

Washington State University – USDA Annual Report – FY 2022

Certificate Number: 91-R-0002

Customer Number: 1026

IACUC-Approved Exceptions: USDA-covered animals

Bears:

- During the hibernation period (~4-5 months) the following exceptions are approved for the care of the bears;
 - The straw bedding is not changed and dens of the grizzly bears are not cleaned.
 - Bears are not fed (water fixtures are left turned on).
 - These exceptions are approved due to the consideration of the need to not disturb the animals during hibernation combined with the fact that the animals are not eating and have very minimal urination or defecation during the hibernation period.
 - Animal wellbeing is assessed via remote cameras daily.
 - Number of Animals: 11 bears

Elk:

Throughout the acclimation period individual pens will be cleaned and bedding added at about monthly intervals (3-6 weeks) or whenever elk are handled (i.e., sedated for sampling). The purpose of the reduced cleaning is to minimize disturbance to the elk and allow them time to settle in the pens. In all cases, we will schedule pen cleaning to coincide with haloperidol treatment or scheduled handling times (i.e., elk are moved out of the pens to handling area) to reduce disturbance to elk. We have found that even opening the door to the pen (let alone trying to routinely spot clean) is very disturbing to the elk and causes them to pace heavily, climb, and jump in some cases. Feed is added through a window and this is as much disturbance as seems acceptable. Due to the disturbance and the likelihood of injury during cleaning, an exception is needed because the risk of injury from cleaning or required sedation of elk outweighs the need for frequent cleaning.

Special bedding and reduced pen cleaning will be necessary during the exposure trial period. Transmission of elk hoof disease is hypothesized to occur through contaminated soils, particularly those that are wet. To promote the potential transmission, we will house elk on soil placed on top of the concrete floored pens. Soil will be sprayed with water to keep it moist. An area of wood shaving bedding will be available in the pen, but part (about a quarter) of the pen will be soil covered. Feces and dirty shavings, particularly around the feeding area, will be spot cleaned when elk are sedated for handling or otherwise out of the pen (about once monthly). However, it is important for fecal contamination and "mud" to remain in much of the pen to enhance hypothesized disease

transmission route. The housing pens will be stripped and disinfected at the conclusion of the study.

Animal wellbeing is assessed daily by animal care and/or research personnel. This applied to 6 elk during this reporting period.