

NDP Response: British Columbia Chapter of Backcountry Hunters

What conservation issues are priorities for your party?

Canada is known for its natural beauty and wildlife. We are blessed with the longest coastlines in the world, abundant freshwater, vast and varied terrain and incredible biodiversity. But the world's biodiversity is declining rapidly, our ecosystems are in distress and communities across Canada are feeling the consequences of climate change. New Democrats believe that we must be responsible stewards of our land, water and oceans to protect and preserve our ecosystems and wildlife now and for future generations.

One of our most important conservation priorities is to protect more of our land, waters and oceans to help our ecosystems and wildlife recover. An NDP government is committed to protecting at least 30 per cent of our land, freshwaters and oceans by 2030, backed by funding and enforcement.

Additionally, we will work with other levels of government to develop a system of urban national parks to support conservation and preserve our natural heritage. To help lower our carbon footprint we will develop a national approach to tree-planting using responsible reforestation, and we will do more to combat invasive species.

What commitments would your government make to conservation funding?

As a start an NDP government is committed to protecting at least 30 per cent of our land, freshwaters and oceans by 2030. We will back up this commitment with increased federal funding and meaningful enforcement. Protecting more of our land, freshwater and oceans will help restore our natural habitats and wildlife, preserving Canada's natural environment for future generations.

What steps would your government take to maintain the tradition of hunting and fishing on public lands and waters throughout Canada?

New Democrats recognize that hunting and fishing is a deep-rooted part of Indigenous culture and a preferred recreational activity for many Canadians. Although most Crown land available for hunting and fishing falls within provincial, territorial, or First Nation jurisdiction, the federal government has a role to play in ensuring there is proper stewardship over these lands. An NDP government is supportive of the continued use of Crown lands for sustainably-managed hunting and fishing. We will do our part to ensure

that we are preserving these lands, waters and wildlife for future generations by combating invasive species, taking real action on climate change, protecting 30 per cent of our land, freshwater and oceans, and more. Additionally, an NDP government will establish a \$40 billion Coastal Protection Fund to clean up the coast and save the wild salmon for the benefit of those who fish along the B.C coast.

What strategies and land management practices would your government pursue to address the impacts of climate change on fish and wildlife populations, habitat conditions, and water resources?

Our communities are already feeling the impact of climate change. Hunters and anglers are in the position to see the changes to our ecosystems firsthand. By protecting 30 per cent of our land, freshwater and oceans an NDP government will be taking real action to address the impact climate change is having on fish and wildlife populations, habitat conditions and water resources. These protected spaces will give ecosystems time and space to recover.

To further protect our freshwater and oceans and reduce waste, an NDP government will ban single-use plastics. We will protect ocean biodiversity by expanding well-enforced marine-protected areas, work to prevent ocean acidification and reverse the loss of coastal blue carbon ecosystems such as salt marshes.

Canada's freshwater resources are critical for the health and well-being of our ecosystems, our communities and our local economies. An NDP government will implement a national freshwater strategy and work with the provinces and territories to protect our waterways under international agreements. We will also reverse the harmful changes brought in by the Conservatives and fully restore navigable waters protections for all of Canada's lakes and rivers, and invest in research to support freshwater protections

Ultimately if we want to preserve our habitats and wildlife, we need to take real action now to address the climate crisis. That is why the NDP has put forward a bold \$15 billion plan to lower emissions and create 300,000 good jobs in a new economy.

What steps would your government take to address the threat that chronic wasting disease (CWD) poses to wild cervid populations (e.g. deer, elk, moose)?

New Democrats know that chronic wasting disease poses a serious health risk and it would take immediate action to address it by prohibiting movement of live cervids. We would examine further options, such as the phase-out of cervid farming with compensation, if scientific and medical evidence demonstrated a clear need for them.

The recovery of species at risk (e.g. caribou) are subject to competing social and economic pressures. How would your government balance these competing priorities to ensure the successful recovery of threatened populations?

New Democrats recognize that we must balance different, and sometime competing, priorities when working towards the recovery of species at risk. An NDP government will meaningfully consult with all parties who will be affected by the decision including the provinces and territories, local governments, First Nations, industry and environmental experts. We believe that the best decisions are the ones arrived at collaboratively through true consultation.

Maintaining intact wilderness areas is beneficial to fish and wildlife populations and provides opportunities for backcountry users to reconnect with the solitude of the wilds. What commitments will your government make to the protection wildlife habitat, biodiversity and sensitive ecosystems?

Protecting more of our land, freshwater and oceans will help restore our natural habitats and wildlife, preserving Canada's natural environment for future generations. To this end an NDP government is committed to protecting at least 30 per cent of our land, freshwaters and oceans by 2030. We will back up this commitment with increased federal funding and meaningful enforcement. Additionally, an NDP government will establish a \$40 billion Coastal Protection Fund to clean up the coast and save the wild salmon. This fund will work on priorities like protecting wild salmon by rehabilitating its habitat, moving fish farms out of migration routes, and working with coastal communities to transition salmon farming to closed containment.