

**YUKON FISH AND WILDLIFE  
MANAGEMENT BOARD**



January 21, 2020

Honourable Ranj Pillai, Minister of Energy Mines and Resources

Honourable Pauline Frost, Minister of Environment

Government of Yukon

Box 2703

Whitehorse, Yukon

Canada, Y1A 2C6

Dear Ministers Pillai and Frost,

**Re: Call to ban Eurasian Wild Boar in Yukon under the *Animal Health Act***

We are writing to you on behalf of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, as well as the Renewable Resources Councils, with regards to the issue of wild boar in Yukon.

As you may know, the Board, as well as the Renewable Resources Councils, recently heard a presentation by Dr. Mary Vanderkop on the issue of wild boar in Yukon during the 2019 RRC AGW, in Dawson City.

During her presentation, Dr. Vanderkop gave an update about the steps the Yukon Government is taking about the management of this domesticated species. During her presentation, Dr. Vanderkop also provided a brief overview of the regulations under the *Animal Health Act*, about the importation of, and care for, domesticated species such as wild boar. The Board raised questions after Dr. Vanderkop's presentation that specifically related to the potential risk wild boar pose to Yukon's flora and fauna, as well as the issues of containment and escapement.

On November 18, 2019, immediately following the RRC gathering, the Board wrote a letter to the Ministers (Pillai and Frost), on behalf of the Board and the RRCs, with recommendations relating to Eurasian wild boar. Our recommendations were based on the information presented by Dr. Vanderkop, and our conversations thereafter.

We recommended the following:

**1.1. The Departments work collaboratively to develop a long-term strategy that includes policy and legislation effectively banning Eurasian wild boar in Yukon, permanently. This measure should also prevent the legal rearing, ownership, import, or export of Eurasian wild boar in Yukon, for both farming and private ownership.**

**1.2 We recommend the immediate removal of Eurasian wild boar from the list of agricultural species permitted in Yukon.**

As cited in our previous letters, wild boar is an invasive species posing significant challenges to wildlife managers and landowners in many parts of the world, including areas of Canada that are not too far removed from the Yukon.

As recently as January 2020, a wild boar escaped a farm near Fort St. John, B.C., and managed to evade capture for over a week, travelling well over 50 kilometres in temperatures as low as -25C°. This is an excellent example of how tough and hardy these animals can be, evading capture by burying themselves in snow during cold winter weather. This evidence proves that boars are hard to contain, extremely hard to capture when loose, can easily survive northern winters and leave a trail of devastation in their wake.

The University of Saskatchewan recently published a study indicating that these animals are rampantly spreading across Canada, causing crop failures and transmitting diseases as they go. This study labelled the species as an “ecological disaster”. This is not a species that our Board supports keeping in our territory. The pros simply do not outweigh the cons.

As we have previously stated, to jeopardize the health and integrity of our native species, for the sake of a few farmed animals, or pets, is simply unacceptable. The continued presence of these animals on our landscape leaves the potential for catastrophic and profoundly unnecessary consequences.

The Board would like to acknowledge the work you and your Departments are doing with concerning wild boar. We hope this issue can be resolved quickly and efficiently, ideally before next summer, to get these measures in place well before any more of these animals are brought into the territory. We are asking that you please respond with an update on the issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



John Burdek

Chair, Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board