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Attn:

Alberta Minister of Agriculture Honourable Jack Hayden
Alberta Minister of Environment Honourable Rob Renner
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development Minister Honourable Mel Knight
Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach
Alberta Fish and Wildlife Program Manager Enforcement Field Services Steven Cross

Hello. We are writing to let you know about our extreme concern over the wolf bounty initiated in the rural municipality of Big Lakes Alberta this past September 2010. Just 8 months ago this misguided \$300 per wolf bounty came into effect, and already 53 wolves have been killed and claimed. This practice was begun in the name of livestock loss prevention, when decades of research have shown that predator bounties ARE NOT an effective long-term solution for reducing livestock losses to predators.

Alberta's Fish and Wildlife program had been mitigating for losses in this region to the satisfaction of their expertise in this area. This management involved the removal of problem wolves that had been identified as depredating on livestock. Not all wolves kill domestic animals, and it is unethical and extremely irresponsible to impose a reward for killing a highly intelligent, enormously social animal that has evolved as a keystone species and top predator to have a very important ecological role.

Some of the cattle in the rural municipality of Big Lakes are grazing on lands that are either crown-owned or abutting crown-owned forests. This natural resource is public, as is the wildlife living on it. We have proposed to engage with the municipal council and work together to educate the community about preventative husbandry practices that are effective at deterring predators. They have refused to respond to our letters and questions. We are aware that Alberta Agriculture is not supporting this decision, but we feel that by not stepping in to improve the situation nor taking a public stand against it, you are being negligent and irresponsible.

We feel that it is the responsibility of Fish and Wildlife, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, and the Ministry of Agriculture to put an end to this outdated, ineffective and cruel practice. There are alternative solutions and individuals with experience using alternative measures successfully that are willing to help and be involved in ethical alternatives. We would be happy to help arrange this if you are interested. In what has evolved into the IUCN designated "Decade of Biodiversity", surely you can recognize that coexistence with top predators is an environmental priority at a local, provincial, national and global level. Canada is one of only 2 countries left hosting the last significant populations of wolves in the world. Their future is dependent upon the actions we take today.

Almost \$16,000 of local taxpayers money was spent in half a year to kill an animal important to the health of its surrounding ecosystem, when this animal may not have killed livestock in the past nor future. Can we please act as true stewards and work to balance OUR needs with he needs of other species? We call upon you to put an end to this bounty, engage in education about responsible husbandry, and have rightful jurisdiction over a public resource. It appears that Alberta is regressing in its tolerance of predators and it is important to recognize the true dangers on the landscape are more guns, traps, and poison. \$16,000 would have been better spent in



hosting workshops, subsidizing for preventative measures (guardian dogs, fladry systems, range riders, etc), producing community resources via pamphlets or websites if reduction in livestock losses is indeed the goal of the Regional Municipality of Big Lakes. We have included 2 images from the March 2010 issue of National Geographic depicting 1)the environment with and without wolves 2) livestock losses due to wolf predation on sheep in Montana. Similar statistics apply to cattle in North America.

Please tell us how you will address this issue. We would be happy to speak by phone or e-mail or arrange a meeting. Killing wolves is NOT the solution.

Most sincerely, Sadie Parr
Shelley and Casey Black

Mission Statement:

Northern Lights Wildlife Wolf Centre promotes wolf and bear conservation throughout the natural environment through public education. We value the role these carnivores play in nature. We strive to provide a one-of-a-kind, quality experience to the public as we support wolf conservation through education.