

RESOLUTION #1
Weed Control in Provincial Waterways

WHEREAS: Municipalities are absorbing the most of the cost of weed control along and within provincial waterways; and

WHEREAS: Provincial support and funding is minimal, a fraction of the real cost; and

WHEREAS: Weed control options are limited within the bed and shore of waterbodies, and are usually labor intensive and expensive; and

WHEREAS: The Province has ownership of the bed and shore of waterbodies, but doesn't appear to have sufficient programming or funding in place to properly manage regulated weeds; and

WHEREAS: Some weed control options require approvals from Alberta Environment and/or Department of Fisheries and Oceans; and

WHEREAS: Weed seeds and reproductive parts can travel great distances along waterways;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development review their current weed control programming and funding for bed and shore of waterbodies, to ensure the effectiveness of the program, as well as implementing a monitoring and assessment program to ensure that weed populations are dealt with proactively.

SPONSORED BY: Red Deer County

MOVED BY: Phillip Massier – Red Deer County

SECONDED BY: Wendy Metzger – Rocky View County

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Alberta Environmental and Sustainable Resource
Development
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Background

When the Weed Act was proclaimed in June of 2010, the list of legislated weeds grew to over 70. New additions to this list include aquatic ornamentals like flowering rush and yellow pale iris. These are not agricultural concerns; however they must be dealt with to protect our native species. Agriculture Service Boards have been bearing the cost in dealing with these invasives only because they have the resources (equipment, manpower, training) required to do so.

Section 17(3) of the Alberta Surveys Act defines the Bed and Shore / the boundary between private land and Crown land re water bodies...

Quoting directly: "For the purposes of this section, the bed and shore of a body of water shall be the land covered so long by water as to wrest it from vegetation or as to mark a distinct character on the vegetation where it extends into the water or on the soil itself."

The Crown clearly has the ownership of the water and bed and shore within water bodies, yet there is limited funding or programming in place to maintain it. If this were a private landowner, a weed notice would be issued, the work could be completed and the landowner would be invoiced. Municipalities are often uncomfortable with issuing notices to the Crown, because the enforcement process can be cumbersome.

Weeds can spread great distances through water ways, they must be controlled and the Weed Control Act of Alberta states that it is the landowner's responsibility to control them. It also states that the Act binds the Crown.

RESOLUTION #2
**Inclusion of all Invasive Hawkweed Species as Prohibited Noxious under the
Alberta Weed Control Act and Regulation**

WHEREAS: Currently, three Hawkweed species are included within the *Weed Control Act* as Prohibited Noxious; and

WHEREAS: There are several other non-native invasive species of Hawkweed that are currently present in Alberta or neighboring jurisdictions;

WHEREAS: The Alberta Weed Regulatory Advisory Committee (AWRAC) currently has a pending recommendation regarding adding these threatening Hawkweed species to the regulation;

WHEREAS: Addressing new and emerging weed issues quickly is proven to be the most effective way to minimize overall control costs and best protect agriculture and the environment;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST**

That Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development immediately revise the *Alberta Weed Control Act* Regulation to include all non-native Hawkweed species, as recommended by the Alberta Weed Regulatory Advisory Committee.

SPONSORED BY: Clearwater County
Rocky View County

MOVED BY: John Follis – Clearwater County

SECONDED BY: Wendy Metzger – Rocky View County

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Background

Hawkweeds are a new and emerging issue in mainly the eastern slopes of the province. The Hawkweed complex has proven very invasive and destructive in neighboring jurisdictions. Several municipalities are currently implementing weed control programs to combat the infestations of Orange Meadow and Mouse Eared Hawkweeds. Since the last Weed Control Act revision several other hawkweed species have been discovered in Alberta, or new information has been obtained showing species present in other jurisdictions are a serious threat to Alberta. These Species have been identified and assessed by the Alberta Weed Regulatory Advisory Committee, the Technical Committee formed to help advise the Minister on Weed Control Act issues. Elevating all non-native Hawkweed species to prohibit noxious is important to protect the province from the further spread of hawkweeds and to support the current control efforts underway on the three regulated species.

Currently Regulated Species

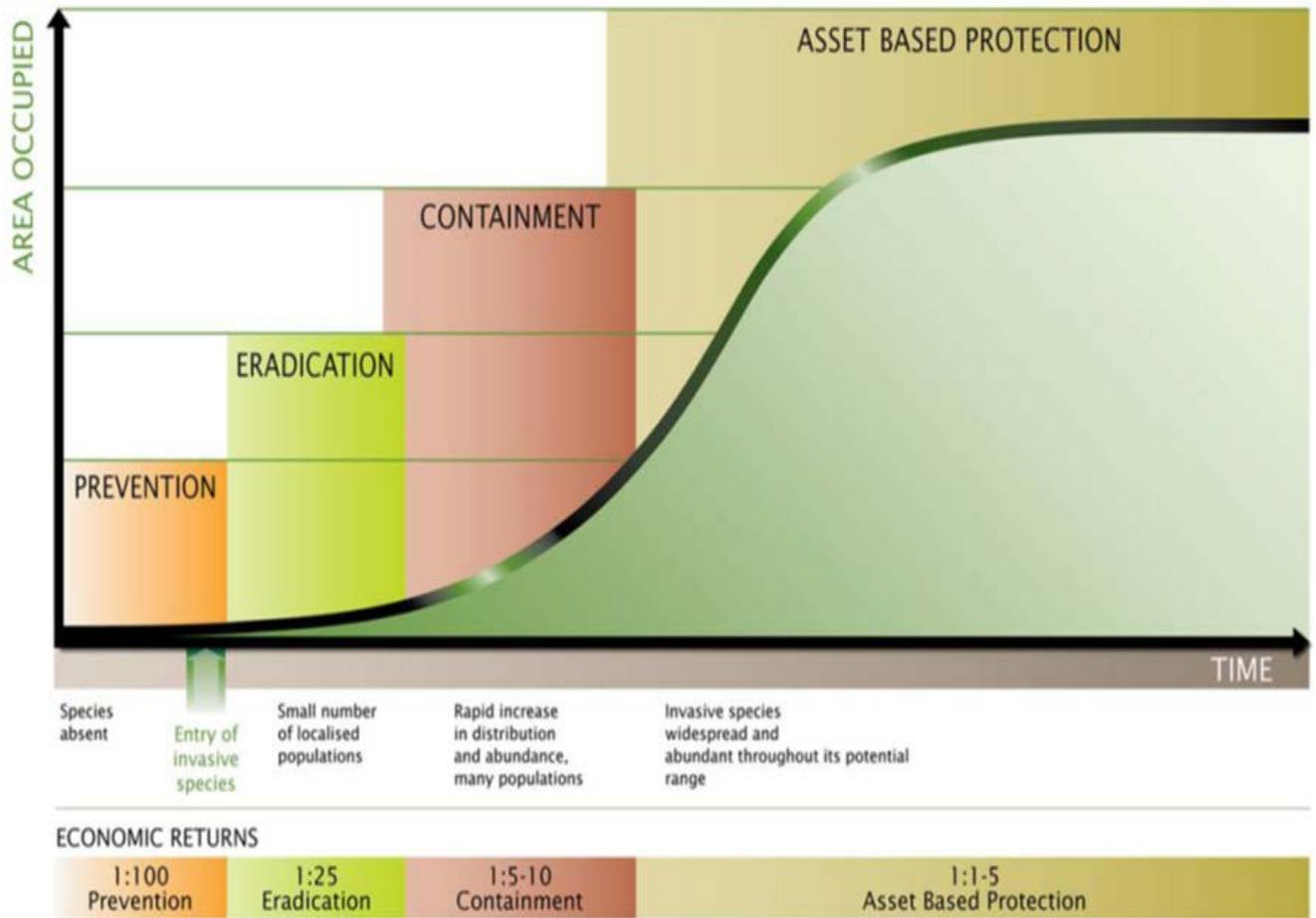
Orange Hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*)
Meadow Hawkweed (*Hieracium caespitosum*)
Mouse Eared Hawkweed (*Heiracium pilosella*)

Recommend Hawkweed Species for Regulation

Whiplash Hawkweed (*Hieracium flagellare*)
Kingdevil Hawkweed (*Hieracium floribundum*)
Yellow Devil Hawkweed (*Hieracium glomeratum*)
Smooth Hawkweed (*Hieracium laevigatum*)
Common Hawkweed (*Hieracium lachenalli*)
Spotted Hawkweed (*Hieracium maculatum*)
Wall Hawkweed (*Hieracium murorum*)
Tall Hawkweed (*Hieracium piloselloides*)
Queendevil Hawkweed (*Hieracium praelatum*)
European Hawkweeed (*Hieracium sabaudum*)
Showy Hawkweed (*Hieracium vulgatum*)

Research in other jurisdictions has found that Invasive Hawkweed Species may hybridize making it difficult to identify exactly which species are present. This could create enforcement issues if all known Invasive Hawkweed Species are not regulated as prohibited noxious within Alberta.

A few eastern slopes municipalities have established and are currently implementing Hawkweed control programs as infestations are discovered likely moving in from B.C. where Hawkweeds are a wide spread issue. It's imperative that control efforts are supported by elevating these species to ensure Hawkweeds are eradicated before infestations can spread to the rest of the province. Addressing Hawkweed now while infestations are low will cost the province and municipalities far less then managing Hawkweeds as a wide spread issue.



RESOLUTION #3
Reporting Rats

WHEREAS: Remaining rat free for the past 50 years is a great triumph for the province and is one of the most successful programs developed under the *Agricultural Pest's Act*,

WHEREAS: Rat control is a provincial priority;

WHEREAS: Rat control needs to be a priority for everyone involved in pest management.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development make it a requirement, under the *Agricultural Pests Act*, that individuals and especially commercial pest control companies, finding a Norway Rat, be required by law to report the presence of the pest, alive or dead, to provincial Pest Inspectors.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development immediately take steps to inform pest control companies and the public that notification of the presence of rats, dead or alive, is required by law.

SPONSORED BY: Cypress County

MOVED BY: Connie Kappler – Cypress County

SECONDED BY: Roy Anaka – Lamont County

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

BACKGROUND:

Alberta is one of the only places in the world that is rat free. The province has been able to maintain this status, thanks to the hard work and determination of provincial and municipal pest inspectors and the Alberta Rat Patrol. It is in fact arguable that the rat control program is one of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development's greatest achievements with the Agricultural Pests Act.

