

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

A settlement of more than \$1.4 million was reached last week in a federal lawsuit against the Pelster family of Elsie in seeking compensation for the death of Debra Palser.

The lawsuit, filed by the victim's husband, Troy Palser, who now lives in Ft. Collins, Colo., was heard in U.S. District Court on Wednesday, Feb. 9.

Benjamin J. Pelster, 34, of Elsie had previously been charged and convicted of motor vehicular homicide in Perkins County Court and was ordered to serve jail time.

Palser filed the federal lawsuit on Sept. 23, 2010 against Pelster and his father, Greg Pelster of Elsie.

Debra Palser, a resident of Elsie at the time, was driving westbound on Highway 23 when she was struck and killed by a farm sprayer driven by Pelster, who failed to yield as he entered the highway in July 2009.

According to the federal lawsuit, cell phone records show Pelster was reading a text message at the time.

The Palser couple's son, Gage Palser, who was an infant at the time, was not critically injured in the accident, nor was another passenger in the mini-van.

According to Palser's attorney Maren Chaloupka, the settlement will go to a fund to provide for Palser's son who is now two.

Associated Press and staff reports were used to compile this story.