

# Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee

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*Report Card on the Resolutions*

*2014*

# Introduction

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The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Provincial Committee is pleased to provide ASB members and staff with the Report Card on Government and Non-Government Responses to the 2014 Provincial ASB Resolutions. This document includes the Whereas and Therefore Be It Resolved sections from each of the resolutions passed at the 2014 Provincial ASB Conference, the associated responses and the grade for each response as assigned by the Committee. Comments from the Committee are included with the grade assigned.

There are four response grades that can be assigned to a resolution response: Accept the Response; Accept in Principle, Incomplete and Unsatisfactory. The grade assigned relates to the quality of the response to the resolution. A definition of what each grade means is included as part of the Report Card. This report also summarizes actions undertaken by the Provincial ASB Committee and provides updates associated with resolution issues.

Please note that the grades assigned by the Committee are intended to provide further direction on future activities or follow up with respondents. If you would like to comment on the assigned grade or follow up activities, please contact your Provincial ASB Committee Representative.

The ASB Provincial Committee consists of five regional representatives, a representative from the Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldman (AAAF) as secretary, a representative from the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMD&C), the ASB Program Manager and ASB Program Coordinator (recording secretary) from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD). The members for 2014 were:

Regional Representatives	Alternate
Patrick Gordeyko, Chair, Northeast Region	Ron Bobocel
Lloyd Giebelhaus, Vice-Chair, Northwest Region	Darrell Hollands
Garry Lentz, South Region	Henry Doeve
Jim Duncan, Central Region	Phillip Massier
Corey Beck, Peace Region	Doug Dallyn
Other Representatives	
Soren Odegard, AAMD&C	
Trent Keller, Secretary/1 <sup>st</sup> VP, AAAF	
Maureen Vadnais, Manager, ASB Program, ARD	
Pam Retzloff, ASB Program Coordinator, Recording Secretary	

# Definition of Terms

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The Provincial Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Committee has chosen four indicators with which to grade resolution responses offered by government and non-government organizations.

## ***Accept the Response***

A response that has been accepted is one that addresses the resolution as presented or meets the expectations of the Provincial ASB Committee.

## ***Accept in Principle***

A response that has been accepted in principle is one that addresses the resolution in part or contains information, which indicates further action is being considered.

## ***Incomplete***

A response that is graded as incomplete is one that has not provided enough information or does not completely address the resolution. Follow up is required to solicit the information required for the Provincial ASB Committee to make an informed decision on how to proceed.

## ***Unsatisfactory***

A response that is graded as unsatisfactory is one that does not address the resolution as presented or does not meet the expectations of the Provincial ASB Committee.

# Executive Summary

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Grading given by the Provincial ASB Committee to Government and Non-Government Organizations response to resolutions passed at the 2014 Provincial ASB Conference.

Resolution Number	Title	Status	Page
1-14	CN Railways Weed Control	Accept the Response	5
2-14	Wildlife Damage Compensation Program	Accept in Principle	9
3-14	Elk ( <i>Cervus elaphus</i> ) Population Control	Accept the Response	12
E1-14	Licensing of glyphosate tolerant wheat in Canada	Unsatisfactory	14

ASBs were given an opportunity to provide input for the grading process by individually grading the resolution responses and submitting them to their regional representative. These results were compiled and the comments used by the Provincial Committee members to determine the final grade.

51% of the ASBs submitted their grading responses for consideration. The number of municipalities per region that responded and the overall grading summary response is included below. This includes accounting for regions that met together to grade the resolution responses.

## No. of ASBs that Responded

Region	% of Region Responding
South	32%
Central	100%
Northeast	100%
Northwest	23%
Peace	23%

NOTE: Central and Northeast Regions graded the responses as a group.

## 2014 Summary of Grading Responses Submitted

Resolution No.	Accept the Response	Accept in Principle	Incomplete	Unsatisfactory	Grade
1-14	3	6	4	6	Accept in Principle/Unsatisfactory
2-14	5	6	5	3	Accept in Principle
3-14	9	7	2	2	Accept the Response
4-14	4	9	5	3	Accept in Principle

The ASB Provincial Committee met with Minister Olson in 2014. The Committee discussed the resolutions with the Minister and some of the issues that had occurred during the year. Issues discussed included the delay in response from the Minister regarding a *Weed Control Act* appeal, ergot, bacterial ring rot, rabies and anthrax, weed control along rail lines and the Clubroot Action Committee not meeting regularly.

The ASB Committee was requested to bring forward the views of the provincial ASBs about fusarium to the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship when Bill 201 was being reviewed. Garry Lentz, South Region Rep, represented the viewpoints of the provincial ASBs. Jason Storch, AAAF President, and Carolyn Kolebaba, Vice-President of AAMDC, were also invited to meet with the Standing Committee to present their association's viewpoints on this issue. The end result of the consultation on Bill 201 was the Committee's recommendation that the bill not proceed any further in the legislature.

The Committee updated the Terms of Reference for the Provincial Committee and made changes to how resolutions will be handled as the Committee felt we were not getting timely and adequate responses to the resolutions. A copy of the Terms of Reference can be accessed at the ASB Program website at:

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/rsv13315/\\$FILE/2014 ASB Prov Cmte Terms of Reference.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/rsv13315/$FILE/2014%20ASB%20Prov%20Cmte%20Terms%20of%20Reference.pdf)

The ASB Provincial Committee tried a new approach for seeking better responses to the resolutions in 2014. The Committee reviewed the responses after they were received in the early spring and gave each one an initial grade. Any response graded as incomplete or unsatisfactory was sent back to the responding organization for clarification. Resolutions 1-14, 2-14 and 3-14 were sent back to the responders and additional organizations for further information. The final grading assigned is based on all information received from the responding organizations.

# CN Railways Weed Control

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- WHEREAS:** Canadian National Railways is a large private company which owns land in the province of Alberta. Ongoing issues with CN's weed control programs exist in the province, and
- WHEREAS:** Over the course of the summer season 2013, CN staff stated that 'CN Rail is Federally Regulated and the *Weed Control Act* of Alberta does not have jurisdiction on CN property', and further stated that: 'It is considered trespassing if there is entry onto CN property without the proper CN documentation and permissions.', and
- WHEREAS:** In past responses to Resolutions requesting Railways in Alberta to control the noxious weeds on their properties, CN has stated they wish to work with municipal inspectors and accepted their responsibility under the *Weed Control Act*, and
- WHEREAS:** CN requires an onerous and involved work permit application, contractor training course and insist on a minimum 24 hours notice just to allow entry onto property, which during the busy weed season, when a 5 minute walk onto a Right-of-way may be needed to confirm a plant's identity, is ludicrous, and
- WHEREAS:** The *Railway Safety Act* states: "No person shall, without lawful excuse, enter on land on which a line work is situated", and
- WHEREAS:** The CN Guidelines Regarding Access to Workplace lists Types of Access, Requirements and Documentations ie: for Contractors, Visitors and "Regulators in line of duty (for example: Transport Canada, Transportation Safety board, Human Resources Development of Canada (HDRC), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), National Transportation Safety Board (NTSC)" whose requirements for access are simply - 'Must present Inspector/Investigator ID card' and 'Must be given Safety Briefing where applicable' Documentation required is 'Regulatory ID card'.

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**

### **THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST**

that Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development work with Alberta Justice, Canadian National Railways and Alberta's Municipalities to confirm that CN Rail is bound by *the Weed Control Act* of Alberta.

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**

**THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST**

that Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, work with CN to confirm that Inspectors appointed under the *Weed Control Act* of Alberta are considered to be "Regulators in line of duty" under *CN Guidelines Regarding Access to Workplace* thereby waiving the requirements for Work Permits, Contractor training and notice to be given prior to entry onto CN Rail property.

**Status:** Provincial

*Response:*

**Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development**

Thank you for your February 14, 2014 letter requesting a Departmental Response to the Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee Resolution #1, Canadian National (CN) Railways Weed Control. I appreciate the opportunity to provide the following response on behalf of Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD).

Railways often have right-of-way weed inspection/enforcement issues that obstruct appointed municipal inspectors in the efforts to enforce the *Weed Control Act* (WCA). While railway right-of-ways in Alberta are covered under the WCA, the railways also have issues that need to be considered for WCA enforcement in areas that may present safety concerns for railways. For example, CN property requires an approved work permit in place prior to entry, which even includes urban Police forces should they wish entry onto railway lands. These permits can be dated for a maximum of one year, and the railway requires that each municipality have its own work permit in place, as permits are limited to one general location, and the railway supervisors responsible for the track in each area can vary.

With these issues in mind, ARD staff are reviewing situations in neighbouring provinces that have developed a plan to deal with weed management issues. This review will help inform the development of our own plan that sets out procedures that satisfy both WCA-appointed inspectors, and any railway safety and procedural concerns. Both CN and Canadian Pacific Railways will be involved, as each railway has weed problems and safety concerns.

If there are any questions with regard to this issue, they can be directed to Mr. David Feindel, Branch Head of ARD's Crop Research and Extension Division at 780-422-4911 (toll-free by first dialing 310-0000).

**Further response from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development**

Thank you for sending me copies of your June 11, 2014 letters in reference to the 2014 Resolution Number 1: CN Railway Weed Control. As you indicated in your letter, the Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee was unclear whether an inspector appointed under the Alberta *Weed Control Act* was considered to be a "Regulator in the Line of Duty".

By way of clarification the term "Regulator in the Line of Duty" is in the CN policy that grants access to Federal Agencies: "Regulators in line of duty for example: (Transport Canada, Transportation Safety Board, Human Resources Development of Canada, Federal Railroad Administration, National Transportation Safety Board)". According to the enclosed CN document, *CN Guidelines Regarding Access to Workplace*, Weed Inspectors appointed under the Alberta *Weed Control Act* are not Regulators in the Line of Duty.

I assure you that Agriculture and Rural Development is committed to addressing this issue, and will keep you informed regarding our discussions with the railways on this matter.

