



# FINAL REPORT

**Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative**

**Project # 04-018**

# WILDLIFE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

*Funding provided by:*



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## **Background**

A separate project was created under the Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative (AEPI) fund in 2004 in recognition of the potential role of the Agriculture Environment Initiatives (AEI) Management Committee in facilitating development of agriculture wildlife projects and programs. The project, identified as Project # 04-018 - Wildlife Program Development, supported the coordination of wildlife agriculture related projects and activities for the AEI Management Committee. A total of \$145,000 was committed to this project (see Appendix A) over a period from 2004 to 2008 of which \$144,678 was expended.

## **Key Activities and Results**

With funding approved through this project a number of key activities were undertaken.

- An AEI Wildlife Sub-Committee (Appendix C) was established to assist the AEI Management Committee with the review of wildlife related proposals coming to regularly scheduled meetings. Eighteen meetings of the Sub-Committee reviewed over 40 applications of which 38 were subsequently approved and completed (Appendix B).
  - Approximately \$5.5 million of AEPI funds were committed and expended towards wildlife related projects. Many were reviewed on an ongoing basis. There was an overriding emphasis on prevention and reduction of wildlife damage particularly where pilot compensation projects were concerned.
- The Sub-Committee was tasked with managing the implementation of “pilot” wildlife damage compensation projects funded by the Business Risk Management Branch of the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. Five “pilot” projects were conducted involving compensation for losses of forage to wild ungulates and waterfowl; and for losses of livestock to wild predators.
  - Approximately \$5.9 million was expended by the Ministry before the transition from the pilot phase to a more sustainable ongoing initiative. The BC Agriculture Wildlife program was established in 2008 which ended the formal involvement of the AEI Management Committee.
- Funding from 04-018 was approved to conduct two major evaluation oriented reports:
  - BC Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot Projects: Evaluation Report (\$25,000)
  - Wild Predator Loss Control and Compensation Project Evaluation (\$20,000)
- The project supported a wide range of program development initiatives and opportunities aimed at addressing wildlife agriculture conflicts including:
  - BC Agriculture Wildlife Advisory Committee
  - Agriculture Wildlife Program
  - Provincial Agriculture Zone Wildlife Program
  - Landowner Enfranchisement projects

- The AEI Management Committee provided overview of ongoing activities and priorities under its “Wildlife Initiative” and related Strategic Direction (Appendix D).

The effect of allocating resources to this project has been to fill a gap in facilitating industry input and assistance in developing projects focused on resolving some long standing agriculture wildlife issues of producers. The AEPI identified wildlife as one of its two main Strategic Priorities. Producer groups were quick to respond with proposals to address the most pressing needs but there was always the question about longer term solutions. In providing the coordination of wildlife agriculture initiatives through this project, the AEI Management Committee was able to maximize the benefits of the other projects approved and implemented on their own merits.

Two major provincial initiatives were launched during the period covered by AEPI Project 04-018. They were the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program of the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, and the Provincial Agriculture Zone Wildlife Program (PAZWP) of the BC Ministry of Environment.

The Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (now called the Agriculture Wildlife Program) represents a longer term commitment by the provincial and federal governments towards compensating producers for financial losses from wildlife. The information gathered from the pilot AEPI projects made a significant contribution to the eventual launch of that program. The Agriculture Wildlife Program (AWP), while currently focussed on compensation, is based on an ongoing emphasis on prevention and mitigation. Again the information and experiences of many AEPI funded projects will contribute to a successful response to that expectation.

The PAZWP initiative of the Ministry of Environment (MoE) is another significant development in the potential long term success of resolving agriculture wildlife conflicts. The resources committed through the AEPI have both stimulated and encouraged MoE to provide a coordinated response from their perspective. This is a critical element in addressing concerns of producers. MoE have the responsibility provincially for the management of wild ungulates and predators including administration of hunting regulations. There are many approaches to resolving agriculture wildlife issues but hunting in various ways remains one the main tools still available. PAZWP, through proposed regional agriculture wildlife advisory groups, has the potential of making hunting a more effective resource.

Two very significant projects involving enhanced hunter/landowner cooperation were approved by the AEI Management Committee – one in the Peace Region, the other in the East Kootenay. The evolution of these projects over the past 3 years saw the focus shift from compensation for wild ungulate losses (now covered by the AWP of MAL) to hunt coordination. Resources from 04-018 has allowed for participation in the initiatives which is aimed at developing a cost effective provincial program that will serve producers and landowners with wild ungulate issues for the longer term.

Continued participation in the BC Agriculture Wildlife Advisory Committee (AWAC) has provided a venue for sharing the information about many of the AEPI funded projects. It has also provided the opportunities to develop new strategic partnerships including one with the BC Wildlife Federation. It will be a combination of on-the-ground programs, services and action along with realistic partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders that leads to long term success.

The following is a brief summary of the results of supporting AEPI Project # 04-018 Wildlife Program Development:

- Facilitated regular scheduling of AEI Wildlife Sub-Committee meetings
- Funded two key evaluation reports that guided subsequent AEI Management Committee decisions
- Supported strategic participation in projects around the province
- Contributed greatly to positive relations with agencies and sectors
- Addressed issues in all geographic regions
- Engaged industry and government stakeholders in discussions about program development
- Allowed input into all major initiatives of other groups, agencies and organizations
- Provided a focussed perspective for the AEI Wildlife Initiative on strengths and weaknesses of programs and services to the industry
- Ensured broader input on wildlife issues for the Agriculture Environment Initiative (AEI) Management Committee and the Partnership Committee on Agriculture and Environment
- Facilitated continuous AEI Management Committee emphasis on wildlife agriculture conflict issues and solutions

### ***Acknowledgements***

The progress made over the past 5 years can be attributed to a number of factors. Foremost though are the many people who have committed time and energy to develop, propose and deliver projects aimed at resolving conflicts between wildlife and agriculture. These include producers, their associations, agencies and many partners. Next to be acknowledged are the members of the Agriculture Environment Initiatives Management Committee and its Wildlife Sub-Committee who have supported the commitment of resources towards numerous projects including the Wildlife Program Development project summarized in this report. Last but certainly not least are the primary funding agencies: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the BC Ministry of Agriculture and the BC Investment Agriculture Foundation.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Baehr, P.Ag.  
AEI Coordinator

## ***Appendices***

## ***Appendix A – Funding Summary***

<b>Management Committee Decision Date</b>	<b>Amount Approved</b>
March 8, 2004	\$10,000
June 17, 2004	\$25,000
December 14, 2004	\$15,000
September 22, 2005	\$15,000
September 14, 2006	\$15,000
September 18, 2007	\$15,000
March 3, 2008	\$25,000
September 4, 2008	\$25,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$145,000</b>
<b><u>Total Expended</u></b>	<b><u>\$144,678</u></b>

## **Appendix B – Wildlife Projects**

### **1. Peace River Stackyard Fencing Program**

00-001 Status completed 06

Up to \$500,000 over 5 years was approved including \$200,000 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands to assist forage producers in the Peace River region to protect their stored crops from elk and deer. The region is experiencing a growing number of elk that remain on farmland year round. The Peace River Regional District on behalf of a multi-stakeholder Wildlife Committee administers the project.

### **2. Delta Forage Compensation/Mitigation/Monitoring**

01-001 Status completed 09

This project addressed the ongoing and serious impacts of waterfowl on agricultural crops. The approved support from the AEPI fund was \$41,781 to assist the Delta Farmer's Institute with the monitoring and mitigation components. The objective was to ensure that all reasonable mitigative measures were implemented in order to minimize the need for compensation. The BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the Canadian Wildlife Service and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada participated in this initiative.

