

January 12, 2023

Testimony against implementing a quarter mile setback for bees on all County, State, and Federal roads in ND. My ND Bee license number is 427. I purchased Dave Nelson's Apiaries in 2012 and relocated our base from Williston ND to Powers Lake, ND. I purchased land, built housing, and pay county and state taxes.

I have hives registered in McKenzie, Williams, Divide, Burke, and Mountrail Counties. We have 123 active locations. Of those yards six may be within 440 yards of roads in question. I don't like cyclists, motorists, or truckers running down my bees. I cannot control where my bees fly nor is a breed available that changes elevation from six feet to fifteen feet when they cross roads.

According to the ND Apiary department a SD beekeeper brought 20,000 hives into Williams County in 2022 and placed them along Highway 2 and just off county roads throughout much of the county. His yard size varied from 120 to 144 hives per location. This represents over 140 new locations in an area already full of bees. If this body were to review the hive placement map for 2021 it would clearly show maximum distribution of bees over available nectar producing acreage in Williams County. The impact of his actions changed my production which was 90 pounds per hive to 30 pounds. His actions not only stole from me a guy that acquired a business the right way, he stole revenue from the state by paying no taxes and reducing my income significantly to owe less tax.

The problem is not bees too close to roads; it's too many bees in ND. The sad thing is ND regulators are not willing to dialogue with the Beekeeping industry to seek solutions. They tell us what we can't do but will not consider an emergency moratorium to limit bees until a fair and reasonable solution can be created. The most regulation lax and wide open state is ND and it also produced before the interlopers decent crops. Just like illegal immigration state regulators seem to bend over backwards to welcome these carpetbaggers while the tax paying do it right bee businesses are told to be nice and suck it up. Due to the states unwillingness to address this problem every ND beekeeper has lost one third of the book value of his business. ND has no territorial respect either legally or traditionally for this industry. Beekeepers have clearly proven they cannot self- regulate either.

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