### **Canadian National Railway (CN)**

As you may already be aware, CN has an extensive weed control program in Alberta, and, indeed, throughout its network. We hire professional contractors to carry out the program, and these contractors are required to respect all applicable laws and regulations. Furthermore, these contractors are required to carry out all weed control activities in an environmentally responsible manner and following best-established industry standards.

Spraying for weeds on the railway is carried out for safety reasons. The elimination of weeds greatly reduces tripping hazards where CN personnel and contractors are working, and also limits the potential for drainage problems and damage to the track infrastructure caused by invasive or fast-growing weeds. Furthermore, effective weed control also limits the future need for brush cutting in order to protect sightlines along our corridors. CN's weed control program helps us operate a safe and efficient railway.

As CN strives to be a good neighbour in all of the communities where we operate, we try to incorporate community concerns pertaining to specific locations and issues into the weed control work schedule, whenever feasible.

We note your letter states that railway safety concerns often obstruct municipal inspectors from being able to do their legislated inspection and enforcement duties. The process CN has put in place for accessing its property was developed for safety reasons. Under the *Railway Safety Act*, railways are responsible for all aspects of railway safety which includes ensuring the safety of CN personnel, the safety of operations through the communities we cross and the safety of third parties while on the right-of-way. Uncontrolled access to the rail right-of-way, without proper briefing and instructions, can have serious consequences. CN's right-of-entry process was developed for this very reason and application of this process also ensures compliance with the provisions of the *Railway Safety Act*.

Resolution No. 1 also refers to the simplified access procedure for regulators in the line of duty. It is important to note that this simplified procedure only applies to federal regulators specifically charged with overseeing CN compliance with various aspects of rail and workplace safety; these include Transportation Safety Board investigators and Transport Canada inspectors, and their



equivalents in the United States. Representatives of these organizations are trained in railway safety and fully understand the risks associated with entry onto a railway right-of-way.

We hope that the information above has shed some light on CN's weed control program. CN would be pleased to collaborate with the ASB in the handling of any specific weed control issue you may identify in the future.

**Provincial ASB Committee Grade: Accept the Response**

**Provincial ASB Committee Comments:**

This resolution was graded as Accept the Response because the questions asked in the TBIR were answered.

The Committee feels that weed control along railways is inadequate and inappropriate and that more work needs to be done to encourage railways to accept their responsibility under the WCA and ensure that their entire ROW is in compliance with the legislation, as ARD clearly indicates that they are bound by the Weed Control Act.

ASBs feel the need for a liaison position between ARD, ASBs and the railways to address the concerns along the railways, similar to what was in place in the 1970's and 80's. It is felt that CP and CN should both be included in this process moving forward to ensure consistency in all railway ROWs.

While safety is important to all parties involved, weed control problems need to be as well. There needs to be a way around having to adhere to onerous safety rules related to the dangers of working on the tracks when the issues are not necessarily in that vicinity but on the ROW.

It was felt that the province needs to take a leadership role in addressing this issue to avoid regional disparity. It is very important that this issue be followed up on.

# Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

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**WHEREAS:** Producers are absorbing the cost of livestock lost due to increased wolf predation occurring along Crown land, and

**WHEREAS:** Program funding varies by the amount of licenses collected which varies from year to year, and

**WHEREAS:** The officers doing the investigations are not left with final say on the cause of the animals' demise, or the eligibility of compensation if the carcass is found or not, and

**WHEREAS:** The criteria of eligibility excludes a variety of livestock producers, and

**WHEREAS:** Municipalities are absorbing the cost of wolf bounties and predator control programs in the Province, and

**WHEREAS:** There are insufficient Fish and Wildlife staff to monitor and control the predator population in the Crown Land bordering agricultural areas.

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**

### **THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST**

That Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resources Development, Justice and Solicitor General and all other relevant government ministries review the current staffing situation, program administration, budgets and funding source of the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program to ensure its effectiveness.

## **FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**

### **THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST**

That Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resources Development, Justice and Solicitor General and all other relevant government ministries implement a monitoring and assessment program to ensure that predators, inclusive of wolves, bears and cougars, are dealt with proactively.

**Status:** Provincial

### *Response:*

#### **Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development**

Thank you for your February 14, 2014 letter enclosing a copy of Resolution #2, Wildlife Damage Compensation Program, that was put forward by delegates at the Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee.

Alberta's Wildlife Predator Compensation Program was recently reviewed to ensure the program's mandate and requirements are current. The program provides compensation for eligible food-producing livestock (cattle, swine, goats, sheep and bison) confirmed to be killed or injured by

predators (bears, wolves, cougars and eagles). The program provides compensation at the average market value for the type and class of animal lost.

To maintain the credibility of our program, livestock losses must be confirmed as killed or injured by predators. Predators are opportunistic animals and are often found feeding on livestock carcasses that have died from other causes. Livestock producers seeking compensation for lost animals are encouraged to contact fish and wildlife officers as soon as possible to confirm that the animal is killed or injured by a predator. We do not provide compensation for missing animals, because there is no evidence to verify if or why the animal is missing.

Fish and wildlife staff from Environment and Sustainable Resource Development and Justice and Solicitor General have extensive training to evaluate predator kills, and manage predators by trapping, shooting and working with registered trappers. Public safety is a priority and our current staffing levels are adequate to respond. Calls are answered immediately and addressed in order of priority.

Because producers cannot legally deal with grizzly bears in the same manner as with wolves and cougars, Environment and Sustainable Resource Development and Agricultural Canada are considering enhanced funding for confirmed grizzly bear predation.

Wildlife management plans guide Alberta's conservation and management activities. Our plans are specific to species, location, population, and hunting regimes. In the event that a species causes an issue, various management practices will be employed. Practices can include hunting, trapping, or relocation. If certain species of wildlife are damaging private property, producers can apply for a damage control licence, which provides the legal authority to hunt or trap the nuisance wildlife to attempt to minimize the damage.

#### **Further response from Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development**

Thank you for your June 11, 2014 letters requesting additional information about recent amendments to the Elk Population Control program and the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.

Environment and Sustainable Resource Development continues to address rising elk populations through hunting strategies. Additional elk hunting opportunities were created for the 2014 hunting season. Elk hunting seasons were added in six wildlife management units (WMUs) - three in the Peace River area and three in the central Parkland region. Hunting season dates for antlerless elk were extended in areas in and around Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Suffield and the Wainwright base. Elk hunting during the archery-only season is now permitted with a general license in WMUs north of CFB Suffield. Annual information on the number of special licences issued and resident hunter harvest is available on the My Wild Alberta website at: [www.mywildalberta.com](http://www.mywildalberta.com) under the Hunting tab.

In regards to the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program, departmental response protocols require investigations of suspected wildlife predation on livestock to be conducted within 24 hours.

The majority of complaints result in the investigator's recommendation being approved. During the last three years, total annual compensation payments averaged \$267,000 with 12 per cent of claims denied. Denied claims could have resulted from ineligible livestock or predators and/or lack of evidence.

Fish and wildlife officers from Justice and Solicitor General conduct investigations of suspected wildlife predation on livestock. I have forwarded your concerns regarding response times and the manner which investigations are conducted to my colleague Tim Grant, Deputy Minister for Justice and Solicitor General for his consideration.

During the past five years, the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program has undergone two substantial reviews, with input from internal and external groups. As I indicated in my previous response, the intent of the program is to provide compensation for the loss of food-producing animals. While poultry is a source of food, most losses are caused by predators that are not covered under the program. At this time the Government of Alberta is not considering other species of predators being added to the program.

In terms of livestock weight loss or stress, there are many possible contributing factors which could impact an animal's health and as a result, it would be difficult to substantiate such claims. As well, I previously indicated that staff have extensive training to evaluate predator kills.

In the last three years, wolves remain the number one killer of livestock, followed by cougars, grizzly bears, and black bears, however, depredation claims are not tracked by geographical region. We encourage producers who graze in heavily forested areas to provide range riders to detect predation, as well as to act as a deterrent through their presence on the landscape.

**Provincial ASB Committee Grade: Accept in Principle**

**Provincial ASB Committee Comments:**

The Committee graded this response as Accept in Principle because the response did address the issue of a review for adequate staffing, but did not deal with the issue of being proactive for dealing with predator problems. The Committee did not agree with ESRD's assessment that there is adequate staff to deal with all predation issues in a timely manner, in all areas of the province.

ASBs are finding that municipal staff are being turned to as a resource when predation occurs because of a lack of response from ESRD. There is also a general lack of proactive steps being taken to address increased pressure from predators on livestock. Many producers are at the point that they not able to deal with it on their own.

This is an issue that needs to be addressed and the ASB Committee will continue to voice the ASBs concerns to ESRD.

# Elk (*Cervus Elaphus*) Population Control

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**WHEREAS:** Crop Depredation Program funding from Alberta financial Services Corporation (AFSC) does not cover all losses from ungulate damage, and;

**WHEREAS:** Producers are absorbing some of the cost of depredation of stored harvest product, and;

**WHEREAS:** Alberta Justice and Solicitor General Fish and Wildlife Officers make recommendations that are short term remedies to ungulate depredation of crops and stored feed, and;

**WHEREAS:** Approximately \$6.9 million have been paid out in losses in the Peace Region over the last 2 years;

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**

### **THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST**

That Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (AESRD) Fish and Wildlife Division increase harvest numbers of antlerless elk as well as extending the hunting season to address the extremely high population in areas of the Province of Alberta.

**Status:** Provincial

### *Response:*

#### **Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development**

Thank you for your February 14, 2014 letter enclosing a copy of Resolution #3 Elk (*Cervus elaphus*) Population Control that was recently passed by delegates at the Provincial Agricultural Service Board Conference. I am pleased to provide a response.

Environment and Sustainable Resource Development has increased the frequency and duration of the elk hunting season and the number of licences issued in an effort to address the concerns described in the resolution. Our department is working to reduce the impact of elk populations in agricultural wildlife management units (WMUs) by holding three antlerless elk hunting seasons that span the period from late August to January 20 each year.

