

An Action Plan for Wildlife Habitat Conservation: Canadian Wildlife Service

**Tabled for public information at the Tri-Council Meeting
of Parks, Wildlife and Environment Ministers.**

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PREFACE

Canada has a rich heritage of wildlife and wildlands. Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) contributes to the conservation and protection of the Canadian and global environments through programs aimed at wildlife, particularly migratory birds, and their habitats.

CWS's wildlife habitat conservation program is multi-faceted, including networks of protected areas and initiatives to promote stewardship of the total landscape, both nationally and internationally.

CWS manages 45 National Wildlife Areas and 101 Migratory Bird Sanctuaries; acts as the Canadian co-ordinator of a national network of Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance); and through participation on the "Wetlands for the Americas" organization, contributes to a network of shorebird reserves. CWS coordinates the North American Waterfowl Management Plan in Canada, a program focussing on conserving millions of hectares of wetlands and upland habitat through partnership actions. As well, CWS enters into cooperative wildlife management agreements with other federal departments, provincial/territorial governments and with native organizations.

This Action Plan for Wildlife Habitat Conservation is consistent with Canada's Green Plan (1990), A Wildlife Policy for Canada (1990) and the Biodiversity Convention which Canada signed in 1992. The Green Plan includes an objective to increase the proportion of protected area in Canada to 12%, which will also be a vital element of our biodiversity planning. CWS's existing and proposed protected areas will contribute to the achievement of both protected areas and biodiversity goals.

The following action plan sets out strategies and corresponding actions that CWS plans to undertake to achieve wildlife habitat conservation objectives. However, there are no lists of potential sites or schedules for designation of sites as NWAs or MBSs. Since most of CWS's habitat conservation efforts involve partnerships with landholders, it would be premature to publish lists of sites and dates without consultation with and concurrence from potential partners. As well, actions to implement the Biodiversity Convention will be specified in coming months, building on potential biodiversity components of initiatives such as the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and Ramsar wetlands.

This action plan updates and replaces the document "Habitat Conservation: Canadian Wildlife Service Strategies for the 1990s". Tabling of this document at the November 25, 1992 Tri-Council meeting provides information to the public on Environment Canada's actions, strategies and objectives to achieve its obligations for wildlife habitat conservation.



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INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Wildlife Service, as the major advisor on wildlife matters to the Government of Canada, assumes the lead role in developing and implementing a wildlife habitat conservation strategy and action plan at the federal level. This lead role is reflected in the Conservation and Protection Results Definition Model:

Mission: Contribute to the conservation and protection of the Canadian and global environments for sustained benefits.

Need: Conserve Canada's natural resources.

Effect: Wildlife habitat is maintained or enhanced.

In 1990, "A Wildlife Policy for Canada" was approved by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Wildlife Conference, to which the Canadian Wildlife Service is the federal representative, and adopted by the Wildlife Minister's Council of Canada. The goal of this national policy is:

" ... to maintain and enhance the health and diversity of Canada's wildlife, for its own sake and for the benefit of present and future generations of Canadians".

The scope of the wildlife policy is expanded to include biodiversity - the variety of different ecosystems, species and genetic stocks. The Policy goes on to specify what actions governments should consider and undertake with respect to wildlife habitat. (See Annex for excerpts regarding habitat).

The Canadian Wildlife Service's "Action Plan for Wildlife Habitat Conservation" takes into account the expectations arising out of this policy, the Conservation and Protection Results Definition Model and the Green Plan, and has been prepared in the context of CWS's leadership obligations at the federal level.

Action plans are presented in the context of habitat conservation strategies and objectives.

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A. WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION - GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A Canadian Wildlife Service Perspective

The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), as the lead wildlife agency of the Federal Government, is guided in the conduct of its roles and responsibilities by legislation and regulatory obligations, by departmental and federal policies, and by its assigned roles within Conservation and Protection. It is also guided by its "clientele", i.e. the Canadian public, whose views on values and expectations regarding Canadian wildlife are regularly monitored. CWS is guided as well by its relationships with other wildlife agencies and non-government organizations.

Drawing on this network of influence, CWS has adopted the following goal and objectives for federal wildlife habitat conservation efforts:

Goal: Canada's wildlife habitat should be maintained or enhanced to sustain all species indigenous to (i.e. naturally occurring in) Canada.

