



ASSOCIATION OF  
PROFESSIONAL BIOLOGY  
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July 31, 2018

The Honourable Doug Donaldson  
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development  
Room 248 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

By email: [WildlifeAndHabitat@gov.bc.ca](mailto:WildlifeAndHabitat@gov.bc.ca).

Dear Minister Donaldson,

**RE: Public Engagement on Wildlife and Habitat**

The Association of Professional Biology (APB) appreciates the opportunity to provide you with feedback through the current Public Engagement process on Wildlife Management and Habitat Conservation.

The APB represents over 500 biology professionals in British Columbia. Our membership is comprised of knowledgeable, experienced and accredited scientists who, through the College of Applied Biology Act (2002), have formally stipulated professional accountability for stewardship of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and biological resources, within a framework made up of Registered Biology Professionals.

Our recent internal APB members' survey focused on soliciting feedback on the 8 challenges and associated questions asked in your Public Engagement on Wildlife and Habitat. Detailed survey results are attached for your consideration.

Generally, the APB advocates for wildlife management and habitat conservation strategies that are guided by:

- Accredited biology professionals, whose work supports policy development and regulatory processes in the public sector; innovative approaches to impact management in the private sector; and objective research and monitoring by independent professionals.

- The application of peer-reviewed science in wildlife management decisions and in the evaluation, improvement, understanding, and objective accountability of the success or failure of related policies and practices.
- Management frameworks predicated on scientific integrity and respect for Indigenous knowledge, rather than dogmatic approaches preordained by special interests. As Biology Professionals we have a responsibility to question any approach that mandates putting private or commercial interests over the public interest in the management of natural resources.
- A commitment to reconciliation and the development of explicit and mutually-acceptable agreements on how scientific and Indigenous information are considered, verified and validated.
- Species and habitat management plans that align with overarching policies, particularly the provincial Climate Action Plans and Cumulative Effects Framework, to reduce the influence of conflicting ministerial mandates and strengthen transparent, evidence-based decision making within government.
- Ecosystem-based approaches, with legislated protection and funding for species at risk.
- Explicit consideration of cumulative effects and climate change in resource management policies and practices.
- Open access to information and permanent archiving systems that provide a foundation for knowledge building, accountability, and continuous improvement in wildlife management and habitat conservation.

Given the broad scope of policy reviews currently underway to renew BC's Land Use Planning, Rural Development, Species at Risk, Climate Change, Professional Reliance, and Wildlife & Habitat policies and strategies, we urge the Province to initiate collaborative approaches amongst these review processes. There are parallels in the discussion among these reviews that would benefit from proactive consideration of how these policies and strategies can evolve to support each other in an integrated way.

Moving forward, **the APB would like to be recognized as a key partner in wildlife management and habitat conservation, and be invited to participate in Direct Engagement** as proposed changes to relevant management strategies are further developed. The APB can play a central role in policy review and development by bringing an objective, knowledgeable, and practice-based perspective to further the discussion.

We look forward to working with you to modernize wildlife management and habitat conservation strategies for British Columbia.

Sincerely,

*Pamela Hengeveld*

Pamela Hengeveld  
Chair, Advocacy Committee  
Association of Professional Biology

Mark Thompson  
President, Association of Professional Biology

Cc: The Honourable George Heyman  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
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