

RCW 77.36.080 Limit on total claims from general fund per fiscal year—Emergency exceptions. (1) Unless the legislature declares an emergency under this section, the department may pay no more than \$300,000 per fiscal year from the general fund for claims and assessment costs for damage to commercial crops caused by wild deer or elk submitted under RCW 77.36.100.

(2) (a) The legislature may declare an emergency if weather, fire, or other natural events result in deer or elk causing excessive damage to commercial crops.

(b) After an emergency declaration, the department may pay as much as may be subsequently appropriated, in addition to the funds authorized under subsection (1) of this section, for claims and assessment costs under RCW 77.36.100. Such money shall be used to pay wildlife interaction claims only if the claim meets the conditions of RCW 77.36.100 and the department has expended all funds authorized under RCW 77.36.070 or subsection (1) of this section. [2024 c 264 s 2; 2009 c 333 s 60; 1996 c 54 s 9; (2001 c 274 s 3 expired June 30, 2004).]

Intent—2024 c 264: "The legislature has historically appropriated \$30,000 per fiscal year from the state general fund and \$120,000 per fiscal year from the fish, wildlife, and conservation account for the payment of claims for crop damage and tasked the department of fish and wildlife with prioritizing those claims within amounts appropriated. The legislature has never intended to assume responsibility for claims in excess of amounts appropriated in any fiscal year.

Claims awarded or agreed upon prior to June 6, 2024, are in excess of amounts appropriated. The legislature intends to appropriate an additional \$184,000 for those claims. No further amounts will be appropriated for payment on those claims. Going forward, the legislature intends to prioritize claims in a more equitable manner that compensates claimants according to the percentage of their loss." [2024 c 264 s 1.]

Effective date—Application—2009 c 333 ss 53-66: See notes following RCW 77.36.010.

Expiration date—2001 c 274 ss 1-3: See note following RCW 77.36.010.

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