### **3. East Kootenay Wild Ungulate Damage Financial Compensation Program Pilot**

01-002 Status completed 07

The objective of this project was to reduce the severity of losses caused by elk and deer in the East Kootenay area. \$1,346,764 was approved to assist individual producers develop and implement measures on-farm to prevent or reduce grazing by wild ungulates.

### **4. Deer Fencing for Orchards and Vineyards**

01-005 Status completed 06

The purpose of this project was to assist growers with the costs of enclosure fences to protect their trees, vines and crops from deer damage. An amount of \$394,791 over 2 years has been approved for the program and delivered by the BC Fruit Growers Association. The program provides between 25 and 33 percent of the costs of constructing the fence.

### **5. Symbiosis Of Agriculture & Wildlife in the Christian Valley**

01-012 Status completed 02

The Christian Valley area in the West Kootenay is an area heavily impacted by increasing elk and deer populations. The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary in conjunction with the Kettle River Stockmen's Association was provided with \$10,000 to develop an agreement on an effective strategy to reduce losses from wildlife to forage and other crops.



**6. Wild Predator Loss Control and Compensation Program  
01-029 Status Completed 2009**

This project, initiated by the BC Cattlemen's Association, focussed on implementing and developing a program that targeted wild predators impacting cattle throughout the province. The program, which operated under a BC Ministry of Environment permit, complemented a wildlife damage compensation program carried out by the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. An amount of \$2,004,225 was expended over a 7 year period.

**7. McBride Stack Yard Fence Program**

01-032 Status completed 04

An amount of \$11,497 was approved for the McBride Farmers Institute to implement a feed yard fencing program. The project assists producers in the Robson Valley area to protect stack yards of stored feed from elk and deer.

**8. Creston Valley Wildlife Damage Prevention**

01-033 Status completed 05

This project assisted producers to take steps to minimize crop losses to deer and elk in the Creston Valley area. The Creston Valley Agriculture Society received \$59,778 to launch this program.

**9. B.C. Beehive Protection Program**

01-036 Status completed 07

The purpose of this program was to assist honey producers around the province to improve protection of hives from damage, particularly from bears. Up to \$40,000 was approved for the commencement of this program, which was administered by the BC Honey Producers Association.

**10. Wildlife Damage Assessment and Prevention / Mitigation Strategies for B.C. Nursery Growers**

01-041 Status completed 02

The BC Landscape & Nursery Association received \$10,000 to carry out an extensive assessment of the impacts of wildlife on nursery production throughout the province. The results assist in the development of a comprehensive program to effectively address wildlife issues facing growers.

**11. Wildlife Damage Management Planning for the Peace**

01-046 Status completed 03

\$21,300 has been granted for the development of a multi-faceted strategy to deal with all aspects of wildlife agriculture conflicts in the Peace River region.

**12. Implementation of Christian Valley Wildlife Damage Mitigation**

02-007 Status completed 06

This project was aimed at assisting farmers and ranchers in the Christian Valley area wishing to take preventative and mitigative measures to reduce wild ungulate damage to forage crops. The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary worked with local residents to implement the project.

**13. Integrated Approach to Starling Control Pilot**

02-009 Status completed 05

This project evaluated the effectiveness of a cooperative approach to reduction of starling damage to agricultural production in the South Okanagan. The primary

practice evaluated was the strategic trapping of the problem birds. The project also determined if the use of scare devices can be reduced. Groups supporting the initiative included the BC Fruit Growers Association, BC Milk Producers Association, BC Grape Growers Association, Okanagan Kootenay Cherry Growers, and the BC Cattle Feeders Association. Regional Districts in the Okanagan were encouraged to support the initiative in future years.

#### **14. Managing Snakes in Agricultural Settings**

02-016 Status completed 03

The objective of this project was to demonstrate practises that increase worker safety and minimize snake mortality in Okanagan orchards and vineyards. An additional objective was to increase awareness of the difference between harmless snakes and the venomous Western Rattlesnake. An amount of \$14,500 was allocated to support this initiative.

#### **15. Quesnel Feed Yard Fence Program**

03-002 Status completed 05

This project offered assistance to forage producers in the Quesnel region to protect their stored crops from elk. This project is similar to the Peace River Stack Yard Fencing project. The Quesnel Cattlemen's Association administers the project. The BCMAFF and WLAP participate and support this initiative.

#### **16. Assessing Novel Bird Management Techniques in Blueberries**

03-005 Status completed 06

This project evaluated a novel approach to preventing bird damage to blueberry crops; \$25,705 was allocated. The purpose was to assist the blueberry industry to find ways of reducing crop depredation without the use of noisy scare devices.

#### **17. Crop Protection Fence Program– Southern Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands**

03-009 Status completed 07

The objective of this project was to reduce the severity of losses caused by elk and deer in the Southern Vancouver Island area. An amount of up to \$140,000 was approved to assist individual producers develop and implement measures on-farm to prevent or reduce grazing by wild ungulates.

#### **18. Crop Protection Fence Program– North Vancouver Island and the Northern Gulf Islands**

03-015 Status completed 06

The objective of this project was to reduce the severity of losses caused by elk and deer in the Northern Vancouver Island area. \$320,876 was approved to assist individual producers develop and implement measures on-farm to prevent or reduce grazing by wild ungulates.

#### **19. Area-Wide Integrated Bird Management in Blueberries**

03-024 Status completed 05

This project developed a GIS database for blueberry farms to assist in conducting an awareness and education program focussing on the growers' responsibility to reduce impacts on neighbours. An amount of \$31,685 was approved for this project.

#### **20. Falconry Bird Control for Cherries**

04-007 Status completed 04

This project determined the efficacy and economic viability of falconry for reduction of bird damage. An amount of \$20,343 was allocated to this project.

**21. Skeena Feedyard**

04-011 Status completed 06

The purpose of this project was to assist producers in the Skeena area to protect stack yards of stored feed from wildlife. An amount of \$13,394 was approved and will be administered by the Skeena Regional Cattlemen's Association.

**22. Comox Valley Waterfowl Damage Mitigation and Compensation Program**

04-016 Status completed 09

This project delivered a compensation program to address impacts of waterfowl (mainly swans and geese) similar to the Delta; the program dovetailed into the Comox Valley Waterfowl Management Project.

**23. Wildlife Program Development**

04-018 Status completed 09

This project supported review and coordination of wildlife related project, interagency liaison on behalf of the AEI Management Committee towards implementation of new programs and the funding of two major evaluation reports. The funds also provided support for the AEI Wildlife Sub-Committee which was the focal point of the Wildlife Initiative for the AEI. A total of \$145,000 was allocated to this project.

**24. Starling Control Program**

05-003 Status completed 07

Protocols developed in the starling control pilot project were implemented in this project. The strategic trapping of starlings to reduce crop loss and the need for audible bird scare devices and continuous monitoring were components project components. \$25,000 has been allocated to this project.

**25. Integrated Bird Management - Lower Mainland**

05-008A Status completed 08

This project implemented a 3-year integrated bird damage management program for blueberries. Damage prevention exclusion netting, deterrent methodologies and the development of On-farm Integrated Bird Management Plans were components of this project. \$30,000 from AEPI funds was approved for this project.

**26. East Kootenay Landowners Enfranchisement Pilot (EKLEP)**

05-010 Status end date February 28, 2010

This pilot project is developing a self-sustaining program to financially reward landowners for the stewardship benefits provided to wild ungulates on their lands. Up to \$96,300 from AEPI funds and \$155,000 from the BC Ministry of Environment have been approved for this project.

