

Meadowbrook Farm Park



Winter 2023-2024 Newsletter

Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association



A Year of Change

The past year has been a year of changes at Meadowbrook Farm Park. Following 13,000 years of stewardship by the Snoqualmie Tribe, and 141 years of private ownership, the 25 year management agreement between the owner-cities and the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association has ended. Maintenance of the historic open space public park is now done by the paid, professional staff of Si View Parks, and the non-profit MFPA will focus instead on educational and interpretive activities and stewardship for the park.

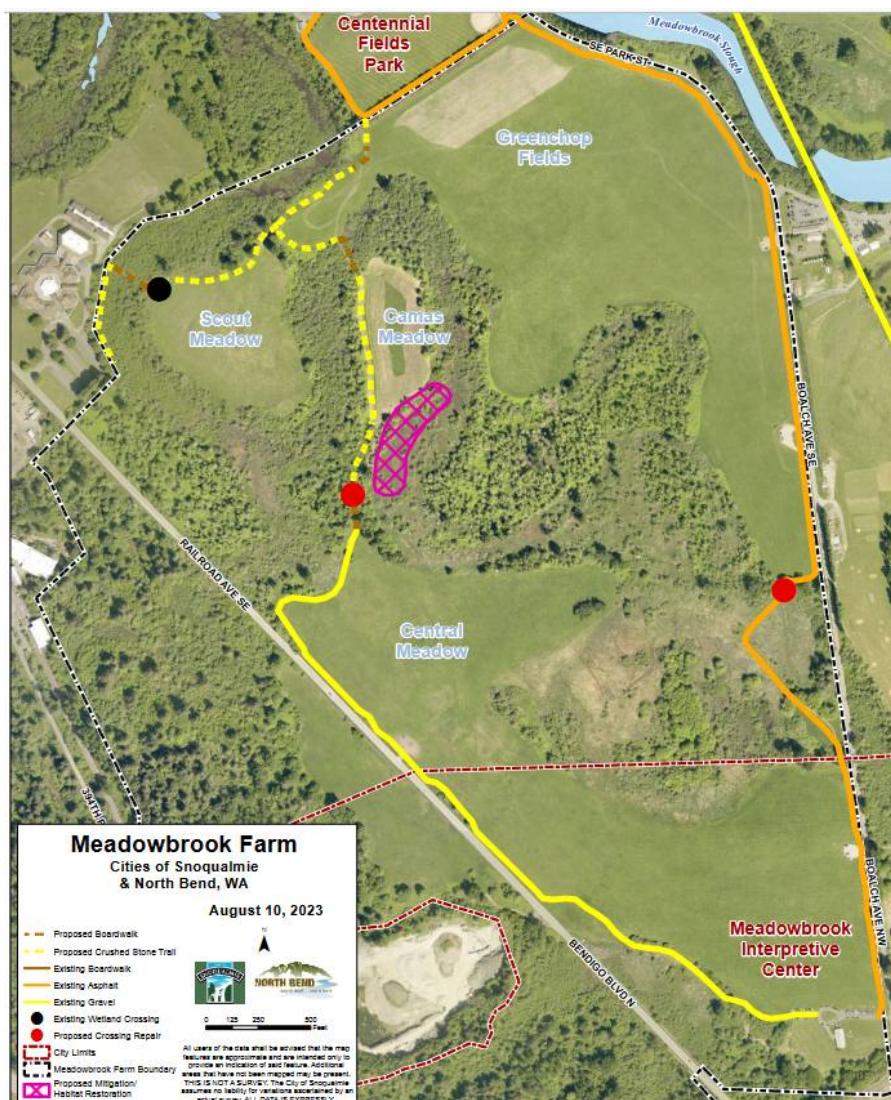
Many changes have occurred over the past 25 years that have affected Meadowbrook. At the time of purchase into public ownership in 1996, Meadowbrook's open meadows were maintained by daily mowing by the local Normanbrook Dairy, who transported the fresh grass to feed their cows. The Snoqualmie Tribe was working through the process of federal recognition. The Si View Parks district did not exist. Elk were rarely seen on the valley floor.

