

**ACTION ITEMS from Conference Call (Mtg#7) of the  
PAZWP-KBR Regional Agriculture Wildlife Committee (RAWC)**

**DATE: Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**TIME: 6:00 to 8:00 pm (Cranbrook MST) OR 5:00 to 7:00 pm (Castlegar PST)**

*Steeple's meeting room Cranbrook, Service BC room in Creston, Arrow room in Castlegar, BC  
(Call 1-877-353-9184, enter 2681689 and #)*

**Participants**

Jeff Morgan – FLNRO – PAZWP Manager

Darrell Smith - AGRI Resource Agrologist

Brian Baehr – ARDCorp/AEI

Donna Thornton - FLNRO-PAZWP Ag/Wildlife Specialist

Tara Szkorupa – FLNRO Wildlife Biologist

Marc-Andre Beaucher – CVWMA Wildlife Biologist

Don Low - AGRI Beef Industry Specialist

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**AGENDA**

<b>18:00</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Introductions of all participants on the call; review of action items from last RAWC meetings (#'s 5 &amp; 6) &amp; Think Tank meeting Feb.2012.</li><li>2. Give update on the "2012 ARDCorp funded Private Landowner Outreach" project and Hunter Landowner Link survey (with KLA &amp; BCCF).</li><li>3. Give update on the 2012 'Think Tank' project.</li><li>4. Get any reports of 2012 ungulate activity and any depredation problems or AWP claims?</li><li>5. Get any reports of 2012 predator issues? Report out on local predator management.</li><li>6. Send ideas to me on hunting seasons for next regulation cycle (2014-2016), by email or regular mail. <i>ALREADY HAVE: whitetail deer season for CRESTON orchardists from the Nov 2011 RAWC, was thinking of a 'Private Land Depredation LEH for whitetail does and antlerless elk' in Feb-Mar? Landowners could then use the H-L Link website to find Hunters?</i></li><li>7. We had talked about a Public Count of ungulates to help calculate ungulate numbers?</li><li>8. I had handouts that I wanted to give to folks, but now I'll mail them out directly. Please send me your mailing address if you'd like them, as well as the minutes, thanks.</li><li>9. Any agenda additions? <i>How about starting a non-government <u>Ag/Wildlife Research Centre</u>? Research for answers will become increasingly important as habitat shrinks from human spread &amp; development, &amp; critters get concentrated. (Wolves must be dealt with...)</i></li></ol>
<b>20:00</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>10. Questions? Wrap up and determine month for next meeting (May 2013?)</li></ol>

**NEXT MEETING?** Early Spring in Creston, tentatively May 2013? Donna will send out a tentative date later, thanks!  
For information, please call 250-365-8607 or email [donna.thornton@gov.bc.ca](mailto:donna.thornton@gov.bc.ca)

***Brought Forward RAWC Action Items***

*Agenda Item #1 - see Action Items from meeting #5 Nov.1/11, had guests at last full RAWC meeting #6 on Jan.13/12, the first 'Think Tank' subcommittee meeting was Feb.12/12*

#### RAWC Meeting #5 Nov.1/11

- The amendment to the *Wildlife Act* for the use of shotguns and slugs for elk has been dropped for now, as we still are able to get a special permit for any specific situation that might come up; normally legal changes are done in 'batches' and HQ Wildlife has no plans to revisit changing the *Wildlife Act* in the near future.
- Creston Ag'l Society has been invited to all the RAWC meetings, as Kris Van der Weyde receives all invitations, but new contact might be Brian Huscroft, Donna to confirm.
- Everyone had hoped for great success with the South Purcell's Mountain Caribou transplant. When that did not happen, fear for the South Selkirk's herd increased, so we got another 'not now' to the suggested LEH boundary change or ER work at Dodge and Corn Creeks in WMU 4-07.
- Investigation into a disabled hunter season is underway, thanks to the gents involved working at it to find the correct contacts.
- Request was made for ag rep on the 'Kootenay Wildlife Harvest Advisory Committee' (KWHAC), but doesn't fit their Terms of Reference for group, no revision to their Terms Of Reference expected. Request was made to have an ag rep at this table in addition to Donna, Donna to draft a letter to the group from RAWC formally making the request for a representative.
- Spoke to Rick Allen about a funding application to Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) for development of moveable hunting blinds, and may not be acceptable due to the public's attitudes towards CBT supporting hunting, so Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (HCTF) is probably a better option to try for funding. Donna to tell Brian H.
- Kill Permit idea has been promoted to Paul R. and John K., but there hasn't been one issued in Kootenay Boundary Region (KBR) in over 8 years, will try other options. A private land LEH for parts of the RMT was not supported during the consultation phase for the last regulation cycle.