**27. Cariboo Cattlemen's Agriculture Wildlife Program**

05-015 Status completed 08

This project supported and promoted initiatives that prevent or reduce damage from ungulates in the geographic area served by the Cariboo Cattlemen's Association. Up to \$33,000 was approved for this project.

**28. Peace River Enfranchisement Pilot (PREP)**

05-016 Status end date February 28, 2010

This pilot project engages producers through compensation for the impacts from wildlife on their forage and grain crops. Landowner agreements for each participant farm and assessments of crop losses and ungulate population estimates are taking place. The project promotes improved communication on agricultural wildlife issues and lays the groundwork for a self-sustaining program providing benefits to producers. Up to \$108,000 from AEPI funds has been approved for this project.

**29. BMP Supplemental – Wildlife**

05-888 Status completed 09

This project provided complementary funding for Best Management Practices of the Canada-BC Environmental Farm Planning program for addressing wildlife related issues. \$130,669 from AEPI funds was approved for this initiative.

**30. Peace River Wildlife Damage Mitigation and Assessment Methodology**

06-002 Status completed 08

This project developed on-farm methodology for quantitatively assessing losses associated with depredation damage and contamination of wildlife excreta. This project is Phase 1 of a 3-phase proposal; Phase 2 establishes a wildlife depredation compensation program and Phase 3 is for a compensation program for losses. \$15,000 was approved for this project.

**31. Peace River Forage Loss Assessment Due to Wildlife**

06-013 Status completed 09

This project quantified damage to hayfields and pastures (plant damage and yield loss), stockpiled forages, swath grazing, bale grazing, stored feed and to fences and infrastructure on selected private landowners' property. Hunt information was collected from private landowners and hunters and Producer experiences and wildlife responses during hunting season and Limited Entry Hunts were documented. Recommendations were made to help relieve and reduce forage producer-wildlife conflicts in the Peace River area.

**32. Okanagan Similkameen Starling Control Program**

06-015 Status completing 09

The objectives of this project are to reduce starling populations significantly to minimize crop damage and the need for audible scare devices and to increase awareness of the negative impacts of starlings on native bird species. Starling trapping and data collection will be performed over a 6 month period. A strategy will be developed for a proposal to the three Regional Districts for long term core funding support. \$72,000 from AEPI funds has been approved for this project.

**33. Evaluating Economic Impacts of Waterfowl Damage**

06-016 Status completed 07

This project summarized data from the Delta and Comox Valley waterfowl damage projects leading to the determination of the full impacts of waterfowl on agricultural lands. Recommendations on how to set up a provincial compensation program for waterfowl damage to perennial forage fields were developed. \$33,000 from AEPI funds was allocated to this project.

**34. Effects of Intensive Agriculture on Migratory Birds in Delta BC**

07-015 Status completed 08

This project provided a review of research and reports on habitat requirements for overwintering migratory birds using the indicator species American Wigeon. The effects of intensive agriculture (such as greenhouses, dairy farms, berry farms and equestrian centres) and other land uses (such as roads and urban development) were quantified to enable the assessment of individual and cumulative impacts on overwintering waterfowl. \$42,000 was approved for this project.

**35. Agriculture Wildlife Conflict Operator Training Module Development**

07-018 Status completed 09

The goal of this project was to provide the public with the assurance that professional standards are being followed by wildlife trappers. The project developed Module 1 -- basic training in all common areas of required skills and knowledge and Module 2 + - - species specific. The program will be mandatory for all trappers, including those engaged in agriculture wildlife conflict resolution. \$10,000 was approved from AEPI funds.

**36. East Kootenay Elk Monitoring Program**

08-015 Status completed 09

This project assessed the response of elk to liberalized low elevation cow/calf hunts and determined whether the hunts effectively reduce overgrazing and crop damage. \$14,000 from AEPI funds was committed to this initiative.

**37. Area-Wide Integrated Bird Management in Blueberries – Phase 2**

08-016 Status completed 09

This project updated the GIS database for blueberry farms that encompasses location, ownership, bird device use and complaint history. The project assessed revisions to the South Coastal Wildlife Management Guidelines (cannon use and impact including evaluation of a mid-day quiet period) and evaluated a motion detection sensor in blueberry fields. \$29,000 from AEPI was approved for this project.

**38. Pemberton Valley Black-tailed Deer Monitoring**

08-023 Status completed 09

The purpose of this project was to monitor movement of the black-tailed deer population living on agricultural land in the Pemberton Valley. Monitoring movement of the resident deer population, combined with an updated inventory of the migratory population, provided data for the implementation of LEH antlerless season for deer in MU 2-11. \$15,000 was approved for this project.

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## **Appendix C – AEI Wildlife Sub Committee**

### **Terms of Reference**

- In March 2004 the AEI Management Committee established the AEI Wildlife Sub-Committee with the following guidelines
  - \* Core membership: AEI Coordinator; AEI Management Committee producer representative; Director MAFF Risk Management Branch; Director, MAFF Resource Management Branch. Other agency and producer organization representatives could be added as required.
  - The mandate of the Sub-Committee was:
    - focus on the wildlife component of AEPI
    - further development of an expanded wildlife initiative.
    - review and recommendations to MC on applications
    - refine strategic direction for combined AEPI and MAFF initiative including recommendations on compensation allocation budgets
    - develop strategy for transition from current funding scenario to long-term scenario

An amount of \$10,000 on an annual basis was approved to support the operation of the sub-Committee and its activities

(\* Note: In January 2006, the MoE was formally added to the AEI Wildlife Sub-Committee)

### **Membership**

Participants at the AEI Wildlife Sub Committee

Members: Linda Allison, Brian Baehr, Philip Bergen, Gary Falk, Rae Fawcett, Michele Fitzgerald, George Hamilton, Geoff Hughes-Games, Jeff Morgan, Greg Norton, Chris Vos.

Guests: Mel Arnold, Todd Bondaroff, Irmi Critcher, Jim Forbes, Wray McDonnell, Ken Nickel, Larry Plett, Murray Swan, Greg Tegart

### **Meetings**

During the period of the project 18 meetings were convened.

April 26, 2004	Kelowna		
June 3, 2004	Kelowna	October 25, 2006	Merritt
October 1, 2004	Abbotsford	February 15, 2007	Merritt
November 16, 2004	Abbotsford	June 1, 2007	Kamloops
January 6, 2005	Kelowna	January 9, 2008	Kamloops
January 25, 2005	Richmond	June 5, 2008	Abbotsford
April 8, 2005	Abbotsford	November 19, 2008	Merritt
April 27, 2005	Dawson Creek	June 4, 2009	Merritt
January 11, 2006	Merritt	August 18, 2009	Kamloops
May 4, 2006	Merritt		

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## 1. Wildlife Initiatives Brochure

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### WILDLIFE INITIATIVE

## Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative

### Background

The Wildlife Initiative is aimed at reducing the impacts of wildlife on agriculture and is one of the programs which fall under the Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative (AEPI). The program is administered by the British Columbia Agriculture Council and is funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. The main components of the Wildlife Initiative relate to addressing adverse impacts to agriculture caused by waterfowl, deer, elk, and wild predators. Knowledge gained from three wildlife damage compensation projects and pilot projects which assessed various approaches to minimizing the impacts of wildlife on agriculture provides the basis for this initiative

### Objectives

1. To effectively minimize the impacts of wildlife on agricultural operations.
2. To encourage partnerships with agencies and organizations that assist producers in minimizing the impacts.
3. To contribute to development of improved policies and regulations by various agencies for a broad spectrum of wildlife/agriculture interactions
4. To improve understanding of the interactions between wildlife and agricultural interests within and beyond the agricultural community through effective communications.

