Agricultural Advisory Committee
Agenda

September 3, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Electronic Meeting

Pages

1. Call to Order
2. Declaration of Interest
3. Delegations
4. Items For Direction or Discussion

   4.a PDR-AAC-56-25 Wildlife Management By-law Update 2

   That report PDR-AAC-56-25 is received; and

   That staff consider any further feedback received from the Agricultural Advisory Committee with respect to the County's nuisance beaver and coyote/wolf by-law reviews.

5. Round Table Discussion

   5.a Sector Trends and Challenges

6. Correspondence
7. Other Business
8. Next Meeting Date

   Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

9. Adjournment

Committee Report

To:	Chair Smith and Members of Agricultural Advisory Committee
Committee Date:	September 3, 2025
Subject / Report No:	PDR-AAC-56-25
Title:	Wildlife Management By-law Update
Prepared by:	Sarah Johnson
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All

Recommendation

1. **That report PDR-AAC-56-25 is received; and**
2. **That staff consider any further feedback received from the Agricultural Advisory Committee with respect to the County's nuisance beaver and coyote/wolf by-law reviews.**

Executive Summary

In January 2025, based on direction from County Council, County staff initiated a review of the County's nuisance beaver and coyote/wolf compensation by-laws. As part of the review process to date, County staff have heard a diverse spectrum of comments both in support of, with questions about, and proposing alternatives to the County's current by-laws. The purpose of this report is to provide the Agricultural Advisory Committee with an update on the comments received, as well as seeking any further feedback the Committee has to offer.

Background and Discussion

In January 2025, County staff presented staff report PDR-CW-02-25 to County Council recommending a review of the County's nuisance beaver and coyote/wolf compensation by-laws. A link to this staff report is included in the Attachments section of this report. Since the initial staff report, the County has held a public meeting and a public open house seeking feedback on the matter. As part of the review process there have also been discussions with the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Through this report, staff will update the Agricultural Advisory Committee on the project and provide a brief summary of the comments received to date. County staff are also open to any further comments from the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

What We Have Heard

There were several organizations circulated on the by-law reviews requesting comments, as well as a public commenting period. The County asked for comments by May 30, 2025.

There was an open house (workshop) held on April 23, 2025, as well as a public meeting on May 8, 2025, to collect feedback on the by-law reviews. Both these meetings were well attended by the agricultural and trapping communities. Most of the comments and discussions at these meetings were in support of keeping the programs in place, while providing feedback on streamlining existing processes associated with the by-laws, and potentially increasing the compensation rates for trappers.

Although much less evident at the in-person and virtual meetings, County staff also received several comments with concerns about the necessity of the by-laws, or raising questions about the by-laws. There was also support for removing the by-laws and alternative options to address these wildlife concerns.

In breaking down the comments received, there were approximately 58% in support of continuing the by-laws (with potential refinements), and 42% wanting the by-laws to be repealed and offer alternative options for wildlife management.

Comments in Support of Continuing the By-laws

There was a lot of support for the continuation of the by-laws, with various reasons for the program to remain in place including the following:

- Hunters and trappers need an incentive and fair compensation to trap these animals and control populations,
- Controlling the population using a bounty program with licensed trappers is humane as it reduces overpopulation issues including starvation and disease,
- Overpopulation will cause unnecessary costs to landowners and taxpayers,
- Anecdotal evidence suggests nuisance animal populations remain at high levels,
- In recent years Grey County was #1 in the province for predation,
- Impacts on land and infrastructure from flooding,
- Impacts on both the financial, emotional, and mental health of farmers from the loss of livestock due to predation,
- Landowners need to be able to protect their property and livestock, and
- There has been an increase in pet attacks, and concerns that there could be human victims in the future.

Other comments in support of refinements to the by-laws include the following:

- The compensation needs to be increased, based in part on the decrease in value for pelts and the increase in input costs such as traps, fuel, etc.,
- Paperwork needs to be streamlined and less onerous,
- The need to require an attack on livestock before authorizing trapping coyotes needs to be revisited,

- For coyotes/wolves, the program needs to have options when an entire animal is taken by predation (i.e., no physical evidence left behind to be evaluated by a livestock evaluator),
- Concerns with the livestock evaluator's judgement in determining whether livestock damage was a result of predation,
- The program should be streamlined with neighbouring counties,
- Municipalities need to update their by-laws with respect to guardian dogs and hunting animals,
- Some municipalities are not collecting the ears and tails when submitting claims, and
- There needs to be regular revisiting to ensure its up to date, and work needs to be in partnership of those groups like the Ontario federation of Hunters, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) and Grey Bruce Trappers, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, the local agricultural community, etc.

Comments in Support of Repealing the By-laws

There were also many comments with concerns, who supported the County repealing the by-laws.

- Research has noted that when a strain is put on a species, they actually increase in numbers through higher birth rates, and therefore the bounty program is having an opposite effect on controlling populations,
- Nuisance is a very subjective term,
- Co-existence can be done peacefully, with minimal encounters,
- Removal by culling or relocation will disrupt the natural habitat,
- Long-term, sustainable, humane, and non-lethal solutions should be considered first,
- Alternative solutions such as beaver baffles and fencing are available for protecting infrastructure, land, and livestock,
- The removal of body parts for the purposes of claiming a bounty is barbaric, and
- The program is archaic and antiquated.

Other Comments

Education is key for all; this was a comment on both sides. Those seeking the continuation of the by-laws, wanted others to understand the following:

- the need for the by-laws,
- how it affects their livelihood,
- licensed trappers use hunting and trapping methods which are humane, and
- the by-laws do help with the overpopulation and predation problems.

Those in support for the programs to be ended wanted other options to be provided and promoted, there are many management options that do not require lethal methods.

The County also received a request for further consultation from the Saugeen Ojibway Nation.

Other suggestions included municipalities could assist with updating their by-laws to allow for working dogs (i.e. guardian dogs) to be exempt from the by-law limits. This would allow livestock

owners to have higher numbers of dogs to help with predation or less fees to have working dogs.

The use of non-lethal methods like beaver baffles, or fencing grants to landowners, could be increased as these options may be able to reduce the need for lethal control methods.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) also met with County staff to discuss any proposed changes to the by-law. MNRF stressed the fact that new policy shouldn't remove any landowner rights to protect their property.

Next Steps

Staff wanted to provide a summary of the comments received to date and provide the County's Agricultural Advisory Committee the ability to share any additional feedback on this matter. Staff will provide a similar update to County Council. Staff are still following up on some of the comments received, and the request for Indigenous consultation. At this stage staff do not have a timeline for when a final recommendation will be made on this topic.

Financial and Resource Implications

None at this time. When a staff report is prepared for County Council with a final recommendation on the review of the County's nuisance beaver and coyote/wolf compensation by-laws, any financial and resource implications will be explored at that time.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal: Planning Ecology Staff

☒ External: Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Saugeen Ojibway Nation, Metis Nation of Ontario, Historic Saugeen Metis, Grey Bruce Trappers Association, Federation of Fur Managers, Beef Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Sheep Farmers, Grey Agricultural Services

Appendices and Attachments

Nuisance Animal Compensation - PDR-CW-02-25.pdf