Certificate of Completion.

The Military Warriors Support Foundation provides recreational outings, including hunting experiences, to combat-wounded military to thank them for their service to our country. In 2011, the group hosted hunts in Wyoming and Colorado for 13 wounded veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan from the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. The Elk Foundation was honored to award a State Grant to help cover costs for the Colorado hunters, including travel and out-of-state permits.
WASHINGTON
Neighbors helping neighbors is still alive and well in southeastern Washington, where several private landowners in the Walla Walla area teamed up with the Elk Foundation and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to improve wildlife habitat on their own properties to help entice crop-raiding elk off adjacent private agricultural lands. All told, the partners treated 2,550 acres of yellow starthistle and spotted knapweed with herbicides in the Touchet River drainage and on Robinette Mountain, creating more and healthier winter range for the Blue Mountains elk herd and relieving headaches for area landowners.

WEST VIRGINIA
The Elk Foundation is a proud sponsor of Beyond the Backyard, an organization dedicated to engaging West Virginia kids in the outdoors through hunting, fishing, conservation and the outdoors. The organization holds numerous events throughout the year, reaching 8,000 youths in six states. A free quarterly newsletter highlights upcoming activities, and its website provides participants with the opportunity to share stories and photos from their adventures. An Elk Foundation grant helped defray the cost of instructional materials.

WISCONSIN
It’s not always good to have all your eggs in one basket, and this has proven to be the case with Wisconsin’s elk herd. Numbering around 150 animals, the herd sticks together and doesn’t roam much. In fact, the herd only occupies 10 percent of the Chequamegon National Forest’s 1,112-square-mile elk range. The elk are missing out on plenty of quality habitat and making themselves more vulnerable to predators. As a result, the herd isn’t growing. In January 2011, Elk Foundation volunteers and others helped the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources construct an acclimation pen southeast of Moose Lake, trap and transport four bulls and eight cows, and release them into the pen for several months before freeing them into the wild in May. Managers hope that by moving small groups of young, easily adaptable elk over several years to isolated, quality habitats, survival and reproduction rates will increase, leading to an increase in elk dispersal and numbers in the state.

WYOMING
Elk Foundation funds helped the Conservation Fund complete a conservation easement in 2011 that permanently protects more than 10,000 acres across two homestead ranches owned by the Espenscheid family. The agreement not only allows the fourth-generation ranching family to continue its ranching operations, but also protects important wildlife habitat in the Green River Valley. The property provides crucial wintering ranges and migration corridors for pronghorn antelope, mule deer, moose and elk, important wetland habitats for songbirds, shorebirds and numerous aquatic species, and about 15 miles of streams, including an important tributary of the Green River that provides spawning habitat for the Colorado River cutthroat trout. The Wyoming Stock Growers Agricultural Land Trust will steward the easement. A portion of the lands are enrolled in the Wyoming Game and Fish Department’s Hunter Management Program.
MEMBERSHIPS
Throughout North America and around the world, more than 184,000 Supporting, Sponsor, Outfitter and Life members shared in the passion to conserve elk country and pass on a wildlife legacy in 2011.

ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM
Wanting their dollars to go that extra acre, generous RMEF members and volunteers donated nearly $938,000 through annual giving in 2011.

WORKPLACE GIVING
One of the most beneficial workplace-giving programs to RMEF is the Combined Federal Campaign, which allows federal employees and military personnel to support their favorite charities through payroll deductions. This program, combined with other workplace giving, generated more than $188,000 in 2011.

MATCHING GIFTS
Many employers will match an employee’s cash donations, volunteer hours, auction item purchase (above fair market value) and portions of Sponsor or Life memberships through employee or corporate matching gift programs. In 2011, 45 companies matched employees’ gifts to RMEF, contributing more than $41,000 to help the foundation accomplish its mission.

MEMORIALS & HONORARIA
RMEF creates memorials and honoraria at the request of families and friends who wish to remember or honor their loved ones through a gift for wildlife habitat. In 2011, donors gifted more than $27,000 through this program.

