

# AND HER NAME IS...WILLOW

PUBLIC PICKS NAME FOR NORTHWEST TREK'S 6-WEEK-OLD MOOSE CALF

*She is the first moose born at the wildlife park in 15 years, and she arrived on Northwest Trek's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday*



**News editors:**

Find a gallery of downloadable photographs here: <https://pdza.smugmug.com/NWTrek/NWT-Media/Moose-calf-Willow-September/>

**Password:** willow

And a downloadable video of the moose calf here: <https://pdza.smugmug.com/NWTrek/NWT-Media/Moose-calf-video-September/>

**Password:** moose

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Sept. 1, 2015

EATONVILLE, Wash. – She is tough and resilient and as beautiful as an integral piece of the Northwest landscape. So it's not surprising that members of the public picked Willow as the name for Northwest Trek's 6-week-old moose calf.

She is the first moose born at the 725-acre wildlife park near Eatonville in 15 years, and she arrived as a very special delivery on July 17 – Northwest Trek's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Staff members nominated three Northwest-themed names for the calf: Willow, Lily and Aspen. The public chose Willow through voting in an online survey over the last month.



Willow's mother, Connie, was named in honor of Northwest Trek co-founder Connie Hellyer. Her father, Ellis, was named in memory of Dave Ellis, a longtime deputy director of the wildlife park.

One other adult moose, Nancy, also wanders the 435-acre Free-Roaming Area at Northwest Trek. The moose are often visible to members of the public as visitors ride trams for a narrated tour of the forests and meadows.

The upcoming Labor Day Weekend is a wonderful time to visit Northwest Trek for a possible peek at the moose family, as well as up-close views of other animals in the Free-Roaming Area, which is home to American bison, Roosevelt elk, deer, bighorn sheep and other animals.

The annual Get Out of the Rut weekend features activities that showcase the behaviors of many of these hoofed animals during the rutting – or mating – season. A video of two elk bugling and sparring for supremacy in the elk herd may be viewed here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY4YQIPCxc4>.

Get Out of the Rut runs Saturday, Sept. 5 through Monday, Sept. 7. Northwest Trek hours are 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day. This Northwest Trek tradition honors elk, moose, bighorn sheep and deer through activities for visitors.

Weekend activities include:

- Trailside Encounters in which keepers showcase and talk about small animals. Times are 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. daily.
- Daily keeper talks (locations and times are posted at the front gate).
- Elk-lympics, in which visitors can test their ability to survive the rut by attempting up to five

Elk-lympic events. They include thrashing, sparring, parallel march, bugling and more. The Elk-lympics run from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day during Get Out of the Rut.

This is also a great time to see how the Northwest Trek babies have grown over the summer. Bison and elk calves, bighorn sheep lambs and deer fawns still stick close to their mothers in the meadows and wooded areas of the Free-Roaming Area. But they are growing more independent and adventuresome, and, though still babies, they've lost some of the distinctive colors and spots they carried shortly after their births.

And, of course, there also are black and grizzly bears, gray wolves, foxes, Canada lynx, bobcats, coyotes, a cougar, beavers, a river otter, fishers, badgers, skunks, raccoons, owls and other animals in natural exhibits along paved pathways in the main area of the wildlife park.



In the Free-Roaming Area, Willow continues to thrive, Northwest Trek Deputy Director Alan Varsik said.

“She is still nursing and also sampling browse, such as willow and maple cuttings, and she’s starting to show a little more independence,” he said. “Connie is taking the occasional time out, where she leaves Willow for a brief period of time. Under the watchful eye of Connie, Willow has also had positive encounters with our other moose.”

For more information, go to [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, is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup>*

*anniversary in 2015. It is located 35 miles southeast of Tacoma off State Highway 161.*

**Photo credits:** Oona Copperhill/Northwest Trek Wildlife Park

Photo captions:

**Top:** Members of the public choose Willow as the name for Northwest Trek Wildlife Park’s 6-week-old moose calf, who was born on July 17. She is still growing into her very long legs.

**Center:** Bull moose Ellis gets nose to nose with his daughter, Willow, at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park.

**Bottom:** Mama moose Connie nuzzles calf Willow in the Free-Roaming Area at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park.

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