

# Human-Wildlife Conflict Update Newsletter

## Bow-Crow Wildlife District

This Newsletter will provide updates on Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) trends in the Bow-Crow District including occurrence type, mitigation, predator compensation and mortality numbers.

### Background

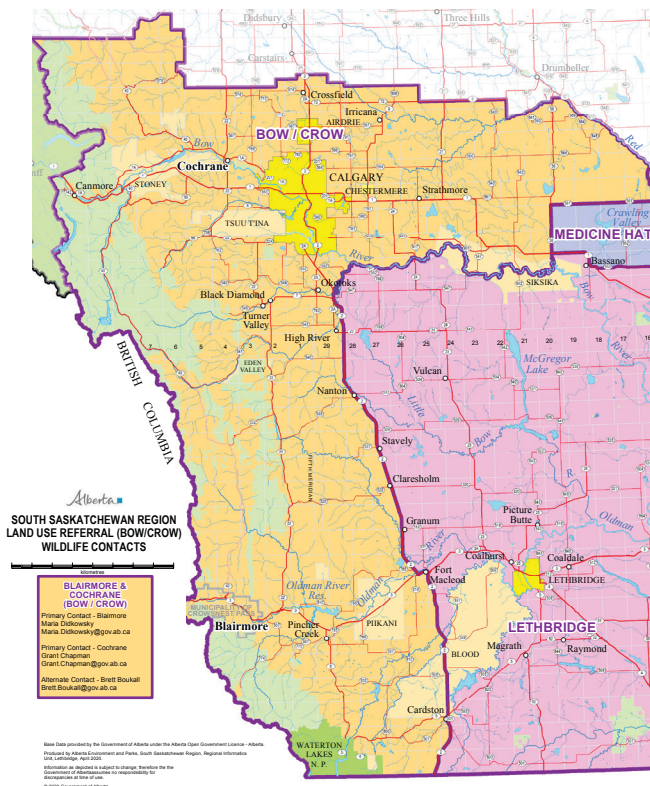
The Bow-Crow District extends along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, from US border in the southwest, north to the Red Deer River/Hwy 27 boundary, and east to Hwy 2. The District consists of alpine, and montane environments, transitioning to the Foothills, before giving way to the agricultural communities of the prairies.

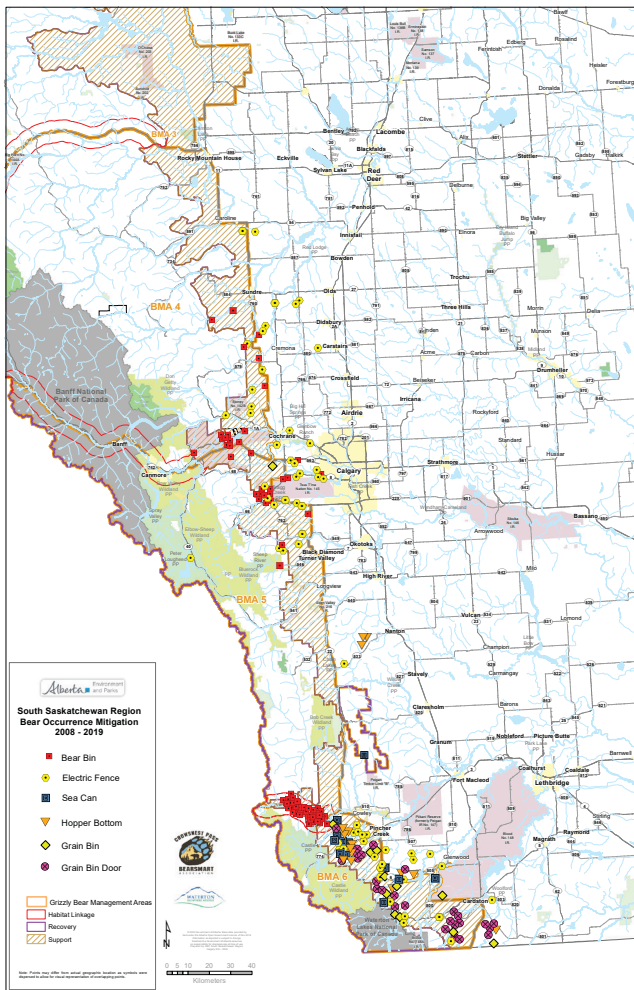
Generally speaking, a wide diversity of wildlife exists throughout the District, including both black and grizzly bears, cougars and wolves. An abundance of prey species, including moose, deer and elk are also present. The District is highly populated with

large urban centres like Calgary, many smaller towns and hamlets and numerous sparsely populated agricultural areas. Recreation, industry and agriculture are also prevalent. This human activity coupled with the presence of large carnivores often results in interactions between the two. This can create public safety and property damage concerns as well as potentially impacting wildlife populations.