The department has also steadily increased the number of antlerless licences issued to hunters during the past four years. In WMU 357, which covers most of the County of Grande Prairie, the number of licences issued increased from 721 in 2010 to 1,312 in 2013. In WMU 521 in the Valleyview and Debolt areas, licences issued rose from 649 in 2010 to 1,538 in 2013. Results of the 2013 hunting season are still being compiled, but initial field survey results and comments from a number of clients suggest the additional hunting opportunities have had an impact in reducing local elk herd numbers.

Environment and Sustainable Resource Development staff and local fish and wildlife officers from Justice and Solicitor General work closely with farmers to devise practices to reduce crop damage by wildlife. It is well documented that adopting these practices into farming operation significantly reduces losses to wildlife.

Agriculture and Rural Development plays a key role in promoting farming practices that minimize ungulate damage to crops. That department can provide landowners with information about ways to protect their crops, including fencing, and which practices are not recommended in areas with elk and deer populations, such as swath grazing. Agricultural producers are also encouraged to allow hunters access to their private lands, as hunting is an effective way to reduce elk populations.

**Further response from Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development**

Thank you for your June 11, 2014 letters requesting additional information about recent amendments to the Elk Population Control program and the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.

Environment and Sustainable Resource Development continues to address rising elk populations through hunting strategies. Additional elk hunting opportunities were created for the 2014 hunting season. Elk hunting seasons were added in six wildlife management units (WMUs) - three in the Peace River area and three in the central Parkland region. Hunting season dates for antlerless elk were extended in areas in and around Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Suffield and the Wainwright base. Elk hunting during the archery-only season is now permitted with a general license in WMUs north of CFB Suffield. Annual information on the number of special licences issued and resident hunter harvest is available on the My Wild Alberta website at: [www.mywildalberta.com](http://www.mywildalberta.com) under the Hunting tab.

**Provincial ASB Committee Grade: Accept the Response**

**Provincial ASB Committee Comments:**

The Committee graded this response as Accept the Response because the questions in the TBIR were answered. ESRD has increased the tags and the duration of the elk hunting season in a number of WMUs.

The Committee feels that more information needs to be provided to assess if there has been any impact to the elk population with the increased hunting. Since elk problems can be very localized, ESRD should work more closely with the affected municipalities to develop strategies on how to most effectively deal with the problem.

Producers that are negatively affected by the large elk population need to be compensated, especially if the efforts to reduce the number of elk are going to be slow or ineffective.

The ASB Committee will continue to monitor this issue and ask for updates from ESRD as time goes on. (Information on elk harvested in 2013 can be found on pages 46-49 of the Appendix)

# Licensing of glyphosate tolerant wheat in Canada

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**WHEREAS:** Wheat, including but not limited to the classes of Canada Western Red Spring, Canada Prairie Spring Red, Canada Western Amber Durum and Canada Western Red Winter Wheat is one of the most important crops grown in Canada, and

**WHEREAS:** In the U.S., where multiple herbicide tolerant crops, like glyphosate tolerant soybeans, corn and cotton have been grown year after year, glyphosate resistant weed numbers have risen dramatically; glyphosate resistant weeds now exist on 49% of U.S. farms, which requires other herbicides to be mixed with glyphosate to control the glyphosate resistant weeds, and

**WHEREAS:** Monsanto is developing GMO crops which will be tolerant to glyphosate and other herbicides such as dicamba to deal with the glyphosate resistant weed issue, and

**WHEREAS:** The benefits of a herbicide tolerant crop system include the reduction of herbicide use and use of less toxic herbicides (like glyphosate), the reduction of tillage and therefore soil erosion and the increased crop production through better weed control timing choices, and

**WHEREAS:** In Western Canada where crop choices are limited, having volunteer glyphosate tolerant wheat to be dealt with in Roundup Ready canola, or in pre-seed situations ahead of wheat or other crops would increase the amount of herbicides being used, or require producers to revert to tillage to deal with this new 'weed'.

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**

### **THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST**

that Alberta Agriculture and Rural development, together with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency prevent the licensing of glyphosate tolerant wheat in Canada

**Status:** Provincial and Federal

### *Response:*

#### **Health Canada**

Thank you for your letter of February 19, 2014 enclosing a copy of the Agricultural Service Board's resolution on the licensing of glyphosate tolerant wheat in Canada. I regret the delay in responding.

As the issue you raise falls within the purview of the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, you have taken the correct course of action by sending him a copy of your correspondence. I trust that Minister Ritz will give your concerns every consideration.

**Canadian Food Inspection Agency**

Thank you for your letter, with which you enclosed the Alberta Agricultural Service Board's *Emergent Resolution, Licensing of glyphosate-tolerant wheat in Canada*. I appreciate being made aware of the Board's views on this issue.

Please be assured that the Government of Canada considers issues of food and feed safety to be of the utmost importance. Canada has one of the most stringent and rigorous regulatory systems in the world. Canada's regulatory system for products of agricultural biotechnology requires that new products undergo science-based safety assessments before they can be cultivated by a grower, used in livestock feed or made available to the consumer.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Health Canada are responsible for assessing the safety of the agricultural products and foods in Canada's food production system. When it assesses new seeds, plants, livestock feeds, fertilizers and veterinary biologics for safety, the CFIA considers human, animal and environmental safety aspects. Health Canada assesses all novel food products for safety before they can be sold to consumers. This rigorous science-based assessment process is applied in the same way to traditionally developed products that have new characteristics and to products of biotechnology.

Agricultural products of biotechnology, such as genetically engineered (GE) wheat, require three separate safety assessments and authorizations prior to commercial use. The CFIA assesses the safety of the end product for release into the environment and its safety for use as a livestock feed, while Health Canada assesses its safety for use as food and its effect on human health. The environmental safety assessment would consider the potential of the plant to become a weed of agriculture or to be invasive of natural habitats; the potential consequences of gene flow to wild relatives; the potential to increase the activity of a plant pest; and the potential impact on non-target organisms and biodiversity. As you are aware, to date, no GE wheat has been authorized for use in Canada.

Any new authorizations by the CFIA for the environmental release of herbicide-resistant plants include a requirement to implement stewardship plans, which are designed to delay weeds from developing tolerance. These plans include guidelines on crop and herbicide rotation and describe the means by which growers can report any problems they have while growing the crop.

As previously mentioned, significant work goes into ensuring that the appropriate precautions are taken before a product of biotechnology is approved in Canada. It is important to maintain our rigorous, science-based assessment process to protect human and animal health and the environment while benefiting from the advances brought by these technologies.



**Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada**

Thank you for your correspondence with which you enclosed a copy of a resolution that received support from delegates at the provincial Agricultural Service Board Conference in January 2014 regarding glyphosate-tolerant wheat in Canada. I regret the delay in this response.

First, let me clearly state that no genetically engineered (GE) wheat has been authorized for use in Canada. Please be assured that when it comes to the approval of GE crops, the Government of Canada considers issues of food and feed safety to be of the utmost importance. Canada has one of the most stringent and rigorous regulatory systems in the world. Canada's regulatory system for products of agricultural biotechnology requires that new products undergo science-based safety assessments before they can be cultivated by a grower used in livestock feed or made available to the consumer.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Health Canada are responsible for assessing the safety of the agricultural products and foods in Canada's food production system. When it assesses new seeds, plants, livestock feeds, fertilizers and veterinary biologics for safety, the CFIA considers human, animal and environmental safety aspects. Health Canada assesses all novel food products for safety before they can be sold to consumers. This rigorous science-based assessment process is applied in the same way to traditionally developed products that have new characteristics and to products of biotechnology.

Agricultural products of biotechnology require three separate safety assessments and authorizations prior to commercial use. The CFIA assesses the safety of the end product for release into the environment and its safety for use as a livestock feed, while Health Canada assesses its safety for use as food and its effect on human health.

Significant work goes into ensuring that the appropriate precautions are taken before a product of biotechnology is approved in Canada, and it is important to maintain our rigorous, science-based assessment process to protect human and animal health and the environment while benefiting from the advances brought by these technologies.

With regard to concerns pertaining to the impact of herbicide-resistant crops on sustainable agriculture please be assured that the CFIA takes this issue seriously. In Canada authorizations for the environmental release of new herbicide-resistant plants include a requirement to implement stewardship plans designed to address the development of herbicide-resistant weeds. Authorizations also include a requirement to monitor the effectiveness of these plans and to report on their implementation to the CFIA. You may be interested to read a recent AgBioForum paper that praises Canada for its effective stewardship of glyphosate-resistant crops. It states that effective crop rotation has been used in Canada to significantly reduce the selection intensity for glyphosate-resistant weeds and suggests that other countries follow suit. The paper can be viewed at the following link: [www.agbioforum.org/v12n34/v12n34a10-duke.htm](http://www.agbioforum.org/v12n34/v12n34a10-duke.htm).

The regulatory assessment process for genetically modified crops is science-based. This ensures a predictable environment for the introduction of new products. It is important that regulatory decisions be evident-based and impartial. If new information relevant to the safety of a product, including those derived from biotechnology, comes to light, the CFIA conducts a review of this information. The Agency may change or revoke authorization, if warranted for safety reasons.

I would note that it is important to the Government that producers continue to have choice in selecting the agricultural practices and technologies that offer them the most benefits, both economic and environmental.

Again, thank you for informing me of the Agricultural Service Board Conference's resolution.

**Provincial ASB Committee Grade: Unsatisfactory**

**Provincial ASB Committee Comments:**

The Committee graded this response as Unsatisfactory because the response does not address the TBIR statement.

The Committee understands that there are processes in place for evaluating new genetically engineered products/crops but still feels that the request was to prevent the licensing and for the reasons noted in the resolution. The Committee understands that it is good to have a scientific review process to determine the safety of these products but no indication is given of an evaluation process to consider potential market impacts and weed control/resistance issues.

The Committee will continue to follow this resolution and advocate to CFIA and AAFC that ASBs do not want to see the licensing of glyphosate tolerant wheat in Canada.