One of the greatest threats to our Rat Free status is complacency. Those of us involved in rat control know that we are unable to be everywhere at once and we know that we must, to some extent, rely on people to inform us of when and where a rat is located. This information is critical because it can help provide the information necessary in determining if a rat problem is occurring, or developing. It is completely inappropriate for individuals and especially commercial pest control companies not to report to the province when and where they are finding rats. In the case of a major investigation, that information can be crucial.

RESOLUTION #4
Wild Boar Eradication Initiative

- WHEREAS:** The population of Wild Boar on the loose as a pest in Alberta continues to grow in spite of random hunting and bounties. Random hunting may eliminate a few from a herd but educates the remainder, forcing them to go nocturnal;
- WHEREAS:** Feral hogs can rapidly increase their population. Sows can have up to 10 offspring per litter, and are able to have two litters per year. Each piglet reaches sexual maturity at 6 months of age. They have virtually no natural predators; and
- WHEREAS:** Time is being lost in the 4 year development of regulations and a discussion paper;
- WHEREAS:** Considered a problem since 2002 (with an estimated population of 200) and since becoming a Pest in 2008 little has been done to prevent further escape and or release of the hogs (see attachment #1);
- WHEREAS:** Only 483 pair of ears has been turned in since the bounty was started in 2007, 674 pair including County programs since 2003 (See background);
- WHEREAS:** It is possible for 20 pair to multiply to 200 pair in a year or less. We are not keeping up with a social hunting program!;
- WHEREAS:** The ROI (return on investment) at this early intervention date is 1:100. Statistics prove that eliminating a pest before it becomes wide spread and established is the most cost effective;
- WHEREAS:** The potential is to have a situation similar to the US with 2- 6,000,000 hogs in 44 states that cost \$800,000,000 per yr. on property and crop damage (see new #s attachment #3);
- WHEREAS:** Damage in the US has taken the form of 27,000 auto accidents, predation of sheep, cattle, goats, chickens, the destruction of crops, gardens, and carrying disease, up- setting natural environmental balances, water quality and riparian areas;
- WHEREAS:** The Provincial Government hired a Professional Pest Control company to rid the Province of rats in the 1950's. The Alberta Rat Program is proof that pests can be controlled. (Other than the N and S poles Alberta

is, "the only place in the world," that is rat free). Alberta now has a chance to be wild boar free;

WHEREAS: Other provinces and states have recognized the problem and potential losses and are taking action (see attachment #2);

WHEREAS: Live trapping or (pen hunting) has proven to be an effective method of eliminating sizeable herds in Red Deer and in counties to the north;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development fast track and initiate a "Provincial Strategy to eradicate Wild Boar as a Pest in Alberta", followed by a 100% guaranteed escapeless penning regulations and enforcement program to address Wild boar in captivity.

SPONSORED BY: Red Deer County

MOVED BY: Penny Archibald – Red Deer County

SECONDED BY: Andre Cloutier – MD of Smoky River

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

BACKGROUND

This resolution is also supported by the County of Barrhead, Lac St. Anne County and Parkland County.

Reproduction

If 40 hogs / 20 pair are allowed to reproduce, 20 pair that could have had 2 litters of 4 each in a year...which means that we have 160 hogs per year.

Farmers in numerous counties have successfully eliminated herds of wild boar by live trapping (pen hunting) but what is needed is a Provincially led program run by professionals that will address the wild boar problem where ever it surfaces.

Economic Damage Potential

The US Situation - in 44 states, established in 21

History – Introduced by the Spanish, can grow to 500 to 750 pounds.

Population 1990 – 17 States, 500,000 to 2,000,000, Now 3 to 6,000,000 in 44 states

Damage 27000 auto accidents yearly, voracious predators, spread disease, destroy crops and property

Costs \$800,000,000 per year in the US

Other Provinces – Manitoba and Saskatchewan have been fighting these pests for years and they are still spreading.

Worldwide - Germany has 2,500,000 also Australia, Japan, Ireland are over run.

Live Trapping Successes – Red Deer County, Counties in the North West and the US.

Live Trapping Plan – Hogs are fed in portable pens, and eventually whole herds are trapped and eliminated. With no chasing, no learned behaviors and decreased impact on the environment. Populations are reduced efficiently.

The current provincial bounty encourages sporadic unorganized hunting that disperses the herd and teaches them to be nocturnal.

Similar to the provincial Rat Control Program, this requires a Provincial focus. A plan of action that uses professional hunters/trappers working in conjunction with Fieldman and farmer's is needed. Implement a strategy that is consistent across the Province.

Wild boars bore into Prairie farms, profits

Last Updated: Saturday, March 16, 2002 | 8:30 PM ET

CBC News

Step aside coyotes. Farmers and conservation officers in the West are dealing with a new threat that's wreaking havoc and multiplying fast.

During the past few years, hundreds of wild boars have escaped from pens where they were being raised on ranches in western Canada.

At first, experts believed the animals would be unable to survive the harsh winters. But they've proven to be wily survivors, grunting their way across land in the middle of the night.

Wild boar shot near Meleb, Man.

According to the latest estimates, there are now about 200 boars at large in Alberta, at least 50 in Saskatchewan, and more than 250 in Manitoba.

"It's aggressive by nature, it's prolific in terms of reproduction, and through its rooting and feeding habits, it's very destructive to farmland and native habitat," says Rob Bruce, of the Problem Wildlife branch of Manitoba Conservation.

Farmers worry that the animals, not native to Canada, may spread disease to domestic swine. The boars, which have large tusks, can also damage crops and rare Prairie plants.

Dave Gillies, a cattle rancher near Meleb, Man., recently shot a wild boar rummaging around inside a calf shelter.

"It was pretty much pandemonium here for the better part of half an hour," he recalled, as cows nearly trampled their offspring while trying to get away from the intruder.

Wild boars have become such a problem that Manitoba has passed a law permitting licensed gun owners to shoot and kill any of the creatures roaming at large. But the animals, which mainly travel at night, are not easy targets.

Experts predict that the hunters will have their hands full. They estimate that three per cent of the province's 3,000 captive wild boars get away annually – adding up to 90 new escapees on the run on the Prairies every year.

Feral Swine in Michigan - A Growing Problem

Like other Midwestern states, Michigan is experiencing a growing problem with feral or wild swine. Thirty years ago, there were no feral swine sightings reported in Michigan. By the end of 2011, more than 340 feral swine had been spotted in 72 of Michigan's 83 counties, and 286 have been reported killed. A sow can have two litters a year of four to six piglets. Based on their prolific breeding practices, it is estimated that feral swine in Michigan currently could number between 1,000 and 3,000.

History

Wild pigs or Eurasian boars (*Sus scrofa*) are not native to the United States. They were first introduced to the United States in 1539 by Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto, who brought hogs to southwest Florida. Nearly 500 years later, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates there are at least 4 million feral swine nationwide causing hundreds of millions of dollars in damage each year to farms, residential areas, forests and the environment.

Feral swine in Michigan are a combination of Eurasian boars and escaped or neglected domestic pigs. Depending on ancestral lineage and cross-breeding among breeds, feral swine vary in appearance. Typical fur coloration for true Eurasian boar can be grey to dark brown to black, while domestic breeds can display a wider variety of colors with many defining patterns of striping or spots. Several generations of cross-breeding between domestic and Eurasian lineages can make the physical appearance of these animals drastically different within the same family unit. As with coloration, the size of mature adults can vary greatly depending on the bloodlines. In Michigan, adults typically range in size from 100-200 pounds, but larger specimens do occur.

Why Are Feral Swine a Problem?

Feral swine are a problem for two main reasons - they can host many parasites and diseases that threaten humans, domestic livestock and wildlife; and they can cause extensive damage to forests, agricultural lands and Michigan's water resources.

Feral swine have been known to carry several diseases and parasites, including hog cholera (classic swine fever), pseudorabies, brucellosis, tuberculosis, salmonellosis, anthrax, ticks, fleas, lice and various worms. Feral swine are highly mobile, making it easy for them to spread disease quickly in Michigan's wildlife and domestic livestock populations.

Feral swine carry several diseases that can infect humans including brucellosis, balantidiasis, leptospirosis, salmonellosis, toxoplasmosis, trichinosis, trichostrongylosis, sarcoptic mange, tuberculosis, tularemia, anthrax, rabies and plague.

Feral swine also are dangerous when cornered or threatened. They can become aggressive and charge and attack humans. They move with great speed and can cause serious injuries with their tusks.

Swine also compete for natural foods with wildlife, such as turkeys, deer and small game. Acorns are a preferred food for feral swine, just as they are for Michigan's native white-tailed deer population. Feral swine will eat almost anything, including dead animals and many forms of vegetation and tree seedlings. When there is a shortage of natural foods for them to consume, feral swine will forage on most agricultural crops and livestock feed. Feral swine will also eat small ground-nesting mammals and birds. And using their acute sense of smell, feral swine will find and eat young domestic livestock and poultry.

Feral swine also routinely engage in two types of behavior that are damaging to soils, crops and water - rooting and wallowing. Their rooting behavior, during which they dig for food below the soil surface, causes erosion, damages lawns and farm lands, and weakens plants and native vegetation. Wallowing behavior, during which feral swine seek out areas of shallow water to roll in mud, destroys small ponds and stream banks, which impacts water quality.

What is the Michigan DNR Doing About Feral Swine?

The DNR has declared *Sus scrofa*, one species of swine, an invasive species in Michigan. As such, possession of this species of swine is now prohibited in Michigan. This was a move by the Michigan DNR to join other states in the battle against feral swine, as well as to align with the National Invasive Species Laboratory's stance on feral swine. Hunting and breeding facilities in possession of *Sus scrofa* after April 1, 2012, will face legal action by the state. [See more information on the order listing feral swine as an invasive species.](#)

Active trapping of feral swine is being done throughout the state in cooperation with USDA-Wildlife Services and the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Any person who believes there might be feral swine on his/her property and would like to inquire about borrowing a trap should contact Nate Newman at USDA-Wildlife Services at 517-336-1928.

The DNR is an active member of the inter-agency Feral Swine Working Group formed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The working group is currently working on a feral swine control and eradication plan for Michigan.

What can you do?

