

Air Force Puts Bombers In 1 Command

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — B-1 bombers from Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota and Dyess Air Force Base in Texas are joining their long-range B-2 and B-52 bomber counterparts under a single Air Force command as part of a leadership shift announced Monday.

The Air Force is grouping its bombers under Air Force Global Strike Command, a nuclear-capable command based at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, in a transition that will be effective Oct. 1. The leadership change also puts the Air Force's next-generation bomber program, frequently called the Long Range Strike Bomber, under the same auspices.

"With a single command responsible for the Air Force's entire long-range strike fleet, the airmen ... will benefit from better coordination and increased sharing of expertise across the five bomber wings," Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III said in a statement.

More than 60 aircraft and about 7,000 people will shift from Air Combat Command to Global Strike Command, according to the Air Force. South Dakota public officials celebrated the shift as proof of Ellsworth's relevancy in the nation's defense.

"Ellsworth continues to demonstrate its readiness to support a wide range of Air Force priorities," South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard said in a statement to The Associated Press.

Neb. Brand-Inspection Bill Advances

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The cost of brand inspections for cattle could rise to \$1.10 per head under a bill advanced Monday by Nebraska lawmakers.

Senators gave first-round approval to an increase in the maximum fee charged by the Nebraska Brand Committee, which inspects cattle and investigates missing and stolen cattle. Inspections are mandatory in the western two-thirds of Nebraska anytime a bovine animal changes ownership. The region includes more than 7,000 brand owners.

Sen. Al Davis of Hyannis said the committee has reached the maximum fee that it can charge under state law. The ceiling was last increased from 65 cents to 75 cents per head in 2005.

Davis said the committee has seen its income fall because of the declining number of cattle inspections between 2012 and 2014 in the wake of severe and widespread drought. A shortage of forage for feed led many producers to sell their cattle.

"Cattle herds do not rebuild easily after a drought year because ranchers tend to graze lightly the following year to allow the forage to recover," said Davis, a rancher.

Davis said most western states already charge about \$1 per head for inspections, including Oregon, Washington, Nevada, South Dakota, North Dakota and Wyoming. He said the committee needs to upgrade its records system, and is struggling to recruit and retain quality employees because of low salaries.

Lawmakers say the committee has been conservative in raising its fees and sometimes has been able to lower them. Members are appointed by the governor and are usually recommended for the position by industry groups such as the Nebraska Cattlemen Association and Nebraska Farm Bureau.

The original bill would have allowed the fee to rise as high as \$1.25, but senators agreed to a scaled-back increase amid concerns that it would squeeze producers. Davis said the full increase to \$1.10 would likely take several years.

Wilder Memoir Is Doing Big Business

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — South Dakota's state-owned publishing house is printing more copies of the best-selling memoir by prairie author Laura Ingalls Wilder.

"Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography," edited by Pamela Smith Hill, was released in November. It has proved to be a blockbuster for the South Dakota Historical Society Press. It's in its fourth week on the New York Times Best Sellers list and as of early May will have 125,000 copies in print.

"We were anticipating we would print 5,000," Nancy Tystad Koupal, director of the South Dakota Historical Society Press, told the *Argus Leader* newspaper.

Wilder penned the popular children's series of "Little House on the Prairie" books, but her autobiography was written for an adult audience and gives a more realistic, grittier view of frontier living.

"We knew we had a perennially popular author, Laura Ingalls Wilder," Koupal said. "We had a book that we had worked very hard to make sure it was readable and accessible — not one academic talking to another. We knew we had a readable book and a popular author, but we didn't think best-seller."

Books from fourth and fifth printing runs will be shipped to distributors, online booksellers and bookstores by early May, according to Jeff Mammenga, media coordinator for the State Historical Society. A sixth print run likely will come in late summer or early fall in preparation for Christmas.

"But who knows?" Koupal said. "Every time I guess on this it just goes crazy. I have no idea what will really happen. It has been amazing."

Environmentalists Contest Broadened Use Of Herbicide

BY HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH
 Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Environmentalists are contesting the federal government's decision to allow more widespread use of a new version of a popular weed killer to be used on genetically modified corn and soybeans.

Motions filed Monday in the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in San Francisco challenge the Environmental Protection Agency's handling of a 2,4-D weed killer called Enlist Duo, a new version of the popular herbicide used since the 1940s. It's aimed at use with seeds that are engineered to resist the herbicide, so farmers can spray the fields after the plants emerge and kill the weeds while leaving crops unharmed.

But the Natural Resources Defense Council and a coalition of five environmental groups, including the Center for

Food Safety, claim in separate lawsuits that it could endanger wildlife and public health. The groups first sued after the EPA in October approved the herbicide's use in six states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. The latest motions were filed after the EPA decided last month to allow its use in nine more states: Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Nebraska, Oklahoma and North Dakota.

