



Dear {FIRST_NAME|Wilderness Defender},

Decisions on Alberta's wolf population are now being made by local authorities, and by hunting groups with funding from foreign special interest groups. And the Alberta government seems unwilling, or unable, to do anything to intervene.

Please help us convince the Alberta government that wolf management, indeed all wildlife management, in Alberta should be carried out in the interests of all Albertans, and not just hunting organizations.

- Carolyn Campbell, AWA Conservation Specialist

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AWA

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Alberta's Wolf Bounty

The Issue

In response to pressure from local hunting groups and some livestock operators, several municipalities and hunting groups are offering bounties for the killing of wolves, including wolf cubs. An important source of funding for the hunting group programs is the Wyoming, USA -based Wild Sheep Foundation.

Wildlife in Alberta is supposed to be managed by the provincial government on behalf of Albertans. But instead, special interest groups are taking decisions on wildlife populations with no scientific justification and no public oversight. The provincial government simply washes its hands of the issue, saying that such bounties are not illegal.

To make matters worse, there is no evidence that bounty programs work to reduce livestock loss. Certainly there are many options before resorting to random killing of predators.

Background

Wildlife in Alberta is a "public resource." As such, all Albertans have a right to a say in wildlife management. Private wolf bounties deny this right.

Wolf bounty or incentive programs have recently been run a number of municipalities, including

- Clearhill County, MD of Big Lakes and the MD of Bonnyville. Hunting groups also offer bounties in Sundre, Rocky Mountain House, Drayton Valley and Grande Cache.

- Some programs even offer payments for the killing of wolf puppies.
- An important funding source for the hunting groups' programs is a Wyoming, USA-based organization, the Wild Sheep Foundation. So a foreign special interest group is paying for Albertan wolves to be killed with no scientific justification, and the Alberta government is unable or unwilling to do anything about the situation.
- Fish and Wildlife staff are fully aware that there is not a shred of scientific justification that operating a wolf bounty has any effect on reducing wolf predation on livestock; it quite simply does not work.
- There are plenty of ways to address issues of predation on livestock before killing wolves. Other options include improved carcass management (dead livestock are an attractant to wolves), improved livestock oversight at sensitive times of year and tools such as electric fencing and flagging
- Fish and Wildlife staff continue to wash their hands of the issue of private wolf bounties, insisting that it is out of their hands and that such bounties are "not illegal." Even when bounties are offered on public land (under a grazing lease), the ministry refuses to take action. AWA believes that it is ludicrous to suggest that a person with a grazing agreement on public land can authorize any hunter to kill wolves on this public land for financial reward, while the province is entirely powerless to do anything about it.
- Unregulated wolf killing can have the direct opposite of the intended effect, and increase wolf predation on livestock. As Fish and Wildlife staff have noted, "It is possible for wolves to coexist with livestock without causing many problems and when this occurs it is important to maintain that pack in the area rather than kill it off, which creates a vacant territory for a pack which may kill livestock."

Wolf policy should be a clear, science-based public decision made by the provincial government and not, as is the current case, ad hoc local decisions or decisions driven by foreign special interest groups.

Take Action

AWA has [already written](#) to Minister of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Diana McQueen, requesting that her ministry takes back management of wildlife in the province, including wolves.

Please take a moment to write McQueen, to request that the province takes back wildlife management in Alberta and halts private wolf bounties funded by foreign special interest groups.

Honourable Diana McQueen
 Minister of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
 #204 Legislature Building
 10800 - 97 Avenue
 Edmonton, AB
 T5K 2B6
 Phone: (780) 427-2391
 Email: draytonvalley.devon@assembly.ab.ca

And please send us a copy at ccampbell@abwild.ca.

Thanks for Taking Action!

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