Under Michigan law, any hunter with any valid Michigan hunting license can shoot feral swine on sight while hunting. **Private property owners also may shoot any feral swine on their property and do not need to be in possession of a hunting license.** If a hunter harvests a swine, he or she is encouraged to provide samples for disease testing by contacting USDA-Wildlife Services at 517-336-1928. [Learn more about the rules for hunting or shooting feral swine in Michigan.](#)

Report any sightings or harvesting of feral swine to Nate Newman at the USDA Wildlife Services Office in East Lansing at 517-336-1928. Sightings, kills and damages can also be reported using this [online form](#).

Wild pigs digging up trouble

MUCH like they've done in other parts of the country, wild pigs are digging up trouble across Mississippi and causing major crop damage, so Mississippi State University and federal experts are helping landowners and farmers eradicate the troublesome beasts.

Wild pigs are a highly adaptable species and are not native to North America. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there are about 4 million wild pigs in more than 35 states, with the largest population being in Texas.

They have been seen in Mississippi since the 1980s and have been spotted in almost every county, with higher concentrations in southern parts of the state.

"Pigs are thought to have first been introduced to the U.S. by Hernando DeSoto during his North American explorations," said Bronson Strickland, assistant extension professor in the Mississippi State department of wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture. "Today, most wild pigs seen in Mississippi are feral from previously domesticated swine. Studies have linked some wild pigs back to feral-domestic and feral-Russian hybrids.

"What made pigs so ideal for domestication is what makes them a problem in the wild," Strickland said. "They are opportunistic omnivores, so they can survive on just about anything, such as acorns, roots, fawns, rabbits and reptiles."

Strickland said one study estimated that wild pigs are costing the U.S.

Key Points

- Wild pigs a highly adaptable species found in 35 states.
- Wild pigs cost U.S. \$1.2b in ag, environmental damage.
- Wild pigs can harbor, spread animal disease.

about \$1.2 billion a year in agricultural and environmental damage.

"They not only are ruining row crops, but they are also causing major environmental damage," said Kris Godwin, Mississippi wildlife services director for USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service. "They are competing with deer and other wildlife for resources and causing erosion in creeks."

Besides property and crop damage, wild pigs can harbor diseases.

"We can remove hogs from property and will do so for free, as long as we are permitted to sample the animals for diseases," Godwin said. "We are concerned about diseases such as pseudorabies and swine brucellosis. There have not been any confirmed cases of these diseases yet, but we need to be on alert. The spread of diseases such as these can be detrimental to (area) livestock operations."

Strickland and Godwin both said setting traps is the recommended method for removing wild pigs from a property.

"Trapping, followed by euthanasia, is an effective way to reduce wild pig populations," Godwin said. "The key



to successful trapping is having the right trap door design."

An effective door is one that activates once pigs have entered and then prevents the pigs from escaping, Godwin said.

"There are three main trap designs that we suggest using," Strickland said. "The most frequently recommended and used trap is a cage trap that can capture a large number of pigs at once."

Mississippi and federal experts also are encouraging hunting wild pigs as an additional means of population control.

"Trapping needs to be the main

means of getting rid of wild pigs because recreational hunting alone will not even put a dent in the population," Strickland said. "We do encourage people to take advantage of the opportunity to hunt wild pigs." ■

Ohio board ready to set standards

RESOLUTION #5
Agricultural Pests Act Review / Invasive Species Act

WHEREAS: The *Agricultural Pests Act* was scheduled to be read in the Legislature in the Fall of 2014. Agricultural Service Boards across the province were made aware of this and had started contributing comments to improve the Act. In the summer of 2012, after an election and a new Agriculture Minister was appointed, the *Agricultural Pests Act* was withdrawn from the queue as it was decided that there were other Acts of higher priority to be reviewed and read in the Legislature for 2014, delaying it to 2016;

WHEREAS: In the Province of Alberta there is only one Act that deals with invasive pests (agricultural or not) and that is the *Agricultural Pests Act*. There are some non-agricultural pests on the Act and a myriad of other invasive species that are not listed that are threatening the environment, water, and recreation in this province. Currently there is no way of enforcing control on these invasive species other than adding them to the *Agricultural Pests Act*;

WHEREAS: The Alberta Government needs to be proactive to keep new threats out of the Province and look at establishing legislation that addresses control/eradication of these imminent invaders. Although there is an Interdepartmental Invasive Alien Species Working Group (IIASWG, composed of representatives of the ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development, Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Transportation, and Tourism, Parks and Recreation,) that is tasked to deal with this problem, there has been little progress made over the past few years;

WHEREAS: It is unclear who, if anyone, is responsible for controlling new non-agricultural invasive pests, thus highlighting the need for a new act and regulation to address these invasive species, and to identify the appropriate Ministries to handle them;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That the Government of Alberta reconsider the priority of the review of the *Agricultural Pests Act* and schedule it for reading in the Legislature in the fall of 2014.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST**

that the Government of Alberta fast track the IIASWG to identify recommendations to create an Invasive Species Act, to be proactive and address alien invasive species that pose a significant environmental, recreational and social risk and cost to all of Alberta.

SPONSORED BY: Ponoka County

MOVED BY: Gawney Hinkley – Ponoka County

SECONDED BY: Barry Dunn – County of Wetaskiwin

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource
Development
Alberta Transportation
Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation
Alberta Municipal Affairs

BACKGROUND

The intent of the *Agricultural Pests Act* is to protect Agriculture within the Province of Alberta. However, The *Agricultural Pests Act* does not provide a clear definition of what an “Agricultural” Pest is and other species that do not fit under any other current legislation in Alberta get placed on the *Agricultural Pests Act* . Enforcement for these species places an undue burden on Agricultural Service Boards as agricultural fieldmen, who are designated inspectors under this Act, are required to do inspections and enforcement for species that do not directly impact agriculture. Under the *Agricultural Service Board Act*, the primary duty of an Agricultural Service Board and Agricultural Fieldman is to ensure that the agricultural resources of the municipality are protected.

This excerpt from Section 2 of the *Agricultural Pests Act* states:

Declaration of pest or nuisance

2(1) Subject to subsection (2), if the Minister considers that an animal, bird, insect, plant or disease is destroying or harming or is likely to destroy or harm any land, livestock or property in all or part of Alberta, the Minister may, by regulation, declare the animal, bird, insect, plant or disease to be

(a) a pest, or

(b) a nuisance,

throughout Alberta or in part of Alberta.

This “definition” is too broad as it states “if the Minister considers that an animal, bird, insect, plant or disease is destroying or harming or is likely to destroy or harm **any land, livestock or property in all or part of Alberta**. **Any** land or property in all or part of Alberta infers by way of omission that Crown land, urban municipalities, federal and provincial parks are all subject to the *Agricultural Pests Act* even though there may be no agricultural impacts.

In our opinion there are already several non-agricultural pests and nuisances listed in the Regulation;

Pests

Dutch elm disease (*Ophiostoma ulmi* and *Ophiostoma nova-ulmi*);

Native elm bark beetle (*Hylurgopinus rufipes*);

European elm bark beetle (*Scolytus multistriatus*);

Nuisances

English sparrow (*Passer domesticus*);

Rock dove (*Columba livia*);

European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*);

Magpie (*Pica pica*).

The *Agricultural Pests Act* is in dire need of change. An immediate review will allow Agricultural Service Boards to maintain a focus on agricultural related pests and to avoid the addition of further non-agricultural pests on to the *Agricultural Pests Act*. This list highlights the need for the *Agricultural Pests Act* to be reviewed immediately and for the government to consider the creation of an “Invasive Species Act” to deal with other pests and invasive species that do not have a direct impact on agriculture. An immediate review will allow Agricultural Service Boards to maintain a focus on agriculturally significant related pests and to avoid the addition of further non-agricultural pests on the Agricultural Pests Act.

The creation of new legislation to specifically address invasive species is also timely as the threat of establishment of several invasive species, such as Zebra and Quagga mussels, is imminent to Alberta and there are currently no laws in place Provincially or Federally to protect the Province. Research has proven that it is more cost effective to prevent the establishment of these species than to try to control them once they become established. The creation of a new “Invasive Species Act” that delegates responsibility to the appropriate government ministry to prevent the establishment of invasive species and allows for control of current species already established would be beneficial to the Province as it would allow Provincial Inspectors to efficiently and appropriately manage these species before they have the opportunity to become established and destroy aquatic and other natural habitats within the Province that all Albertans currently enjoy for their pristine beauty and recreational opportunities.

In 2012 there was a resolution on the Agricultural Pests Act Review and the following is the “**Therefore Be It Resolved**”. The responses from the appropriate agencies can be found at the link.

Taken from:
[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/rsv13774#lateresolution1](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/rsv13774#lateresolution1)

Emergent Resolution #1 Agricultural Pest Act Review

Therefore be it resolved that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that the *Agricultural Pests Act* review process include the option of adding different Government Ministries to administer parts of the Act not covered by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. In the event that this change is implemented, non-agricultural pests including terrestrial, aquatic and semi aquatic pests and their administration will fall under Sustainable Resource Development or Alberta Environment.

The (pre 2012 renaming) Ministries of Environment and Water, Sustainable Resource Development and Transportation all agreed in their response to the resolution that something needs to be done to address control of alien invasive species.

For more information on Interdepartmental Invasive Alien Species Working Group (IIASWG)

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/prm13274](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/prm13274)

Invasive alien species or invasive species are increasingly recognized for their global and local impacts to our economy, social values, and natural environment. They create a host of harmful environmental effects to native ecosystems that include the displacement of native species and the degradation or elimination of habitat. Currently there are gaps in our knowledge of invasive species and their impacts to Alberta's economy. Certain invasive species impacts do not create a direct economic impact, but can create a secondary societal impact by creating human inconvenience or discomfort. Certain invasions impact human health, compromise aesthetic or other values, create foul odours, or change the use patterns of areas of the community.

Full Draft report on the Alberta Invasive Alien Species Management Framework available at:

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/prm13262/\\$FILE/frame.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/prm13262/$FILE/frame.pdf)

Zebra Mussels: from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Zebra mussel
(*Dreissena*
***polymorpha*)**



Zebra mussels

Species and Origin: Zebra mussels and a related species, the Quagga mussel, are small, fingernail-sized animals that attach to solid surfaces in water. Adults are 1/4 to 1 1/2 inches long and have D-shaped shells with alternating yellow and brownish colored stripes. Female zebra mussels can produce 100,000- 500,000 eggs per year. These develop into microscopic, free-living larvae (called veligers) that begin to form shells. After two-three weeks, the microscopic veligers start to settle and attach to any firm surface using "byssal threads". It is the only freshwater mussel that can attach to objects. They are native to Eastern Europe and Western Russia and were brought over to the Great Lakes in ballast water of freighters. Populations of zebra mussels were discovered in the Great Lakes about 1988.