# Previous Years Resolutions

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2013

## **Resolution 1-13: Weed Control in Provincial Waterways (Unsatisfactory)**

The Committee is aware of the program put in place to address the threat of Aquatic Invasive Species such as Zebra and Quagga Mussels and the importance of being proactive. The Committee feels that it is equally important to focus on invasive aquatic plants as well and would like to see increased/adequate funding to proactively control the spread and or eradication of species such as Flowering Rush and Eurasian Water Milfoil. The Committee encourages ESRD to work with ARD and PMRA to ensure control options are available through registered products under the Minor Use Program that would allow the use of these products in water bodies. ESRD is presently reviewing the Fisheries Act to which additional aquatic weed species may be added to allow for ESRD's full authority to control them.

## **Resolution 2-13: Inclusion of all Invasive Hawkweed Species as Prohibited Noxious under the Alberta Weed Control Act and Regulation (Accept in Principle)**

The Committee is aware that AWRAC has reviewed these species and recommended that they be added to the WCA regulation as captured in the letter to David Feindel on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2014.

See Appendix.

The Committee will continue to follow this issue to ensure that these species are added to the Act.

## **Resolution 4-13: Wild Boar Eradication Initiative (Accept in Principle)**

With the implementation of the Wild Boar Containment Standards, ARD has been working with municipalities in 2014 to meet with wild boar producers across the province to educate them on the fencing standards and inspect their current fencing system. Producers that are not in compliance with the minimum fencing standard will be required to have their fences staked by October 1, 2014 and upgraded to meet the minimum fencing standard by 2018. This is to be considered the first step in an eradication strategy for wild boar at large.

See Appendix for expectations and timelines.

## **Resolution 5-13: Agricultural Pests Act/Invasive Species Act (Unsatisfactory)**

The Committee is aware that consultation on the Agricultural Pests Act will begin with stakeholders in the fall of 2014. With the addition of the Fisheries Act also being under review the committee will be following the changes or creation of a new act to insure the outcome is an act that meets the needs of the ASBs and ask that ASBs throughout the province provide input to possible changes.

### **Resolution 6-13: Composition of Soil Conservation Appeal Committee (Accept in Principle)**

The committee will monitor and provide information to ASBs when consultation begins, however the *Soil Conservation Act* is still not under review.

2012

### **Resolution 4-12: Wild Boar Eradication Initiative (Incomplete)**

Please see resolution 4-13 for information.

### **Resolution 6-12: Requiring Seed Cleaning Plants to Test for Fusarium (Accept in Principle)**

The *Agricultural Pests Act* will be reviewed and consultations will start this fall with stakeholders. The ASB Committee will be advocating for the continued zero tolerance for fusarium in the *Act* and would like to encourage individual ASBs to participate in the stakeholder consultations. This recommendation will be forwarded to ARD for consideration to be included in the Regulation of the *Agricultural Pests Act*.

### **Resolution 7-12: Herbicide Selection for Noxious Weed Control on Acreages (Accept in Principle)**

The Committee is pleased to inform everyone that good progress has been made on the Acreage Owner Pesticide Certification pilot program course. There are still some problems to work out on the online portion of the course, but the program will be up and running shortly, with a spring 2015 implementation date.

### **Resolution 8-12: 2011 Provincial Enforcement of the Weed Act (Unsatisfactory)**

Pest Surveillance Branch has a new Executive Director, Dr. Jim Calpas and a new Director, Dr. David Feindel. The ASB Committee met with both of them to discuss areas of common interest in early 2014. They indicated that they are reviewing their programs and working towards additional staff to support their regulatory programs.

### **Resolution 9-12: Requiring labelling of flower seed mixes with all species present (Unsatisfactory)**

The committee continues to seek opportunities to express their concerns surrounding this issue.

### **Resolution 10-12: Request for Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (AARD) to take a more forceful approach to the selling of noxious and prohibited noxious weeds at greenhouses and plant retailers (Unsatisfactory)**

Please see resolution 8-12 for information.

# APPENDIX

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR RESOLUTIONS

## Minimum Containment Standards for Alberta Wild Boar Farms

### CONTAINMENT STANDARDS

#### Fence construction:

There will be two acceptable minimum containment standards. Wild boar producers have a choice of either building a fence that is partially buried into the ground (Standard 1) or using a double fence system (Standard 2). Both of these fencing systems require an electric fencing component.

Standard 1 Buried fence with an electric wire.		Standard 2 Double fencing system with an electric wire.	
Fence height above surface*	Minimum 1.5 metres	Outer fence height above surface*	Minimum 1.5 metres
Fence depth below surface	Minimum depth of 45 cm	Inner fence height above surface*	Minimum 1.5 metres
Fence material:	Lock joint woven fencing made from 10 gauge or heavier high tensile wire with no more than 10 cm spacing between vertical and horizontal lines.	Fence material:	Lock joint woven fencing made from 10 gauge or heavier high tensile wire with no more than 10 cm spacing between vertical and horizontal lines.
Fence posts:	Maximum spacing between posts is 3 metres.	Fence posts:	Maximum spacing between posts is 3 metres.
		Distance between fences	A minimum of 1.2 metres and a maximum of 5.0 metres
Electric wire:**	Made of 12 gauge high tensile wire and must be 10 cm to 30 cm above the surface on the inside of the fence held by lateral supports 30 cm in length.	Electric wire:	Made of 12 gauge high tensile wire and must be 10 cm to 30 cm above the surface on the inside of the inner fence held by lateral supports 30 cm in length.
Electric output:	Minimum of 10 joules	Electric output:	Minimum of 10 joules

\* Fence height must be such that a minimum of 1.5 metres are above the ground surface or above any other surface including snow drifts.

\*\*If two electric wires are used then it is suggested that the wires be placed at 20 cm and 40 cm above the surface and that separate fence chargers be used for each wire.

**Maintenance:**

It is expected that all producers will maintain their fences in good condition at all times. This will include, but not limited to, maintaining proper tension on the fencing material, ensure that vegetation is trimmed below the electric wires, and replacing the fence posts as required.

**EXCEPTIONS TO THE CONTAINMENT STANDARDS**

**Existing fences:**

The following temporary exception to Containment Standards is available for those producers with existing fencing systems with a target date of October 1, 2014:

- The bottom of the existing fence must be anchored to the surface with stakes spaced no more than 1.5 metres apart and the stakes must be a minimum of one metre into the ground sloped at a 45° angle to the outside of the enclosure. This will be considered a temporary equivalent containment to buried or double fencing.

**Repair or replacement of fences:**

Repairs, replacement, or modifications to existing fences will require an upgrade to the existing Containment Standards. Producers will be encouraged to consult with inspectors.

All existing wild boar fencing systems will be required to comply with the Containment Standards as soon as possible with a target date for all producers to be compliant with the standards by December 31, 2018. This will allow time for producers to upgrade their existing fences to meet the existing containment standards. It is estimated that buried fences could have a life span of four to seven years depending on the type of soil and moisture conditions. A double fence could last longer with fencing material lasting up to 15 years.

The wild boar containment standards came into effect on July 1, 2014 and ARD formulated an “Action Plan” with support of affected Ag Fieldmen for authorities where wild boar are farmed. This Action Plan included:

**Expectations:**

There is an expectation that ARD will provide information and support to producers and Agricultural Fieldmen in order that they may carry out their obligations and responsibilities thus ensuring their compliance with the APA. In order to move this process forward, ARD staff have been assigned to work with Agricultural Fieldmen to achieve compliance through education and direction. ARD in partnership with Ag Fieldmen will work with these producers throughout the summer and into the fall of 2014 to facilitate compliance as the new containment standards came into effect on July 1, 2014. ARD in conjunction with Ag Fieldmen will continue to monitor this process ensuring producer’s meet the accepted equivalency for existing fences by October 1, 2014. Any producer in non-compliance after that date will be managed into compliance by ARD, utilizing our compliance principles. The accepted equivalency will be phased out over a five year period ending December 31, 2018, at which time; all producers will be required to comply with the minimum containment standards.

**Timeline:**

There is a target date of compliance for equivalency by October 1, 2014.

All existing wild boar fencing systems will be required to conform to the Containment Standards no later than December 31, 2018.

ARD is currently working with producers with co-operation of the affected Ag Fieldmen and expect general compliance to the equivalency standards as required.

Minimal resistance is being encountered and the process to gain compliance through the legislation and ARD’s Compliance Principals is being developed.



Mr. David Feindel, Branch Head  
Pest Surveillance Branch  
Agriculture and Rural Development  
17507 Fort Road NW  
Edmonton, AB  
T5Y 6H3

March 14, 2014

Dear Mr. Feindel,

In 2008 – 2010, the Alberta Weed Control Act and Weed Control Regulation underwent extensive consultation and review to achieve the new *Weed Control Act* and Regulation of 2010. The *Act* and Regulation were completely reviewed and updated to account for emerging threats to Alberta's landscape, research on the biology and control of invasive species and technology adopted since the *Act* was last reviewed.

The Alberta Weed Regulatory Advisory Committee (AWRAC) was the committee that reviewed the Regulation, and was made up of a diverse group of stakeholders interested in effective regulation of weeds in Alberta. Representatives from urban and rural municipalities, the Alberta Invasive Plants Council (AIPC), Alberta Native Plant Council (ANPC), academia, industry, NGO's, the general public and government met together to achieve a Regulation that represents the concerns of all Albertans.

Since then, AWRAC's role, to provide the Minister with credible input to ensure provincial weed legislation is current and effective in preventing and minimizing the spread of non-native invasive plants, has continued. Some accomplishments include the development of a Terms of Reference for the committee, a protocol for the assessment of weeds for the purpose of regulation under the Alberta Weed Control Act, a risk assessment standard for the committee's evaluation of species, and several species lists including a Study List, Watch List and protocol, and recommendation lists for species including Do Not Regulate, Prohibited Noxious and Noxious.

