

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

January 30, 2026

Dear Blackfoot 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 livestock 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 the use of a 1998 Ford Shuttle-bed truck. Like in past years, the Blackfoot Challenge has hired **Dan Massee**, who is an independent contractor with personal liability insurance, to pick up dead animals on **MONDAYS and THURSDAYS** of each week starting on **February 16th and running through May 14th, 2026**.

Please call Dan Massee (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 carcasses to the MT Department of Transportation composting facility at Clearwater Junction. Like last year, MDT has generously agreed to partner with us to accept livestock carcasses at their facility. It would be appreciated if you remove ear tags from carcasses, as it makes the composting process more efficient.

For folks in Lincoln, Nevada Creek, or the north end of the Drummond Canyon area, please call Dan and he will work out a pick-up time.

Before February 16th and after May 1st 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, and 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 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 Ovando, Helmville, Lincoln, and Potomac areas—if there is anyone we've overlooked, please pass the word on. For any questions, please call 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