Many zebra mussels attached to a native mussel.

Impacts: Zebra mussels can cause problems for lakeshore residents and recreationists. Homeowners that take lake water to water lawns can have their intakes clogged. Mussels may attach to motors and possibly clog cooling water areas. Shells can cause cuts and scrapes if they grow large enough on rocks, swim rafts and ladders. Anglers may lose tackle as the shells can cut fishing line. Zebra mussels can also attach to native mussels, killing them. Zebra mussels filter plankton from the surrounding water. This filtering can increase water clarity, which might cause more aquatic vegetation to grow at deeper depths and more dense stands. If a lake has high numbers of mussels over large areas, this filter feeding could impact the food chain, reducing food for larval fish.

Status: They have spread throughout the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River from Brainerd downstream, and are now in other rivers and inland lakes. They are established in Minnesota and were first found in the Duluth/Superior Harbor in 1989. The [Infested Waters PDF](#) list provides details of current infestations. Diving ducks, freshwater drum (sheepshead), and other fish eat zebra mussels, but will not significantly control them.

Means of spread: Mussels attach to boats, nets, docks, swim platforms, boat lifts, and can be moved on any of these objects. They also can attach to aquatic plants, making it critical to remove all aquatic vegetation before leaving a lake. Microscopic larvae may be carried in water contained in bait buckets, bilges or any other water moved from an infested lake or river.

Where to look: Examine boat hulls, swimming platforms, docks, aquatic plants, wood and other objects along shorelines of lakes and rivers. Join in the [Volunteer Zebra Mussel Monitoring Program](#) and report your efforts each year.

****Regulatory Classification:** It is a [prohibited invasive species](#) (DNR), which means import, possession, transport, and introduction into the wild is prohibited.

Taken From: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticanimals/zebramussel/index.html>

Unwelcome arrivals

Zebra & quagga mussels at Fathom Five National Marine Park of Canada

Parks Canada biologist Scott Parker was on the lookout. [Zebra mussels](#) and their relative the quagga mussel had invaded the Great Lakes some years ago, and it was probably inevitable they would show up at [Fathom Five National Marine Park of Canada](#) of Canada. Then in July 1991 Scott and his colleagues found a zebra mussel in one of their study areas. With resignation Scott said, "we knew the ecosystem was about to experience a significant change and that we could do very little stop it."

[Invasive species](#) like zebra and quagga mussels commonly travel to new areas as stowaways. They hitch a ride with people, goods and vehicles moving from one country or region to another. The zebra mussel was probably transported from its native Asia to the Great Lakes in ballast water dumped by a ship in the late 1980s.

Moving in and taking over



Quagga mussels, like their relative the zebra mussel, have invaded Fathom Five and much of the Great Lakes

© Robyn Korn, 2006

New arrivals can be very disruptive to an ecosystem. Many, like quagga and zebra mussels, can be incredibly prolific. A female zebra mussel can produce a million eggs a year, and her young can colonize most any surface: boats, water-intake pipes, buoys, docks and plants. Zebra mussel communities can be fantastically dense - as much as 700,000 per square metre!

Also consider the fact that a single mussel can filter all the microscopic food from a litre of water each day. This has a huge effect, and people like Scott Parker have witnessed a major shift in the food web, from an efficient pelagic (open water) system where *plankton* feeds fish to a lake bottom system where plankton feeds mussels. These invasives are essentially sucking life and nutrients to the lakebed.

Some natives can't compete



A female zebra mussel can produce a million eggs a year, and her young can colonize most any surface
© Environment Canada

For some species, the zebra mussel's arrival has been disastrous. At Fathom Five and throughout much of the [Great Lakes](#), the tiny arthropod, *Diporeia*, is at the base of the food chain. This species lives in the lake bottom and feeds on settling algae and other organic material. But zebra mussels seem to be out-competing *Diporeia* for this food. Since *Diporeia* can make up 70 percent of the living matter in a healthy lake bottom, their decline is a problem for fish species that depend on them for food. Smaller fish like lake herring, whitefish, yellow perch and sculpin feed on the *Diporeia*, and larger salmon and trout in turn feed upon them.

Scott Parker has seen *Diporeia* decline from 1,000 per m² to zero in some areas. "We think it has everything to do with zebra mussels," he says. Some species have shifted their diet to eat mussels, however as Scott says "this is junk food, low in calories and nutrients".

More to come?



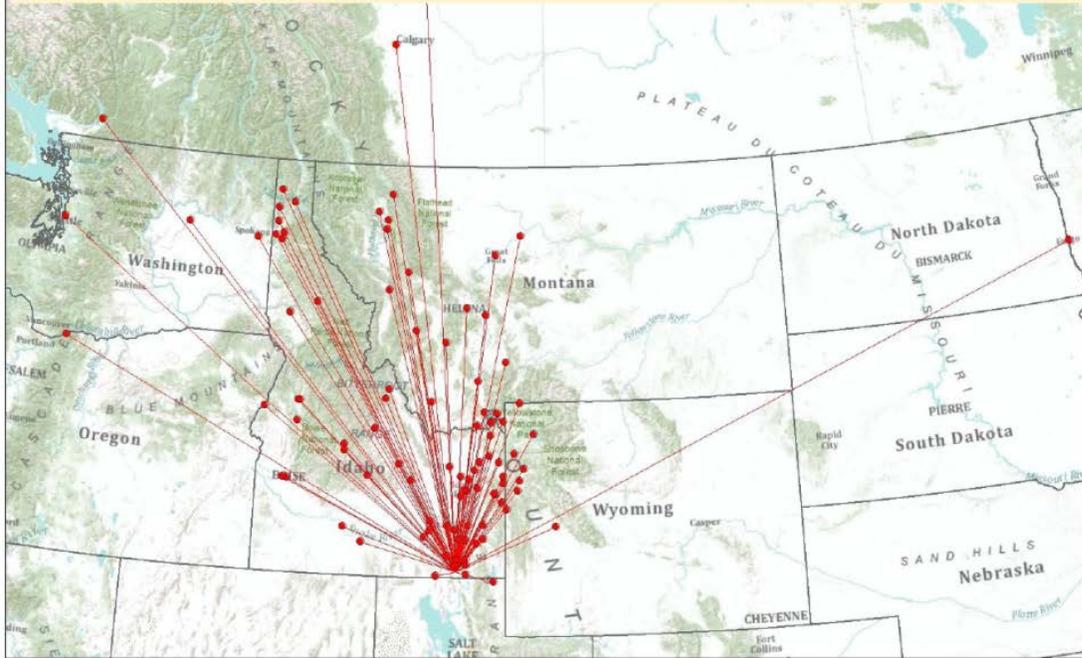
Researchers have witnessed a major shift in the Great Lakes food web due to invasive species.
© Wilkes, D. A., 1992

Taken From: http://www.pc.gc.ca/canada/pn-tfn/itm2-/2007/2007-05-14_e.asp

**Infested Lakes Visited by Boaters Entering Idaho
2011**

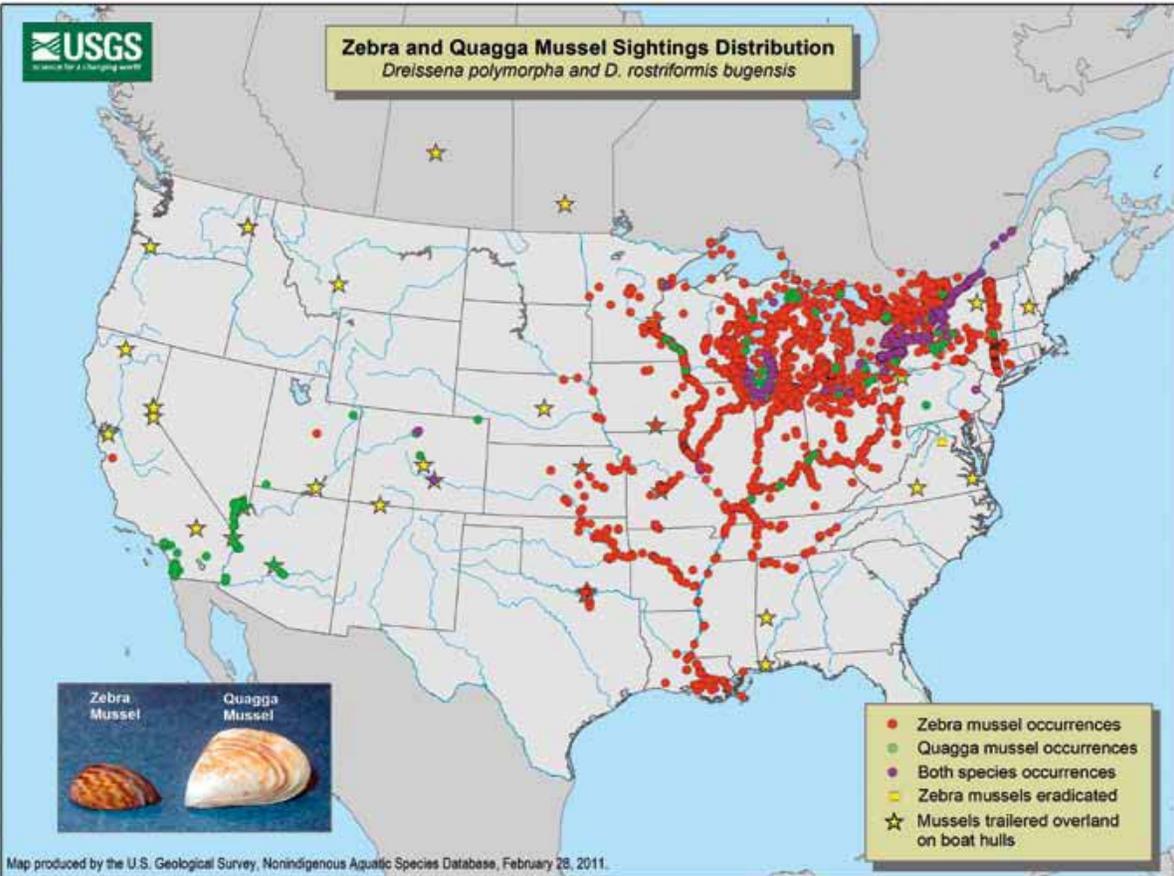


Where are boaters going after they are inspected?