### Principles

1. To recognize the significant contribution made by agriculture towards sustaining wildlife habitat.
2. To integrate AEPI mitigation and prevention programs with the federal-provincial Agriculture Policy Framework Implementation Agreement for BC and the National Farm Stewardship Program.
3. To work towards equality of access to program funding by farmers with wildlife impacts.
4. To recognize and support the primary responsibility of producers to protect their own crops.
5. To recognize the importance of the wildlife resource in British Columbia and the potential impacts of agricultural activity.



## **Application Process**

The following information is required from an applicant to access wildlife damage prevention, mitigation or compensation programs:

1. The name of the group interested in delivering a program.
2. A description of the nature and magnitude of the problem including which species is/are involved, and the timing and type of impact.
3. A description of current or on-going mitigative measures by individuals and/or groups to address the negative impacts.
4. The geographic area being targeted.

The completed proposal, highlighting the points identified above, should be forwarded to the address listed below using the Agriculture Environment Initiatives application template found on the BC Agriculture Council website, [www.bcac.bc.ca](http://www.bcac.bc.ca),

## **Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be evaluated using the following general criteria:

1. The priority of the issue within the agricultural sector and a demonstrated lack of available practical damage prevention measures.
2. Proposals should have technical merit, show practicality as well as provide assurances that regulatory and safety concerns will be addressed.
3. Availability of program funds to meet project requirements.
4. The naming of a suitably qualified and experienced organization willing to undertake the work with the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and the BC Agriculture Council.
5. The demonstrated commitment of other agencies towards resolving the identified wildlife/agriculture conflicts.

## **Information**

The Wildlife Initiative is managed by the BC Agriculture Council - Agriculture Environment Initiatives Management Committee. That committee is made up of producers with representation and support from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C.

For further information contact:  
Brian Baehr, Coordinator  
Agriculture Environment Initiatives  
BC Agriculture Council  
102-1482 Springfield Road, Kelowna BC V1Y 5V3

Phone: 250-763-9790 Fax: 250-762-2997 E-mail: [brian@bcac.bc.ca](mailto:brian@bcac.bc.ca)

## 2. AEI Wildlife Initiative Update – January 28, 2005

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### Background

- In March 2004 the AEI Management Committee established the AEI Wildlife Sub-Committee with the following guidelines
  - Core membership: AEI Coordinator; AEI Management Committee producer representative; Director MAFF Risk Management Branch; Director, MAFF Resource Management Branch. Other agency and producer organization representatives could be added as required.
  - The mandate of the Sub-Committee was:
    - focus on the wildlife component of AEPI
    - further development of an expanded wildlife initiative.
    - review and recommendations to MC on applications
    - refine strategic direction for combined AEPI and MAFF initiative including recommendations on compensation allocation budgets
    - develop strategy for transition from current funding scenario to long-term scenario
  - An amount of \$10,000 on an annual basis was approved to support the operation of the sub-committee and its activities
- In June 2004 an amount of \$25,000 was approved for the review of the wildlife compensation pilot programs. This amount was used to fund the Zbeetnoff-McTavish Report.
- In December 2004 the Management Committee approved a further \$15,000 for follow-up and further development of an AEI Wildlife Initiative committed additional funds through an AEI project account "04-018 Wildlife Program Development" which included the previous allocations of \$10,000 and \$25,000 as noted above.
- The Management Committee also supported expansion and extension of wildlife damage compensation programming along with further consultation with agencies and industry groups

### Discussion

- Because of the support for further development of this initiative by the Management Committee and the interest by the agriculture industry a workable operational model is necessary.
- The AEI Wildlife Program can operate under the current mandate as provided in the March 2004 Management Committee meeting. The Sub-Committee operates with additional input from MAFF and AAFC. Changes in the mandate

would require approval of the AEI Management Committee. Because of the profile of the project, an update report would be provided for the quarterly AEI Management Committee meetings

- All expenditures and activities will continue to fall within the terms of the AEPI Agri-Food Futures Fund Contribution Agreement with Investment Agriculture Foundation
- Current priorities include:
  - Ensuring close liaison with wildlife oriented expenditures under the National Farm Stewardship Program
  - Liaison with MAFF and AAFC on linkages to ongoing Business Risk Management programs for the longer term funding of these initiatives
  - Management of the "complimentary" wildlife damage prevention BMP funds.
  - Recommendation of the "Allocation" of MAFF Business Risk Management Branch funds for wildlife damage compensation. Develop a more formal understanding regarding MAFF and BCAC roles in managing compensation funds
- New proposals for expansion of wildlife related initiatives would be vetted by the Wildlife Sub-Committee. The AEI Management Committee would make final decisions on new funding although it could use the Sub-Committee as the body most capable of ensuring conditions of a conditional approval were met, for example.

January 28, 2005

### **3. Status of Agriculture Wildlife Issues and Initiatives – 2007**

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#### Objectives

The purpose of this report is to begin to monitor the progress being made in how conflicts between agriculture and wildlife are being managed and to highlight areas of success and where progress is needed.

A key objective with respect to agriculture wildlife conflicts is to strike a balance between impacts to economic viability of agricultural operations and sustaining wildlife habitat and values.

#### Issues

Most types of wildlife agriculture conflicts can be categorized as follows:

Wild predators and livestock

Wild ungulates and field crops

Waterfowl and field crops

The issues for agriculture are economical impacts resulting primarily from lost crops and livestock. From the wildlife perspective the issues are the impacts of agriculture on natural habitat and access to private and leased lands for hunting.

#### Background

In the late 1900's the cattle industry faced a most frustrating situation with respect to increasing predation from wolves. Reduced conservation officer service and restricted use of Compound 1080 left ranchers with a sense of disappointment about minimizing losses from wild predators. No compensation program was in place nor was there provincial government support to introduce such a program.

Waterfowl impacts in the Fraser Delta as well as other areas, while not significant economically on an area wide basis caused severe economic impacts to a number of individual producers. Frustrations mounted as general public support for increased numbers of waterfowl implied a lack of responsibility for the impacts.

Deer and elk were causing increasing damage to stored feed in the Peace River region, to standing crops in the East Kootenay and tree fruits in the Southern interior. The effectiveness of hunting as a population management tool was declining for reasons such as restrictions in rural farm areas, decreasing hunter numbers and mistrust between the agriculture and wildlife sectors that affected access to hunting on farms. The results again were a feeling of frustration by farmers about the lack of support.

#### Progress

Although issues existed throughout the province, agreement was reached in 2003 to run pilot compensation projects in the East Kootenay to deal with losses from elk and deer, in the Fraser Delta to deal with migratory waterfowl impacts and to establish a province-wide wild predator loss program for cattle. In each case a farm organization took the lead in the on-the-ground delivery of the program. Prior to that a projects were approved to assist with feed yard protection in the Peace and standing forage protection in the East Kootenay. Other feed yard and standing forage protection projects followed where there were applicant groups and issues severe enough to support an application for assistance. In 2004 wildlife damage prevention was included as a BMP eligible for assistance under the National Farm Stewardship program.

