



## *Fast Facts*

The following fact sheet will help you answer questions you may receive from visitors to Prince Albert National Park.

### ***Keeping the Wild in Wildlife*** **Increasing Public Safety in Waskesiu by** **Reducing Habituation of Elk in the Townsite**



- 1. Aggressive elk in a national park community is a public safety concern. Parks Canada is working to provide a safe environment for people and wildlife.**
- 2. Elk in Waskesiu show little fear of humans.** They do not run away, like most wild animals, when they see people. They sometimes act like a tame animal rather than a wild animal.
- 3. To avoid, or at least reduce, the harmful conflict between humans and elk, PANP is continuing to attempt to reduce the ‘tame-like’ behavior of elk in the townsite.** Based on practices used in Banff and Jasper, PANP is increasing public awareness and conducting “aversive conditioning” of elk in the townsite.
  - Aversive conditioning involves repeated actions carried out by park staff. This includes startling elk or chasing them. The purpose of aversive conditioning is to restore the natural fear of humans that wild animals should have. Tools may involve sticks with streamers, bangers, screamers or 12-gauge beanbag shells.
  - Aversive conditioning will begin the week of September 17.
- 4. Information is available at the information centre. We encourage visitors to:**
  - Give elk and all wildlife space - Keep at least 30 metres (three bus lengths) away
  - Treat all wildlife with respect as all wildlife can be dangerous
  - Make the townsite less appealing by not planting grass - plant plants that are native to the area instead (contact Friends of the Park or the park Townsite Office for a list of native plants)
- 5. Elk are most dangerous/aggressive during the spring calving season (May – June) and fall (September – October) rut.**
- 6. Elk can be very aggressive towards dogs.**
- 7. Visitors should report all wildlife/human conflict to staff immediately.** A conflict is when an elk approaches/chases a human, the elk’s ears point back and it won’t move out of the way or an elk waves its antlers back and forth.

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