Zebra and Quagga Mussel Sightings Distribution *Dreissena polymorpha* and *D. rostriformis bugensis*



- Zebra mussel occurrences
- Quagga mussel occurrences
- Both species occurrences
- Zebra mussels eradicated
- ☆ Mussels trailed overland on boat hulls

Map produced by the U.S. Geological Survey, Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Database, February 28, 2011.

RESOLUTION #6
COMPOSITION OF SOIL CONSERVATION APPEAL COMMITTEE

WHEREAS: Section 14(a,b,c) of the *Soil Conservation Act* legislates that an appeal committee for Municipal Districts, Improvement Districts and Special Areas shall consist of the Board (if there exists an Agricultural Service Board);

WHEREAS: Section 14(d) of the *Soil Conservation Act* legislates that an appeal committee for all other municipalities shall consist of the Council, or at least 3 members of the Council (regardless of the existence of an Agricultural Service Board);

WHEREAS: Section 14(5) of the *Agricultural Pests Act* legislates that the local authority shall appoint a committee (at Council discretion, and regardless of the existence of an Agricultural Service Board) to hear and determine appeals;

WHEREAS: Part 4, Section 19(1) of the *Weed Control Act* legislates that the local authority shall establish an independent appeal panel to determine appeals;

WHEREAS: Legislative reviews for *Soil Conservation Act* and *Agricultural Pests Act* have been delayed; planned alignment of similar sections of these enabling legislations (related and/or applicable to the *Agricultural Service Board Act*) has not occurred.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development review the current legislations and standardize the criteria for appeal committee composition, to ensure enabling legislations are aligned with the *Weed Control Act*, which legislates an independent appointed panel to determine appeals (regardless of whether there exists an Agricultural Service Board).

SPONSORED BY: Municipal District of Greenview

MOVED BY: Allan Perkins – MD of Greenview

SECONDED BY: Lesley Vandemark – MD of Greenview

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

BACKGROUND

Applicable Sections of the various Acts:

Soil Conservation Act

Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000 Chapter S-15 Current as of November 1, 2010

Composition of appeal committee

14 An appeal committee shall consist of

- (a) in the case of a municipal district, the Board, or, if there is no Board, at the discretion of the council, (i) the council, or (ii) at least 3 members of the council appointed by a resolution of the council;
- (b) in the case of an improvement district, the Board, or, if there is no Board, at least 3 persons appointed by the Minister responsible for the *Municipal Government Act*;
- (c) in the case of a special area, the Board, or, if there is no Board, at least 3 persons appointed by the Minister responsible for the *Special Areas Act*;
- (d) in the case of a municipality other than one referred to in clause (a), (b) or (c), at the discretion of the council,
 - (i) the council, or
 - (ii) at least 3 members of the council appointed by a resolution of the council.

1988 cS-19.1 s14; 1995 c24 s99(32)

Weed Control Act

Statutes of Alberta, 2008
1, 2011

Chapter W-5.1

Current as of October

Part 4

Appeal of Inspector's Notice or Local Authority's Notice

Appeals

19(1) A local authority shall establish, at least annually, an independent appeal panel to determine appeals of inspector's notices, local authority's notices and debt recovery notices.

- (2) A person who is given an inspector's notice, local authority's notice or debt recovery notice may, in accordance with the regulations, appeal it to an appeal panel.
- (3) The appeal panel may confirm, reverse or vary the inspector's notice, local authority's notice or debt recovery notice.

Agricultural Pests Act

Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000
2010

Chapter A-8 Current as of November 1,

Appeal to local authority

14(1) A person who

- (a) has an interest in land as an owner or occupant, or

(b) has an interest in livestock as an owner or person in control of livestock and feels personally aggrieved by a notice issued by an inspector under section 12 may appeal to the local authority of the municipality within which the land or livestock is located by filing a notice of appeal under this section.

- (5) A local authority shall at the beginning of each calendar year appoint a committee to hear and determine appeals under this section and on receipt of a notice of appeal a local authority shall refer the appeal to that committee.

RESOLUTION #7
Pesticide Container Collection Program

WHEREAS: Since 1989, Alberta's municipalities have been involved with the collection of empty pesticide containers and have done so with only one time funding from Alberta Environment to establish permanent collection sites within their municipalities; and

WHEREAS: Municipal governments in cooperation with transfer station and landfill operators manage the day to day maintenance and supervision of the sites and cover the costs associated with the transfer of containers from temporary depots to permanent sites without any funding from Alberta Environment; and

WHEREAS: CleanFARMS oversees the removal of the containers sites by hiring contractors to process the containers and funds this program through a levy collected from its pesticide manufacturer members on each container (less than 23 litre) sold into the market place; and

WHEREAS: Collection programs are poised to become increasingly expensive and labor intensive with the likely addition of bale & silage wrap, Ag-film, twine and grain bag collection programs, and

WHEREAS: Alberta is only one of two provinces in Canada that utilize municipalities to deliver the pesticide collection program within their province while the remaining provinces place this responsibility and cost on agricultural retail facilities who market and sell pesticide products.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development develop, with CleanFARMS, an empty pesticide container program that places the responsibility of collecting pesticide containers in Alberta with the Agricultural Retail/Dealer and removes the financial responsibility from the municipalities.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That should Alberta Environment and/or CleanFARMS prefer the municipalities continue to co-operate in the Pesticide Container Collection program, that all costs to the municipalities associated with the program be recovered from Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development and/or CleanFARMS.

SPONSORED BY: Flagstaff County and the M.D. of Smoky River No. 130

MOVED BY: Rick Bergseth – Flagstaff County

SECONDED BY: Robert Brochu – MD of Smoky River

CARRIED: _____

DEFEATED: X

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource
Development

Amendment to resolution passed

RESOLUTION DEFEATED

BACKGROUND

The Empty Pesticide Container Recycling Program is an industry led voluntary extended producer responsibility program delivered by CleanFARMS. The program operates to collect, clean and recycle empty commercial class pesticide containers (less than 23 litres) from farmers and other pesticide users. Upon collection, the containers are shredded, cleaned and recycled into various value added plastic products.

CleanFARMS is a nonprofit industry stewardship organization that funds this program through a levy collected from its pesticide manufacturer members on each container sold into the marketplace.

There are approximately 1200 collection sites throughout Canada (British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island) that utilize Agricultural Retail Facilities while two provinces (Alberta and Manitoba) rely upon municipal collection facilities.

Most Alberta municipalities have been involved with the Pesticide container collection program since its inception and established permanent collection facilities with one-time funding from Alberta Environment. However, the municipalities have become responsible to fund the maintenance and operation costs of the temporary and permanent collection sites while the Agricultural Retail Industry in the other provinces handles this responsibility.

Flagstaff County operates one main collection site and six temporary sites to increase access for pesticide container disposal. Empty pesticide containers are transported from the temporary sites to the main collection site by the municipality. Each site must be supervised as well as maintained to ensure proper disposal of the containers. Flagstaff County has budgeted \$17,000 for the operation, maintenance and transportation costs associated with the pesticide container collection program in 2013.

According to CleanFARMS, Alberta has an empty pesticide container rinse rate of 90% as opposed to Saskatchewan's 95%. Ontario and East have the best rinse rate at 99+%. The higher rinse rate in Ontario and the East is attributed to a zero tolerance for un-rinsed containers. The containers are rejected if they do not meet the requirements. A retailer-based collection system would be able to provide consistent supervision and would increase the rinse-rate of empty herbicide containers.

Alberta should move towards a dealer collection program, it would provide CleanFARMS the opportunity to develop a system similar to the one that exists in Ontario and East. They would be able to implement a program with zero tolerance for un-rinsed containers.

RESOLUTION #8
Timeliness of Agriculture Financial Services Corp. (AFSC)
on farm hail investigations

WHEREAS: Hail claims for Alberta are expected to be “close to double the amount AFSC experiences in an average year”, and

WHEREAS: Timely hail adjustment for agricultural producers are a necessity to ensure operational activities like harvest are not delayed excessively, and

WHEREAS: Agricultural producers are in more and more cases farming land at great distances, and to leave areas of the field for adjusters to complete their investigation requires the movement of large amounts and pieces of equipment when revisiting fields to complete harvest which is expensive and an inefficient use of time, especially when time at harvest is so valuable, and

WHEREAS: Areas of the harvested field left for investigation may not be representative of the hail damage received, potentially costing the producer or AFSC significantly, and

WHEREAS: Producers are reporting that hail investigations have been left in excess of 30 days after hail storms have passed, and

WHEREAS: AFSC is in the business of providing hail insurance to producers, and as such needs to be prepared with qualified staff to provide investigations in a timely manner.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA’S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That AFSC undertake to have adequate and qualified staff in place, on retention if needed, to ensure hail investigations take place with minimal delay to harvest operations.

SPONSORED BY: Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130

MOVED BY: Robert Brochu – MD of Smoky River

SECONDED BY: Raoul Johnson – MD of Smoky River

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Agriculture Financial Services Corp.

BACKGROUND

Taken from <http://www.afsc.ca/doc.aspx?id=5881>

AGRICULTURE FINANCIAL SERVICES CORPORATION

Straight Hail and Hail Endorsement Claims Update- August 28, 2012

Alberta has experienced heavy hail damage across the province this growing season, and claim numbers to date are close to double the amount AFSC experiences in an average year. The 2012 crop year may develop into the largest hail claim-volume year in AFSC's seventy-four year history with hail insurance.

We thank our clients for their patience and offer assurance that every effort is being made to efficiently manage these extraordinary claim volumes.

On-farm hail inspections continue to be prioritized by storm date and clients will be contacted by an adjuster prior to the hail inspection. Claim volumes are being monitored at a provincial level, and adjusters are being deployed to maintain a similar level of service throughout the province.

Clients who want to harvest their affected acres, or put them to an alternate use prior to an inspection are advised to contact their local AFSC District Office. Office staff will advise these clients what they need to do to ensure they remain eligible for hail coverage.

RESOLUTION #9
Comprehensive Coverage for Wildlife Damage to Honey and Leafcutter Bee Structures.