Objectives:

- I To maintain wildlife habitat throughout Canada in sufficient quantity and quality to support desired wildlife population levels.
- II To encourage and support the habitat conservation initiatives of Non-Government Organizations.
- III To ensure that the environmental impacts on habitat of new initiatives and existing programs and policies are minimized.
- IV To ensure that the environmental quality of wildlife habitats is maintained or enhanced.
- V To contribute to the conservation of wildlife habitat internationally.
- VI To support and promote the development of scientific expertise to improve the technical basis for habitat conservation.
- VII To ensure that the importance of wildlife habitat in Canada is promoted.

The Canadian Wildlife Service has developed a series of strategies and related action plans to expedite its contributions to the achievement of these objectives as well as to illustrate how it intends to work with others in the achievement of habitat conservation. These strategies and action plans will be guided by a series of principles, grouped into four general categories:

- (a) Habitat Conservation Needs/Obligations/Opportunities
- (b) Habitat Conservation Approaches
- (c) Responsible Agents for Habitat Conservation
- (d) Leadership in Habitat Conservation

Each of these categories and the principles articulated within them are consistent with the Wildlife Policy for Canada, the Federal Policy on Land Use, the Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation, the Federal Water Policy, the National Parks Policy, the DFO Policy for the Management of Fish Habitat, the Treasury Board Policy on Federal Land Management and the Biodiversity Convention. These principles are consistent with Canada's commitment to fulfill the objectives of the World Conservation Strategy as described and extended in Caring for the Earth and of the Green Plan. As well, these principles recognize and respect a longstanding axiom in Canada that the free exercise of private rights and obligations associated with land tenure should be preserved unless they are clearly demonstrated to be contrary to the public interest.

Guiding Principles

a) Habitat Conservation Needs/Obligations/Opportunities

- Canada's indigenous wildlife require sufficient quantity and quality of habitat to sustain their abundance and their species and genetic diversity.
- No net loss of habitat functions is fundamental to wildlife habitat conservation, and, in areas where serious degradation or losses have occurred, net gains (through the restoration, enhancement and/or creation of habitat) are essential.
- All aspects of the Canadian landscape - urban, rural, wildlands and marine environments - represent opportunities for wildlife habitat conservation.

b) Habitat Conservation Approaches

- Habitat conservation requires an ecosystems approach which takes into account the need for biodiversity. It follows that research is fundamental to this understanding.
- The way in which land is used and managed determines the quality and quantity of habitat upon which wildlife depends.

- The protection and maintenance of certain critical wildlife habitats may take precedence over their use and management by humans.
- Wildlife habitat conservation is dependent upon the incorporation of environmental objectives into the economic decision-making process, as was recommended by the (Brundtland) World Commission on Environment and Development, the CCREM National Task Force on Environment and Economy and Canada's Green Plan.

c) Responsible Agents for Habitat Conservation

- Habitat conservation requires a cooperative approach involving all levels of government, land owners, native people, non-government organizations and the private sector.
- Management costs for habitat conservation are the responsibility of all Canadians, whereas the costs for mitigating measures to retain or restore habitat are borne by those whose actions affect habitat.
- Governments are accountable for the impact and long-term effects of their programs and policies on wildlife habitat.
- The Federal Government has a responsibility to conserve wildlife habitat, while respecting the jurisdiction of provinces and territories and the rights of individual land owners.

d) Leadership in Habitat Conservation

- The Federal Government has the responsibility to provide leadership for habitat conservation on federal lands and internationally, whereas the Provinces, Territories, Municipalities and aboriginal peoples have leadership responsibilities on their respective lands.
- Effective leadership in wildlife habitat conservation relies on a well-informed and involved public, and is frequently based on partnerships.

B. HABITAT CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS FOR THE CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

There is no one strategy which CWS can embrace in habitat conservation; rather, a series of strategies is required, based on the seven objectives identified in Part A of this document.

To implement these strategies, action plans for CWS follow each strategy response, based on specific tasks identified by the CWS Habitat Conservation Task Force and others. These action items will appear in CWS Headquarters and Regions' annual work plans and long-term operational plans, in conformance with the Conservation and Protection Results Definition Model.

As implementation of these strategies occurs, tasks will be completed, new tasks may be articulated and added, and priorities may change. To ensure currency of this CWS habitat conservation action plan document, CWS Management Board will review it annually, incorporating amendments, additions and/or deletions as may be appropriate.

