

SILETZ NEWS



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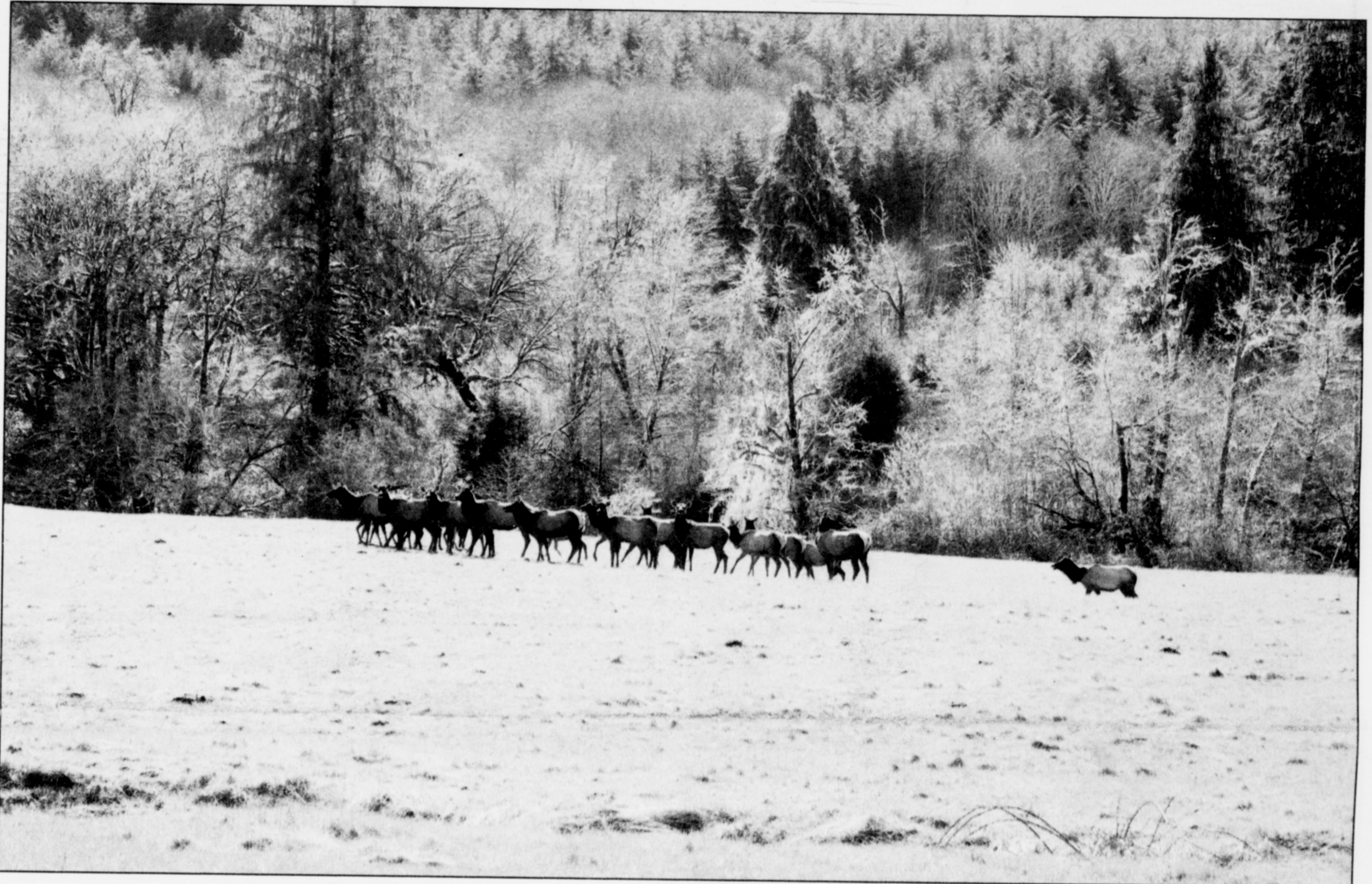


Photo above by Natasha Kavanaugh
Photo below by Diane Rodriguez

Conference sparks international, national interest in language program

By Diane Rodriguez

Thanks to the *Wall Street Journal* and other news organizations who know an interesting story when they see one, the Siletz Tribal Language Program enjoyed a 10-day run in national and international news in February.

The original article appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* on Feb. 18. Entitled *Talking the Talk, for Posterity/Oral Online Dictionaries Help Preserve Languages, Cultures Muted by Modernity*, the article written by Robert Lee Hotz opened with the unveiling of several "talking dictionaries" by Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania and the National Geographic's Enduring Voices project.

The Athabascan language taught through the Tribal language program and its "talking dictionary" were included during the presentation at this American Association for the Advancement of Science conference in Vancouver, B.C.

On the same day, an article written by Richard Gray appeared in *The Telegraph* in London. Entitled *Internet may save endangered languages/Vanishing languages spoken by only small groups of people around the world could be saved from extinction by social media networks*

and the Internet, this article also highlighted the "talking dictionaries:"

Linguists have also unveiled eight new "talking dictionaries" as part of a project to save thousands of ancient tongues from extinction.

The digital dictionaries feature more than 32,000 written words and 24,000 audio recordings taken from native speakers from remote corners of the world.

David Harrison, from Swarthmore College in Philadelphia, said: "You can have a language spoken by only 50 or 500 people, only in one location, and now through digital technology that language can achieve a global voice."

"Endangered language communities are adopting digital technology to aid their survival and to make their voices heard around the world. This is a positive effect of globalisation."

The talking dictionaries initiative from National Geographic Society's Enduring Voices project is an attempt to prevent these ancient languages being forgotten.

See Language on page 5.

A herd of elk in a field east of Siletz (above) enjoy a warm sunny day on March 8. The nice weather didn't hang around long, though. Just five days later, Lincoln County residents were treated to up to six inches of snow. The street below in Lincoln City shows the depths of the snow and how it can cause phone lines to sag. Nearly every part of the county was cut off from the Willamette Valley or other areas of the coast at one time or another on March 13 because of the snow and trees that came down across roadways. See additional photos on pages 10-11.