WHEREAS: AFSC currently does not offer comprehensive coverage for wildlife damage to Honey and Leafcutter bee structures;

WHEREAS: Other Provinces in western Canada offer this coverage;

WHEREAS: The average Leafcutter Bee Structure holds approximately 60,000 bees. Structures cost \$300 - \$350/ structure. Structures cover an average of 3 acres. There is an average of 15 to 25 nesting blocks per structure. At a 100% loss, replacement cost on a quarter sections is usually \$15,000-\$25,000;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That AFSC offer regular comprehensive coverage to all bee structures, to help offset costs as a result of wildlife damage, and that Alberta producers receive the same coverage that other provinces offer.

SPONSORED BY: Mackenzie County

MOVED BY: Danny Friesen – Mackenzie County

SECONDED BY: Walter Sarapuk – Mackenzie County

CARRIED: _____

DEFEATED: X

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Agriculture Financial Services Corp.

Wildlife Damage Compensation Program for Crop Damage

Purpose

- This program compensates Manitoba agricultural producers for damage caused by migratory waterfowl and big game.

Eligibility

- Producers do not have to carry MASC AgrilInsurance to be eligible.
- This program covers damage caused by deer, elk, moose, bear, wood bison, ducks, geese or sandhill cranes.
- The producer must contact their local MASC insurance office within three days of the occurrence of the loss.
- Eligible crops include:

wheat	oats
barley	flax
rye	rapeseed
canola	mixed grain
buckwheat	triticale
mustard	field peas
corn	sunflowers
lentils	canaryseed
fababeans	dry edible beans
greenfeed	hemp grain
tame millet	alfalfa
timothy	sweet clover
red clover	tame grasses
legumes	soybeans
potatoes	carrots
rutabagas	lettuce
parsnips	cooking onions
other vegetables	
- Baled hay is eligible once it is gathered from the field and placed in an eligible storage site. If bales cannot be gathered due to wet field conditions, they remain eligible for wildlife damage compensation.
- Eligible honey products include beehives and related equipment, honeybees, brood and honey.
- Eligible leafcutter products include leafcutter bee field shelters and their contents (nesting materials, equipment, eggs and larvae). The

shelters and related equipment must be in active field service.

- Crops used for swath grazing are not eligible.
- Crops intended or used as a lure crop or intercept feeding are not eligible.
- Wildlife losses due to poor management or neglect are not covered.

Coverage

- The amount of production loss is adjusted for quality based on a field sample.
- **Wildlife compensation is limited to 90 per cent of the value of loss.**
- Compensation is equal to the amount of lost or damaged production, multiplied by the AgrilInsurance dollar value, multiplied by the applicable per cent of compensation.
- For tame and native hay, compensation is determined by multiplying the tonnes of destroyed hay by the AgrilInsurance dollar value for that type of hay, multiplied by the per cent of compensation.
- If honeybee and leafcutter bee products are destroyed, the compensation is based on actual losses at established prices, multiplied by the per cent of compensation.
- For producers insured with MASC, the production that was lost due to wildlife damage is included as production in Individual Productivity Index (**IPI**) calculations, which prevents your insurance coverage from declining due to wildlife damage.
- Values for all eligible products are based on AgrilInsurance dollar values or values established by MASC in consultation with industry sources.
- This program compensates for wildlife damage done in the field up to harvest, including any reduced value to the production due to wildlife faeces contamination.

Wildlife Damage Compensation Program for Crop Damage

Cost

- This program is cost shared by the Government of Canada (60 per cent) and the Province of Manitoba (40 per cent). Compensation above the 80 per cent level is provided solely by the Government of Manitoba.
- No premiums or administrative fees are charged to producers for this compensation.

Claims

- All losses are based on appraisals done by MASC adjustors.
- The producer must take all reasonable efforts to prevent the wildlife damage from occurring and to utilize all prevention programs that may be available.
- Recurring claims for the same damage may be restricted unless permanent prevention measures are implemented.
- Producers will not be paid twice for the same loss, wildlife damage loss paid under this program will not be paid under MASC AgrilInsurance.
- No payment is made if the claim payment is less than \$100.
- There is no maximum payment amount.

For more information contact your local MASC insurance office or visit masc.mb.ca.

Compensation program available for all Saskatchewan producers

Every year, producers on the Prairies experience crop loss due to wildlife. The Wildlife Damage Compensation Program through the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) can help any producer in Saskatchewan in this situation.

All Saskatchewan producers are eligible to receive compensation for losses and take part in programs designed to prevent and limit wildlife damage; you do not have to be a Crop Insurance customer to participate.

Crop and Livestock Damage Compensation

Crops eligible for compensation include all seeded commercial crops; stacked hay, silage and bales; market gardens, tree nurseries, sod farms, honey and leaf cutter bees, including their structures; and crops used for alternative feeding systems.

There is 100 percent compensation on claims \$150 and over caused by wildlife.

There is also 100 per cent compensation for the death of livestock or poultry due to predation. Compensation is eligible on predation by any wild animal that causes injury or death to eligible livestock. Up to 80 per cent of an injured animal's value may be provided to cover veterinary costs.

For crops, final compensation values are set based on a six-month average price survey conducted from September to February. Compensation is also available for dening excreta-contaminated grain.

In 2010, swath, bale and corn grazing used as part of a well-managed feeding system became eligible for compensation. A well-managed feeding system is defined by the following: there must be fences in place to confine the livestock; the movement of the livestock on the feed must be controlled; and the feed must be suitable for livestock.

Feed must be either baled hay, a crop grown with the intention of swath grazing, or standing corn. There must be a plan in place to ensure the livestock are making full use of the feed and there is not excessive waste. The livestock also need to be rotated throughout the field, ensuring the

nutrients are returned evenly to the land. Finally, the livestock must have access to water/snow, shelter, windbreaks and fences.

Prevention

Funding can be acquired for fencing around feed yards, temporary fencing to protect feed sources and fencing to protect nurseries and market gardens. Upon review and recommendation by an SCIC adjuster, and verification that feed management requirements have been met, SCIC will provide funding to offset the cost of fencing materials.

Prevention measures may include lure crops, waterfowl feeding stations, intercept feeding scare cannons and elk feedings stations. An SCIC adjuster will work with the producer to determine what measures are appropriate.

For damages to crops or forages, and to file a claim, producers should contact SCIC as soon as the damage occurs so that the assessment process can begin.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact your local customer service office;
- Call 1-888-935-0000; or
- Visit www.saskcropinsurance.com.



NEW AGRISTABILITY ONLINE CALCULATOR

A new tool is now available to help producers analyze the potential for acquiring an AgriStability benefit. An online AgriStability Calculator can be accessed at www.saskcropinsurance.com and is designed to help a producer better understand how AgriStability works and how benefits are generated.

The calculator takes the producer through a number of different steps where the farm's production, expense and income information is entered. The producer will need to have on-hand previous years' tax, CAIS and AgriStability information to achieve a final calculation. The process involves most aspects that factor into the AgriStability program, such as a structural change in the farming operation and the varying income and expense information for each of the past five years.

Once all of the information is collected and the producer has worked through the various segments of the online tool, a final benefit calculation is made. This gives the producer an opportunity to investigate the potential for AgriStability benefits while also determining the impact on future years' reference margin.

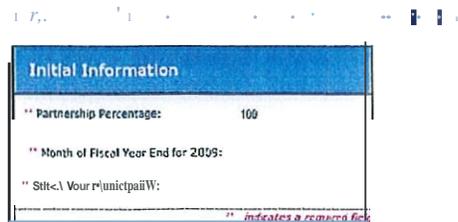
The online calculator relies on the data that is entered by the producer and no information that is entered is recorded or saved by the

producer's potential AgriStability benefits, it is not a guarantee of receipt of a final benefit. The AgriStability Calculator does not reflect adjustments like combining operations for whole-farm purposes, changes to fiscal periods in the reference or program year, or limits on government contributions.

SCIC is focused on providing direct, reliable and local service to producers. This online AgriStability Calculator is part of that ongoing effort.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the AgriStability call centre at 1-866-270-8450; or
- Visit www.saskcropinsurance.com.



Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC). While the calculator has been designed to provide an accurate analysis of a

OCTOBER 2010

RESOLUTION #10
Continuation of the Prairie Shelterbelt Program

- WHEREAS:** The Government of Canada has announced it will cancel the Prairie Shelterbelt Program in 2013, a program which has successfully operated since 1901, and
- WHEREAS:** The Prairie Shelterbelt Program is an excellent example of a cost-sharing approach, where all who benefit contribute. Canadians contribute by providing the trees. The landowners contribute by providing the land, the labour and equipment needed to prepare the land, plant the trees, and maintain them over time, and
- WHEREAS:** The Prairie Shelterbelt Program has always been of great value to the agricultural community, contributing to snow trapping, the reduction of soil movement due to wind, enhancing the environment, providing wildlife habitat and beautifying the appearance of the prairie landscape, and
- WHEREAS:** The Government of Canada website states: 'Shelterbelts on the Canadian prairies are a form of "afforestation", a term used in the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gases as one acceptable practice of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere (ie. a carbon "sink")', and
- WHEREAS:** Municipalities are very involved at the grass root level and support the continuation of the Prairie Shelterbelt Program.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that the Government of Canada continues the Prairie Shelterbelt Program to the benefit of all Canadians.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST:

that the Provincial Government of Alberta extensively lobby the Federal Government to reinstate this important program that serves the needs of their rural constituents in such a meaningful way.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST:

that the Federal Government provide 55% of the funding to operate a Prairie Shelterbelt Program, with the remaining 45% split equally between Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

SPONSORED BY: Stettler County, M.D. of Smoky River No. 130 and
County of Grande Prairie No. 1

MOVED BY: James Nibourg – Stettler County

SECONDED BY: Robert Brochu – MD of Smoky River

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Federal and Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Background:

4th Whereas taken from: <http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1199722936936&lang=eng>

The Shelterbelt Centre ships 5 to 6 million trees to about 8 to 10 thousand applicants per year in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta & Peace River District of B.C. In addition, it provides shelterbelt material, conducts research, provides technical assistance and promotes the use of trees and shelterbelts throughout the prairie region. All of this is currently of great value to agricultural producers and acreage owners in Western Canada

Shelterbelts are currently planted for the protection of surface and ground water soils, crops, buildings, livestock and for wildlife habitat. Carbon capture, reduction and sequestration are further benefits. Shelterbelts do not require the conversion of large tracts of agricultural land to reduce our carbon footprint, the land stays in production and the shelterbelts complement the economic and environmental sustainability of the farm. A few examples of how shelterbelts reduce that footprint are as follows:

1. Shelterbelts can be designed to keep farmyards, driveways and roads clear of snow. Financial and greenhouse gas emission savings can be achieved as a result of reduced snow clearing activities. While these figures are difficult to quantify, any farmer or rancher knows that trapping snow in the fields, rather than the yard or corrals, reduces the workload and provides moisture for subsequent crops.
2. Properly designed shelterbelts can reduce the heating costs of farm buildings by 30%. Depending on the source of energy used, greenhouse gas emission reductions as well as financial saving can be considerable, estimated at \$1,000,000 for a single county.
3. Shelterbelts remove carbon dioxide and store it as carbon for long periods of time as wood. It is estimated that every kilometer of shelterbelt planted sequesters roughly 38 tonnes of carbon. It is also estimated that the shelterbelts planted in the five-year period of 2008-2012 will sequester about 2.1 million tonnes of carbon.