TRAILS SOCIETY
The Trails Society recognizes friends who, through their estate plans, are remembering the generations who will walk in our footsteps. Nearly 500 Trails Society members have remembered the RMEF through planned gifts. These gifts are given either during one’s life or through a testamentary gift.

“We feel strongly that the RMEF is the best investment for our conservation dollars. Donations are utilized to gain the maximum benefit for habitat preservation, education, maintaining the hunting heritage for future generations, and the practice of sound biologic principles. RMEF is a very professionally run organization from top to bottom because of dedicated staff and enthusiastic volunteers.”

— T.W. & Claire Garrett, RMEF Life Member & Habitat Council Members
We have served on three Chapter Committees in the past 20 years and the Habitat Council for five years. We feel qualified to say that RMEF is the premier wildlife organization in the United States.

Ed and Carol Carmack, RMef life MembeR & habiTaT CounCil MeMbeR

Habitat Partners
The Habitat Partner program recognizes major donors for their philanthropic donations. Their cumulative giving begins at $2,500. Individual and corporate Habitat Partners donated nearly $2.5 million to conserve elk country in 2011.

Corporate Partnerships
In 2011, corporations stood shoulder to shoulder with the RMEF through sponsorships, Bugle magazine advertising and affinity partnership programs. These same businesses and others also donated products and services, contributed royalties from cause-related marketing programs through licensing agreements and sponsored Elk Foundation events. Corporations invested more than $2.4 million in RMEF through this program in 2011.

Foundation Support
With their generous contributions, private, corporate, state and federal foundations provided more than $2.3 million to RMEF in 2011. They supported habitat enhancement projects, permanent protection of critical elk range and programs that taught thousands of children and adults about the value of conservation and North America’s great hunting heritage.

"Since 1995, four generations of our family have given time, energy and money to the RMEF for three reasons: First, permanent land protection that preserves elk country for our grandchildren and the public. Second, RMEF’s unfailing commitment to its mission and quality of people to make it happen. Third, enduring friendships with folks who share a common vision for conservation, hunting, and a moral commitment to make a positive and lasting difference in this world. All great reasons to keep on giving."

—Mike and Kathy Post, RMef Life Member & Habitat Council Members
“At the 2011 Elk Camp, we asked Habitat Council members to get creative about raising new funds and attracting new members. A few months later at our summer meeting in Cody, a question about HC members pooling their monies into a fund for others to match became reality and raised over $1 million!

