

Dear Mendocino County Board of Supervisors,

As the current owner of a family agricultural business that has been in Mendocino County for over 80 years I want to ask you all to support and approve the 5 year service agreement with the USDA APHIS Wildlife Services to implement the integrated wildlife damage management (IWDM) program for and also approve the related 2020/21 work and financial plan for the IWDM program.

I have used Wildlife Services off an on over the years, it is not a constant use. Like many other agricultural family businesses in the county, there have been times that having Wildlife Services specialists available has saved our family business thousands of dollars and 99% of those dollars saved have ended up being spent in the county. Just two years ago we had 6 baby calves killed by coyotes in the space of two weeks. That loss represented a \$9,000.00 reduction in income for that year and if Wildlife Services had not been available at that time there would have been more baby calves killed resulting in an even greater reduction in income.

As I am sure many other agricultural business owners have told you, for those of us in agriculture there is a fine line between remaining viable, that allows us to keep our lands in agricultural production while providing open spaces, environmental habitat and view sheds, all benefiting Mendocino County and it's residents and the opposite of viable, ending our business and potentially selling our lands. Look around the county at where agricultural businesses used to be and ask yourselves if that is your vision for the rest of the county.

Please note that I do not in any way support killing all predators or removing species that are at times problems for those of us in agriculture. Those species and predators that agriculture calls on Wildlife Services for help with have their necessary place in the environment but some of them become problems and must be dealt with.

If Wildlife Services contract with Mendocino County is terminated, the goal of those in opposition to renewing the contract, who do I contact for help with Mountain Lions or Coyotes killing baby calves or livestock? Who does the rural resident contact for a skunk problem. Do you choose to leave us with that responsibility and if so how do you see that working out? The opposition to renewing the contract has voiced many untruths about Wildlife Services in their effort to end the program. I ask you to question the Agricultural Commissioner on what these untruths are.

There is a similarity that you as supervisors should consider before you vote. That of the city or rural resident getting help from law enforcement when a human predator arrives at their (or your) door or on their property. For those of us in agriculture we can't call on law enforcement for species or predator problems, we call Wildlife Services. Why should we be denied help when you provide it to others?

Sincerely,
Peter Bradford

Bradford Ranch, LLC