Now, a new agreement may be considered between owner-cities Snoqualmie and North Bend, and the Snoqualmie Tribe, to include the Tribe as part of the Governing Body of Meadowbrook Farm Park. A Policy Advisory Board, made up of organizations included in the MFPA, will advise on strategic planning. Si View Parks will continue to manage the rental activities that partially fund park maintenance, and utilize its staff for field mowing, building and trail maintenance. The MFPA will work with the Tribe to expand educational and interpretive plans, lead walks and hikes, and work with the Tribe and Si View on special events and projects. Meadowbrook Farm Park --the prairie above the falls-- part of the ancestral homeland of the Snoqualmie Tribe, is a special place that will continue to be cherished and stewarded by all.

Prairie Loop Trail Project update from North Bend

The Cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie, in partnership with Si View Metropolitan Park District (SVMPD) and the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association (MFPA), are increasing the number of pedestrian trails at Meadowbrook Farm Park. This project includes trail connections through Meadowbrook Farm Park to Snoqualmie Middle School, Centennial Fields Park (now becoming a fully accessible park), and the Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center.

Under a separate grant, new interpretive signage was prepared in consultation with the Snoqualmie Tribe that helps to tell the rich history of the original Snoqualmie Prairie, Baq^Wab, and its importance, management, and use by the Snoqualmie Tribe throughout history. The project design considers impacts to the prairie lands and wildlife, encouraging individuals using trails to be mindful and respectful while visiting the prairie. This project is partially funded by King County Parks Levy Grant Program. It is currently in design and permitting, with construction, coordinated by Si View Parks, planned for 2024. You can view a larger image of the project map by visiting <https://www.siviewpark.org/downloads/MeadowbrookLoopTrail.pdf>.



Winter Visitors: Aleutian Cackling Geese



An estimated 800 Cackling Geese from the Aleutian Islands are wintering on Meadowbrook this year.

Yes, there **are** Canadian Geese on Meadowbrook, but they are greatly outnumbered right now by their similar looking cousins, Aleutian Cackling Geese, who have migrated south for the winter. Many Cackling Geese go further south, to open fields in California's Central Valley, Texas or even Mexico—but some winter here in the coastal northwest.

The Cackling Geese (*Branta hutchinsii*) were once grouped with Canadian Geese, but were re-classified as a separate species in 2004, then divided into 4 sub-species. The birds nest in Alaska and northern Canada in the summers, feeding both in water and open tundra on plants, insects and crustaceans. In winter, the geese may forage for seeds and grains in open fields as well as other plants. The Cackling geese are gregarious, in large flock groups, and generally mate for life. The oldest recorded Cackling Goose, banded in Alaska, was almost 23 when shot in Oregon.

In flight, the Cackling Geese live up to their name! Rather than the sporadic “honks” of Canadian Geese, the Cacklers characteristically all talk as they fly. Take a walk on Meadowbrook sometime before March or April, when they head back north, and you may enjoy the sight of these interesting birds!



Cackling Geese: smaller, shorter neck, steeper forehead, smaller bill, primary flight feathers longer than tail.



Canadian Geese: larger, longer neck, sloped forehead and longer bill. Shorter primary flight feathers.

Prairie Restoration Begins (at Three Forks, not Meadowbrook)

Update by Ryan Lewis, Snoqualmie Tribe restoration specialist



Three experimental plots are newly planted with native prairie plants, for the beginning of the prairie restoration effort. This field is part of King County-owned Three Forks Park, near the Middle Fork bridge.

Snoqualmie Tribe's Department of Environmental and Natural Resources completes first experimental Snoqualmie Prairie planting with help from Culture, and Governmental Affairs and Special Projects.

At the end of November, Tribe staff from multiple departments gathered in an open field at the foot of Mt. Si to complete a first experimental planting of native prairie plants. Since spring of 2023, ENR's Restoration Team has been preparing pilot plots to receive bulbs of camas, chocolate lily, and many other native meadow plants.

This effort is a first step in a long-term vision of returning native plants to Snoqualmie Prairie, the large open grassland above Snoqualmie falls between Snoqualmie and North Bend. Before European-American settlement, Snoqualmie Tribe ancestors kept parts of the valley above Snoqualmie Falls free of trees to support the growth of camas and other edible plants, and to promote habitat for large game like deer and elk.

Today, some large sections of the historic Snoqualmie Prairie have been preserved from development, including Meadowbrook Farm, parts of King County's 3-Forks Natural Area, and smaller privately owned properties. Despite this, prairie remnants today are vegetated by nearly 100% non-native plants, and important

native plants like camas are no longer present. Without deliberate reintroduction, these species are unlikely to return to Snoqualmie Prairie.

