

Blackfoot Challenge Carcass Pick-up Program 2026 • The Wildlife Committee

January 30, 2026

Dear Avon Area Ranchers, Landowners, and Land Managers:

The Blackfoot Challenge, MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service are again offering the **Carcass Pick-Up Program**. We are heading into our 23rd year of the program; and we have removed more than 12,360 carcasses during calving season from the Blackfoot watershed, as well as Powell and Granite Counties.

THANK YOU for all of your help getting carcasses off the ranch! As you know, this helps keep bears, wolves, and other wildlife away from calving areas and home sites. Due to issues of grizzlies being lured into several ranch compounds for livestock carcasses, **it is recommended that after March 15th** carcasses not be stored within the ranch headquarters or near cattle activity. If possible, carcasses should be stored at a minimum of 400 yards from human and livestock activity at an accessible site with good visibility. Be sure to lock up all sheds and barns where grain and other bear attractants are stored.

We continue to have support from the US Fish and Wildlife Service for a 1998 Ford Shuttle-bed truck, and again hired **Dan Massee**, who is an independent contractor with personal liability insurance, to pick up dead animals each week starting on **February 4th and running through May 13, 2026**.

We are working with our ranching neighbors from the Drummond and Phillipsburg area again this year to do carcass removal. We also want folks in the Avon area to know about this service if there's interest. **Dan will make a loop through the Avon area on WEDNESDAYS of each week in addition to picking up carcasses from the Drummond-Phillipsburg area.**

Please call **Dan Massee** at **(406) 793-5639** at your earliest convenience if you have a dead animal. Please leave a message on Dan's answering machine if you don't get Dan right away.

Dan will take the livestock carcasses to the Powell County Landfill in Deer Lodge, MT.

Before February 4th and after May 13th TEXT or call, Bri Cunha (816)868-8610, Dan Cunha (406) 677-1206, Eric Skelton (406) 546-3277, Jim Stone (406) 210-3595, or Jamie Jonkel at FWP (406) 544-1447. They will provide livestock carcass pick up at any time outside calving season.

Thanks again to those of you who participated in the program last year. Also, a BIG thank you to all of you who made program donations. Those help us hire Dan and keep the program going each year. We appreciate your help getting carcasses into the truck when you have them loaded in the bucket of your tractors or leave calves on round bales for Dan.

We've sent this letter to ranchers in the Avon area —if there is anyone we've overlooked, please pass along this information. For questions, please call the Blackfoot Challenge Wildlife Program Coordinator Eric Graham at (406) 240-3132. You can also call the Blackfoot Challenge's Ovando office at (406)793-3900.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Randy Gazda, Wildlife Committee Chair, Blackfoot Challenge