

# AFSC and ACA Wildlife Damage Compensation 2014-2015

## Plan, Strategy and Consequences

### Alberta Beef Producers Summary

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Wildlife damage and compensation in Alberta is administered and compensated through various processes depending on the problem and the source of compensation. Alberta Financial Services Corporation (AFSC), Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Branch (AJSG), Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource, through their Fish and Wildlife Department (ESRD) and Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) are all involved. ESRD and ACA signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for delivery of some programs in 2014. A summary flowchart for these is shown in the figure.

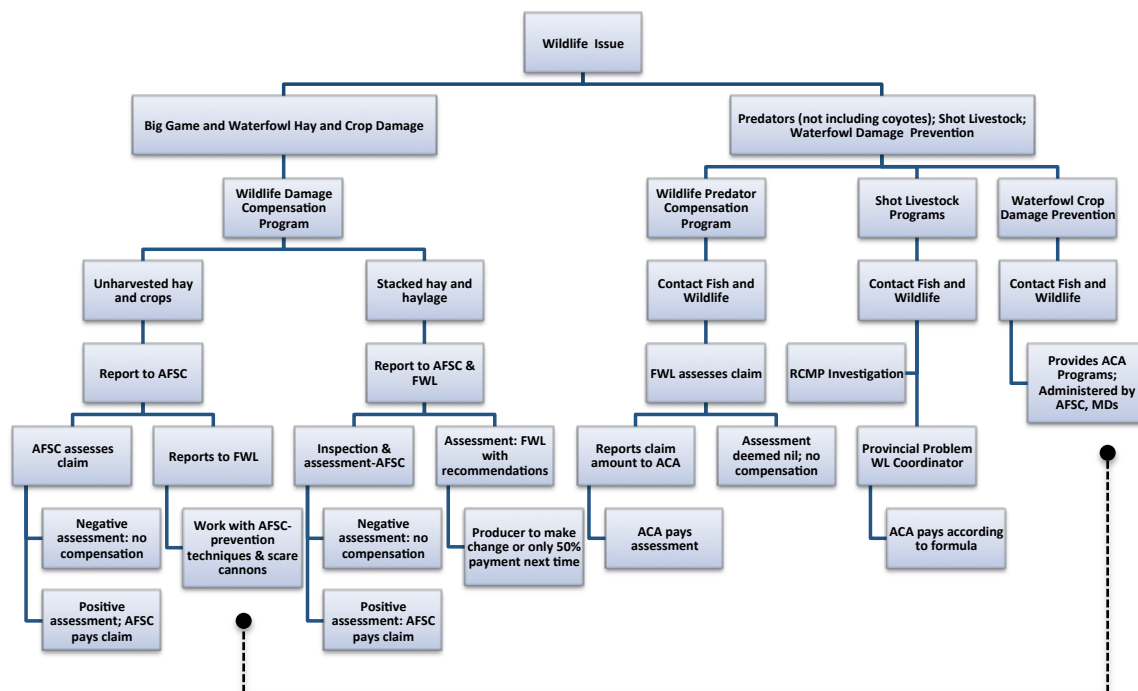


Figure 1. Flowchart for Wildlife Damage Claims in Alberta. AFSC = Alberta Financial Services Corporation; FWL = Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Branch, Alberta Solicitor General; ACA = Alberta Conservation Association.

## A. Alberta Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)<sup>1</sup>

### Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (WDCP): Unharvested and Stored Forage

#### Overview

The *Wildlife Damage Compensation Program* (WDCP) compensates agricultural producers for damage to eligible annual unharvested crops that is caused by (1) ungulates, (2) waterfowl, (3) upland game birds and (4) bears. Also included is Wildlife excreta contaminated crops and silage in pits and tubes.

<sup>1</sup> From AFSC Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

AFSC also offers WDCP for Stacked Hay, Greenfeed and Haylage in Pits and Tubes. This program provides compensation for damage caused by ungulates (white tailed deer, mule deer, elk, moose or antelope) to harvested hay.

Producers wishing to participate in WDCP are not required to have insurance to qualify for a claim.