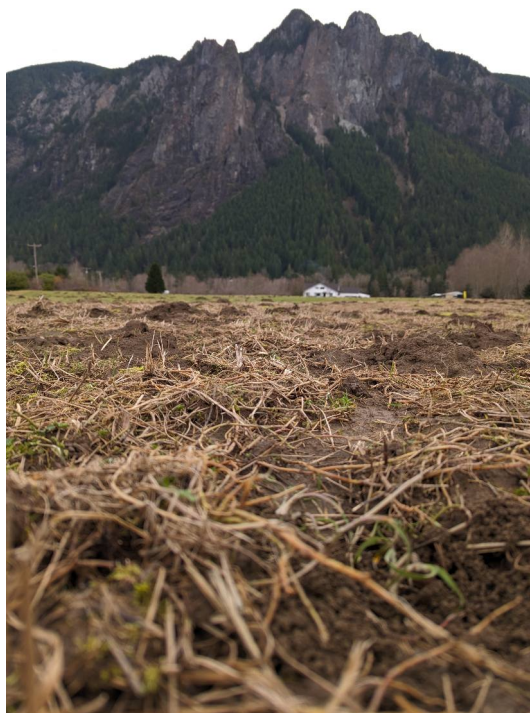
Bringing back and sustaining native species at the prairie will require a long-term commitment over decades and generations. As a first step, the Tribe's ENR program has received funding from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to test species for reintroduction and methods for controlling invasive weeds. The pilot plots planted last month will be monitored over the next two years, with the goal of developing best practices for larger prairie restoration efforts in the future.

Similar experimental plots are planned at Meadowbrook's Camas Meadow and Central Meadow areas—a long-time goal—and Three Forks Park land now owned by City of Snoqualmie. Site preparation and planting efforts there await signed agreements with the City of Snoqualmie before beginning restoration.

We would like to thank our partners at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, King County Parks, Ecostudies Institute, and Pertect Inc. for their contributions to this project.



Planned initial prairie restoration sites on Meadowbrook's Camas Meadow and Central Meadow. Snoqualmie Middle School and SR 202 in upper left hand corner of map, Park Street on right.



The first new green shoots emerge in January from bulbs planted at the prairie restoration project at Three Forks Natural Area near the Middle Fork.

Happy Birthday, Meadowbrook-the-Town!

Friends, neighbors and former residents gathered August 25, 2023, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the platting of Snoqualmie's Meadowbrook neighborhood. The festive summer block party included a barbecue potluck, special birthday cake, and historic recipes from the neighborhood. The Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum's director Cristy Lake gave a special history presentation illustrated by photos from the Museum collection, and valley historian Dave Battey talked of life in the small busy town.

Meadowbrook-the-Town was platted in 1923, on part of the original Snoqualmie Prairie, later Hop Ranch, planned to add stability to the lumber mill work force by providing the opportunity for additional family housing and home ownership. Home owners could walk to work via the railway trestle or Meadowbrook bridge, and easily utilize the hospital, school and community center near the mill. Local builder Bill Blaisdell built most, but not quite all, of the new homes.