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Michael A. & Linda R. Carter
Mike & Linda Carter
Steve Carver
Cascade Chapter
Cascade Wood Products
Jerry Cashette
C. A. C. & Vivian Chalkey
Jody Casey - In Loving Memory of
Larry Casey
Canyon Country Wildlife Club
W. Frank Cattell
Cedar Point Sportman Club
Central Bank of Lake of the Ozarks
Central High School
Central Kentucky Chapter
Gail & Mary Jan Chapman
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Chapter
Lea & Carolyn Chester
Charlotte Chapter
D. G. & Dleta Christensen
Curtis & Janet Christiansen
Clark County Credit Union
Ted Church
Ralph & Susan Cindo & Family
Circle Four Farms
Citizen Security Bank
Citizens Bank & Trust Co. of Jackson
Citizens National Bank & Trust
City of - William D. Gorman, Mayor
City of Jackson, Tourism & Convention Comm.
Clarksdale Electric Co-op
Clean Gas, Inc.
Cedar Valley Water, Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. Claus Clemens
Terryl Wayne & Karen Cloutier
Coachman, Inc.
Cabrini
Caine Tire
John F. Jack Cochrane
Pat Coody
Rawley & Lana Cagan
Jim & Jo Cahnchun
Jim Cohn
Jim & Melanie Cohn
Paul & Linda Collins
Carson City Airline, Inc.
Columbia River Knife & Tool
Crawford & Sage Valley
Complete Western Star Truck & Service
John A. Cooking Distributing
Paul & Leath Coal
Gaye & Michelle Conner
Conrad & Kate
Robert & Anna Cook
Jay Cook - Marine Bank
Coke & Company
Robert R. & Laura J. Cooper
John B. & Mary Cooper
Paul John Cooper
Dr. Vernon Cooper, Jr.
Wayne E. Copeland
Copper Mountain, Inc.
D.V. & Carol Cottrell
Am & DocConnell
Corporate Express
Cortez Gold Mines
Coralie Chrysler Plymouth Dodge
Colt Hill's Chrysler
Jay Coubter
Wayne Crowell & Michelle Howard
William A. Creagh
Thomas & Dorothy Craig
Craker & Young Gun Association
Crestbrook Forest Industries Ltd.
Tom Cerny - Canmar Trail Tool Control LLC
Christine Cressy
Hotel Route 66 Convention & Hotel
Mark B. & Karen Cratsley
In Honor of Griffin Crew
Croy & Company, Inc.
Lauren, Madison, Jill, & Sofia
Denise & Linda Crouse - Crouse Electric
Valerie & John Crouse
Dr. A. S. & Berenice Cudmore
Mike Cudone
Kevin & Fanuelle Cummings
Dan Cunningham
K. Robert Cunningham
Richard O. Curty, Jr.
Jerry M.
Curry Comb Outfitters
Fritz Curtez
James A. & Joan Czyzynski
John W. D. Arcy
Jim & Jennifer Dajura
D.J.'s Sales & Service Parts & Repair
Robert Dajdgar
Dawsonville American, Inc.
- Portrait Angels Mill
Dan & Mary Daniel
Danna Daniel
Dawson, Travis C.
Dawson, Thomas H.
Dawson, Thomas H. & Linda Carolyn
Dawson Spring Festival
Dawson, John H. & Lisa
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Davis, John E.
Davis, Robert D.
Davis, Jeffery G.
Davis, Robert D. & Kathy
Davis, Ron & Sherry
Davis, John "Jack"
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Friends of the Foundation
"We've been involved with RMEF for 25 years and it's the best-run conservation organization going—90 cents of every dollar goes to work in the field! Great things get accomplished when everyone gives a little. Even those who can't write a check can join a chapter committee and raise money. Last but not least, "We've been involved with RMEF for 25 years and it's the best-run conservation organization going—90 cents of every dollar goes to work in the field! Great things get accomplished when everyone gives a little. Even those who can't write a check can join a chapter committee and raise money. Last but not least, things get accomplished when everyone gives a little. Even those who can't write a check can join a chapter committee and raise money. Last but not least, "We've been involved with RMEF for 25 years and it's the best-run conservation organization going—90 cents of every dollar goes to work in the field! Great things get accomplished when everyone gives a little. Even those who can't write a check can join a chapter committee and raise money. Last but not least,
"We are proud to support the efforts of RMEF. Protecting and enhancing 6 million acres of habitat and the restoration of elk east of the Mississippi both
Dry Fork hunts
Drive Train Industries
Doug Perry
Douglas Post Ranch
Duke Industries
Dry Fork hunts
Eagle Cap Campers, Inc.
ELK RUBS ETERNAL

The Rock Creek area 20 miles west of Ellensburg in Washington’s Cascade Mountains has it all: generous public access, breathtaking views of Mount Rainier (see cover photo), mountain goats, bighorn sheep, mule deer, golden eagles, peregrine falcons, steelhead and bull trout, Chinook and coho salmon—not to mention one of Washington’s largest herds of elk. Up until five years ago, it also hosted a dizzying checkerboard of state-owned lands intermingled with private lands. In 2007, a private landowner notified RMEF that its parcels would soon be for sale. The public has enjoyed free access here for generations. But as prime real estate relatively close to Seattle amid a slumping timber market, it would sell quickly. The Elk Foundation helped pull together a diverse group of stakeholders to protect the parcels most essential to elk and other wildlife—10,386 acres along Rock Creek. RMEF and its partners completed the last phase of the acquisition in 2011. Now all of those acres are part of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Oak Creek Wildlife Management Area.