<b>Big Game</b> deer; elk; antelope; moose; mountain goat; mountain sheep, and bear	<b>Waterfowl</b> ducks; geese and sandhill cranes
<b>Upland Game Birds</b> grouse; partridge; turkey; pheasant; and ptarmigan	

**Premium and Cost Sharing**

The Federal and Provincial governments pay all the costs for this program. Producers do not pay any premium or administration costs.

**Crops Eligible and Not Eligible**

- a. All unharvested crops including hay that can be insured under AFSC Insurance are eligible for compensation under this program.  
Stacked Hay and Haylage in Pits and Tubes are not insurable under any of AFSC’s Insurance Programs but are eligible for coverage under WDCP.
- b. The following crops are **not** eligible:
  - crops in granaries, bins, stacks or bales left in the field Exception: silage in pits and tubes are eligible
  - crops seeded on land considered unsuitable for production
  - crops seeded too late in the season to produce a normal yield
  - volunteer crops
  - crops that were cut or swathed for grazing
  - crops left exposed to wildlife damage due to management practices
  - grazing land or native pasture

**Compensation**

Compensation is based upon the commercial value of the crop.

Commercial value for a wildlife claim is determined by estimating the yield of the undamaged hay crop at the time of inspection multiplied by the higher of:

- the highest price option offered under the current year’s Hay Insurance contract; or
- the price offered under the “Variable Price Benefit” for hay, determined in the fall.

**Indemnity**

There is a non-refundable appraisal fee of \$25 for each section of land with damage.

**Unharvested Hay**

To be compensated under WDCP there must be at least 10 per cent wildlife damage and a minimum of \$100 calculated loss per crop. Damaged hay crops cannot be cut until adjusted, as wildlife claims cannot be adjusted from representative strips.

For AFSC Hay Insurance clients, the wildlife claim will be deducted from any Hay Insurance payments. Compensation is based on the percentage of damage multiplied by the commercial value of the crop.

**Stacked Hay and Haylage in Pits and Tubes**

A Provincial *Fish and Wildlife* (FW) Officer will provide the producer with appropriate recommendations to prevent further damage prior to a claim being paid. If a producer has a second claim, the minimum recommendations for the FW Officer during the first claim visit must have been implemented in order to be eligible for a full claim. If the recommendations have not been followed,

the producer is only eligible to receive 50 percent of the claim amount. On third and subsequent claims, if minimum recommendations are not followed, a claim will not be paid.

Claims filed over the winter will not be finalized until all damage has ceased and the total damage can be determined.

For Wildlife Damage Compensation for Stacked Hay, the maximum compensation is \$5,000 per inspection.

### Client Responsibilities

#### Annual Crops and Unharvested Hay

**Contact AFSC.** Producers must contact AFSC at least 24 and preferably 72 hours prior to harvest so AFSC can arrange to have an adjuster perform an on-farm inspection.

#### Stacked Hay and Haylage in Pits and Tubes

**Contact Fish and Wildlife and AFSC.** Producers are responsible to notify Fish and Wildlife and AFSC as soon as possible after first noticing damage to request an inspection and receive more detailed information. The AFSC adjuster will also include information from Fish and Wildlife.

The following shows claims and payments for damages under the AFSC Wildlife Damage Compensation Program reported in 2014. These claims include those for wildlife excreta and market loss. Total indemnities for 2013 were almost \$6 million for 601 claims<sup>2</sup>.

#### Wildlife Losses – 100% Government Funded (no producer premiums required)

Year	Wildlife		Waterfowl		Total	
	Claims	Indemnity, \$'000	Claims	Indemnity, \$'000	Claims	Indemnity, \$'000
2011	435	4,767	128	1,019	563	5,786
2012	672	5,028	115	473	787	5,501
2013	515	5,549	86	450	601	5,999

## **B. Alberta Conservation Association (ACA): Predators, Shot Livestock and Crop Damage Prevention<sup>3</sup>**

### **Landowner Compensation/ Prevention Program**

The Landowner Compensation/ Prevention Program was initiated by the provincial government's Environment and Sustainable Resources Department (ESRD) to contribute to a more positive attitude among landowners towards wildlife. This consists of three delegated programs from ESRD: the Waterfowl Crop Damage Prevention Program; the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program; and the Shot Livestock Compensation Program. ACA is responsible for the administration and implementation of these programs in Alberta.