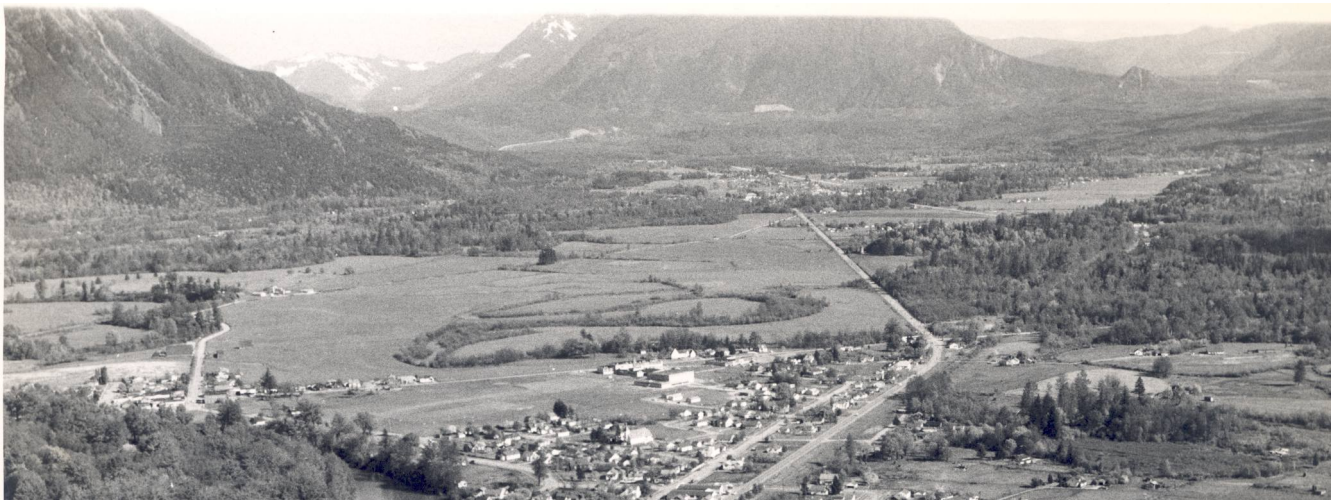
Meadowbrook businesses provided needed services to both the Meadowbrook neighborhood, the mill-owned housing across the river and nearby farms. Two groceries, a meat market, pharmacy, movie theater, a doctor's office, dentist, clothing store, florist, heating and appliances, a funeral home/ambulance service . . . most things people needed were close at hand, and businesses served the surrounding countryside as well. However, in 1958, the mill company decided to no longer provide mill worker housing, and sold the company homes north of the river (often to the current renting residents) to be moved. Many were moved to what became the Williams Addition of Snoqualmie. With the loss of so many of their customer base, Meadowbrook's businesses languished, and many eventually closed. Today, some of the business buildings continue with other uses. The Meadowbrook neighborhood, annexed by Snoqualmie in 1952, remains a neighborhood of pleasant homes.



Meadowbrook neighborhood circa 1956-1957 looking north towards Meadowbrook bridge. SVHS photo

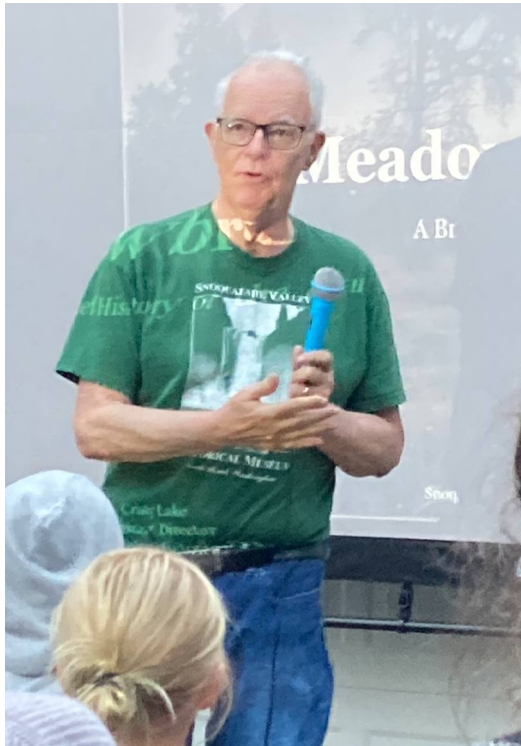


Meadowbrook neighborhood business district probably in the 1940's, looking south from Meadowbrook bridge. Note two grocery stores, meat market and drug store. SVHS photo



Circa 1956--1957 valley aerial: Meadowbrook neighborhood at lower left. Snoqualmie at lower center. Note future sites of Snoqualmie Elementary, Snoqualmie Middle School and Mount Si High School. Tollgate Farm and Nintendo site at upper right, all on open farmland that was the Snoqualmie Tribe maintained Snoqualmie Prairie. SVHS photo

100th Birthday Potluck!



Above: Neighbors and friends gather for barbecue and potluck on closed streets. McCarty photo Left: Valley historian Dave Battey tells about early-day life in the Meadowbrook neighborhood. McCarty photo



Birthday party attendees gather for presentation on Meadowbrook history by Snoqualmie Valley Museum director Cristy Lake. McCarty photo

Coming Events!

North Bend 101 Friday, March 1, 7 pm Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center

Join Cristy Lake of the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum to find out about the history of North Bend the town. Beginning with the last ice age, discover why this valley has been important to people for thousands of years. Special photos from the museum's collection will give vivid glimpses into North Bend's past and personalities. Families welcome!