All these methods of reducing our carbon footprint contribute to the Federal Government's Action Plan 2000 on Climate Change, and the closure of the program will reduce the Government's ability to reach its carbon sequestration goal, so it is to their benefit to reinstate the Prairie Shelterbelt program. In addition, this program provides great benefits to farmers, ranchers, and acreage holders across the prairies. We therefore request that Agriculture and Agrifoods Canada reverse its decision to end this Program, and that the Provincial government also support the reinstatement of this program.

Many of Alberta's ASBs have written Minister Gerry Ritz requesting that the Prairie Shelterbelt program not be cancelled due to the important benefits it offers to all Canadians in the prevention of soil erosion, protection of environmentally sensitive areas and promotion of biodiversity. The letters sent follow as further background information to the Resolution.



Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130

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

Phone: (780) 837-2221

Fax: (780) 837-2453

April 18, 2012

Honourable Gerry Ritz

Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

1341 Baseline Road

Ottawa, Ontario

K1A 0C5

Dear Honourable Minister Ritz:

It was with great dismay that we learned of your Ministry's decision to end the Prairie Shelterbelt Program run by the Agri-Environment Services Branch (AESB) Agroforestry Development Centre, formerly known as the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) Shelterbelt Centre.

Although we can certainly appreciate the Federal Government's need to control spending and cut programs, we strongly believe the Prairie Shelterbelt Program has been, and continues to be one of the most valuable programs ever developed to improve agriculture and the prairie landscape. We cannot argue that primary agriculture production has changed significantly since the program's inception, and even within the last 10 to 15 years with the very welcomed advent of conservation tillage.

It is this Council's considered opinion that as the increase in farm & implement size drives the removal of field shelterbelts and encroachment into historically non-crop areas, the need for further planting becomes that much more relevant to ensure the biodiversity needed by wildlife and wild pollinators. Research maintains that field and yard shelterbelts reduce heating costs and reduce greenhouse gases while offering protection to all manner of wildlife.

The information we have been able to find indicates that in the 'dirty thirties', when soil conservation concerns were paramount, approx. 1.5 million seedlings were distributed in Alberta through the PFRA program each season. A gradual decline in distribution occurred with the lowest numbers in the 60's and 70's showing a range of approximately 100,000 to 600,000 seedlings distributed. A gradual resurgence in popularity is indicated by seedling distribution numbers reaching the million mark in 2004, to 1.25 million in 2008 (the final year we have numbers for).

In our opinion these numbers show the program has not outlived its usefulness and we respectfully request that you reconsider your position, and the Federal Government continue to support the Prairie Shelterbelt Program.

Sincerely,

Robert Bruch, Reeve

cc: Honourable Evan Berger, Minister Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Pat Gordonkyo, Provincial A.S.B. Committee
A.S.B. Chairmen of Alberta



Office of the Mayor

May 10, 2012

The Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
OTTAWA, ON K1A 0C5

Dear Honourable Minister Ritz:

It was with great concern that we learned of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's decision to end the Agri-Environment Services Branch Prairie Shelterbelt Program. Leduc County Council echoes the sentiments of the Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130 whereby they suggest that,

"we strongly believe that the Prairie Shelterbelt Program has been, and continues to be one of the most valuable programs ever developed to improve agriculture on the prairie landscape."

Leduc County has always strongly supported the Prairie Shelterbelt Program promoting the planting of trees by our residents. Significant resources and staff time have been contributed in facilitating this program over the many years and we have seen, and continue to see, the positive effects of this program within our municipality. Although it is difficult to quantify, there are substantial environmental, economic, social, and communal benefits to having trees in our landscape and, respectfully, our Leduc County municipal council finds it astounding that your Ministry would end a program that has made such a positive impact in all of our rural communities.

To offer a grassroots perspective on the effect of this program within Leduc County: In association with the hard work and dedication of the Agroforestry Development Centre staff and their facility at Indian Head Saskatchewan, Leduc County has facilitated the distribution of 190,825 trees to our rural residents since 2007. Our rural municipality is located immediately south of the City of Edmonton where the mitigation of soil erosion by wind and water is of great value to agricultural producers and the planting of shelterbelt trees continue to assist in sustaining this valuable asset along with the promotion of biodiversity, providing wildlife habitat, improving air quality, and the overall enhancement of the quality of life of rural residents.

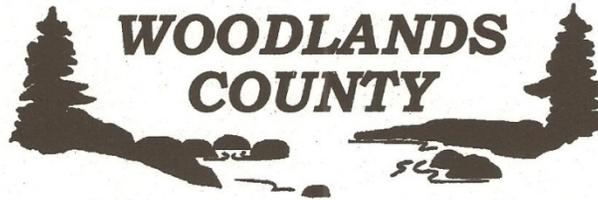
We strongly encourage that the decision to end this infinitely valuable program be reconsidered as we believe that the Prairie Shelterbelt Program continues to serve an essential purpose and these benefits can continue to be realized across the prairie provinces.

Respectfully,

John Whaley, Mayor

cc: Honourable Verlyn Olson, Minister, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
Agricultural Service Board Chairs of Alberta
James Rajotte, MP for Edmonton-Leduc
Blaine Calkins, MP for Wetaskiwin
Mike Lake, MP for Edmonton-Millwoods-Beaumont

Municipal Office
Box 60, #1 Woodlands Lane
Whitecourt, AB T7S 1N3
Telephone: (780) 778-8400
Facsimile: (780) 778-8402
Toll Free: 1-888-870-6315
E-mail: admin@woodlands.ab.ca
Website: www.woodlands.ab.ca



Regional Municipal Office
P.O. Box 33
Fort Assiniboine, AB T0G 1A0
Telephone: (780) 584-3866
Facsimile: (780) 584-3988
Toll Free: 1-866-584-3866
E-mail: admin@woodlands.ab.ca
Website: www.woodlands.ab.ca

May 25, 2012

The Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri - Food
Agriculture and Agri – Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

Dear Honourable Minister Ritz:

Woodlands County's Agriculture Service Board would further like to support previous correspondence from both the Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130 and Leduc County in expressing concerns regarding the cessation of the Agri – Environment Services Branch Prairie Shelterbelt Program.

We firmly believe that this program is a very valuable program in many aspects relating to agriculture and the environment. Woodlands County is very supportive of the program by annually dedicating personal and other resources in facilitating the distribution of shelterbelt trees.

Although our municipality is relatively small in terms of population, we have had in excess of 38,000 trees distributed in this area since 2003. The variety of uses for the trees include rehabilitating riparian areas, improving wildlife habitat and biodiversity as well as farmyard shelterbelts to name a few. We have a consistent increase since 2003 for shelterbelt trees requests from our ratepayers. These increased requests follow the overall increase in seedling distribution from the Agroforestry Development Centre.

We respectfully request that you reconsider the decision to end this extremely valuable program as we believe that the Prairie Shelterbelt Program continues to be a significant asset to the agriculture industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dale McQueen", is written over a horizontal line.

Dale McQueen, ASB Vice Chair

cc: Honourable Verlyn Olson, Minister, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.
Pat Gordeyko, Provincial A.S.B. Committee
ASB Chairs of Alberta
Honourable Rob Merrifield, M.P. for Yellowhead



P.O. Box 34
BERWYN, ALBERTA
T0H 0E0

June 18, 2012

Honourable Gerry Ritz
Minister of Agriculture and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

Dear Honourable Minister Ritz:

RE: Prairie Shelterbelt Program

The Municipal District of Peace No. 135 Agricultural Service Board would like to support previous correspondence from the Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130, Woodlands County, Leduc County, AAMDC, and numerous others, in expressing concerns regarding the discontinuance of the Prairie Shelterbelt Program in 2013.

We strongly believe that this program is very important in many ways to sustainable agriculture and environment. Our MD is working closely with the producers by dedicating personnel and equipment for distribution and planting of shelterbelt trees. To further this objective of sustainability, our MD has recently planted a demonstration plot with 27 species/cultivars at a cooperator's farm, and data will be collected as to how different tree species become established under local environmental conditions.

There are enormous benefits from treed areas, and this highlights the increasing need for tree supply for environmental, riparian, habitat restoration, biodiversity and municipal snow management programs as climate and environmental concerns are increasing, not decreasing. This program has tremendous potential to help provide municipal government services, as well as or in conjunction with, private land shelterbelting. Pushing the cost of a societally valuable program totally on to private land owners will be detrimental to the advancement of environmental improvements. Everyone benefits from good land stewardship by private landowners.

In our view, the shelterbelt program has numerous long term environmental and economic benefits. We respectfully request that you reconsider the decision to end this highly valuable program, and ensure the Federal Government continues to support the Prairie Shelterbelt Program.

Sincerely,

Sandra Friesen, Vice Chairman
M.D. of Peace No. 135 ASB

cc: Honourable Verlyn Olson, Minister, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Honourable Chris Warkentin, MP for Peace River
ASB Chairmen of Alberta



WHEATLAND COUNTY

Hwy 1, R.R. 1 Strathmore, Alberta T1P 1J6 Tel. (403) 934-3321 Fax (403) 934-4889

October 2, 2012

The Honourable Gerry Ritz
Agriculture & Agr.-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

RE: Prairie Shelterbelt Program

Dear Honourable Minister Ritz:

The Wheatland County Agricultural Service Board would like to express its concerns in regards to the ending the Prairie Shelterbelt program. Municipalities across Alberta have faithfully participated in this program over the years because they believed in the value of this program and continue to believe in it.

As farming practices have changed over the years we have seen a diminished need for field shelterbelts as well as an increase in the removal of existing shelterbelts. This in itself lends support to the need for even more plantings to maintain greenhouse gas reduction initiatives as well as critical biodiversity and wildlife habitat.