Over the past 18 months, risk assessments and evaluations have been completed on a number of weed species. At its January 8, 2014 meeting, AWRAC approved the following recommendations to be forwarded to the Pest Surveillance Branch:

1. That the Regulations be revised to name the following species in the following categories:
  - a. Hieracium aurantiacum – Orange Hawkweed Noxious (downgraded)
  - b. Hieracium caespitosum – Meadow Hawkweed Noxious (downgraded)
  - c. Hieracium flagellare – Whiplash Hawkweed Prohibited Noxious
  - d. Hieracium floribundum- Kingdevil Hawkweed Prohibited Noxious
  - e. Hieracium glomeratum – Yellowdevil Hawkweed Noxious
  - f. Hieracium laevigatum- Smooth Hawkweed Prohibited Noxious
  - g. Hieracium lachenalii – Common Hawkweed Prohibited Noxious
  - h. Hieracium maculatum – Spotted Hawkweed Prohibited Noxious
  - i. Hieracium murorum- Wall Hawkweed Prohibited Noxious
  - j. Hieracium pilosella – Mouse-ear Hawkweed Prohibited Noxious (same)

k.	Hieracium piloselloides – Tall Hawkweed	Noxious
l.	Hieracium praealtum – Queendevil Hawkweed	Prohibited Noxious
m.	Hieracium sabaudum- European Hawkweed	Prohibited Noxious
n.	Hieracium vulgatum – Showy Hawkweed	Prohibited Noxious
o.	Zygophyllaceae - African Rue	Prohibited Noxious
p.	Sphaerophysa salsula - Alkali swainsonpea	Prohibited Noxious
q.	Vincetoxicum rossicum - Pale/European Swallow-wort	Prohibited Noxious
r.	Vincetoxicum nigrum - Black Swallow-wort	Prohibited Noxious
s.	Daucus carota L.- Queen Anne’s Lace	Prohibited Noxious
t.	Viola arvensis - European Field Pansy	Not regulated
u.	Lolium persicum – Persian Darnel	Not regulated

2. That the Pest Surveillance Branch direct additional communications to urban and rural municipalities and government departments that both Prohibited Noxious and Noxious category weeds require action by landowners (land managers) to destroy or control infestations. (There is presently a general misunderstanding that only Prohibited Noxious species require action under the Act.) AWRAC suggests that this communication could come in the form of more emphasis / discussion by PSB staff at regional weed inspector schools, and through letters to municipal governments and other provincial government departments and by postings on the government website.
3. That a determination be made of what legislation is most appropriate to manage invasive aquatic plant species and other invasive species (insects, pests, diseases) not included in existing legislation. A comprehensive Invasive Species Act has previously been suggested.
4. That the updated AWRAC Terms of Reference 2014 be formally endorsed as presented (see attached).

AWRAC members continue our commitment to working with the Pest Surveillance Branch to ensure that Alberta’s landscape is protected from the introduction and spread of invasive plant species. We look forward to your response to these recommendations.

Yours truly,



Tim Dietzler, Co-Chair, AWRAC



Gayah Sieusahai, Co-Chair, AWRAC

cc. Dr. James Calpas, Executive Director  
Crop Research and Extension Division  
Agriculture and Rural Development  
Agriculture Building  
5030 - 50 Street

## Big Game Harvest Estimates 2013 – Elk

My Wild Alberta – Hunter Harvest

WMU: Wildlife Management Unit

WMU	Males	Females	Young	Total Animals	Hunter Success Percentage (%)
102	17	29	3	48	63%
104	5	14	0	19	41%
106	0	0	0	0	0%
108	4	5	0	9	44%
110	0	0	0	0	0%
116	5	0	0	5	25%
118	2	3	0	5	25%
119	2	0	0	2	7%
124/144/148/150	68	30	2	100	48%
151/152	14	8	0	22	43%
164/166	26	9	0	35	12%
200/202/203/232/234	83	104	13	200	36%
204/228/ 230	6	0	0	6	13%
206/222/226/244	14	5	0	19	15%
208/220	11	7	0	18	15%
212	25	63	23	111	68%
214/314	28	46	7	81	45%
216/320	37	48	8	93	41%
221/322	9	19	4	32	36%
224	12	21	4	37	13%
236/238/256/500	22	11	0	33	36%
248	3	0	0	3	11%
252/254/258/260	19	12	0	32	44%
300	10	25	3	39	16%
302	102	41	16	160	28%
303	0	13	3	17	17%
304	164	85	11	260	20%
305	139	55	0	194	18%
306	74	38	0	112	23%
308	59	35	3	97	12%
310	37	20	0	57	12%
312	176	116	11	303	23%
314	71	6	0	77	10%
318	0	5	0	5	1%
322	3	0	0	3	3%
324	6	0	0	6	2%
326	9	0	0	9	2%

**ESRD/Big Game Harvest Estimates 2013 – Elk**

WMU	Males	Females	Young	Total Animals	Hunter Success Percentage (%)
328	22	0	0	22	4%
330	0	3	3	6	1%
332	37	44	15	96	13%
334	19	18	0	36	13%
336	28	36	0	64	15%
337	9	26	4	39	11%
338	22	18	12	51	8%
339	9	0	0	9	2%
340	19	4	0	22	6%
342	6	3	0	9	5%
344	59	9	3	71	11%
346	71	79	16	165	15%
347	9	0	0	9	4%
348	43	75	8	126	15%
349	0	0	0	0	0%
350	0	0	0	0	0%
351	3	0	0	3	5%
352	22	11	3	36	14%
353	22	31	7	59	8%
354	43	22	0	65	17%
355	3	15	0	18	12%
356	59	39	3	101	10%
357	220	405	40	665	28%
358	195	181	21	397	26%
359	176	206	44	426	36%
360	105	113	36	254	33%
400	50	13	0	63	6%
402	50	22	6	77	8%
404	19	9	0	28	25%
406	23	10	0	33	13%
408	0	0	0	0	0%
410	12	9	3	25	11%
412	0	0	0	0	0%
414	0	0	0	0	0%
416	2	0	0	2	6%
417	5	0	0	5	30%
418	16	0	0	16	100%
420	2	0	0	2	10%
422	0	0	0	0	0%
426	9	0	0	9	16%
428	0	0	0	0	0%
429	12	0	0	12	6%
430	3	0	0	3	25%
432	0	0	0	0	0%

*ESRD/Big Game Harvest Estimates 2013 – Elk*

WMU	Males	Females	Young	Total Animals	Hunter Success Percentage (%)
434	3	0	0	3	14%
436	3	0	0	3	11%
437	3	0	0	3	5%
438	6	8	4	18	9%
439	3	7	0	10	10%
440	3	0	0	3	5%
441	6	3	0	9	14%
442	0	0	0	0	0%
444	0	0	0	0	0%
445	0	0	0	0	0%
446	0	0	0	0	0%
502	0	0	0	0	0%
504	0	0	0	0	0%
505	6	4	0	10	8%
506	6	9	0	15	9%
507	12	27	3	42	13%
508	9	10	0	19	17%
509	3	12	3	19	13%
510	34	31	9	74	11%
511	3	10	0	13	12%
512	0	0	0	0	0%
516	0	0	0	0	0%
520	9	7	2	18	16%
521	136	299	89	524	32%
522	161	193	30	384	35%
523	59	95	7	161	24%
524	0	0	0	0	0%
525	3	0	0	3	6%
526	62	56	10	127	18%
527	74	92	12	178	25%
528	0	0	0	0	0%
529	0	0	0	0	0%
532	0	0	0	0	0%
534	0	0	0	0	0%
536	3	0	0	3	50%
537	0	0	0	0	0%
539	0	0	0	0	0%
540	0	0	0	0	0%
544	3	0	0	3	8%
624	0	0	0	0	0%
732	0	156	27	183	72%
936	9	16	5	30	26%

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*ESRD/Big Game Harvest Estimates 2013 – Elk*

<b>Estimated Totals</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Young</b>	<b>Total Animals</b>
	3,290	3,310	533	7,132

## **Update on Acreage Owners Pesticide Program September 29, 2014**

Progress continues on completion of the program. As of today, committee members have not seen the online version, though content development was finalized in July. Pesticide vendor's certificates have been issued to all pilot project municipalities. Most municipalities have a list of participants waiting to become involved. See below for the most recent info the committee has from Lakeland College. The program will DEFINITELY be available this winter in preparation for implementation in the spring of 2015.

### **July 23, 2014**

From Linden Lundback Update on Acreage Owners Pesticide Program

I thought I should provide a bit of an update as to the progress of the online program. I was hoping to have the system up and running by mid this week but I have had a couple of sick days this week and there are still a couple of tweaks to perform on the system that were decided on during a recent meeting Vivianne and I had with the developer. These program modifications should be completed by week's end and then the new program will have to be loaded onto the college server. The course material is loaded and there are just a few more questions to enter and that part of the project will be complete. Once the updated program is loaded onto the server, I'll get some 'student' id's and passwords out to you for program testing. At that point, I'll also provide you with some parts of the program I would particularly like you to concentrate on along with of course anything else you may find that is not quite workable in the program. We are also finalizing the sign up and payment portion of the system which has proved to be somewhat more time consuming than anticipated.

I am still waiting for the final touches for the brochure. I have most contact numbers but I still require the contact numbers from MD of Lesser Slave Lake and the county of Grande Prairie. If you could please forward those contact numbers to me as soon as possible, I can get the final touches done on the brochure.

Thanks for your patience and I look forward to receiving the contact numbers for Slave Lake and Grande Prairie for the brochure.

### **August 1, 2014**

From Linden Lundback...Another update on the acreage owner system.

I have been working with our developer this week and had an opportunity to test out the system from a student's perspective. I found a couple of areas that needed modification so the plan is to get the changes in place to the program, upload the program to our server and I'll give the thing another check next week. If all goes good, then I'll be forwarding log in information to all of you so you can give the system a check from your end (at the earliest you would be receiving log in information around Aug. 12 or so).

### **September 16, 2014**

Again, it has been a while since the last update. I was hoping to have a test scenario out to you folks late last week but a change in our server parameters necessitated a change to the online system which just

got completed late last week. There have also been more changes to the operational software and there is still a bug that is in the exam portion of the system. That is being currently looked at and will hopefully be operational in the near future. I'll keep you posted.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Dietzler, Agricultural Fieldman  
Rocky View County



# ALBERTA AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM UPDATE

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September 15, 2014

Drafted by:	Kate Wilson	Phone number: 780-427-7791
Agency/Branch/Unit:	Alberta Environment & Sustainable Resource Development Fish and Wildlife Policy Branch /Fish and Wildlife Habitat Policy	

## **BACKGROUND:**

Aquatic invasive species, in particular zebra mussels, quagga mussels, Asian carp, and Eurasian watermilfoil, are significant risk to Alberta's aquatic infrastructure and aquatic ecosystems. Alberta Environment & Sustainable Resource Development is leading a new provincial aquatic invasive species prevention program, province-wide. Elements of this program include: 1) watercraft inspections, 2) monitoring, 3) rapid response planning 4) education & outreach, and 5) policy & legislation.

