

(S.D.)-Officials Plan To Herd Elk Out Of Wind Cave National Park

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 01/14/2013 12:10 PM

HOT SPRINGS, S.D. (AP) - Officials are considering herding elk out of Wind Cave National Park in southwestern South Dakota to reduce a bloated herd.

The park plans to reduce its elk herd by about 600 animals in the next two years to prevent overgrazing. Officials plan to use a helicopter to move them outside of the park.

Some area landowners who attended a recent public meeting in Hot Springs about the plan expressed concerns about elk damaging private property. State Game, Fish and Parks Regional Wildlife Manager John Kanta says there are several programs in place to help landowners who have depredation problems.

The park used to round up excess elk and sell them to American Indian tribes out of state, but that practice was ended because of chronic wasting disease.