OBJECTIVE I: To maintain wildlife habitat throughout Canada in sufficient quantity and quality to support desired and sustainable wildlife population levels.

The Canadian Wildlife Service recognizes and accepts that the achievement of this goal must take into account not only its own mandated programs, but as well the programs of other federal agencies, the provinces, territories, municipalities, native groups and the private sector. CWS further recognizes that special consideration is required for northern lands, marine environments and endangered species. To clarify CWS roles and responsibilities, a series of sub-objectives have been identified followed by a CWS strategy and action plan towards the achievement of the sub-objective.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 1. To maintain and/or enhance wildlife habitat on federal lands.

CWS Strategy 1.1 CWS will establish and maintain key habitats in a national network of National Wildlife Areas (NWAs), by:

- ° developing and implementing a National Wildlife Area System Plan to guide the selection, acquisition and management of National Wildlife Areas;
- ° effectively managing existing NWAs;
- ° developing creative approaches to the securement of NWAs;

- using acquisition to secure future NWA sites where other approaches are proven inappropriate or unavailable;
- establishing a federal funding capability to participate with other agencies to conserve key habitat.

CWS Action Plan: In the pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- evaluate and confirm criteria for the selection of NWAs;
- rationalize existing NWAs, and infill, expand or delete as appropriate;
- enter into agreements with other federal government departments to transfer administration and control, and/or the management of, or enter into co-management agreements for, the habitat portions of their holdings to DOE (CWS);
- obtain and manage compensatory lands for key habitat unavoidably lost through the actions of others, in accordance with the "no net loss" principle;
- optimize habitat acquisition opportunities under other federal programs (eg. St. Lawrence Action Plan, Fraser River Action Plan, Great Lakes Wetlands Conservation Action Plan, North American Waterfowl Management Plan, native land claims);
- pursue gifts to the Crown, land exchanges, lease arrangements, easements, etc. that have habitat potential for NWAs;
- develop funding responses to unplanned wildlife habitat acquisition opportunities;
- develop and implement NWA management plans;
- apply cost recovery (where appropriate) to offset operations;
- use partnerships and/or agreements to manage NWAs;
- use volunteers (where appropriate) in the management of NWAs;
- use NWAs for habitat research and to promote public awareness;
- improve enforcement regimes for NWAs.

CWS Strategy 1.2 CWS will establish and maintain a network of Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, by:

- developing and implementing a Migratory Bird Sanctuary System Plan to guide the selection, establishment and management of Migratory Bird Sanctuaries;
- exploring alternate forms of bird sanctuaries for municipal areas;
- effectively managing present Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, particularly those found on federal lands.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- evaluate and confirm criteria previously drafted and circulated for review;
- rationalize existing Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, and infill, expand or delete as appropriate;
- seek to strengthen Migratory Bird Sanctuary Regulations vis-a-vis habitat protection, including the option of seasonal sanctuaries;
- improve the enforcement regimes for Migratory Bird Sanctuaries.

CWS Strategy 1.3: CWS will actively seek the cooperation of the Canadian Parks Service to ensure the continued maintenance of key habitats within National Parks, by:

- supporting and influencing the implementation of the National Parks System Plan;
- exploring the potential for cooperative and complementary programs with the Canadian Parks Service.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- continue to share data and information with the Canadian Parks Service vis-a-vis habitat and wildlife;
- investigate opportunities to share and link interpretation facilities and programs, environmental emergency response systems, cooperative habitat research programs, endangered species recovery programs, etc.;
- develop mutually-supportive positions vis-a-vis habitat conservation issues;
- develop and implement joint strategies to facilitate a DOE action response to the 12% protected areas objective for Canada.

