

Return of the Wapati - An Update

Back in the summer of 2010, the Virginia Forest Landowner Update (V. 24 No. 3) featured a story about the Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) plan to reintroduce elk to Buchanan, Dickenson and Wise counties in SW Virginia. Beginning in 2012, elk were returned to the area over three years, with the final 45 animals being released this April. There are approximately 85 elk in the current herd; only 3 have died since the initial reintroduction. For now, concerns expressed had over bringing elk back to the area (collisions with cars, damage to agricultural fields, and introduction of disease) have not come to fruition. The VDGIF hopes to grow the herd to 400 animals.