### Large Carnivore Mitigation

A number of proactive mitigation programs exist within the District with the aim of reducing negative interactions between large carnivores, particularly grizzly bears, and people. These programs are delivered by AEP and various community groups including the Waterton Biosphere Reserves Carnivores and Communities Program, Crowsnest Pass BearSmart, Bow Valley WildSmart and Mountainview BearSmart. There have been over 100 mitigation projects implemented between 2014 and 2018 in the area. The primary focus of these projects has been on grizzly bears. Projects include erecting electric fence to protect livestock, grain and beeyards, fortifying grain bins by installing bear proof grain bin doors, sea canisters or metal hopper bottoms, providing deadstock bins to secure deadstock until it can be picked up for proper disposal and using bear proof bins for garbage and livestock feed. The projects are delivered through a variety of means including short term loans, cost sharing between landowners and community groups or direct purchase by landowner with advice and/or financial or in-kind support from the groups mentioned above. This is an excellent example of the necessity and benefit of having local groups assisting in the delivery of effective proactive large carnivore mitigation.





For more info:

[Electric Fence and Bears](#)

[Chickens and Bears](#)

[Bees and Bears](#)

[Deadstock Composting and Bears](#)

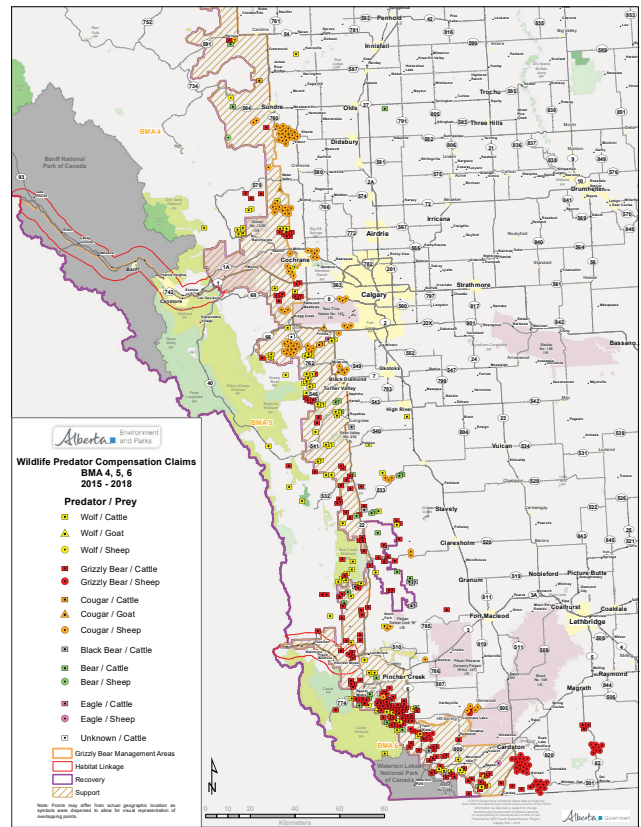
[Fruit Trees and Bears](#)

## Predator Compensation

The Wildlife Predator Compensation Program provides compensation to ranchers whose livestock are killed or injured by wildlife predators. Compensation is covered for cattle, bison, sheep, swine and goats. It does not cover horses, donkeys, or exotic animals such as llamas, alpacas or wild boar. The program covers those animals attacked by wolves, grizzly bears, black bears, cougars and eagles. Coyotes and other wildlife are not included.

Between 2015 and 2018 there were 349 approved processed claims for livestock killed or injured by predators. The majority of these claims were for cattle (71%) and sheep (21%). Over half (52%) were a result of grizzly bears followed by wolves (26%) and cougars (11%).

The total amount of compensation paid out to producers during this time was over \$650,000. This includes medical bills for those animals injured by predators.