CWS Strategy 1.4: CWS will actively promote the protection, maintenance, enhancement and management of wildlife habitat on other federal lands, by:

- identifying, inventorying, assessing and monitoring habitat found on other federal lands;
- developing memoranda of understanding or agreement or other arrangements as appropriate regarding habitat on federal lands;
- exercising horizontal influence powers through federal legislation, policies, codes of practice, etc. (eg. Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation, Federal Policy on Land Use, Federal Water Policy, federal environmental assessment processes, Canadian Environmental Protection Act);
- influencing the policies and programs of other government departments as they impact on the effective management of habitat (eg. Agriculture, National Defence, Indian and Northern Affairs);
- influencing policies and programs on aboriginal lands for effective habitat conservation.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- complete initial habitat capability analyses, by province, of federal landholdings larger than five hectares;
- facilitate and support RAMSAR assessments and plans for wetlands on federal lands;
- explore memoranda of understanding or agreement with other federal departments or agencies regarding habitat protection and management;
- contribute to environmental assessments under the federal environmental assessment process regarding wildlife/wildlife habitat impacts.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 2. : To maintain or enhance wildlife habitat on northern lands, i.e. lands in Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

CWS Strategy 2: CWS will contribute to the maintenance and/or enhancement of wildlife habitat on northern lands by:

- participating with native peoples in the land claim settlement process, to ensure conservation of key holdings;

- developing an effective environmental assessment capability to ensure habitat conservation;
- identifying and prioritizing key habitats, and preparing conservation strategies;
- encouraging non-government organizations to become more involved in the conservation of key habitats;
- expanding networks of Migratory Bird Sanctuaries and National Wildlife Areas and supporting the expansion of Canadian Parks Service programs for areas of national significance, with the concurrence of native groups and territorial governments.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- share and interpret wildlife/wildlife habitat data with native groups undertaking land selections for claim settlements;
- contribute to streamlining environmental assessment review procedures to avoid duplication with equivalent procedures;
- where applicable, ensure full involvement in environmental assessment processes in the North;
- identify key habitat for CWS-mandate species, and disseminate such information to all governments and agencies involved in northern development;
- develop an action plan to maintain the quality of northern habitats in case of environmental emergencies;
- participate in seminars, workshops, and similar activities that feature northern habitat issues;
- develop strategic action plans for the conservation of key northern habitats;
- encourage and facilitate native peoples' involvement in the management of key habitats.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 3.: To support the maintenance and/or enhancement of wildlife habitat on provincial Crown lands.

CWS Strategy 3: CWS will contribute to the maintenance and/or enhancement of wildlife habitat on provincial Crown lands, by:

- developing cooperative agreements for habitat conservation, maintenance and/or enhancement;

- influencing and supporting the establishment of habitat conservation programs;
- incorporating habitat conservation into federal/provincial agreements;
- influencing and supporting provincial policies and programs for effective management/conservation of habitat (eg. wetlands conservation policies).

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- contribute to the identification of key wildlife habitats of national and regional importance;
- develop conservation strategies in concert with provincial authorities, to protect key habitats;
- actively participate in provincial habitat conservation initiatives;
- provide scientific and management support in habitat conservation initiatives;
- participate in provincial habitat conservation committees;
- enter into partnership agreements as appropriate;
- urge the designation of important wildlife habitats as critical wildlife habitat under provincial legislation;
- promote the application of federal environmental assessment processes to projects, policies and programs as required;
- review major developmental proposals to determine if federal jurisdiction - habitat in particular - is impacted;
- encourage provincial wildlife agencies to review their departmental policies and programs to ensure the impact on wildlife habitat is neutral.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 4: To support the maintenance and/or enhancement of wildlife habitat on municipal and private lands.

CWS Strategy 4: CWS will contribute to the maintenance and/or enhancement of wildlife habitat on municipal and private lands, by:

- influencing and supporting municipal policies and programs for effective management of habitat;

- encouraging stewardship arrangements which promote habitat conservation and promote habitat extension services;
- developing, in concert with provincial agencies, cooperative agreements for habitat securement, maintenance, enhancement and restoration, especially in areas where degradation or loss is critical;
- ensuring wildlife damage prevention programs are in place to complement habitat development programs;
- encouraging private industries to participate in wildlife habitat conservation.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- in concert with provincial agencies, review and offer scientific advice on municipal proposals, and identify habitat concerns;
- support studies that may recommend changes to the land tax structure to encourage habitat conservation;
- support and participate in private land stewardship initiatives;
- develop public awareness programs on habitat management techniques, and promote habitat extension services;
- facilitate the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan through the establishment of conservation areas for wildlife;
- develop crop damage prevention programs as required.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 5: To support the maintenance or enhancement of the productivity of marine wildlife habitats.

