

CHALLIS CREEK CATTLE CO., LLC

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Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Salmon Region
99 Highway 93 North
P.O. Box 1336
Salmon, Idaho 83467

RE: Wildlife depredation – Landowner damage Claim

Mr. Stansberry & Schmidt:

Ever wonder why landowners have a problem working with IDF&G? Well after your response to our property loss claim for 2012 we are reminded that a 'good faith working relationship' with the department isn't possible.

Your letter refers to a booklet entitled "A Landowners Guide to Preventing Big Game Damage and Filing Damage Claims". At no such time over the past four years have this document been discussed or provided and a search of the <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/> web site doesn't provide any link [which I'm sure you would have provided, if it had]. We have consistently communicated with Mr. Stansberry over the years and this is the only claim we have filed. The problem has escalated to where it is having a significant financial impact.

Over the past several years we have attempted to work with IDF&G to mitigate Big Game Damage. While we have had numerous depredation permits, our suggestions regarding hunting regulations and seasons in our portion of 36B have been disregarded. Yet we continued to work closely with Mr. Stansberry in an attempt to mitigate. Now that the damages to our property have exceeded \$20,000/year, and we request reimbursement for what you will cover, you now refer to a booklet? Then you insult us by not responding for several months and suggest that a counter offer based on some assumptions is a better approach.

Detailed below are our comments:

- You propose the 'animal use method' instead of relying on 2010 yields. Are you aware that this problem has been occurring for the past 5 years? If anything it is getting worse regardless of the depredation efforts [perhaps we should have gone to the 'booklet' instead of working with IDF&G]. The losses this year are greater, than 2011, and 2011 greater than 2010. We incurred losses on fields that weren't affected in 2010. We have maintained yield records for the past decade. We had to use 2010 for some fields as we didn't get a crop in 2011. So which is a better indication of the loss?
- You have failed to take into account the elk now occupy the same field as our cows. The elk moved into the fields by the county road and didn't leave. The cows left their calves and moved into the willows.
- Why only a 50% average daily consumption rate? Are you assuming that they come in at night and then leave during the day? Obviously, we failed to communicate the fact that they were there all day over a 45-day period.
- Our original application only took into account the loss as of a certain date. We haven't taken into account additional loss on other fields. After pressuring the elk we had to request an extension to kill them at another field 2 miles from the Home Place.
- You propose an average value of \$160/ton while we have been selling hay for \$180/ton and now buying it back at \$180. We disclosed oat hay sold at \$140/ton and alfalfa sold at \$180/ton. You haven't taken into account the actual hay lost.
- We only had 1 hunter for elk yet you charge us for 4? We disclosed the receipt of an access charge but not for elk. All hunters came for deer. It's not the deer that are the problem.

The other issue for ranchers is the impact of wolves. Whether it is at our Persimeroi or Challis property, the wolves have pushed them down into the bottoms. The cows have their young and the new cows bring their young down. Were also seeing where they are calving later in the season. Yet IDF&G's approach is no different from FWS except in one respect. YOU cut off hunting of wolves during a critical period when they're 'denning up'.

So now you manage the problem [wolves] that created another problem [elk] in a manner for which we don't get compensated. We no longer receive sufficient compensation for wolf losses. You don't pay for damages to fences, which in our case is extensive. And now you indicate that we should be subsidizing the cost of feeding your elk.

We will continue to document the impact that elk are having on our property. We feel that it is important to document the impact, especially in regards to Echinococcus Granulosus, which is now found in bull elk on private property along the Lemhi River bottom. IDF&G has taken the position that it is not infectious and a risk to domestic animals or humans. This is in opposition to other science and the position of Custer County Commissioners. Thus if there is an impact we will hold IDF&G responsible.

3/4/13

Challis Crk Cattle Big Game Damage

IN summary, we are extremely disappointed with the handling of the matter by the Department. We attempted to develop a workable relationship with the department to no avail. It is disheartening that you couldn't even communicate your intentions. We further realize the elk damage will not adequately be addressed and will have to accept whatever you propose.

We accept your offer of 79 tons of loss with the exception of the payment rate. It should be the market value of the crop lost, \$180.00/ton. Thus we accept a reimbursement of \$14,220.00 [79tons @ \$180/ton]. Advise if this is acceptable so we know what or if any additional action is necessary.

If Mr. Stansberry isn't the authorizing representative, should we be communicating with Mr. Schmidt? Where is the division of authority?

Be advised that in the future we intend to document the damage of the elk. As we are now in the 'new season' we will include the herds now coming into our fields. If you wish to substantiate our claims, we suggest you advise with whom we should communicate; otherwise we will consider our numbers, dates, locations, and crop to be correct.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen Bauchman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen Bauchman
Member

CC: Dustin Miller, OSC
Wayne Butts, Custer County Commissioner
Idaho for Wildlife