For a more detailed summary of predator compensation in the Region between 2015 and 2018 visit:

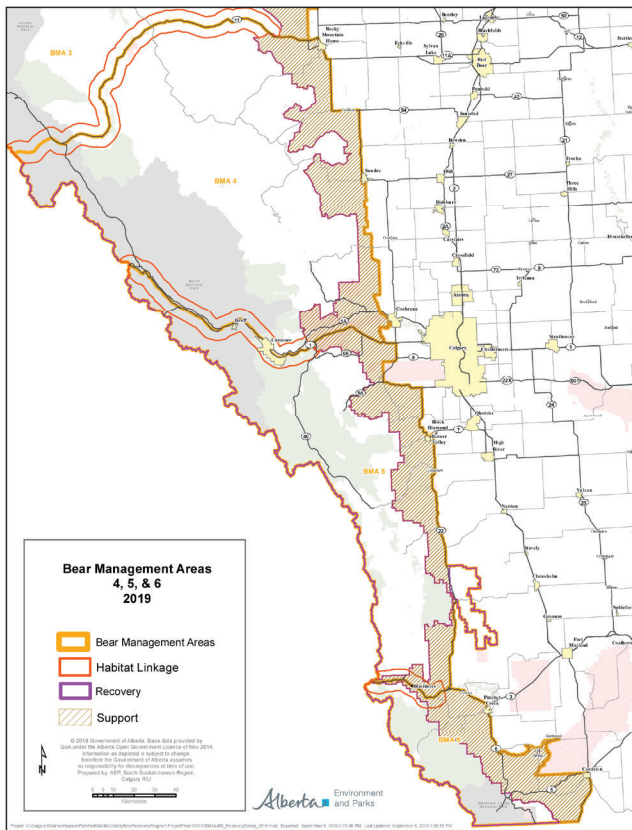
<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/predator-compensation-south-saskatchewan-region>

For more info on the provincial compensation program:

<https://www.alberta.ca/wildlife-predator-compensation-program.aspx>

## Grizzly Bear Occurrences

Grizzly bears are currently listed as a *Threatened* species in Alberta. The provincial draft Recovery Plan identifies different Zones of Management. The Recovery Zone comprises public lands along the foothills and west into the mountains and would inform the management of industrial development and human use. Managing attractants as well as other sources of human-grizzly bear occurrences that often results in public safety concerns, bear mortality or translocations would be a priority within this zone. The Support Zone, those lands east of the Recovery Zone, is intended to maintain grizzly bears that have home ranges only partially in the Recovery Zone. Given that the Support Zone is comprised of largely private lands, it is expected to be a focal area for proactive attractant management strategies to reduce Human Bear Occurrences. The Habitat Linkage Zone identifies key wildlife movement corridors that also have significant development within including urban areas, major highways and railways.



In 2018, there were 52 grizzly bear related occurrences in BMA 4, 238 in BMA 5 and 41 in BMA 6. Livestock predation makes up the majority of occurrences in BMA 4 and 6, most of those occurring on private lands (Support Zone) on cattle and sheep. In BMA 5, the majority of occurrences were a result of bears frequenting developed areas such as campgrounds (primarily in Kananaskis Country (Recovery Zone)) and residential areas (Support Zone). The majority of these incidents involved bears obtaining natural food rewards such as buffaloberry (*Shepherdia Canadensis*).

There are times when grizzly bear occurrences can result in bears being translocated or moved outside of their home range to prevent the problem from reoccurring. They would be moved to areas where the likelihood of a reoccurrence is low. For example, a bear that was killing livestock would be moved to an area of the province where livestock was not present. In 2018, there were 3 grizzly bears translocated from BMA 4, 2 from BMA 5 and 2 from BMA 6.

More details pertaining to annual BMA specific Grizzly Bear Occurrence summary reports can be found here:

BMA 4 <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/grizzly-bear-occurrence-summary-bma-4>