CWS Strategy 5: CWS will contribute to the maintenance or enhancement of the productivity of marine wildlife habitats by:

- promoting and undertaking activities in marine environments which are consistent with and supportive of the DOE Marine Environmental Quality Management Framework;
- identifying, prioritizing and disseminating information on key marine habitats to regulatory authorities;
- assessing the impact of fisheries practices on the food chains of specific wildlife groups;

- exerting powers to influence offshore developments and the transport of oil and other contaminants, to prevent damage to marine habitats;
- strengthening and enforcing existing federal legislation to reduce pollution caused by ocean dumping;
- establishing emergency plans to limit habitat damage on key areas resulting from oil spills and participate as required in emergency responses;
- providing habitat impact advice on applications for aquaculture permits; and,
- developing an effective environmental assessment capability to ensure marine wildlife habitat conservation.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- produce seabird atlases;
- conduct workshops, conferences, symposia;
- explore options to establish various reserves for seabirds;
- conduct cooperative research with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to evaluate exploitation of specific fish stocks, to determine levels that will permit their sustained use by man, birds and other wildlife;
- develop and implement educational programs for area fishermen regarding the stewardship of the environment they share with seabirds and other wildlife;
- participate in environmental assessments of offshore oil and gas developments;
- work directly with Canadian Coast Guard and other transport surveillance authorities to ensure active enforcement of transport legislation;
- advise and consult with DOE's Environmental Protection staff regarding applications for ocean dumping; and,
- develop within CWS an adequate response capability for environmental emergencies.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 6: To protect, maintain, enhance or rehabilitate habitat for endangered species under federal jurisdiction.

CWS Strategy: CWS will contribute to the protection, maintenance, enhancement or rehabilitation of habitat for endangered species by:

- leading, developing and implementing CWS and federal policies for endangered species which include appropriate references to their habitat requirements;
- determining habitat management requirements for endangered species under federal jurisdiction;
- cooperating with appropriate agencies to identify, secure, regulate and manage endangered species habitat;
- participating in the identification of species recovery needs, and in developing and implementation of recovery plans; and,
- participating in the identification and implementation of habitat conservation plans for threatened communities (eg. Carolinian Canada, Prairie Conservation Action Plan).

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- undertake cooperative research to establish minimum habitat requirements and the opportunities available to meet these requirements;
- undertake site-specific research;
- develop cooperative arrangements to secure and manage required habitats and designate specific habitat sites to allow for regulatory control;
- provide active participation on RENEW (Recovery of Nationally Endangered Wildlife) recovery teams;
- participate on steering committees;
- provide scientific advice;
- support and influence management direction;
- promote the development of federal policies for conservation of endangered species' habitats, as well as endangered habitats;
- ensure that each CWS habitat takes into account the specific conservation needs of endangered species.

OBJECTIVE II: To encourage and support the habitat conservation initiatives of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).

The Canadian Wildlife Service recognizes that NGOs have a special and growing role in the habitat conservation sector, including the focusing of public interest groups on habitat concerns; the acquisition and management of specific habitats; the generation of revenues from the public, corporate and government sectors in support of habitat initiatives; and, providing lobbyist, activist and catalytic leadership functions in support of habitat initiatives.

CWS Strategy: CWS will actively encourage and support the habitat conservation initiatives of NGOs by:

- ° developing and entering into partnerships, agreements, etc. to secure/manage important habitats; and
- ° providing scientific/management support to NGO habitat initiatives.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- provide increased support to Wildlife Habitat Canada through participation on the Board of Directors and on technical committees, through the undertaking of joint research projects, and through the provision of advice on program planning;
- ensure CWS capability to lever resources/support through appropriate allocation of resources;
- participate on scientific and technical advisory committees;
- encourage the creation/reactivation of habitat coordination committees where required;
- participate in specific project or program steering committees;
- provide national/secretariat support where appropriate; and
- organize and convene habitat-related workshops to facilitate implementation of NGO goals and activities.

OBJECTIVE III: To ensure that the environmental impacts on habitat from new initiatives and existing programs and policies are minimized.

Co-operative regional and headquarters application of federal environmental assessment processes (the existing federal Guidelines Order and pending environmental assessment legislation under Bill C-13) will ensure that potentially significant adverse impacts on habitat are either eliminated or minimized.