## **BULLETS BY PROGRAM ELEMENT:**

### **WATERCRAFT INSPECTIONS**

- As part of the watercraft inspection component of the program, four inspection stations have been implemented at commercial vehicle scales on major highways entering Alberta (Hwy 16 at Vermillion, Hwy 1 at Dunmore, Hwy 4 at Coutts and Hwy 3 at Crowsnest Pass).
- At this time the watercraft inspections are voluntary unless initiated by a Fishery Officer (with probable cause).
- Over 4000 boats have been inspected in 2013-2014 as part of the Alberta Aquatic Invasive Species Program – of those, over 100 have been considered to be “high risk” (e.g. from provinces/states that have invasive mussels or have no inspections or monitoring in place).
- The inspection station season has been extended to the end of September due to the high number of boats inspected this season.
- Two boats were intercepted that harboured invasive mussels during the inspection season; full decontaminations were performed on-site.
- Approximately 20 watercraft from high risk areas were decontaminated for invasive mussels, unknown species, or standing water in which many invasive organisms can be harboured.
- During the course of 2013-2014, ten boats have been intercepted by other jurisdictions, International Border or Alberta's watercraft inspectors that were harbouring invasive mussels and destined for Alberta.
- While the program has received a lot of exposure and interest, it is estimated that only 50-60 percent of the trailered watercraft driving by are currently stopping for an inspection.
- The province has been collecting boat traffic data at the four inspection sites (open June 9-Sept 30) on major highways – the majority of the high risk boats this summer have been entering the province at the eastern border and have originated from eastern provinces and states.
- In addition to the seasonal staff conducting boat inspections on four major highways entering the province, a mussel sniffer dog pilot was initiated in partnership with the Flathead Basin Commission out of Montana.

- The sniffer dogs were trained specifically for quagga and zebra mussels at Lake Havasu, AZ in the spring of 2014. The dogs spent 10 days at inspection sites in Montana and 10 days at inspection stations in Alberta. This was a highly visible project and demonstrated that the dogs are proficient at detecting mussels on watercraft.
- Alberta will be working on building the mussel sniffer dogs into the long-term inspection program.
- Regarding snowbirds returning to Alberta in the late winter/early spring, ESRD is pursuing staffing the Coutts commercial vehicle scale with watercraft inspectors (less than one km from the International border) for the March-May season.
- In 2015 ESRD anticipates an increase in watercraft inspection stations and, pending the approval of the Legislative amendments, an increased enforcement element associated with changing the status of the inspections to mandatory.

#### RAPID RESPONSE

- A 24/7 hotline has been initiated for aquatic invasive species reports. Other jurisdictions, federal border agents, stewardship groups and the public are asked to report any suspicious specimen whether they are on watercraft, other vessels or in the water. The hotline operators are able to triage calls into “inquiry” or “emergency” and deploy Fishery Officers in the case of an emergency. AIS Hotline: 1-855-336-BOAT (2628).
- A rapid response plan for invasive mussels is in development and has been authored by a multi-stakeholder “task team” that includes major water managers in the province including irrigation, hydropower, and government-operated water management infrastructure.
- The plan will also address the “current state” of all control options for invasive mussels, and take steps to prepare for the utilization of those controls (including chemical).
- A tabletop exercise will be initiated when the draft plan is complete to test the efficacy and ensure that it covers all major elements of an invasive mussel detection.

#### MONITORING

- The monitoring program is a partnership between Alberta Environmental Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation Agency’s water quality monitoring staff, Agriculture & Rural Development, Tourism Parks & Recreation, the City of Calgary, and the Alberta Lake Management Society.
- Prior to 2013, no monitoring for invasive mussels or other aquatic invasive species was conducted in Alberta.
- In the 2013 field season, more than 50 water bodies were sampled for invasive mussels province-wide on five occasions. Staff utilizes both plankton tows (for larval “veligers”) and artificial substrates (for adults).
- In the 2014 field season, more than 70 water bodies were sampled for invasive mussels province-wide on three occasions (some of which were previously sampled in 2013).
- To date, all results of the mussel monitoring program have come back negative.
- In the 2014 field season, a pilot aquatic plant monitoring project was initiated with the Alberta Lake Management Society. They conducted in-depth littoral surveys at three high use lakes and cursory “rake toss” surveys at high risk areas on “LakeWatch” lakes (e.g. citizen science program).
- The program requires a multi-taxa approach to aquatic invasive species monitoring, and the Department will be pursuing this for the next field season.

#### EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- The Department and partners worked to raise the profile on the aquatic invasive species issue this summer with the launch of the *CLEAN DRAIN DRY Your Boat* Campaign. Campaign materials include the creation of a video, radio spots, billboards, boat launch signs, advertisements, articles, and educational materials such as chamois', fact cards, posters, waterproof wallets, floating key chains, beverage coolers, stickers and more.
- The Eastern Irrigation District and the Alberta Invasive Species Council provided \$40k to produce boat launch signs and the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association provided funding to assist with billboards on major highways.
- The Department has partnered with Michael Short's *Let's Go Outdoors* program to continue to create videos that can be used for television ads, feature videos, and instructional videos. For the longer feature video, there is interest in partnering with other western provinces.
- The next phase of the education team will see the development of a *Don't Let it Loose* campaign that targets aquarium stores and customers, as well as addresses the intentional release and ceremonial/cultural introductions.

#### POLICY & LEGISLATION

- A Ministerial Order was passed in August 2013 under the *Fisheries (Alberta) Act* that provides more protection that was previously available by adding quagga mussels as a prohibited species and providing enhanced authority to Fishery Officers to stop, inspect, decontaminate, and if necessary, quarantine mussel fouled boats.
- Legislation is being pursued (spring 2015) that will amend the *Fisheries (Alberta) Act* to provide for a more robust prevention program including the authority to make inspections mandatory, provide enhanced authorities for Fishery Officers & Guardians, and create a schedule of controlled species.
- The amendments are in line with western States who have been able to prevent invasive mussel establishment thus far.

#### GENERAL

- ESRD is pursuing dedicated funding for all elements of program for the long term protection of Alberta water bodies. This includes an increased number of inspection stations, rapid response and control efforts, education campaigns, monitoring and appropriate staffing for the program.
- Currently the aquatic invasive species known to exist in Alberta that create the most problems are Prussian carp and Flowering rush. Both are believed to be widespread.
- Partnerships are essential to the success of the program. Other Ministries have been key in raising the profile of the issue and implementing the program: Agriculture & Rural Development, Tourism Parks & Recreation, and Justice & Solicitor General (Fish & Wildlife Enforcement, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement). External stakeholders have also participated in program development and implementation: Alberta Irrigation Projects Association, Alberta Invasive Species Council, Alberta Association of Summer Villages, Alberta Fish & Game Association, TransAlta, Alberta Lake Management Society, Municipal Governments, Watershed Planning & Advisory Councils, and more.
- The Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba detection of veligers and adult mussels after the potash treatment is troubling and a huge cause for concern. The province acknowledges this threat and the need to safeguard our borders from harmful aquatic invasive species.
- Alberta is interested in pursuing a larger aquatic invasive species strategy with mussel-free western provinces (e.g. British Columbia and Saskatchewan), potentially through the New West Partnership. This could include collaboration on inspections, monitoring, education as well as containment of source waters (e.g. Lake Winnipeg, MB and eastern provinces).

**CONTACT:**

**Name:** Ms. Kate Wilson

**Title:** Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator

**Division:** Policy

**Phone:** 780-427-7791

**Email address:** [kathryn.wilson@gov.ab.ca](mailto:kathryn.wilson@gov.ab.ca)

## APPENDIX B

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Mike Cory  
Senior Vice-President for Western Region, CN  
Walker Operations Building B  
10229 127 Ave  
Edmonton Alberta  
T5E0B9

Please find enclosed a copy of a resolution that received support from delegates at the provincial Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Conference held in January 2014. We would appreciate your response to Resolution Number 1: CN Railways Weed Control.

Your response is requested by June 30, 2014 and may be submitted directly to:

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary, ASB Provincial Committee  
3602-48<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8

Or [tkeller@athabascacounty.com](mailto:tkeller@athabascacounty.com)

The ASB Provincial Committee has already received a response from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) that indicates that the railways have duties and responsibilities under the Alberta *Weed Control Act* but that safety concerns often obstruct municipal inspectors from being able to do their legislated inspection and enforcement duties. The ASB Provincial Committee would like to know what your plans are for ensuring you are in compliance with the *Weed Control Act* and how the rural municipalities can work in cooperation with you to ensure compliance with this Act.

This issue is a concern to the Committee because ASBs are tasked under the ASB Act “to promote, enhance and protect viable and sustainable agriculture with a view to improving the economic viability of the agricultural producer”. Weeds can have a detrimental impact when they become established on crop land and we have been hearing concerns from across the province about lack of weed control within railway right of ways and weeds spreading into adjacent fields.

We encourage you to work with ARD and the rural municipalities to ensure that you are in full compliance with the Weed Control Act.

We look forward to your response on the attached resolution.

Sincerely,

Patrick Gordeyko

Cc: Jason Krips, Deputy Minister Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development  
Jim Vena, Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer, CN  
Dr. David Feindel, Branch Head of Pest Surveillance Branch, Alberta Agriculture



Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
3602 - 48th Avenue, Athabasca, Alberta T9S 1M8

June 11, 2014

Mr. Jim Vena  
Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer, CN  
935 de La Gauchetière Street West  
Montreal, Quebec H3B 2M9

Dear Mr. Vena:

Please find enclosed a copy of a resolution that received support from delegates at the provincial Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Conference held in January 2014. We would appreciate your response to Resolution Number 1: CN Railways Weed Control.