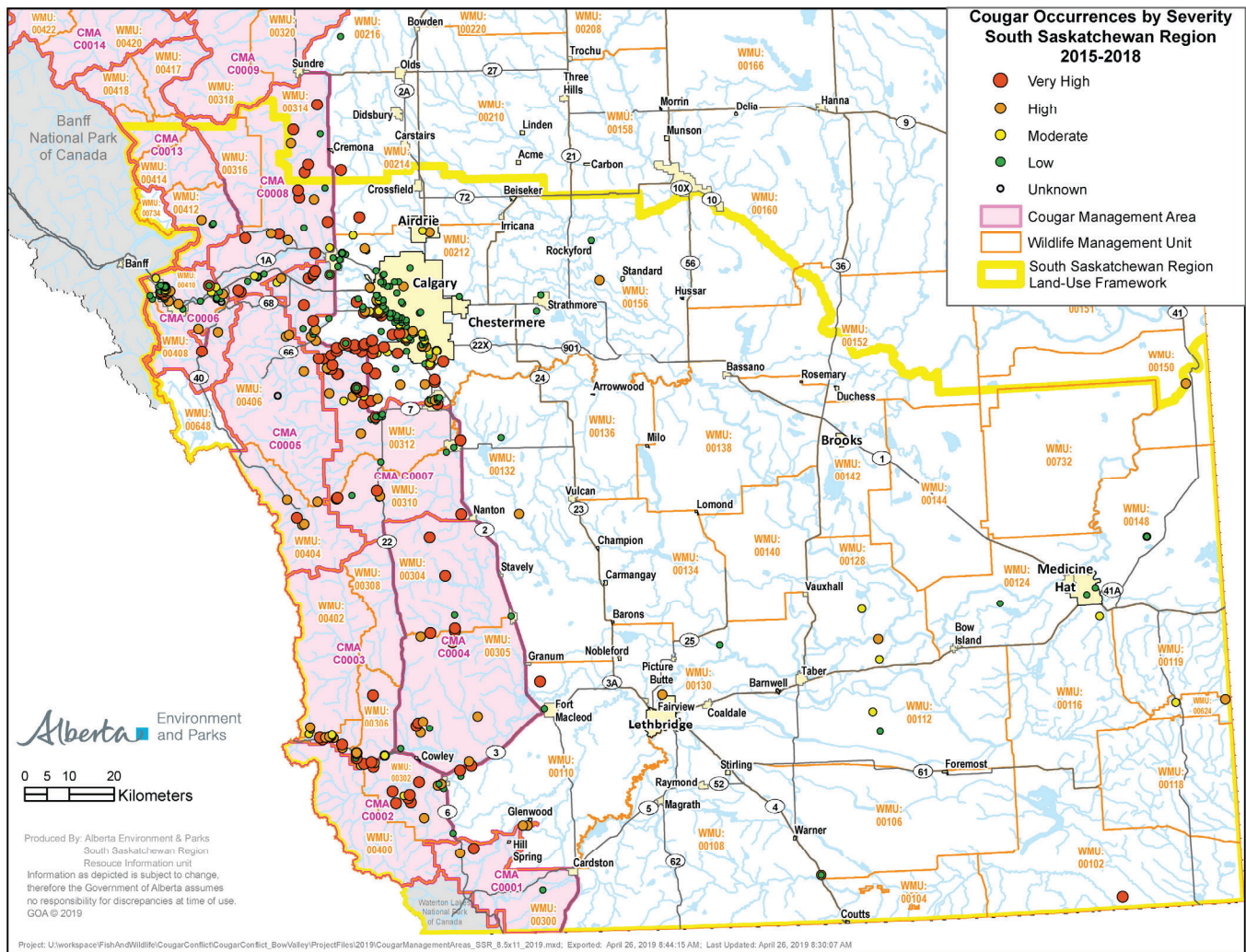
BMA 5 <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/grizzly-bear-occurrence-summary-bma-5>

BMA 6 <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/grizzly-bear-occurrence-summary-bma-6>

Grizzly bear mortality can occur in all of the BMAs. For instance, between 2009 to 2018, there have been 19 mortalities in BMA 4; 56 mortalities in BMA 5, and 30 mortalities in BMA 4. The cause of death varies from BMA to BMA. A summary of Grizzly Bear mortality can be found here: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/grizzly-bear-mortality-summary>

## Cougar Occurrences

The prevalence of healthy prey species (deer, moose, elk and bighorn sheep) results in a healthy cougar population, particularly within the western portion of the Region. Where human development exists, particularly in proximity to forested and riparian areas, human cougar interactions tend to exist.



There were 477 human cougar occurrences between 2015 and 2018 in the South Saskatchewan Region. These occurrences were classified on a sliding risk scale from relatively Low Risk (cougars travelling in or near developed areas) to Extreme Risk (cougars injuring or killing people). A high proportion of cougar occurrences were High to Very High risk, a result of cougars preying on livestock, pets or wildlife (primarily deer) in or near developments. Communities along the western edge of Calgary, where many residences / communities lie adjacent to forested cover, were particularly susceptible. These areas have some of the highest cougar occurrence rates in the province. Cougar occurrences can happen throughout the year and at any time of the day, though most do occur between dusk and dawn.

Hunting seasons exist for cougars and legal hunter harvest accounts for the majority of cougar mortality followed by landowner removals and accidental trapping.

For a more detailed summary of Cougar occurrences within SSR visit:

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/human-cougar-occurrence-summary-human-cougar-coexistence-in-the-south-saskatchewan-region>

If you have any questions, please contact one of the Biologists below:

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