BC Wildlife Federation: CentreBC Response

Dear Jesse,

Thank you for writing on behalf of BCWF's 37,000 members, and the hundreds of thousands of British Columbians who hunt, fish, camp and explore the outdoors.

Your members are some of the province's most committed conservationists, and they know our rivers, forests and mountains better than anyone.

We are thankful to you for giving us the opportunity to respond to your questions. Where we don't yet have a position, we have said so plainly rather than make a promise we haven't costed.

1. Public access to lands and resources

We want robust backcountry access, while enhancing and preserving our relationship with First Nations, wherever possible through treaties. By 2028, we will create a $15 million a year trails fund to build and maintain trails, shared with local governments, First Nations and trail groups. We will also build 1,000 new provincial campsites by 2030. Our platform does not include legislation guaranteeing access to Crown land, and we would welcome the chance to discuss your proposal in a meeting.

2. Fish, wildlife and habitat funding

We agree that healthy habitat protects people as well as wildlife. We will double the Watershed Security Fund to $200 million, supporting local projects for drinking water, salmon and flood protection. Forests Against Fire will reach $25 million a year for thinning, fuel reduction, prescribed fire and replanting, with a set share for First Nations crews and cultural burning. About 300 seasonal wildfire crew members will stay on through the winter to do prevention work.

Our platform does not yet include dedicated wildlife funding in law, an independent management commission, or a controlled-burn target in hectares. We would be glad to work with BCWF on these ideas in a meeting.

3. The federal firearms buyback

Our public safety plan puts police resources where they matter most. We will double BC's targeted enforcement programs for repeat and violent offenders. We will make the extortion task force permanent, and set up a 40-officer port enforcement team by 2028. Our platform does not take a position on the federal buyback.

Thank you again for your work in conservation. We look forward to continuing the conversation.

Sincerely,

Elenore Sturko
Leader, CentreBC