Most of the major and most severe conflicts facing the industry in the early 2000's have now had some attention. The issues, however, have not been resolved. Wildlife numbers have continued to increase, generally unabated by natural phenomenon, hunter numbers continue to decline resulting in new areas of significant impact and only a shift of the problem in areas where some major investments by government and industry had already been made

The general public have become more sensitized to the problem as they too are affected by such things as proliferating non-migratory geese fouling parks, beaches and school yards, by coyotes adapting to a diet of family pets in urban areas, and by bears in backyards. The use of lethal control measures has become more and more acceptable. The public have also become aware of the benefits farmers and ranchers provide in the way of habitat and the subsequent cost to them in the way of lost feed or livestock.

### Programs and Initiatives

BC Ministry Agriculture and Lands Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (ending in March 08)

Projects in the East Kootenay (ungulate and forages), Cariboo (ungulate and forages), Delta (waterfowl and forage crops), Comox Valley (waterfowl and forage crops).

Provincial Wild Predator Compensation Program (wild predators and cattle)

Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative (AEPI) fund

Mitigation projects Cariboo, Comox Valley, Delta that support the compensation programs in place.

Provincial Wild Predator Loss Control Program for cattle

Landowner Stewardship Incentives projects (MoE and AEPI)

Projects in place in East Kootenay and Peace

Hunt coordination aimed at improving cooperation between hunters and farmers

Payment to producers to recognize contribution to wildlife sustenance. Makes the connection Ecological Goods and Services

National Farm Stewardship Program - Wildlife Damage Prevention

Province wide eligibility with completion of an EFP

Funding from both the NFSP and AEPI

### MoE Wildlife Act Review

Changes should provide enhanced ability to manage wildlife for conservation and hunting success objectives while minimizing economic impacts on agriculture

Growing Forward Environment and Business Risk Management Chapters provide potential for programs and resources over the next 5 years.

Hunting License regulatory review provides venue to encourage hunting that benefits agricultural objectives as well as those of hunters and trappers

### Gaps

Entire regions with limited or no availability of effective initiatives

Examples include the Peace region where farmers with deer elk and waterfowl impacts have no assistance

Current approach hits most high priority regions and conflicts but misses individual impacted producers outside those areas

Although a province wide wild predator program is currently in place it is not applicable to species other than cattle. Sheep and horses are excluded. The predator trapping program is close to being province wide.

Uneven accessibility to programs with exception of NFSP wildlife damage prevention BMP. The NFSP, which ends in March 08 does not provide assistance to many small holdings that lack official farm status.

Information on wildlife numbers to support refinements in wildlife management

### Challenges

Communication of availability of ungulate exclosure fencing assistance

Improving the effectiveness of hunting and trapping as a impact reduction tool

Equitable access to appropriate assistance

Ensuring the incentive to minimize impacts is not lost by implementation of compensation programs

Costs of loss verification

Integration/separation with Crop Insurance

Public awareness of the severity of impacts

### Effectiveness Indicators

Breadth of program coverage vs areas of significant issues

Loss reduction vs. compensation

Adequacy of compensation

Partnerships in addressing issues

Development of new tools, policies regulations to support efforts to minimize impacts

### What Can We Do??

Secure Resources

Set achievable targets

Build partnerships

Focus and coordinate resources

Create long term tools

Implement short term programs

Establish an action oriented Agriculture Wildlife Working Group

BEB / October 17, 2007

## 4. Landowner Incentive Program

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### BCAWAC Update – PAZWP Excerpt

October 23rd, 2007

Jeff Morgan  
Fish and Wildlife Branch, MOE  
jeff.morgan@gov.bc.ca

#### 1. The *Proposed* Provincial Agriculture Zone Wildlife Program (PAZWP)

**A signal from MOE that it recognises the ALR as a special zone with specific objectives and opportunities and that it will increased it focus on proactive wildlife management solutions**

A Provincial Agricultural Zone Wildlife Program is being considered to increase hunting opportunities, decrease agricultural impacts and promote private land stewardship. The PAZWP would allow Government to 1) establish and work cooperatively toward economic, ecological and social objectives within the ALR, 2) leverage federal funding (Federal-Provincial-Territorial Framework Agreement on Agriculture), and 3) effectively coordinate resources with other organizations in order to optimize societal returns.

Coordination would be achieved through committees that are mandated to promote stewardship and integrate all prevention, mitigation and compensation strategies for agriculture/wildlife conflict.

MoE's authority to manage wildlife would be coordinated and balanced with MAL's (Business Risk Management Branch) authority and ability to assess crop damage and provide compensation to producers.

MoE's wildlife managers would establish population targets and develop harvest strategies for agricultural settings based on the objectives of all sectors.

Government would coordinate resources across ministries at provincial and regional levels and develop financial partnerships with other organizations such as the BC Agriculture Council which delivers the Environmental Farm Plan and the Agriculture Environment and Wildlife Fund.

Specifically *the proposed* MOE PAZWP would:

- Fund regional MOE positions that would act as point people to coordinate and contribute toward the management of wildlife populations in agricultural settings,
- develop provincial and regional agriculture zone harvest strategies,
- conduct regular wildlife population assessments,

- assimilate and respond to crop loss assessment information provided by MAL,
- develop and oversee private land hunting coordination programs,
- develop an agriculture zone hunting license system to promote agriculture zone hunting and increase revenues-a consultation process currently underway (formal linkage to BCAWAC required),
- develop provincial policies and MOU's for issues such as the issuance of wildlife kill permits, escaped buffalo etc.
- collaborate with the Conservation Officer Service in the development of a private land compliance and enforcement strategy,
- collaborate with MAL in the development of a public education and awareness strategy designed to encourage hunting in the ALR and to pre-empt hunting closure bylaws, and
- develop partnerships with other organizations (e.g. ICBC, MOT) and funding sources to effectively lever resources and pursue the stewardship of all environmental resources including; fish and wildlife habitats, water, biodiversity and public recreation opportunities.

The PAZWP would enable the creation of regional agriculture/wildlife committees that would develop conflict reduction strategies. Hunting would be promoted as an effective "win-win" wildlife management tool and an agricultural zone hunting license system would be developed to increase hunting license revenues.

In implementing the PAZWP, MOE would recognise the mandated communication, consultation and coordination roles of the BC Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment and its subsidiary, the BC Agriculture Wildlife Advisory Committee. The creation of smaller technical committees will probably be required to address issues such as agriculture zone specific hunting licenses.



## 5. 2008 Wildlife Damage Compensation Interim Program

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Prepared by BRMB – Production Insurance

### Background Information:

Pursuant to the British Columbia Agriculture Plan announced by Minister Bell, Strategy 6 states: “Implement approaches for farmers to receive benefits for ecological goods and services (EG&S)”. Detail includes the following: “To help limit conflicts between agriculture and wildlife, The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the Ministry of Environment will be addressing wildlife-agriculture conflict issues as a priority. As a means of recognizing the contribution of farmland in maintaining wildlife habitat, we will develop and implement a strategic wildlife damage reduction plan that will include compensation funding for BC farmers and ranchers.”

As such, the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands - Business Risk Management Branch (BRMB) has been tasked with the development and implementation of an **Interim Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (WDCP)** for the 2008 growing season in the Province of British Columbia. Our intention is to work with industry associations to develop criteria for program policy and objectives for wildlife damage compensation. The first phase of the interim program will compensate “qualifying cattle producers whose unharvested forage crop intended for hay production has been damaged by wildlife”. This includes eligibility criteria, threshold levels, registration deadlines or not (terms included in Federal/Provincial Agreements on funding), levels of mitigation and time frames that will be provincial in scope. We will also consider acceptable levels of administration costs, and balance the cost/benefit of regional approaches to delivery. Parameters for all types of wildlife damage experienced in the province will be included.