This is also well supported by the following statement on the Government's own website; "The Government of Canada supports an aggressive approach to climate change that achieves real environmental and economic benefits for all Canadians". In fact one of the suggestions in regards to what Canadians can do to help climate change was to "plant a tree".

In Wheatland County over the last 5 years nearly 100,000 trees have been planted. It is estimated that one mature tree can store up to 48 lbs. of carbon/year so in Wheatland County alone the potential for carbon storage from just the last 5 years of planting is 4.8 million pounds.

Wheatland County has also seen this program as a way to development partnerships in our community and for the past 15 years we have been in partnership with local 4-H clubs in our area who work with us to distribute the trees to landowners using this as an opportunity to raise funds for their clubs.

While we realize that cost cutting measures are sometimes a necessity we ask that you reconsider your position in regards to the Prairie Shelterbelt Program and continue this extremely valuable program.

Yours truly,

Ken Saue
Wheatland County
Agricultural Service Board Chairman

c.c. The Hon. Verlyn Olson, Minister of Agriculture & Rural Development
Kevin Sorenson, M.P., Crowfoot
Jason Hale, MLA, Strathmore-Brooks



P.O. BOX 800
CROWSNEST PASS, ALBERTA
T0K 0E0
PHONE (403) 562-8833
FAX (403) 563-5474

October 9, 2012

Honorable Gerry Ritz
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5

Dear Honorable Minister Ritz:

RE: Prairie Shelterbelt Program

The Municipality of Crowsnest Pass Agriculture Service Board would like to support previous correspondence from the MD of Smoky River, Woodlands County, Leduc County, MD of Peace, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC), and others in expressing concerns about the termination of the Prairie Shelterbelt Program in 2013.

Our Agriculture Service Board is the newest 70th Agriculture Service Board in the Province of Alberta. Our plan was to implement the Prairie Shelterbelt Program in our community in 2013 to improve soil conservation in this windy S.W. part of Alberta. The new municipal Agriculture & Environmental Services Department that operates in conjunction with the local Agriculture Service Board is responsible for enforcing and creating programming related to the Alberta Soil Conservation Act. One of our planned mitigation strategies to control soil erosion was to plant shelterbelt species on farmland, riparian land adjacent to waterbodies, and on soil exposed municipal land where possible.

We urge you to reconsider the termination of this program and hope to one day have some success stories to tell about the Prairie Shelterbelt Program in our community similar to other rural Alberta Districts that have participated in this program for many years and have benefited from it immensely.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheldon Steinke", written over a horizontal line.

Sheldon Steinke, Chair
Crowsnest Pass Agriculture Service Board

Cc: Honorable Verlyn Olson, Minister of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Honorable Bruce Decoux, Mayor of the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass
Agriculture Service Board Chairs of Alberta

RESOLUTION #11
Short Term Solid Manure Storage

WHEREAS: Weather conditions and other mitigating factors make offsite short term solid manure storage a necessary component of confined feeding operations;

WHEREAS: Short term solid manure storage guidelines are addressed in the Agriculture Operations Practices Act Regulations;

WHEREAS: AOPA Standards Administration Regulation states short term solid manure storage sites may be placed within 150 meters of residences but no mention is made of setbacks from roads or public places of gathering i.e. churches, active cemeteries, parks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development bring forward to the AOPA Policy Advisory Group the review of short term solid manure storage as it pertains to setback distances from residences as it does not include places of public gathering or roadways.

SPONSORED BY: County of Lethbridge

MOVED BY: Steve Campbell – County of Lethbridge

SECONDED BY: Lorne Hickey – County of Lethbridge

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

BACKGROUND:

The Agriculture Operation Practices Act regulates how long off site solid manure storage can take place and setback distances to residences, water tables and common bodies of water. However, the regulations do not address setbacks from roads or places of public gathering such as active cemeteries, churches and campgrounds.

Theoretically, manure could be stockpiled (usually 400 – 500 tonnes) at the property line of a church or campground or within 150 meters of a hamlet from spring until fall.

Confined feeding operators are asking that these gaps in the regulations be addressed in order to keep unscrupulous operators from giving their industry a black eye as public scrutiny is so important in today's agriculture markets.

RESOLUTION # 12
AGRI-ENVIRONMENT SERVICES BRANCH STAFFING

WHEREAS: Agri-Environment Services Branch staff have provided Agricultural Service Boards and the farming community with expert information and help in many areas of Agriculture in conjunction with the Environment.

WHEREAS: Agri-Environment Services Branch staff have become well respected in their communities and this reflects well on government participation and indicates their interest in Agriculture.

WHEREAS: The Agri-Environment Services Branch has provided grass roots programs that have been an asset to the farming community in good sound direction with actual results on the ground.

WHEREAS: Although some programs outlive their usefulness, other new programs become necessary as our environment changes.

WHEREAS: It has become obvious that it is the government's intent to reduce staff in rural offices and have shut down 7 offices across western Canada where they are needed.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That the federal government reconsider their direction and re-open and re-staff offices in rural communities to an appropriate number of staff that will allow programs to be carried out efficiently before their connection to the community is lost.

SPONSORED BY: County of Barrhead No. 11

MOVED BY: Marvin Brade – County of Barrhead

SECONDED BY: Bill Lee – County of Barrhead

CARRIED: X

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Federal

DEPARTMENT: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Agri-Environment Services Branch Background

The Agriculture and Agri-Food Portfolio will realize a 10-per cent reduction of its annual budget by 2014-15. For AAFC, this means reductions of \$15.0 million in 2012-13, \$158.5 million in 2013-14, and \$253.6 million in 2014-15 and thereafter.

These cuts mean that about 400 AESB employees have been affected which are about 50% of the population as a result of 7 prairie office closures and the discontinuation of programs such as the shelterbelt changes in community pastures as an example. Offices closed to date were in Hanna, Medicine Hat, Vegerville in Alberta as well as Dawson Creek, British Columbia and Rosetown, Gravelburg and Moosejaw in Saskatchewan.

The Agri-Environment Services Branch are involved in many programs and helped other organizations in the development and progress of their programs. Some of the programs that are more familiar to us are the Shelterbelt Program, Community Pastures Program, the Community Development Program and the Co-operative Development Initiative Program.

It is good to revamp programs from time to time but this can be done without eliminating offices and downsizing on the ground staff so that the programs cannot be carried out. Clients deal with people they know and having watched Alberta Agriculture go through the same consolidating they are now finding that they lost touch with the direct contact with the farming community and are trying to reverse the trend. When these employees raise their families in these communities and work hard for their clients it reflects well on the government.

The hub offices work directly with the clients and address their concerns. It is because of this easy access that clients become familiar with the government staff and become comfortable enough to express their concerns and ideas. The staff in the field can tell you what is relevant and what still applies and what does not.

Efforts to reduce administration is a good thing provide that it is done appropriately bearing in mind that some of these long service people have dedicated their lives to their profession and to the Federal Government. We have worked well with these rural staff members and the combination of our efforts and the sharing of costs on putting on workshops, completing on the ground projects and sharing aspects of specific work has benefited both parties economically. We are getting a lot for our dollar with actual benefits.

We, at the County of Barrhead 11, understand the need to reduce budgets and that cuts may be necessary at times but feel the cuts are being made without truly understanding the ramifications.

We have been fortunate that the office closest to us has not been closed, other areas have not been so lucky. The direct communication with government staff is vital. We are willing to work with the Department staff to reduce costs as much as possible to maintain that communication.

**RESOLUTION #13
MODERNIZATION OF SEED CLEANING PLANTS**

WHEREAS: Presently most Seed Cleaning Plants are in need of improvements to meet the current needs of today's grain producers;

WHEREAS: When producers received a reasonable price for their grain, relative to their expenses, Seed Cleaning Plants charged fees that adequately covered operational and maintenance expenses;

WHEREAS: Over the past several years the narrowing of profit margins for producers, and Seed Cleaning Plants holding their fees low to retain a slim profit margin for the producer, it has created a situation where most Plants are near obsolete with an inability to ever afford to modernize;

WHEREAS: Most local municipalities have identified this dilemma for the Plants and have provided just enough funding to keep the Plants surviving, but not to fully modernize;

WHEREAS: The prolonged lack of financial support at the Provincial and Federal government level is leading to a gradual demise of existing Seed Cleaning Plants;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

That the provincial and federal governments provide financial assistance to Seed Cleaning Plant co-operatives to modernize their facilities to meet the current local needs of grain producers.

SPONSORED BY: Beaver County

MOVED BY: Ron Yarham – Beaver County

SECONDED BY: Cliff Martin – County of St. Paul

CARRIED: _____

DEFEATED: X

STATUS: Provincial and Federal

DEPARTMENT: Agriculture and Agri Food Canada
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Background:

In the establishment years of Alberta Seed Cleaning Plants the provincial government offered cost shared grants to municipalities to either establish new Seed Cleaning Plants, or cover upgrades to existing ones. All forms of provincial government financial support to seed cleaning plants ended by 1996. During this period this initiative proved very beneficial to both the agricultural producers, municipalities and the Province. In 2008 a 5-year Federal/Provincial/Territorial initiative called Growing Forward was introduced. Due to tremendous interest, relevant the Growing Forward programs such as Agri-Business Automation and Lean Manufacturing, are no longer accepting applications for the 2012-2013 fiscal year as the budget has been fully committed.

Since Provincial government financial support ceased the following trends have emerged:

- 1) The trucks utilized for hauling grains have increased in size to the point where many of the older Seed Cleaning Plants cannot readily accommodate these larger vehicles.
- 2) The producer's costs for hauling grains for seed cleaning has increased, both due increased fuel costs, and for increased hauling distances to facilities able to handle these larger truck sizes.
- 3) Many municipalities have been providing small intermittent grants to financially assist their local seed cleaning plants for upgrades necessary to keep them viable.
- 4) Several of the older Seed Cleaning Plants have not been able to afford upgrades, and have since closed, or are or in jeopardy of closing.
- 5) The number of primary producers has declined with a corresponding decline in membership in the Seed Cleaning Plant cooperatives. This has lead to elevated cleaning rate charges to the remaining grain producers to offset costs.
- 6) Seed Cleaning Plants improvements have not been able to access various rural stabilization initiatives and grants due to unfamiliarity of the non-rural government officials with Seed Cleaning Plants.
- 7) Seed Cleaning Plant managers have developed into valuable local resource persons on seed, yield and pest information for producers.