#### **1. Waterfowl Crop Damage Prevention**

**Contact Fish and Wildlife.** This program, developed by ACA, assists producers to help prevent depredation losses to crops caused by waterfowl by providing information on loss-prevention techniques and scare cannons. These activities complement the joint federal-provincial financial compensation program, which requires that a prevention program be provided for agricultural producers to qualify for compensation funding. The program is administered by AFSC.

<sup>2</sup> AFSC Annual Reports, 2013 and 2014

<sup>3</sup> Alberta Conservation Association, Annual Operating Plan 2014/15.

## 2. Wildlife Predator Compensation Program

This program provides financial compensation to agricultural producers who have incurred losses to livestock (cattle, swine, sheep, goats and bison) because of predation by wildlife (bears, wolves, cougars or eagles) and for veterinary costs for injured animals due to wildlife.

- a. **Contact Fish and Wildlife.** Assessment of losses is undertaken by Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, Fish & Wildlife Enforcement Branch (AJSG)- *Fish and Wildlife Officer*. FWL/AJSG<sup>4</sup> liaise with claimants through the investigation process, and for any appeals. Their recommendation is passed on to ACA.
- b. **ACA** is responsible for making the compensation payments to the agricultural producers according to a set payment scheduled. ACA liaises with clamant once the claim has been verified. In 2014/15, the federal government will supply approximately 50% of the funding required for compensation payments.
- c. Any appeals from claimants are communicated through FWL/AJSG<sup>4</sup>. They are heard by a Wildlife Predator/Shot Compensation Committee that includes FWL/AJSG and ACA.

## 3. Shot Livestock Compensation Program

**Contact Fish and Wildlife.** This program provides financial compensation to agricultural producers who have incurred losses to livestock because of accidental shooting by third parties during an open hunting season. Compensation covers losses of horses and livestock covered under the predator program, as well as veterinary costs for wounded animals. Assessment of the losses is undertaken by FWL/AJSG with RCMP. This is handed off to the Provincial Wildlife Coordinator who reviews; they hand off to ACA for payment. ACA is responsible for making the compensation payments to the agricultural producers as per a set payment schedule. Any queries or appeals from claimants go through FWL/AJSG Provincial Wildlife Coordinator<sup>4</sup>; these are heard by a Wildlife Predator/Shot Compensation Committee that includes FWL and ACA.

### Budgets: Landowner Compensation and Damage Prevention Projects for 2014/15.

Project	Primary Purpose	Expected Outcomes
<b>Waterfowl Crop Damage Prevention</b> ACA \$12,030 <u>Partner \$31,240</u> Total \$43,270	Provide assistance to agricultural producers in preventing crop depredation losses as a result of waterfowl.	· Provide access to scare cannons and information on techniques for reducing crop depredation to agricultural producers. · Ensure the prevention program meets requirements so that Alberta's agricultural producers qualify for the joint federal-provincial compensation program.
<b>Wildlife Predator Compensation</b> ACA \$160,149 <u>Partner \$150,000</u> Total \$310,149	Reimburse livestock producers for losses or injury to specified livestock because of predation by wolves, cougars, grizzly bears, black bears or eagles.	· Provide compensation payments up to the annual program budget as approved by the ACA Board of Directors.
<b>Shot Livestock Compensation</b> ACA \$15,000 <u>Partner \$0</u> Total \$15,000	Reimburse livestock producers for losses or injury to specified livestock as a result of accidental shooting by a third party during an open hunting season.	· Provide compensation payments up to the annual program budget as approved by the ACA Board of Directors.

<sup>4</sup> FWL Provincial Wildlife Coordinators: Northeast Region (Spruce Grove) Phone 780 674-8266; Central Region - (Rocky Mountain House) Phone 403 742-7508; Northwest (Peace River) Phone: 780 833-4334.