The development of this interim compensation program will involve, but not be limited to, partnerships within the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands – Regional Operations & Industry Competitiveness, Ministry of Environment, BC Cattlemen’s Association, and the BC Agriculture Council. These partnerships will form the basis of the working groups that will meet on policy development, program design and assessment methodology, damage assessment training and industry communications on a regular basis, over the next couple of months. Further, these same working groups will continue to meet and evolve as this interim program develops into a full wildlife damage compensation program for the agriculture sector of British Columbia. This program will also include expanded partnerships into other agricultural sectors and associations.

The purpose of this information document is to establish working group roles and responsibilities at the Policy Level. Similar publications will be drafted and sent to members of the various working groups, as they become involved in the different phases of the program. The intent is to ensure meaningful communication towards program implementation over the next couple of months and into the growing season. Further details will be added to this working document at our first Policy Working Group meeting on March 14, 2008 in Fort St. John or forward any comments to [kshianhooker@gmail.com](mailto:kshianhooker@gmail.com).

### Policy Working Group Roles and Responsibilities:

#### Ministry of Agriculture & Lands - Business Risk Management Branch – Production Insurance

1. Developing and implementing interim Wildlife Damage Compensation Program 2008 growing season and beyond;
2. Sales and Marketing;

- WDCP policy complies with Agriculture Plan and federal/provincial requirements for cost sharing.
- Communications and announcements, as required.
- 3. Wildlife Damage Adjusting;
  - WDCP meets requirements for adjusting policy & procedures, contract adjustor training as required.
  - WDCP does not duplicate benefits offered by Regional Pilot Programs.
  - WDCP provides access to compensation for growers not covered by Regional Pilot Programs.
- 4. Finance and Administration - WDCP policy, regulations, forms are vetted through the Policy & Procedures process; and
  - Assist with draft form preparation.
  - Ensure budget transfers between BRMB and other MAL entities are set up to cover travel costs, as needed.
  - Ensure claim preparation process and documentation meets standards.
- 5. Field Operations - work with Field Operations Manager to identify roles and prioritize training for field staff; and
- 6. Ensure that existing Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot Programs fit with interim WDCP for 2008.
  - Confirm pilot programs operate in conjunction with interim WDCP to provide seamless wildlife compensation across adjoining boundaries within the province.
  - Communicate design and methodology experiences with BRMB field staff and contractors to ensure continuous improvement of interim program towards full WDCP.
  - Continue to interact and cooperate with MOE and ROPS on development of mitigation policies and practices to guide future provincial programs.

#### **Ministry of Agriculture & Lands - Regional Operations & Industry Competitiveness**

1. Review proposed work plan and program deliverables for 2008;
2. Assist in interim program delivery through membership in policy development, program design and assessment methodology, damage assessment training and industry communications;
3. Interactions with BCCA members, other agriculture producers groups/associations, and MOE to ensure wildlife mitigation practices are adopted provincially;
4. Provide recommendations for program improvement; and
5. Ensure that existing Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot Programs fit with interim WDCP for 2008.

#### **Ministry of Environment (MOE)**

1. Review proposed work plan and program deliverables for 2008;
2. Assist in interim program delivery through membership in policy development, program design and assessment methodology, damage assessment training and industry communications;
3. Interactions with BCCA members, other agriculture producers groups/associations, MAL, and local rod and gun clubs/ BC Wildlife Federation members;
4. Ensure wildlife mitigation practices are adopted provincially;
5. Provide recommendations for program improvement; and
6. Ensure that existing Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot Programs fit with interim WDCP for 2008.

#### **British Columbia Cattlemen's Association (BCCA)**

1. Review proposed work plan and program deliverables for 2008;
2. Assist in interim program delivery through membership in policy development, program design and assessment methodology, damage assessment training and industry communications;
3. Facilitate open dialogues between regional cattle associations that work towards program improvement from interim stages to a full program implementation for 2009 and beyond;

4. Interaction with MAL/MOE to communicate and implement effective mitigation strategies which will ensure WDCP success ( needed to ensure access to federal funds and longevity of program);
5. Provide recommendations for program improvement; and
6. Ensure that existing Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot Programs fit with interim WDCP for 2008.

**British Columbia Agricultural Council (BCAC)**

1. Review proposed work plan and program deliverables for 2008;
2. Assist in interim program delivery through membership in policy development, program design and assessment methodology, damage assessment training and industry communications;
3. Interaction with MAL/MOE to communicate and implement effective mitigation strategies which will ensure WDCP success needed to ensure access to federal funds and longevity of program); and
4. Provide recommendations for program improvement.

## 6. AEI Management Committee Update – April 8, 2008

### Wildlife Initiatives - April 8, 2008

#### Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

#### 2008 Interim Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

- MAL has established a team lead by the Business Risk Management Branch to develop and implement an interim version of a Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (WDCP)
- The objectives for 2008 include supporting all of the existing pilot program areas initiated in cooperation with the AEPI funded initiatives over the past several years. All would be delivered by the same producer oriented groups as they currently exist
- The 2008 Interim WDCP consists mainly of a forage loss compensation component for the remainder of the province that will target the first cut of forage for this year.
- Producers enrolled in existing forage loss pilots will be eligible for compensation related to the full season
- Status of compensation pilots managed with AEI
  - The Cariboo project may be expanded to include the south Cariboo group that had asked to be included in the Cariboo Forage Loss Program last year and there may be a waterfowl damage component to that program as well.
  - The East Kootenay Program is considering an expansion to the Creston area under the same terms as the existing program.
  - Both the Delta and Comox waterfowl damage compensation programs will be continued

The Wild Predator Loss Compensation Program is expected to continue in much the same format as in previous years.

#### Linkage of Mitigation to Compensation

- Eligibility under the 2008 WDCP states:
  - “Applicants must be committed to reducing wildlife depredation on crops by using mitigation and prevention activities”
- Mitigation in the 3 major conflict categories
  - Ungulates and Forage
    - Key initiatives include enfranchisement projects, EFP wildlife damage prevention BMP’s, and PAZWP
  - Waterfowl and Forage
    - Limited opportunity but mostly related to on-farm practices
  - Predators and Livestock
    - Wild Predator Loss Control Program managed by BCCA
- Provincial Ag Zone Wildlife Program (PAZWP)
  - Current focus on liberalizing hunting regulations to facilitate management of wild ungulate populations in agricultural areas
    - establishment of an agricultural zone hunting tag
    - emphasis on antlerless animals and flexibility in the setting of seasons to improve the effectiveness of hunting to reduce losses

#### Links to AEI Funded Enfranchisement and Mitigation Projects

- **Landowner Enfranchisement Initiatives**
- The two currently approved and funded “enfranchisement” projects are shifting focus to