"Our concern is the same as we've had all along, which is that this is a powerful chemical that has demonstrated harm to human health and to wildlife, and the EPA has simply not done an adequate job of assessing it before letting it loose," said Paul H. Achitoff, an attorney representing five of the groups.

Demand for Enlist promises to be strong because many weeds have become resistant to glyphosate, an her-

bicide commonly used on genetically modified corn and soybeans now. Enlist includes a combination of both the new version of 2,4-D and glyphosate. Groups that unsuccessfully lobbied the EPA to prevent its expanded use say they are concerned about 2,4-D's toxic effects and the potential for it to drift.

The EPA, which has said previously that the herbicide meets safety standards, said in written statement Monday that it would review the petition and "respond appropriately." Dow Agro-Sciences, which manufactures Enlist, has said that the new version has been engineered to solve potential problems, like drift before and after the herbicide hits the plant.

But Sylvia Fallon, the wildlife director for the New York-based Natural Resources Defense Council, wrote in a blog posted on the group's website Monday that the use of "increasingly toxic pesticides" is "unsustainable."

South Dakota

Lawmakers Spar Once Again Over Using Dogs To Hunt Lions

BY BOB MERCER
 State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The decision earlier this year that allows hunters to use hounds year-round to track mountain lions outside the Black Hills can stand, the Legislature's rules review committee decided Monday.

The committee voted 3-2 Monday against scheduling a hearing to consider suspending the rule.

Sen. Jim Bradford, D-Pine Ridge, wanted the hearing.

He told the rules members that he had spoken in the past against the use of dogs to pursue lions, when legislation to allow the practice was considered in the Senate.

The decision Monday was more complicated.

The state Game, Fish and Parks Commission approved the rule change Jan. 15 on a 5-3 vote, after receiving a citizen petition seeking permission to use hounds in pursuing lions.

State law provides a 75-day window after a public hearing for a rule change to be presented to the legislative committee for review.

But the legislative committee doesn't meet during the months of January through March when the Legislature is in regular session.

Instead, Monday's meeting was the first for the



Hunhoff

legislative committee this year.

Rather than have it expire, GFP filed the rule change in mid-February with the Office of the

Secretary of State.

The rule then took effect March 3 without review by the legislative committee.

Another citizen subsequently filed a petition with the GFP Commission to repeal the rule. The commissioners declined to repeal it.

The mid-February filing was legal under state law. However, the legislative committee still had the authority to consider suspending the new rule.

On Monday, the two senators and three representatives present for the committee's meeting put the matter to a test — and then a rest.

GFP's lion management plan doesn't cover the population outside the Black Hills fire protection district, according to Tony Leif, the director for GFP's Wildlife Division.

Outside the district is where dogs now can be used. "We don't have a lot of lions out on the prairie. We do on occasion have lions that get out there," Leif said.

He explained that ranchers now can seek assistance from hounds men.

Bradford responded that the lion population on the prairie hasn't reached the level requiring dogs to hunt them.

"To me, I can't imagine the situation. Of course, we've had a few. We've had some down on the reservation," Bradford said.

He received support from Rep. Peggy Gibson, D-Huron. She called it "a perceived problem that isn't going on out in the state of South Dakota."

The three other committee members — Sen. Mike Vehle, R-Mitchell; Rep. Timothy Johns, R-Lead; and

Rep. Jean Hunhoff, R-Yankton — voted against the attempt to schedule a hearing.

Vehle, the committee's chairman, said that, because the rule is already in effect, there wasn't the necessity for the committee to review whether the Game, Fish and Parks Commission had correctly followed the rule-making process.

The lion hunting season closed March 31 in the Black Hills district but remains open throughout the rest of South Dakota year-round.

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1. We hold you in our thoughts and memories forever.
2. May God cradle you in his arms, now and forever.
3. Forever missed, never forgotten. May God hold you in the palm of His hand.
4. Thank you for the wonderful days we shared together. My prayers will be with you until we meet again.
5. The days we shared were sweet. I long to see you again in Gods heavenly glory.
6. Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.
7. Though out of sight, you'll forever be in my heart and mind.
8. May the light of peace shine on your face for eternity.
9. May God's angels guide you and protect you throughout time.
10. You were a light in our life that burns forever in our hearts.
11. May God's graces shine over you for all time.
12. You are in our thoughts and prayers from morning to night and from year to year.
13. We send this message with a loving kiss for eternal rest and happiness.
14. May the Lord bless you with His graces and warm, loving heart.
15. I have written my own message and it is included.

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