

Responses from Canada's Conservatives

BC Wildlife Federation

Watershed and Fisheries Sustainability Questions

How will you support the recovery of wild salmon? Please include objectives, funding levels, and ministry, governance, legislative, regulatory and on-the-ground actions you will take.

The iconic Pacific salmon species are part of the fabric of life for communities throughout British Columbia and are an essential part of BC's marine and freshwater ecosystems. While some stocks are robust, many are under threat. This has consequences for Indigenous peoples, coastal communities, and commercial and recreational fishers, as well as to the health of BC's rivers and streams and to endangered populations like the Southern Resident Killer Whales.

As part of Canada's Recovery Plan, we will develop a Pacific Salmon Strategy focused on making measurable progress toward restoring at-risk salmon stocks. Our approach, for salmon and all fisheries, is based on restoring and maintaining healthy stocks that support commercial, recreational, and cultural fisheries, and that respect the importance of all resource users, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous, commercial, recreational or cultural.

With our Pacific Salmon Strategy, Canada's Conservatives will:

- Enforce a strict timeline for the completion of stock assessments;
- Prioritize funding for community-led habitat restoration or other projects that support at-risk stocks;
- Ensure the Salmonid Enhancement Program is sufficiently resourced to support at-risk stocks;
- Increase support for and engagement with Indigenous- and community-led hatchery and enhancement projects;
- Implement mass-marking programs at BC fish hatcheries and allowing mark-selective harvest of salmon in BC's sport fishery, protecting sensitive fish populations while maintaining the health of BC's public fishery;
- Create a pinniped management plan that will address threats to at-risk stocks in a balanced way; and
- Identify the likelihood of future threats due to climate change.

Canada's Conservatives also support the sustainable development and growth of Canada's world-leading aquaculture sector due to its ability to provide a solid economic base in coastal communities, create stable, long-term employment, and contribute to Canadian food security while succeeding as a leading Canadian export to global markets.

We understand that salmon farming on the west coast has been deeply controversial. Therefore, any decisions related to salmon aquaculture must be based on robust science, guided by conservation, and be respectful of the communities and families that rely on these jobs.

A Conservative government will:

- Maintain the decision to remove salmon farms from the Discovery Islands, but ensure the process is more respectful of local First Nations, communities, and workers;
- Create a modern Aquaculture Act that can help restore public confidence;
- Strengthen monitoring requirements for salmon farms;
- Develop, in consultation with industry, First Nations, communities and other stakeholders, a comprehensive Salmon Aquaculture Management Strategy that addresses both the risks and opportunities of this sector; and
- Develop a tax incentive program for the development and adoption of technologies that reduce contact between wild and farmed salmon.

Will you support the Province of British Columbia's watershed sustainability fund and strategy with matching federal funding commitments?

Canada's Conservatives have a proud history of being strong proponents of conservation and being the party of the great outdoors. Our party was built by farmers, hunters and anglers - people who respect and live off the very lands and waters we need to conserve.

Within Canada's Recovery Plan, we have a detailed plan to protect the environment, including watersheds and wetlands. We will:

- Restore funding for the National Wetland Conservation Fund and the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program, which Justin Trudeau cancelled.
- Support wetlands and watershed protection by supporting the completion of the Canadian Wetland Inventory and exploring ways to protect wetlands on private lands
- Provide funding for watershed protection, including restoring funding for the clean-up of Lake Simcoe and maintaining funding for the Great Lakes in Ontario and Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba.

Further, we will invest an additional \$3 billion between now and 2030 in natural climate solutions focused on management of forest, crop and grazing lands and restoration of grasslands, wetlands, and forests.

Landscape and Wildlife Sustainability Questions

The B.C. Wildlife Federation supports the protection of land and waters for conservation purposes as long as the protection initiatives include established uses such as hunting, fishing, trapping, camping and hiking. When moving to increase protection or conservation of lands and waters, what will your policy be on including stakeholder groups, such as the B.C. Wildlife Federation, in discussions about the selection and setting of objectives for new protected areas?

Conservatives have a proud history of being strong proponents of conservation and have a strong track record of creating parks and protecting critical habitats. In 2010, the previous Conservative government committed to conserving 17% of terrestrial lands through protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. As of January 2020, Canada had reached 12%. We remain committed to reaching the target of 17% and will seek to increase our goal to 25%.