#### RAWC Meeting #6 Jan.13/12

- The distributed agenda for this meeting was not followed at all, as Tara's presentation was what the guests had come to see (that's why we're still catching up now on Action Items!)
- no incentive payment available for wolf carcass (shot or trapped). EK trappers and Guides&Outfitter's will pay some subsidy; government has no additional funds at this time to cover that cost. KBR Wolf Management Plan has been recommended (with a zoned approach around agricultural areas) but must wait for the provincial one to come out to see what it contains (is it too general or does it mention regional applications?). *The wolf management plan has just been released for public comment, please see this site to enter comments:* [<http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2012FOR0210-001774.pdf>](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2012FOR0210-001774.pdf)
- The local Conservation Officer Service (COS) do some wolf control in specific circumstances, when can verify cause of death and it appears that a pack has targeted a certain area. Much of the domestic stock mortality linked to wolves has been anecdotal (not verifiable).

#### THINK TANK first Meeting (8 members on conference call) Feb.12/12

- Came up with ideas for an 'Aversive Conditioning study', propose to do some research to see if it is possible to impact or possibly change non-migratory elk behaviour to avoid sedentary behaviour (homesteading or residency) from even starting. Initially we had plans to do own prescribed burns, create wildlife corridors, and develop high elevation water sources, but must work with the established Ecosystem Restoration programs and groups, plus the Regional District with their established land use plans.
- July 27/12 Donna sent note to new supervisor (John Krebs, KBR Fish & Wildlife Section Head), who was okay with Think Tank idea on this 'AC' study so long as the research was up to an academic level.

Donna sent out email to RAWC members to advise on this committee's progress and that we had a green light to proceed.

- Funding applications recommended by Think Tank to be submitted, to see if ARDCorp/Agriculture Environment Initiatives program (AEI), Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (HCTF) and/or Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) would fund study?
- August 15/12 progress note sent out to all RAWC members on Private Landowner Outreach Project.

### ***RAWC Meeting Notes, New Action Items & Agreements*** RAWC Meeting #7 Nov.8/12

#### **Agenda Item #2**

- 2012 ARDCorp Private Landowner Outreach Project – Draft report recently received from Becky Phillips, final one to be completed in December, will be distributed at that time or early January 2013. Had 28 landowners at 5 KLA information sessions. Display booth reached ~31 landowners, ~40 hunters and ~210 members of the general public. Hunter-Landowner Link survey handed out and received 23 completed ones, have initial responses summarized (roughly 1/3 did not know about site-1/3 had no need for more hunters-1/3 lacked computer access); final report and invoices due mid-December 2012, send report copies out early in January 2013.

#### **Agenda Item #3**

- 2012 Aversive Conditioning Project (THINK TANK) – Started contacting prospective partners, got in-kind support from Thompson River's University, University of Alberta and FLNRO's Ecosystem Restoration (ER) Program. Had submitted funding application to AEI, but without funding partners to put up 15% of the cash requested, it was not accepted (had 'in-kind' support only, no cash). Have also submitted HCTF proposal for \$5000 'seed' money to design academic study, and I am in conversations with CBT on gaining their support as well.

#### **Agenda Item #4**

- Crop depredation and AWP payments have not decreased this year; some ranchers indicate they've seen a localized increase in elk activity (not sure this means higher elk numbers).
- Have yet to roll crop loss results into database, Darrell should have information in mid-December?

#### **Agenda Item #5**

- Darrell was at last Wild Predator Control meeting and have more issues now, Faye was checking on any extra stock losses from members to give to the COS.

#### **Agenda Item #6**

- Creston COS and landowners did not want a depredation hunt on private land. Try a short GOS, or a "Planned Hunt" instead? Donna to discuss with Tara.
- Must get hunting and trapping regulation suggestions to Donna as soon as possible, as public and First Nations consultation must start summer 2013 for the next synopsis cycle.

#### **Agenda Item #7**

- Donna spoke to specialists and cannot do a 'public count' at same time as aerial surveys, as our activity would compromise the data (by chasing critters), and then couldn't really compare results to other years. But if we do one in late summer, the information wouldn't impact established survey procedures and could be useful in figuring out ungulate composition ratios? (We'll wait and see if this conflicts with haying season?!). Must ask ALL members of RAWC to see if interested and available to

help.

#### Agenda Item #9

- If fewer elk do not mean less crop depredation and AWP compensation money paid out, we need to explore the relationship between numbers and behaviour. An autonomous non-government 'Centre of Excellence' idea for behavioural research was discussed, but would need half a million dollars to even start? But as Tara pointed out, with the East Kootenay elk collar studies that she has done so far, elk that changed their behaviour went to a more sedentary level, NOT more migratory. (We only have a small sample size to work with, as of 58 elk monitored more than 1 year, 53 showed no change, 4 became less migratory and only 1 became more migratory). However, if this behaviour is spreading throughout the elk population, our timing of hunting regulations to target non-migratory elk may need adjusting? Other options like Aversive Conditioning that impact elk behaviour need to be explored.
- Discussion included: Try to get more precise calculations of crop losses? Try to compare 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cut hay figures to see if volumes grown are similar enough to compare damage/losses in early spring? Try for funding for more exclosures? Suggested to try to get \$ from some of the environmental groups that were at the recent agriculture-environment forum, Donna to check.