



News editors:

- **Photos:** Here's the link to a gallery of downloadable photos of Willow, the 4-month-old moose calf, taken on Monday.

<https://pdza.smugmug.com/NWTrek/NWT-Media/Willow-11-23-15/>

Password: Willow

- **Video:** And here's the link to downloadable video.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/zc29pmn0guxadki/Willow%202.mpeg?dl=0>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov. 24, 2015

WE ARE MOOSSED THANKFUL FOR A FRISKY 4-MONTH-OLD CALF – AND GENEROUS VISITORS WHO'VE DONATED 2,000 POUNDS OF FOOD TO HELP THE HUNGRY

Help Out for Half Off continues Thanksgiving Weekend: Visitors who bring two or more food items for Emergency Food Network get half off general admission – and have a chance to spot moose calf Willow

EATONVILLE, Wash. – It's an exciting Thanksgiving Week at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park. We have amazing new photos and video of Willow, the 4-month-old moose calf, to share. And, on Monday, Emergency Food Network picked up another 1,267 pounds of food donated by our guests for Pierce County's hungry families.



That total alone is equivalent to 1,014 meals, and it brings Northwest Trek's donations to 2,263 pounds for November – so far.

The Help Out for Half Off food drive continues during Thanksgiving Weekend, and there's no better time to bring friends and family to the wildlife park.

The landscape is bathed in the beauty of fall colors, the animals in the Free-Roaming Area are active, and visitors who bring two or more items of shelf-stable food to donate receive half off general admission. Thankfully, it's a win-win-win. The drive benefits Pierce County's non-profit Emergency Food Network, which distributed 15.3 million pounds of food in 2014.

Every visit to Northwest Trek includes a 50-minute, narrated tour of the 435-acre Free-Roaming Area, which is home to Willow and her mom, Connie; two other moose, Ellis and Nancy; plus herds of American bison and majestic Roosevelt Elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, deer, a pair of trumpeter swans and other animals.



At 4-months-old, Willow is growing fast. Keepers estimate she weighs between 120 and 130 pounds. Her legs are still long and spindly, but her body is filling out.

She's nearly weaned from her mother's milk and is growing more independent each day.

She moves farther away from Connie in search of the foliage that makes up the bulk of her herbivore diet. She also has a hearty appreciation for the grain that keepers leave out to supplement the browse, or branches and leaves, moose so like to munch on.

Though she's venturing farther away from mom than when she was nursing, Willow still sticks fairly close to Connie, Northwest Trek Zoological Curator Marc Heinzman said. "Willow hasn't been afraid to explore," he said.



The young moose was a most special surprise for Northwest Trek staff in 2015. She was born on July 17, the wildlife park's 40th birthday. Her name was chosen by members of the public who gave it the most votes from a slate of prospective names selected by wildlife park keepers.

She has quite a bit of growing to do. An adult female moose can weigh around 800 pounds.

That's a lot, but it's significantly less than the weight of the food generous Northwest Trek visitors have brought in during the wildlife park's Help Out for Half Off food drive. In fact, the food donated to date is more than the weight of *three* adult female moose, or two fully grown males.

In addition to the chance to see Willow during a tram tour of the Free-Roaming Area, visitors also can walk forested pathways past natural exhibits with many other native Northwest animals, including black and grizzly bears, wolves, foxes, Canada lynx, bobcats, beavers, river otters, owls – and, fittingly this week, a turkey vulture.

For more information about the moose calf – and to see photos of Willow – go to www.nwtrek.org/moose. For more information about Northwest Trek, go to www.nwtrek.org.

Northwest Trek will be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Thanksgiving Weekend. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. It's a great time to get out and spend time in nature, rather than among the shopping crowds.

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Northwest Trek, accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, is a 725-acre zoological park dedicated to conservation, education and recreation by displaying, interpreting and researching native Northwest wildlife and their natural habitats. The wildlife park is a facility of Metro Parks Tacoma and is located 35 miles southeast of Tacoma off State Highway 161.

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