



February 3, 2021

Press Release

ICBC customers to receive an average rebate of \$190 – Let's give our Wildlife a Break.

Already wondering what the relationship is between ICBC and *Hunters for BC*?

Many of our wild animals and birds live beside our highways and that is where they die when stuck by vehicles. When this collision involves a large mammal such as a deer, moose or bear, a claim to ICBC for damages soon follows.

On average there are over 10,000 insurance claims every year, including approximately 570 personal injuries and 3 deaths. (BC Wildlife Collision Prevention Program Website)

An average of 23,650 animals dies each and every year as a result of these collisions. (BC Wildlife Collision Prevention Program Website)

What we do not know is how many wander off to die, out of site and out of mind. It has been estimated that three to four times of those that die on our highways, die out of sight.

Out of sight and out of mind for some, but not for *Hunters for BC*.

These animals are what BC is famous for; these animals represent our way of life. Although far too many die on our highways, there is another death statistic that many are not aware of.

In response to high numbers of animal/vehicle collisions in specific locations, ICBC helps fund BC Highways to erect “high” fences along stretches of our highways that prevent large mammals from wandering out onto the highway and damaging vehicles. (High is of a sufficient height to prevents animals from jumping over.)

Great for cars, great for occupants and generally good for animals, but not always.

These high fences also represent a death trap.

High fences are a barrier to ungulates (deer, moose, elk etc.) trying to escape from our abundant predators. Coyotes, wolves, and cougars have learned and understand that if they chase their prey towards a fence that cannot be crossed, their chance of a successful kill increases substantially.

“We have these high fences near where I live in the Okanogan”, says Robin Unrau, President of **Hunters for BC – SCI**.

“I drive these highways regularly and although I am happy to not worry about colliding with an animal on the highway, I keep my eye on what is happening behind the fence. Almost every day one can see the remains of an animal that has been killed by one of our abundant predators that now live along these fences.”

“Although we applaud the effort ICBC and BC Highways has put into trying to manage our wildlife/vehicle conflicts, we need to go further. Animal overpasses and underpasses are part of the answer, but they are costly and will take years to fully install. In the meantime, we ask that the BC Wildlife Branch begin to quantify this danger to our ungulates and in areas where high mortality is occurring, implement a predator reduction program.”

*“To that end, I pledge to donate my ICBC rebate to BC’s **“Habitat Conservation Trust Fund”** with the request they use it to help fund research into mortalities caused by high fences and for better management of our predators”* said Robin. *“I also call on all like minded individuals that can afford to part with this rebate to do so likewise, or if so inclined, to any of BC’s many organisations that place high values on our wildlife and their habitat requirements.”*

Hunters for BC – SCI is an award-winning wildlife conservation organization in British Columbia. Our mission is to actively promote, support & advocate for responsible conservation and management of British Columbia’s wildlife and natural resources.

For further questions or information, please contact Robin Unrau, President **Hunters for BC** at (250) 864-7645 or president@bcinteriorsci.ca