

RESOLUTION 24-1

RE: SUPPORT FOR ELK DAMAGED PROPERTIES

WHEREAS, Jackson County passed Resolution 24-4-99, Re-Introduction of Elk (*Cervus canadensis*) to Jackson County after a lengthy discussion. Said Resolution indicated in part "the management plan will contain appropriate measures to minimize risks to agricultural interests, and control herd distribution;" and

WHEREAS, since that time, the elk have been re-introduced to Jackson County within the designated Black River Elk Range; however, damage to agricultural interests has steadily increased; and

WHEREAS, appraised elk damage has increased from \$153 in 2015 when the elk were first introduced to \$32,271 in 2023. These claimed amounts were from two (2) claimants in the Town of Knapp who received \$10,000 each, per Wis Statute 29.889(7)(b)4, even though their claims far exceeded this amount; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has attempted harassment of the elk, temporary fencing, permanent fencing, repellents, diversion crops and trapping re-location of elk to abate the damage to agricultural interests; and

WHEREAS, the sub-group in the Town of Knapp area continues to grow and has a near 1:1 ratio of bull to cow with approximately 60 – 70 elk with 20 – 25 estimated to calve in 2024, increasing this subgroup to 80 – 95; and

WHEREAS, approximately 330 acres of tillable land in the Town of Knapp has had damage due to the elk and since a hunting season has now opened, Wis. Stat 29.889(7m)(a)(a) indicates "a person who receives wildlife damage abatement assistance or wildlife damage claim payments and any other person who owns, leases or controls the land where the wildlife damage occurred shall permit hunting of the type of wild animals causing the wildlife damage on that land and on contiguous land under the same ownership..."; and

WHEREAS residents have voiced concerns with the DNR at two meetings held in May and June 2024, regarding the requirement to allow public hunting on private property if abatement funds will be requested and due to this requirement, it is believed commercial agriculture will no longer occur in the Town of Knapp; and

WHEREAS it is believed crops will no longer be planted, therefore, the elk will move to better grazing areas, possibly outside of the designated Black River Elk Range and into other counties and far better agricultural areas of Jackson County, some of which is beginning to occur already; and

WHEREAS, Town of Bear Bluff is outside the Black River Elk Range; however, we have suffered elk damage. Residents do not receive considerations, such as permanent fencing for their cranberry marshes at no cost and as crops are destroyed by the elk and no longer planted, the elk will move on to other desirable sources throughout the area, including the cranberry marshes of Town of Bear Bluff; and