<p>hunt coordination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recognition for forage losses is being addressed by MAL through the WDCP</li> <li>○ Hunting is still the single most important “tool” remaining for management of wildlife population</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participation by producers in hunt coordination may provide assurances of meeting WDCP requirements for mitigation and prevention. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruitment of new hunters is a priority of the BCWF as a means of reversing a trend to a reduction in hunter numbers</li> <li>○ Improved access to private lands by hunters is also a priority of BCWF but not necessarily welcomed by producers</li> </ul> </li> <li>● The PAZWP initiative of MoE provides a complimentary focus on improving the effectiveness of hunting in agricultural zones that will lead to reduced depredation.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Peace River Landowner Enfranchisement Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Seeking to encourage current participants to enroll in 2008 Interim WDCP then add project funds to match incentive level paid in first year of participation</li> <li>○ One year completed of hunt coordination. Positive responses from both hunters and producers. Most hunters travel from lower mainland area.</li> <li>○ Looking to expand area covered but only with MAL WDCP for main incentive</li> <li>○ Approval given to provide incentives to participants in the form of assistance with purchase and construction of exclosure cages recommended by WDCP</li> <li>○ Investigating opportunities for producers to benefit more from providing on-farm facilities for RV</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>East Kootenay Landowner Enfranchisement Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Participants are currently enrolled in EK Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot</li> <li>○ Two years completed in hunt coordination. Positive responses received by hunters and producers in follow-up surveys conducted each year.</li> <li>○ Producers in Creston Valley area have expressed interest in participating in 2008. They are being approached about hunt coordination and being included in the EK Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot area and thus being eligible for losses occurring beyond the first cut</li> <li>○ Cooperating in investigation of on-line accommodation services for hunters</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Wild Predator Loss Prevention Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Benefits livestock industry - mainly cattle – by targeting wild predators</li> <li>○ Provides mitigation and prevention initiative to match the compensation component</li> <li>○ Funding currently under review</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Waterfowl Damage Prevention Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Both the Delta and Comox Valley projects have mitigation components</li> <li>○ The emphasis is primarily on land and crop management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Canada-BC Environmental Farm Plan – Beneficial Management Practices</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Wildlife Damage Prevention BMP has provided access for producers to assistance with constructing wildlife exclosure fencing</li> <li>● The status of the inclusion of this BMP in both a transitional and/or new EFP initiative is not known</li> <li>● Opportunities may be available to add additional on-farm works relative to facilitating hunting in agricultural areas</li> </ul>

## 7. Wildlife Initiatives Update – September 19, 2008

<b>Ministry of Agriculture and Lands 2008 Interim Wildlife Damage Compensation Program</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAL has implemented an “interim” Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (IWDCP). The program consists mainly of a forage loss compensation component for the remainder of the province outside the existing pilot project areas and targeted the first cut of forage.</li> <li>• All of the existing pilot program areas initiated in cooperation with the AEPI funded initiatives over the past several years were continued. All would be delivered by the same producer oriented groups as they currently exist.</li> <li>• Producers enrolled in existing forage loss pilots will be eligible for compensation related to the full season</li> <li>• Status of compensation pilots managed with AEI             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Cariboo project was expanded to include the south Cariboo group that had asked to be included in the Cariboo Forage Loss Program last year and a waterfowl damage component has been added to that program as well.</li> <li>○ The East Kootenay Program expanded to the Creston area under the same terms as the existing program.</li> <li>○ Both the Delta and Comox waterfowl damage compensation programs continued unchanged.</li> <li>○ The Wild Predator Loss Compensation Program continued in much the same format as in previous years.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A deer excreta in grain program is in the process of being implemented as part of the IWDCP</li> <li>• <b>Linkage of Mitigation to Compensation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Eligibility under the 2008 IWDCP states:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Applicants must be committed to reducing wildlife depredation on crops by using mitigation and prevention activities”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Mitigation Initiatives</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Provincial Ag Zone Wildlife Program (PAZWP)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Current focus on liberalizing hunting regulations to facilitate management of wild ungulate populations in agricultural areas</li> <li>○ Investigating establishment of an agricultural zone hunting tag</li> <li>○ Emphasis on antlerless animals and flexibility in the setting of seasons to improve the effectiveness of hunting to reduce agricultural losses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Mitigation in the 3 major conflict categories include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ungulates and Forage                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key initiatives include enfranchisement projects, EFP wildlife damage prevention BMP’s such as fencing, and PAZWP which is aimed at wildlife population management in agricultural areas</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Waterfowl and Forage                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited opportunity but mostly related to on-farm practices</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Predators and Livestock                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wild Predator Loss Control Program managed by BCCA aimed at</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

removing problem predators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Landowner Enfranchisement Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The two currently approved and funded “enfranchisement” projects are shifting focus to <b>hunt coordination</b>.</li> <li>○ Recognition for forage losses is being addressed by MAL through the IWDCP</li> <li>○ Hunting is still the single most important “tool” remaining for management of wildlife populations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Participation by producers in hunt coordination may provide assurances of meeting WDCP requirements for mitigation and prevention. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruitment of new hunters is a priority of the BCWF as a means of reversing a trend to a reduction in hunter numbers</li> <li>○ Improved access to private lands by hunters is also a priority of BCWF but not necessarily welcomed by producers. Landowner liabilities related to hunting are a concern.</li> <li>○ The PAZWP initiative of MoE provides a complimentary focus on improving the effectiveness of hunting in agricultural zones that will lead to reduced depredation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>East Kootenay Landowner Enfranchisement Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participants are currently enrolled in EK Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot</li> <li>▪ Two years completed in hunt coordination. Positive responses received by hunters and producers in follow-up surveys conducted each year.</li> <li>▪ Producers in Creston Valley area were included in the EK Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot area and thus being eligible for compensation of losses occurring beyond the first cut</li> <li>▪ Cooperating in investigation of on-line accommodation services for hunters</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cariboo Forage Loss Mitigation</b> – Complementary to Forage Loss Compensation Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus on demonstration of enclosure fencing and lure crop establishment</li> <li>○ Investigating ways to facilitate hunt coordination</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Wild Predator Loss Prevention Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Benefits livestock industry - mainly cattle – by targeting wild predators</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provides mitigation and prevention initiative to match the compensation component</li> <li>○ Funding currently under review with consideration being given to other livestock</li> <li>○ Need clarification that provincial funds spent on mitigation are eligible for federal cost sharing</li> <li>● <b>Waterfowl Damage Prevention Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Both the Delta and Comox Valley projects have mitigation components</li> <li>○ The emphasis is primarily on land and crop management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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BEB/AEI Coordinator

September 19, 2008



## **8. Agriculture Environment & Wildlife Fund Wildlife Initiative -- Strategic Direction**

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### **Objective:**

To support development and implementation of an effective and comprehensive suite of programs to address wildlife agriculture conflicts in all regions of BC by:

- Assisting producers to prevent or mitigate impacts
- Building partnerships between government and non-government agencies to facilitate implementation of projects and programs
- Assisting agencies in making wildlife damage mitigation and compensation programs more effective
- Supporting projects that demonstrate conflict resolution opportunities

### **Partners:**

Building partnerships is an effective way of developing a common understanding of issues and the effectiveness of measures to reduce conflicts. Key agency partners include:

- BC Agriculture Council
- BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (MAL)
- BC Ministry of Environment (MoE)
- BC Ministry of Forests (MoF)
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)
- Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAFBC)
- Environment Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service
- BC Wildlife Federation
- Ducks Unlimited Canada

### **Tools:**

The tools to address conflicts are comprised of a wide range of programs, projects and actions that can be undertaken by agencies and organizations in cooperation with producers. Major tools and key partners include:

- Agriculture Wildlife Program (MAL/AAFC) – Initiated in 2008, cash compensation for forage and cattle losses.
- Provincial Agriculture Zone Wildlife Program (MoE) – In implementation phase, targeting of wildlife management in agricultural areas to address impacts, coordination of hunting to improve it's effectiveness as a Management tool.

- Agriculture Environment and Wildlife Fund (BCAC/IAFBC) – In implementation phase, wildlife issues identified as a key area for AEI Management Committee lead.
- Wild Predator Loss Control Program (BCCA/BCAC/MoE) – Seeking funding and potential expansion for continuation into 09-10 and beyond, currently targeted at responding to attacks on cattle, potential for inclusion of other livestock.