Your response is requested by June 30, 2014 and may be submitted directly to:

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary, ASB Provincial Committee  
3602-48<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8

Or [tkeller@athabascacounty.com](mailto:tkeller@athabascacounty.com)

The ASB Provincial Committee has already received a response from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) that indicates that the railways have duties and responsibilities under the Alberta *Weed Control Act* but that safety concerns often obstruct municipal inspectors from being able to do their legislated inspection and enforcement duties. The ASB Provincial Committee would like to know what your plans are for ensuring you are in compliance with the *Weed Control Act* and how the rural municipalities can work in cooperation with you to ensure compliance with this Act.

This issue is a concern to the Committee because ASBs are tasked under the ASB Act "to promote, enhance and protect viable and sustainable agriculture with a view to improving the economic viability of the agricultural producer". Weeds can have a detrimental impact when they become established on crop land and we have been hearing concerns from across the province about lack of weed control within railway right of ways and weeds spreading into adjacent fields.

We encourage you to work with ARD and the rural municipalities to ensure that you are in full compliance with the *Weed Control Act*.

We look forward to your response on the attached resolution.

Sincerely,

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair  
ASB Provincial Committee

Cc: Mike Cory, Senior Vice-President for Western Region, CN  
Jason Krips, Deputy Minister, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development  
Dr. David Feindel, Director, Pest Surveillance Branch, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development



Jason Krips  
Deputy Minister  
3rd fl JG O'Donoghue Building  
7000 - 113 Street  
Edmonton Alberta  
T6H 5T6

Dear Mr. Krips,

Thank you for your response to the 2014 Resolution Number 1: CN Railways Weed Control. The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Provincial Committee reviewed the resolution response and has determined that it is incomplete. The Committee felt that the response adequately answered the first part of the resolution that requested confirmation that CN Rail is bound by the Alberta *Weed Control Act*. The Committee is still unclear as to the response for the second part of the resolution that asked if an inspector appointed under the Alberta *Weed Control Act* is considered to be a "Regulator in the Line of Duty". We would appreciate further clarification on this part of the resolution.

A copy of the resolution is attached for your information. The response may be sent to:

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary, ASB Provincial Committee  
3602 – 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8

Or [tkeller@athabascacounty.com](mailto:tkeller@athabascacounty.com).

We appreciate your response to this resolution and look forward to receiving additional clarification on it.

Sincerely,

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair

Cc: Dr. David Feindel, Branch Head of Pest Surveillance Branch



Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
3602 - 48th Avenue, Athabasca, Alberta T9S 1M8

---

June 11, 2014

Dr. David Feindel  
Director, Pest Surveillance Branch  
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development  
17507 Fort Road NW  
Edmonton, Alberta T5Y 6H3

Dear Dr. Feindel:

Thank you for your response to the 2014 Resolution Number 1: CN Railways Weed Control. The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Provincial Committee reviewed the resolution response and has determined that it is incomplete. The Committee felt that the response adequately answered the first part of the resolution that requested confirmation that CN Rail is bound by the Alberta *Weed Control Act*. The Committee is still unclear as to the response for the second part of the resolution that asked if an inspector appointed under the Alberta *Weed Control Act* is considered to be a "Regulator in the Line of Duty". We would appreciate further clarification on this part of the resolution.

A copy of the resolution is attached for your information. The response may be sent to:

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary, ASB Provincial Committee  
3602 - 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8

Or [tkeller@athabascacounty.com](mailto:tkeller@athabascacounty.com)

We appreciate your response to this resolution and look forward to receiving additional clarification on it.

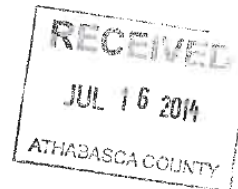
Sincerely,

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair  
ASB Provincial Committee

Cc: Jason Krips, Deputy Minister  
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

July 11, 2014

Mr. Patrick Gordeyko  
Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary  
3602 -- 48 Avenue  
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8



Dear Mr. Gordeyko:

Thank you for sending me copies of your June 11, 2014, letters in reference to the 2014 Resolution Number 1: CN Railway Weed Control. As you indicated in your letter, the Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee was unclear whether an inspector appointed under the Alberta *Weed Control Act* was considered to be a "Regulator in the Line of Duty".

By way of clarification, the term "Regulator in the Line of Duty" is in the CN policy that grants access to Federal Agencies: "Regulators in line of duty for example: (Transport Canada, Transportation Safety Board, Human Resources Development of Canada, Federal Railroad Administration, National Transportation Safety Board)". According to the enclosed CN document, *CN Guidelines Regarding Access to Workplace*, Weed Inspectors appointed under the Alberta *Weed Control Act* are not Regulators in the Line of Duty.

I assure you that Agriculture and Rural Development is committed to addressing this issue, and will keep you informed regarding our discussions with the railways on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jason Krips".

Jason Krips  
Deputy Minister

Enclosure

cc: David Feindel, Branch Head, Crop Research and Extension Division



## Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130

P.O. Box 210 FALHER, ALBERTA T0H 1M0

Phone: (780) 837-2221

Fax: (780) 837-2453

July 16, 2014

Mr. David Feindel  
Branch Head of ARD's Crop Research and Extension Division  
17507 Fort Road NW  
Edmonton Alberta  
T5Y 6H3

RE: CN Weed Control and AARD's response to the 2014 Resolution

Dear Mr. Feindel:

Council of the M.D. of Smoky River No. 130 reviewed the responses to the Provincial ASB Conference resolutions at their July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, and Council wishes to express their dissatisfaction with the response to the M.D. of Smoky River sponsored resolution "CN Railways Weed Control" - a copy of the response received so far is attached to this letter.

First, the Therefore Be It Resolved of the Resolution asks that AARD work with Alberta Justice (and others...) 'to confirm that CN Rail is bound by the Weed Control Act of Alberta'. It is our understanding that Alberta Justice has not yet disproved CN's stated opinion they are not bound by the Act. The statement in the response: "While railway right-of-ways in Alberta are covered under the WCA..." is to our knowledge attributable to Deputy Minister Krips. This Council has no wish to demean the importance of DM Krips or his opinions, however this ASB, and by passing the Resolution at the Provincial ASB Conference, the ASB's of Alberta have requested a legal opinion from Alberta Justice on this matter. CN operates throughout the Province and has repeatedly ignored their responsibilities to destroy Prohibited Noxious and control Noxious weeds in many municipalities both urban and rural. CN has also repeatedly ignored weed notices issued under the Act under the guise they are above the laws of the province. Can we not have a legal opinion from Alberta Justice to settle this matter once and for all?

Second, the Further TBIR is not addressed in the response whatsoever. Inspectors must be able to enter onto CN property to fulfill their duties, and doing so safely is certainly of paramount importance to everyone. Completing a work permit application to allow someone to walk within the right-of-way does not assure a person's safety. CN needs to recognize the difference between inspecting (which for efficiency's sake may need to be done immediately, without giving notice) and weed control which would require planning and therefore giving notice is not an issue.

In 2013 after the 5 work permits were submitted and approved by the M.D. of Smoky River we needed to pay and take the time to complete an online Contractor's Safety Course, give 10 days

notice of our intent to enter and meet with the CN Track Supervisor for orientation, and then we were supposed to give 24 hours notice each time we planned to enter and inspect CN property. This is not conducive to allowing for inspections to take place when often all that is required is a 5 minute walk from a municipal right of way to confirm the identity of a plant noticed while driving by. Inspectors appointed under the Weed Control Act need to be recognized by CN as 'Regulators in line of duty'.

We ask that Alberta Agriculture fulfill the requests outlined in the CN Railways Weed Control resolution so that the inspectors appointed under the Weed Control Act of Alberta are able to perform their duties knowing they have the jurisdiction under the Weed Control Act, and without the need to complete the onerous work permits and contractor training required by CN.

Feel free to contact me, or our Agricultural Fieldman Normand Boulet at 780-837-2221 ext 115, cell 780-837-0043 or e-mail [asb@mdsmokyriver.com](mailto:asb@mdsmokyriver.com) with any questions in this regards.

Sincerely,



Robert Brochu, Reeve and ASB Chairman  
780-837-0522

Cc: Honourable Verlyn Olson, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Jason Krips, Deputy Minister  
Patrick Gordeyko, Chairman Provincial ASB Committee



## Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130

P.O. Box 210 FALHER, ALBERTA T0H 1M0

Phone: (780) 837-2221

Fax: (780) 837-2453

August 13, 2014

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair  
Provincial ASB Committee  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary  
3602 – 48<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Athabasca, AB  
T9S 1M8

Re: CN's July 7<sup>th</sup> letter of response to Resolution #1: CN Weed Control

Dear Mr. Gordeyko:

The M.D. of Smoky River ASB are strong believers in the ASB Resolution process and in the work of the Provincial ASB Committee. It is our hope the Committee will continue to push for responses and action to resolutions when these are deemed as unsatisfactory to the requests posed by the Resolution.

The July 7<sup>th</sup> response from CN's Mario Pagé, Chief of Staff is in our opinion an unsatisfactory response. We find it interesting and telling that CN states their contractors have to respect all applicable laws, but at no time does CN state they must do weed control for lawful reasons, i.e. in accordance with the Weed Control Act (WCA). Many other reasons; tripping, drainage, infrastructure protection, sightlines, 'being a good neighbour' are cited, but it appears they maintain that CN does not have to abide by Alberta's WCA. This continues to leave our municipal inspectors and enforcement programs in a quandary, and being as Alberta Justice does not wish to have their opinions shared, the simplest answer would be to have CN admit they have legal responsibilities under the WCA.

Regarding the question of CN's right-of-entry process, and a potentially simplified access procedure; we certainly hope that the resolve of the Committee does not sway at the first 'no' it receives. Certainly our municipal inspection programs would not go far if we shied away from an issue just by being told 'no'!