Hike the Prairie Loop Trail Saturday, March 9 9 am Meet at Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center

Enjoy Meadowbrook's open meadows and forested areas on a guided, level 2.5 mile loop that includes hidden fields not visible from any road. If we go quietly, we may see wildlife! Our route will follow the future trail connections to Snoqualmie Middle School and Centennial Fields, and return via the paved trail. Dress for the weather, including boots for wet areas. Families welcome; may be difficult for strollers. Heavy rain or high wind will cancel.

Hike to the Big Cedar Saturday April 6 meet at Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center

Walk through Meadowbrook's woods and across seasonal stream channels to see a tree that has been growing here since approximately 1523. See many northwest native plants and learn how important cedar was for northwest tribes and pioneers. Dress for the weather, including boots for wet areas. Families welcome. Hike is about 1.75 miles; not suitable for strollers. Heavy rain or high wind will cancel.

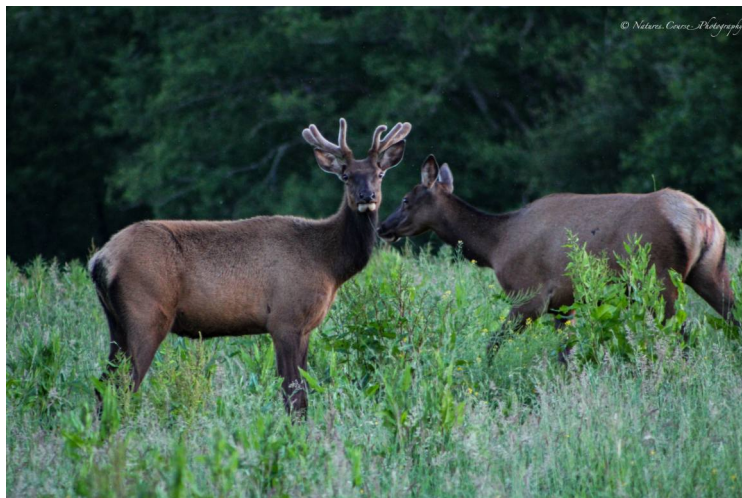
Snoqualmie 101 Friday April 26 7 pm Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center

Enjoy an evening with Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum's Cristy Lake, and find out about the history of the town of Snoqualmie. From its geologic origins, thousands of years of tribal life, and early pioneers, gain a new appreciation for our special home place. See rare photos from the museum's collection, and find out about the real people and their times in Snoqualmie. Families welcome!

Outdoor Kids' Jamboree! Wednesday June 26 Free Family event!

Multiple outdoor organizations gather to provide fun and interesting children's activities. Mark your calendar now, and watch for more details to come!

Guided Hikes?! Would your family, group, or troop like an exclusive, personal hike on Meadowbrook? Have a certain area you would like to see, or a special interest? We will match you with a guide for a walk designed just for you! info@meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org



Meadowbrook elk's new antlers are still covered with "velvet" in the spring. Berger photo

New Trail Benches Coming Soon!

Meadowbrook's elk-watching pull-out area on SR 202 will soon be even better! The pull-out has been a welcome addition for drivers on SR 202 by creating a safe area to pull off for those who want to enjoy the view and watch elk. Now, Eagle Scout candidate Tate Nicholson is adding benches to the area, for comfortable and relaxed appreciation of this very special area.

This will be Meadowbrook's 23rd Eagle or other Scout-related amenity at Meadowbrook, including trail bridges, sign kiosks, picnic tables, trail and sign maintenance and other projects. To be eligible to create an Eagle project, a Scout must already be a leader. Requirements include at least six months experience in a leadership role in the scout troop as a Life Scout, as a troop officer and mentor; earning 21 merit badges, including 13 specifically required ones involving first aid, life saving, environmental stewardship, personal fitness, camping, citizenship in the community, country and world, and other life skills. The candidate must participate in a Scoutmaster conference, pass a review board, and demonstrate leadership by organizing a lasting project to benefit the community. Only 2–8% of Scouts become Eagle Scouts.

Tate Nicholson's Eagle project will add 3 sturdy recycled plastic benches to the pull-out area, set on cement pads to aid maintenance. Don Remley, maintenance supervisor at Si View Park, advised the project. The pads have been poured, and the benches will be added when the cement has cured. Thank you, Tate!

