

# SPRUCE THE MOOSE



*Public picks name for Northwest Trek Wildlife Park's bright-eyed, quickly growing, 4-week-old male moose calf*



**Northwest Trek**  
Wildlife Park

**METRO PARKS TACOMA**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** July 8, 2016

EATONVILLE, Wash. – Votes are in. Numbers are tallied. And the winner is...Spruce.

Northwest Trek's male moose calf, who will be a month old on Tuesday, has a name.



Members of the public cast 4,337 votes in a naming survey conducted over the last couple of weeks. They picked Spruce from three tree-name choices – Spruce, Douglas and Ash - submitted by Northwest Trek keepers.

The race was close between Spruce and Douglas (as in Douglas fir). Spruce won with 44 percent of the vote. Douglas captured 38 percent. Ash was a very distant third.

All three are Northwest names.

Spruce, born June 12, is just the second moose born at the wildlife park near Eatonville in the last 16 years.

His sister, Willow, arrived last July 17 – a surprise gift on Northwest Trek’s 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Many of Northwest Trek’s members, visitors and friends liked and commented on the naming survey on social media, giving

their opinions on the choices submitted by keepers – and suggesting a few of their own.

One comment, though, perfectly summed up what seemed to be the prevailing sentiment: “Awww Spruce the Moose would be adorable!”

And, in fact, he is adorable. Spruce spends his days hanging out with mother Connie, staying close but venturing out a little into the forest to munch on browse (twigs, leaves, tree branches). He also continues to nurse, and is growing quickly.

You don’t just haul a scale out into the woods, track down a moose and weigh him, so keepers have to estimate his weight. It’s approximately 50 pounds.

While nursing, a calf can gain up to three pounds a day.

Spruce’s parents were named for Northwest Trek icons – Connie for the wildlife park’s co-founder, Connie Hellyer; his father, Ellis, was named for longtime wildlife park deputy director and conservationist Dave Ellis.

But in keeping with the wildlife park’s animal naming procedures that began a couple of years ago, Willow and the new calf will have identities that reflect the forests in which their species live.

Moose are the only residents of the wildlife park’s Free-Roaming Area that are named.

Visitors aboard narrated tram tours of forests and meadows in the 435-acre Free-Roaming Area should keep sharp eyes out the windows, seeking a sighting of Northwest Trek’s five moose – adults Connie, Ellis, and Nancy and calves Willow and Spruce.

The area also is home to an American bison herd that includes six calves born this spring; woodland caribou and Roosevelt elk herds with two calves each; plus two lambs among the bighorn sheep population.

Meanwhile, over in Northwest Trek’s central area, where visitors walk along forested pathways to view a wide variety of animals, three beaver kits born on May 5 are growing quickly, too, becoming accomplished swimmers and spending time in their den with their parents.

Visitors can look for the beaver kits on exhibit in the Wetlands area of the wildlife park. The Wetlands also are home to an energetic pair of 1-year-old North American river otters who arrived at Northwest Trek last month. There’s a new skunk on exhibit, too, along with a badger, wolverine and other animals.

Along other pathways, visitors come upon exhibits holding two young black bears, a grizzly bear, a family of wolves, red foxes, a cougar, coyotes, Canada lynx, bobcats and other animals.

And over near the main office and gift shop, the 3-month-old Kids’ Trek is wowing children from toddlers to tweens with its one-of-a-kind, nature-inspired play structures. Kids’ Trek includes a 20-foot-tall replica of a hollow tree to play in; nets to climb on; a pole to slide down; three slides, including one through a tunnel with a 30-degree bend; a net ladder to scale forwards, backwards or even upside down; a stream in which to splash; a toddler zone featuring a sand play area and other amenities; and a “construction zone” with large sticks children can use to build forts or other imaginative structures.

All of these activities are free with admission or membership to Northwest Trek.

The wildlife park is open from 9:30 a.m. to 6p.m. daily.

For more information, go to [www.nwtrek.org/moose](http://www.nwtrek.org/moose) or [www.nwtrek.org](http://www.nwtrek.org).

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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, a facility of Metro Parks Tacoma. It is located 35 miles southeast of Tacoma off State Highway 161.*

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