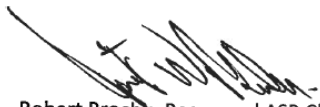
The safety of our municipal inspectors is paramount to all concerned, however there must be consideration given to the difference between inspection and enforcement. Entering rail right of way with equipment to conduct enforcement is completely different and certainly requires more notification than inspection. However even for enforcement; completing an 18 page Safe Work Permit (one permit for each municipality being inspected), taking an online contractor's safety course, receiving an orientation from the track superintendent, giving 10 days notice to the track superintendent, and then giving 24 hours notice prior to entering each time is beyond the bounds of being reasonable. Rather, it appears to be a process intended to either have people give up and ignore the problem, or just go forward with inspections and enforcement without notification of entry – and hope they don't get caught. Neither of these avenues serves the end needs.

Our inspectors receive training and orientation to enter onto other hazardous sites, like oil and gas exploration and production areas. They can be trained in railway safety and already understand the risks associated with entry onto a railway right-of-way – so allowing a simplified access procedure is possible, CN just has to agree that it is something they wish to allow.

The M.D. of Smoky River ASB hopes the Provincial ASB Committee will continue to press for positive changes on behalf of the ASBs of Alberta.

Feel free to contact myself or our Agricultural Fieldman Normand Boulet, CCA at 780-837-0043 [asb@mdsmokyriver.com](mailto:asb@mdsmokyriver.com) with any questions.

Sincerely,



Robert Brochu, Reeve and ASB Chair  
780-837-0522

Cc: Honourable Verlyn Olson, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Jason Krips, Deputy Minister  
Corey Beck, Peace Region Representative, Provincial ASB Committee  
Maureen Vadnais, ASB Specialist



Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
3602 - 48th Avenue, Athabasca, Alberta T9S 1M8

June 11, 2014

Mr. Bill Werry  
Deputy Minister  
Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development  
11th Floor Petroleum Plaza ST  
9915 - 108 Street  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2G8

Dear Mr. Werry:

Thank you for your response to the 2014 Resolution Number 2: Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Provincial Committee reviewed the resolution response and has determined to grade it as "Accept in Principle". The Committee appreciates the information you sent regarding the recent review of the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program and other aspects of the program.

The Committee would like to inform you that there are still concerns among the agricultural community regarding investigations for livestock killed by wildlife predators.

Agricultural producers report that it takes too long for a Fish and Wildlife Officer to investigate their kills. They would like to see an Officer come to investigate the kills in 6 to 12 hours of a call so that the majority of evidence is preserved. The major problem is that evidence being sought to distinguish the type of kill can be destroyed within hours of the kill by other predators or scavengers prior to an investigation being performed.

The producers also have concerns with how investigations are done and would like to know what percentage of calls result in compensation. The program currently only compensates producers for cattle, bison, sheep, swine and goats that are attacked by wolves, grizzly bears, black bears, cougars and eagles. Producers would like to know why other animals, such as poultry, are not covered under the program. The program also excludes other predators that contribute to livestock loss that producers feel should also be covered.

Producers have the impression that officers that are doing the investigations do not have the authority to say what the cause of the animal's death was and that the final determination that an animal was killed by a predator is made by someone who has not even seen the animal. Producers feel that they are being denied



compensation in some instances because the inspector is not able to make the decision as to whether or not the animal was killed by a predator in the field at the time of the investigation.

Producers also feel that the compensation is not fair because there are significant costs that are associated with stress and injury to livestock that are not covered under the current program. Animals that are stressed or injured typically go off feed causing them to lose weight. Less weight at time of sale equals less income to a producer.

The Committee would appreciate any statistics that you could provide about the program so we can better understand it. Information we would like to see is: how many incidents were investigated and compensated for, length of time between a predator kill report and an investigation starting, types of kills by predators across the province through the program and if there are discrepancies from north to south or forested areas that are geographically related and affect the destruction of evidence prior to investigation due to the ability to spot/find a downed animal.

Additional information regarding the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program may be sent to:

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary, ASB Provincial Committee  
3602 – 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8

Or [tkeller@athabascacounty.com](mailto:tkeller@athabascacounty.com)

We will include this information in the annual report card that we provide to all the ASB members across the province so that they also have a better understanding of this program and how it works.

Predators are an increasing concern to producers across the province and producers feel that the current program is not effective. Producers are feeling increased pressure from predators as more Crown land is being opened up or developed. This problem has not been recognized or addressed by the current predator management programs in place and this is causing an increased financial burden on producers. Increased funding, more timely inspections and granting inspectors the ability to make final decisions regarding how an animal died are all needed in order to ensure that this program remains viable and effective.

We appreciate your response to Resolution Number 2 and are looking forward to receiving the additional information requested so we can better understand how the Predator Compensation Program works.

Sincerely,

Patrick Gordeyko  
Chair, ASB Provincial Committee



Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
3602 - 48th Avenue, Athabasca, Alberta T9S 1M8

June 11, 2014

Mr. Bill Werry  
Deputy Minister  
Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development  
11th Floor Petroleum Plaza ST  
9915 - 108 Street  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2G8

Dear Mr. Werry:

Thank you for your response to the 2014 Resolution Number 3: Elk (*Cervus elaphus*) Population Control. The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Provincial Committee reviewed the resolution response and has determined that it is incomplete. The Committee felt that the response only addressed one area of the province whereas the resolution asked for an increase in the harvest numbers of antlerless elk in high elk population areas throughout the Province of Alberta. ASB members recognize the largest problem is in the Peace River area of the province, but there are other areas of concern in the South and Central regions of Alberta. The Committee would like to know if the harvest number of antlerless elk and hunting season were increased in any other areas of the province.

The Committee is also interested in learning how many additional elk were removed based on the increase in licenses for antlerless elk for the 2013 hunting season.

A copy of the resolution is attached for your reference. The response and additional information may be sent to:

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary, ASB Provincial Committee  
3602 – 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8

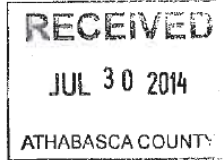
Or [tkeller@athabascacounty.com](mailto:tkeller@athabascacounty.com)

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We appreciate your response to Resolution Number 3 and would appreciate additional information about the program.

Sincerely,

Patrick Gordeyko, Chair  
ASB Provincial Committee



59580

July 22, 2014

Mr. Patrick Gordeyko, Chair  
c/o Trent Keller, Secretary  
Alberta Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
3602 - 48 Avenue  
Athabasca AB T9S 1M8  
[tkeller@athabascacounty.com](mailto:tkeller@athabascacounty.com)

Dear Mr. Gordeyko:

Thank you for your June 11, 2014, letters requesting additional information about recent amendments to the Elk Population Control program and the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.

Environment and Sustainable Resource Development continues to address rising elk populations through hunting strategies. Additional elk hunting opportunities were created for the 2014 hunting season. Elk hunting seasons were added in six wildlife managements units (WMUs) – three in the Peace River area and three in the central Parkland region. Hunting season dates for antlerless elk were extended in areas in and around Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Suffield and the Wainwright base. Elk hunting during the archery-only season is now permitted with a general licence in WMUs north of CFB Suffield. Annual information on the number of special licences issued and resident hunter harvest is available on the My Wild Alberta website at: [www.mywildalberta.com](http://www.mywildalberta.com) under the Hunting tab.

In regards to the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program, departmental response protocols require investigations of suspected wildlife predation on livestock to be conducted within 24 hours. The majority of complaints result in the investigator's recommendation being approved. During the last three years, total annual compensation payments averaged \$267,000, with 12 per cent of claims denied. Denied claims could have resulted from ineligible livestock or predators and/or lack of evidence.

Fish and wildlife officers from Justice and Solicitor General conduct investigations of suspected wildlife predation on livestock. I have forwarded your concerns regarding response times and the manner which investigations are conducted to my colleague Tim Grant, Deputy Minister for Justice and Solicitor General for his consideration

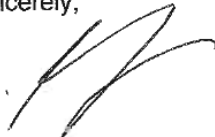
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During the past five years, the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program has undergone two substantial reviews, with input from internal and external groups. As I indicated in my previous response, the intent of the program is to provide compensation for the loss of food-producing animals. While poultry is a source of food, most losses are caused by predators that are not covered under the program. At this time the Government of Alberta is not considering other species of predators being added to the program.

In terms of livestock weight loss or stress, there are many possible contributing factors which could impact an animal's health and as a result, it would be difficult to substantiate such claims. As well, I previously indicated that staff have extensive training to evaluate predator kills.

In the last three years, wolves remain the number one killer of livestock, followed by cougars, grizzly bears, and black bears; however, depredation claims are not tracked by geographic region. We encourage producers who graze in heavily forested areas to provide range riders to detect predation, as well as to act as a deterrent through their presence on the landscape.

Sincerely,



Bill Werry  
Deputy Minister

Cc: Tim Grant  
Deputy Minister of Justice and Solicitor General

RECEIVED AR 9383  
AUG 27 2014  
ATHABASCA COUNTY

August 15, 2014

Mr. Patrick Gordeyko  
Chair  
→ c/o Trent Keller, Secretary  
Alberta Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
3602 - 48 Avenue  
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8

Dear Mr. Gordeyko:

In his July 22, 2014 letter to you, my colleague, Bill Werry, Deputy Minister for Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, requested that I address your concerns regarding the manner in which fish and wildlife officers conduct investigations of suspected wildlife predation on livestock and the time it takes them to respond. As Deputy Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, I appreciate the opportunity to provide the following information.

When possible, investigations of suspected wildlife predation on livestock are conducted within 24 hours. Officers attend sooner if they can, but a response target of six to 12 hours in all cases is not feasible given existing staffing levels and operational demands. Producers are asked to assist investigators when it is safe to do so by preserving as much evidence as possible ahead of their arrival.

All fish and wildlife officers are trained to identify predator attacks on livestock. They let the evidence guide them to a finding, and if they can confirm a predator listed under the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program is responsible for an attack on livestock, full compensation will be offered.

In situations where there is not enough evidence to confirm an attack, the investigator will forward the available evidence and photographs to a regional problem wildlife specialist who will assist in making a determination regarding the cause of death.

.../2