Hi! My name is Tate Nicholson. I've lived in the beautiful Snoqualmie Valley all my life. I am currently a senior student at O'Dea High School in Seattle. My favorite classes at school are Personal Finance, Food Science, and English. I am a member of my schools Cross Country running team and Track & Field team. Outside of school, I enjoy being a Boy Scouts of America troop member in our local BSA Troop 1776. I also enjoy car-oriented activities such as high-performance driver education events with local car clubs, car meet ups with other car enthusiasts, and working on my car. I ski and snowboard in the winter, and I enjoy fishing and camping with my friends in the summer. I have participated in Wyld Life and Young Life since I was in 6th grade, and this is a big part of my life in addition to my Scouting.

I joined Scouts in 1st grade as a Cub Scout and am excited to be nearing the end of my Scout journey pursuing my Eagle rank. This has required perseverance and lots of help from my family, my



Tate Nicholson anchors the form for the cement pad for a new bench at Meadowbrook's Central Meadow.

Scout leaders, and my fellow scouts, Earning merit badges and completing scout projects has taught me many practical skills I will use in life, as well as gaining a better understanding of my community, country and world, Some of my favorite merit badges have been the camping merit badge, the first aid merit badge, the snow sports merit badge, and the citizenship in the world merit badge. I'm proud to be contributing to my Snoqualmie Valley community and the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association with my Eagle project so people will have a safe and comfortable access to Meadowbrook Farm Park for years to come!



Si View Park's Don Remley (left) instructs Tate Nicholson (right) in mixing cement for the bench forms.



Tate and helpers begin the cement pour into the first bench form.



Workers pause to watch the Cackling Geese fly over: Tate and his mother Marcie Nicholson. (center).

New MFPA Board Members

As the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association moves its focus from park management and maintenance to education, interpretation and stewardship, we have welcomed several exciting new board members! Thank you for your interest in Meadowbrook Farm Park!

Greg Watson Citizen at Large

Greg Watson is an historian, educator and artist, and is happily returning to the Meadowbrook board after a number of years teaching in the Auburn area. Greg was involved in the early efforts to acquire and preserve Meadowbrook Farm, and wrote the initial grants for the planning and start of construction of the Interpretive Center building. Our MFPA logo is Greg's design, as are the drawings that grace the Mary Louie art interpretive sign. Greg has studied the Lushootseed language extensively with the late Skagit Elder Vi Hilbert.



Harold Erland Upper Snoqualmie Valley Elk Management Group

Harold is a wildlife biologist who has planned and directed the research activities of the valley's elk herd in conjunction with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. He and his family are avid birders, and his daily birdwatching walks on Meadowbrook have given him an intimate knowledge of the land and its wildlife. Harold has been a frequent speaker for Meadowbrook presentations on the Snoqualmie valley elk, wildlife, and birds, and a leader of many Meadowbrook walks.



Terry Pottmeyer Citizen at large

Terry has extensive organizational and consulting experience with a number of non-profit organizations, including seven years as Executive Director of Friends of Youth. She has been a Mercer Island City Council member, and Mercer Island School Board president, and has worked with agencies advising many small non-profit groups. Her interests include youth, education and non-profit fundraising. Now a North Bend resident, she maintains an extensive garden and an enthusiastic interest in all the life within it.



Wintertime!

Looking for the elk in winter? Check the weather! If it's windy, they are likely sheltering under evergreens or in thick brush. When it's sunny, they are more apt to be in the open enjoying the warmth. Check out all the open meadow areas to avoid missing them. Remember to watch respectfully, and never approach any wild animal!



An elk's heavy winter coat is up to 5 times warmer than the sleek summer coat.



When grasses and clovers are covered with snow, an elk may paw the snow away to find food and graze. But they can also browse on branches, tree stems and bark, and are tall enough to reach high to do this. Vine maple, alder, cottonwood and willow twigs are favorites. Battey photo

Reserve Meadowbrook!

Imagine your special event at Meadowbrook! The Interpretive Center building is a versatile and scenic venue for weddings, meetings and celebrations of all types. The adjacent East Meadow can be reserved for outdoor events. For rental information, visit www.siviewpark.org or www.meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org or call Si View Parks at 425 831 1900.



Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association

PO Box 1462, Snoqualmie, WA 98065 www.meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org



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Caroline Villanova (Mountains to Sound Greenway)
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Mike McCarty (City of North Bend) (secretary)
Bill Whitaker (Snoqualmie Citizen)
Terry Pottmeyer (North Bend Citizen)

John House (treasurer)
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Ron Crouch (North Bend Citizen)
Harold Erland (USVEMG)
Greg Watson (Citizen at large)