### **Key Challenges:**

Significant progress has been made on many fronts over the last 8 years. There is a much clearer understanding of the problems and solutions. New programs are being implemented. Agencies and organizations are finding new ways to cooperate in addressing the issue. Still there remain some major challenges and gaps:

- Further refinement and implementation of the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program
- Enhancing the effectiveness of hunting as a wildlife management tool to mitigate impacts on forages
- Finding an effective way to mitigate migratory waterfowl impacts on forages
- Finding more publicly acceptable and cost effective ways to mitigate or prevent bird damage to horticultural crops
- Addressing forest ingrowth impacts on grazing for wildlife and livestock
- Assessing impacts of climate change related scenarios such as mild winters and pine beetle on wildlife populations and range

### **Strategic Actions for AEI Management Committee:**

Selection of projects that address the main challenges identified above. Some potential activities include:

- Cost effective way of facilitating hunt coordination initiatives
- Support for BC Wildlife Federation "Outdoor Passport" initiative as a means to building trust between landowners and hunters.
- Clarifying constraints related to landowner and hunter liability concerns
- Develop project proposals to address most pressing constraints to effective wildlife impact mitigation
- Evaluation and implementation of mitigative measures in support of compensation program

## 9. Wildlife Damage Mitigation Overview (appended to Strategic Direction)

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### Wildlife damage mitigation:

- Supports commitment to MAL forage and livestock loss compensation program
- Complements preventative measures by producers

### Wild predator loss mitigation

- Proposal by BCAC/ARDCORP to IAF is under consideration. That proposal may see inclusion of sheep as well as cattle
- Current program is closely linked to the MAL Wild Predator Loss Compensation program as a “verified” loss is required to trigger a mitigative action
- The program provides a mechanism for response to attacks by wild predators on livestock

### Wild ungulate forage loss mitigation

- Intended to reduce need for producer funded prevention measures such as exclusion fencing
- Support by producers for mitigative measures is an expectation for continued access to MAL Forage Loss Compensation Program
- Effective hunting is seen as only viable option to manage wild ungulate numbers in agricultural areas
  - Constraints to hunting effectiveness in reducing impacts
    - Lack of hunter interest in non-trophy animals
    - Hunting season opening timing to reduce “pressure”
    - Limited access by hunters in agricultural areas
    - Concerns by landowners about allowing hunting
  - Opportunities to improve hunting effectiveness
    - MoE PAZWP initiative proposals on regulatory changes
      - “Agricultural Tags” for non-trophy animals taken in agricultural areas
      - Adjusted timing of seasons to meet agricultural impact concerns and target populations
    - BCWF Outdoor Passport initiative
      - Encourage respect by hunters for landowner concerns
      - Address landowner liability concerns
      - Encourage partnering of hunters and agricultural landowners
    - AEI/MoE hunt coordination initiative (Peace R, E Kootenay)
      - Reduce hassle of managing access by hunters
      - Assist hunters in accessing hunting opportunities with willing landowners

BEB/AEI Coordinator – November 2008

**10. BC Wildlife Predator Loss Control and Compensation Project  
Evaluation Report**

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**BC Wildlife Predator Loss Control  
and Compensation Project:  
Evaluation Report**

**Final Report  
Prepared for**

**BC Agricultural Council Agriculture Environment  
Initiatives**

**Prepared by:**

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**11. BC Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot Projects: Evaluation Report**

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**BC Wildlife Damage Compensation  
Pilot Projects: Evaluation Report  
Final Report**

Prepared for

**BC Agricultural Council  
Agriculture Environment Initiatives**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This program evaluation examines the three BC wildlife prevention, mitigation and compensation Pilot programs after their first three years of operation. Information on the programs was obtained from program managers, program participants and the various other stakeholders that interacted in the delivery of the Pilots.

The Pilot programs were created to address wildlife-agriculture interactions that are causing economic losses to agricultural crops and livestock. The design of the Pilots was premised on several basic assumptions:

- Society desires levels of wildlife populations that require agricultural land for habitat
- Economic losses to agriculture are probably significant
- Wildlife-agriculture conflict situations can be improved to the benefit of agriculture and wildlife
- A combination of mitigation, prevention and compensation is likely to be most effective and efficient in meeting the demands of wildlife and agriculture
- Some of the economic losses are unavoidable
- The sustainability of the programs must be based on their ability to manage the financial risk from agriculture-wildlife conflicts at the farm level.

### **BC Wild Predator Loss Control and Compensation Program (WPLCCP) for Cattle**

The key evaluation findings of the predator Pilot are:

- The program is viewed as effective by all stakeholders
- The program has reduced the risk of financial loss due predator activity
- While the economic value of predator kills is relatively small, the wildlife management benefits of the program are high
- Animal behaviour theory appears to have been successfully applied in developing the mitigation strategy of removing problem animals.

The key challenges faced by the predator Pilot include:

- Administrative costs are disproportionately high in relation to the compensation paid
- Availability of mitigation expertise will be a key determinant of program success
- Expansion of the program to other predators and commodities needs to consider availability of verification specialists

### **East Kootenay Ungulate Predation Damage Compensation Pilot Program**

The key evaluation findings of the wild ungulate Pilot are:

- The very significant impact to forage caused by wild ungulates has been established
- The fencing component of the program has the potential to eliminate the risk of financial loss on private lands due wild ungulate predation

*Evaluation of BC Wildlife Damage Compensation Pilot Projects*

- The fencing component of the program is expected to shunt wild ungulate populations onto unfenced Crown range and adjacent properties, resulting in accelerating livestock grazing and carrying capacity concerns in those areas
- The fencing component has “drawn a line in the sand” and aggravated relationships among all stakeholders
- The compensation component of the program will require upwardly spiralling financial resources unless eligibility compensation is linked to damage prevention measures.

The key challenges faced by the wild ungulate Pilot include:

- To be a more effective, the regional model for the program has to include all affected stakeholders since the necessary solutions are not all confined to private lands
- Wild ungulate population numbers are unsustainable in many locations or will shortly be unsustainable
- Sustainable solutions to the wild ungulate problem need to address the issues of wildlife populations and habitat carrying capacity
- Stakeholders need to negotiate a shared relationship to wild ungulate maintenance and implement a comprehensive strategy that integrates management of wild ungulates on private and Crown range with agricultural sector needs
- Identifying financial options which would permit cash-strapped farmers to borrow money to construct damage prevention fencing.

**Delta Forage Compensation, Mitigation and Monitoring Project**

The key evaluation findings of the waterfowl Pilot are:

- The significant impact to forage by migratory waterfowl has been established but it is variable, changes location year by year, and is difficult to quantify
- Much of the waterfowl damage is unavoidable
- The continued search for mitigation measures is warranted but effective new mitigation strategies will be more difficult to find
- The level of “compensation” in the Pilot is not meaningful in relation to the financial losses being incurred by forage producers
- The regional model for stakeholder involvement in the Pilot is a success
- Future program development should build on the working relationships created wherein the program is additive to other agriculture-environment initiatives and does not replace them.

The key challenges faced by the waterfowl Pilot include:

- There is limited opportunity to reduce the risk of financial losses to forage producers short of advocating a change in commodities produced
- The real costs of compensating forage producers are likely to be significantly higher than what the program currently pays out
- Support and participation of non-agricultural stakeholders in other areas is anticipated to be critical to the success of an expanded program.