



The Alberta Fish & Game Association is your voice in conservation

August 25, 2021

To the Rural Municipalities of Alberta

AFGA Information Circular – Cervid Harvesting Preserves

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Victor Benz, President of The Alberta Fish and Game Association (AFGA).

I would like to bring to your attention a topic of special interest to our organization. This past January we were made aware of a provincial lobbying effort by the Alberta Elk Commission to change provincial legislation in pursuit of the legalization of Cervid Harvesting Preserves (CHPs) in Alberta. We are firmly opposed to this proposed legislation change and responded with the attached letter to the Premier and the Ministers responsible, signed by my predecessor, Mr. Brian Dingreville.

It has recently come to our attention that the Alberta Elk Commission is now approaching individual counties within Alberta, looking for a letter of support for the legalization of Cervid Harvesting Preserves in Alberta. In anticipation that your administration either has already been approached or will be approached in the near future by the Alberta Elk Commission on this topic, I am reaching out to share our position with you. If you deem it useful, we are prepared to answer any questions you may have or make a presentation to you and your Council on this topic.

Our position has not changed. We believe that game ranching is in direct conflict with the conservation of Alberta's wild cervid populations and remain in steadfast opposition of it, which includes a call for the phase-out and elimination of all existing game ranches in the province. The introduction of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) to Alberta was the direct result of the initiation of game ranching in the early 1990s. In addition to the risk of prion-based disease transmission like CWD, game ranching also results in the spread of other diseases, invasive species, genetic contamination, disruption of wildlife movements and habitat fragmentation.

At the heart of this issue, the Alberta Elk Commission would expect wealthy clientele to pay for access to land where trophy elk are bred and raised in a pseudo-agricultural environment. If this were to be permitted, it is but a small step to allowing paid access for hunting on all private land in this province. Opposition to such a concept informs the basis of the AFGA objects, goals and mission statement.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Victor Benz', written in a cursive style.

Victor Benz, President
The Alberta Fish and Game Association
president@afga.org