



Wild Lands Advocate 9(5):10, October 2001

Letter on Game Farming

Dear Mr. Klein:

Re: Montana Judge Rules Against Pen Shoots on Game Farms

I have written to you many times on the matter of the dangers of farming wildlife. My fear is that because certain Alberta Government members have such close personal ties to this industry, our government is not able to view game farming objectively. It therefore cannot protect wild wildlife, conventional agriculture, hunters and the general public from its very real threats. Alberta's neighbor to the south, Montana, has just dealt game farming a new lethal blow. Is Alberta paying attention as to why?

As you undoubtedly know, Montana citizens voted out game farming and penned shoots last November, through Ballot Initiative 143. This ballot decision was subsequently challenged by game farmers through a court injunction. The injunction has just been denied by Judge Donald W. Molloy. The reasons for his denial are startling and include these **STATE** considerations for wildlife:

- Disease prevention
- Hybridization
- Loss of Habitat

And, they include the following **STATE** considerations for Montana's hunting heritage:

- Fair chase
- Maintaining true hunter ethics

Although I have been working for the protection of Alberta wildlife and its habitat for 35 years, it has been at least 25 years since I can recall any similar official interest in Alberta's wildlife like that expressed in Montana's recent landmark judgment. Certainly Alberta's Wildlife Act and Policy reflect no such provincial interests in wildlife or hunting.

Why is it that Montana, the state on Alberta's border with such similar landscapes, wildlife populations, industries and peoples as ours, can recognize the value that wildlife contributes, while Alberta regards wildlife as little more than something to be exploited (Act and Policy) or else something that is in the way of industry and always expendable? Alberta has no protective provincial legislation for wildlife and only a few policies that afford some protection. Why is wildlife valued there, but not here? Why is Montana taking such extraordinary measures to oust game farms in order to protect wildlife, while Alberta apparently continues to regard game farming as benign?

Will Alberta undertake to seriously examine Judge Molloy's decision in Montana and commit to a promised public examination of the whole, dangerous game farming industry?

Yours sincerely,
Vivian Pharis, AWA Director