Our approach will respect the importance of all users of the land and ensure concerns are heard and addressed. Conservatives have always valued the role that hunters, fishers, and anglers have played in conserving our environment and have consistently drawn on their expertise in creating policy, including through the previous government's Hunting and Angling Advisory Panel. We look forward to continuing that legacy of cooperation between a Conservative government, the BC Wildlife Federation and like-minded groups.

The B.C. Wildlife Federation believes that funding for wildlife and habitat management is woefully inadequate across Canada. Will you support an increase in budgetary allotment to fish and wildlife management? If so, what are your ideas for new sources of funding for wildlife and habitat management?

Canada's Conservatives have a proud history of being strong proponents of conservation and the party of the great outdoors. Our party was built by farmers, hunters and anglers - people who respect and live off the very lands and waters we need to conserve. Our plan will protect wildlife and fish habitats, while recognizing the importance of outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping.

We will invest an additional \$3 billion between now and 2030 in natural climate solutions focused on management of forest, crop and grazing lands and restoration of grasslands, wetlands, and forests. These solutions can have multiple benefits; not only will they help sequester carbon, but they can also provide protection for communities and additional benefits for wildlife.

Because wetlands, rivers and lakes provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife nationwide, our plan includes:

- Restoring funding for the National Wetland Conservation Fund and the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program, which Justin Trudeau cancelled.

- Supporting wetlands and watershed protection by supporting the completion of the Canadian Wetland Inventory and exploring ways to protect wetlands on private lands
- Providing funding for watershed protection, including restoring funding for the clean-up of Lake Simcoe and maintaining funding for the Great Lakes in Ontario and Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba.

Canada's Conservatives will also establish a Task Force on Woodland Caribou to work collaboratively with provinces and local communities to propose solutions sensitive to local expertise and management.

And we will increase funding to control pest species that pose a substantial threat to forest health in national parks and federal lands.

We also have a detailed plan to restore critical fisheries stocks. Our approach is based on restoring and maintaining healthy stocks that support commercial, recreational, and cultural fisheries, and that respect the importance of all resource users, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous, commercial, recreational or cultural. To do this, we will:

- Prioritize stock assessments, stock recovery planning and enforcement of science-based catch limits because these have been shown to be the most important predictors of well-managed fisheries. We will also ensure that stock recovery plans incorporate climate change risks.
- Strengthen the role of advisory bodies in fisheries management to enhance cooperation between resource users and ensure that commercial, recreational, and cultural fishers can all have confidence in management decisions.
- Work with stakeholders, First Nations, and regional jurisdictions to implement ecosystem-based fisheries management, including control of abundant predator populations which impact commercial and SARA-listed species.
- Update and strengthen the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans' national aquatic invasive species program and ensure that the Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations are being implemented.
- Address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, seafood fraud and ghost gear.
- Restore community-based conservation initiatives like the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program, provide more support for hatcheries, and support public conservation education initiatives.

Firearms Questions

Bill C-71, an Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms, received Royal Assent in June 2019. Do you support repealing Bill C-71? Yes / No

Do you support or oppose Bill C-21, now before parliament?

Do you support or oppose the May 2020 Order-in-Council prohibiting 200,000 firearms owned by RCMP-vetted Canadians?

Do you support or oppose allowing municipalities to ban handguns?

With Canada's Recovery Plan, Canada's Conservatives will take politics out of the classification process for firearms and focus on public safety.

A Conservative government will maintain the ban on assault weapons and the restrictions put in place by the May 2020 Order-in-Council. We will launch a transparent, public review of the classification system to make sure that classification decisions are grounded in science and facts and not politics.

For six years, Justin Trudeau and the Liberal government has divided Canadians, pitting east versus west, rural versus urban. He has demonized farmers and sport shooters and taken no action on the real problem of increasing firearm smuggling and organized gang activity. Statistics Canada reports that homicides rose more than 20 per cent during Trudeau's time as Prime Minister (from 2016 - 2020). At the same time through Bill C-22, the Trudeau government repealed minimum mandatory sentencing for serious gun crimes, such as weapons trafficking, unauthorized imports or exports of firearms, and robbery or extortion with a firearm.

Canada's Conservatives will focus on cracking down on violent criminals and addressing the root causes of crime, including gang violence and gun smuggling. We will bring in tougher laws, give police the resources they need, and hire an additional 200 RCMP officers specifically assigned to combat gang violence and the smuggling of guns and drugs. We will take real action to rid our communities of violence crime and keep Canadian families safe, while standing up for the rights of law-abiding firearm owners.