

Responses from Canada's Conservatives

Ontario Federation of Hunters and Anglers National Fishing and Hunting Collaborative

Questions regarding the Conservative Party of Canada's priorities on wildlife issues

Conservation

As the party of the great outdoors, Canada's Conservatives have a proud track record of supporting Canadians hunters and anglers and their conservation work.

In 2010, the previous Conservative government committed to conserving 17 per cent of terrestrial lands through protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. As of January 2020, Canada had reached 12 per cent. We remain committed to reaching this target and will seek to increase our goal to 25 per cent. We will not only favour the creation of large parks in remote areas, but also protect areas near where people live.

We have a detailed plan to realize this goal, that includes:

- Continuing to develop parks and protected areas in all parts of Canada;
- Investing an additional \$3 billion in natural climate solutions focused on the restoration of grasslands, wetlands, and forest;
- Focusing on using remote sensing to identify conservation gaps in the southern working landscape and gather data that can be used to determine the potential for lands to provide ecosystem services; and
- Working with Indigenous communities to expand the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas managed and stewarded by Indigenous Guardians.

Wetlands

Our wetlands, rivers, and lakes are essential to our quality of life. They provide us with drinking water, provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife, and offer recreation opportunities.

To support our wetlands, we will support the completion of the Canadian Wetland Inventory, explore ways to protect wetlands on private lands and provide funding for watershed protection.

We will restore funding for the National Wetland Conservation Fund, the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program, and for the clean-up of Lake Simcoe - all funding that was cancelled by the Trudeau government. We will maintain funding for the Great Lakes in Ontario and Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba.

To protect water quality, we will end raw sewage dumping into our waterways in partnership with provinces and municipalities. We will also tighten the rules on cruise ship dumping in Canadian waters to align with Alaska's rules.

Sustainable Fisheries

Canada's fishing communities want to leave well-managed, sustainable fisheries to future generations, yet they are now more divided than ever and fearful for their future.

What is needed now is unity in a common purpose: restoring and maintaining healthy stocks that support commercial, recreational, and cultural fisheries.

A Conservative government will restore calm and confidence to Canada's fisheries sector by respecting the importance of all resource users and putting conservation first. To do this, we will:

- Update and strengthen the Department of Fisheries and Oceans national aquatic invasive species program and ensure that the Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations are being implemented.
- Restore community-based conservation initiatives like the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program, provide more support for hatcheries, and support public conservation education initiatives.
- 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.
- 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.

Firearms

Canada's Conservatives respect the importance of firearms to the law-abiding outdoors community. As a sign of our respect, we will improve the regulation of legal firearms to ensure that it is evidence-based and focuses on protecting public safety.

We will start by repealing C-71 and the May 2020 Order in Council and conducting a review of the *Firearms Act* with participation by law enforcement, firearms owners, manufacturers, and members of the public.

We will then update legislation by introducing a simplified classification system and codifying it in law so that it is clear what types of firearms fit into each category and classification decisions can be made quickly, and with the public and firearms owners having confidence that they are not arbitrary.

The legislation will also - for the first time - contain definitions of currently ambiguous terms like "variant."

We will also bring in a strict regime to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals. This contrasts with the Liberals, who have refused to take action against gangs, while harassing hunters and sport shooters.