CWS Strategy: CWS will contribute to the reduction of negative impacts on habitat from new initiatives and existing programs and policies by:

- developing and implementing an environmental assessment response strategy;
- working cooperatively with land owners/managers to achieve no net loss of migratory bird habitat functions from development projects, programs or policies;
- working cooperatively with federal land managers to achieve no net loss of wildlife habitat functions on federal lands due to development projects, programs or policies;
- promoting the "no net loss" concept for other wildlife habitat;
- developing and overseeing implementation of mitigative measures where habitats are adversely impacted or lost. Where possible, attempting to achieve a "net gain" in habitat.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- contribute to the revision of the "Environmental Assessment in the Canadian Wildlife Service: Task Force Report".
- develop data bases to respond to environmental assessment needs;
- participate in federal environmental assessments, and as appropriate, in provincial environmental assessments, participation to include the planning, implementation and post implementation stages;
- develop and implement criteria for the "no net loss" concept;
- seek support from the public and non-government organizations for the "no net loss" concept;
- test the "no net loss" concept in selected projects/programs.

OBJECTIVE IV: To ensure that the environmental quality of wildlife habitats is maintained or enhanced.

A variety of processes, substances and actions can lead to reductions in environmental quality of wildlife habitat, including the introduction (intended or otherwise) of toxic substances, environmental emergencies, loss of buffer areas, lack of surveillance and lack of knowledge.

CWS Strategy: CWS will contribute to the maintenance or enhancement of the environmental quality of wildlife habitats, particularly for migratory birds, by:

- monitoring habitat quality in support of the development and application of standards and guidelines for habitat conservation under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and environmental assessment processes;
- ensuring capability to provide adequate response to environmental emergencies impacting on wildlife habitat;
- increasing enforcement of existing legislation (Canadian Environmental Protection Act, Canada Wildlife Act, Migratory Birds Convention Act, etc.) for habitat protection;
- describing trends in environmental quality of habitats for State of Environment reporting purposes;
- influencing and advising on policies and programs which impact on wildlife habitat (eg. agriculture, forestry).

CWS Action Plan: In support of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- research pathways of toxic chemicals through habitat;
- determine levels of environmental contaminants tolerable to wildlife as well as safe levels of contaminants in wildlife for human consumption;
- explore the use of wildlife habitat as a bio-indicator of environmental quality;
- determine migratory bird habitats at risk, with respect to toxic chemical use patterns;
- develop appropriate data bases;
- map critical habitats for migratory birds;
- develop contingency plans to limit habitat losses or degradation in emergency situations;

- participate with and advise emergency response teams;
- disseminate information on key migratory bird habitats to regulatory authorities;
- exert horizontal powers to effect program modifications as required.
- promote CWS participation with national and regional activities for State of Environment reporting where wildlife habitat information for migratory birds is required;
- clearly identify policies and programs which impact on the quality of wildlife habitats and determine their precise impacts;
- design, promote or undertake studies to determine the environmental quality of wildlife habitats, particularly for migratory birds;
- sensitize decision makers as to the impact of their programs on wildlife habitats, and recommend corrective actions.

OBJECTIVE V: To contribute to the conservation of wildlife habitat internationally.

CWS recognizes that wildlife habitat concerns know no national or international bounds. Apart from the shared species of wildlife that Canada accommodates alongside other nations, Canada has a larger interest in habitats the world over, seeking to ensure that the habitats which support the world's flora and fauna are managed and maintained to enhance biodiversity and in accordance with sustainable development philosophy.

CWS Strategy: CWS will contribute to the conservation of wildlife habitat internationally by:

- ° developing and implementing cooperative arrangements which promote research, management, and sustained use in countries with whom Canada shares species;
- ° supporting international conventions and agreements which contribute to habitat conservation, and encouraging other nations to become signatories to such conventions and agreements;
- ° supporting and implementing bilateral and multilateral agreements or similar arrangements which promote habitat conservation;

- ° influencing and providing expertise to Canadian and international agencies and institutions (eg. Canadian International Development Agency, Agriculture Canada, Forestry Canada, banks and lending institutions, World Bank, Global Environmental Facility etc.) that undertake, promote or support projects in other countries; and
- ° promoting the use of alternative methods or substances where evidence confirms that current land use practices and/or chemical uses in the environment are damaging to migratory birds and their habitats.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- continue and extend the Latin American Program;
- arrange staff interchanges;
- develop and implement mechanisms such as shorebird reserves with other nations;
- continue and extend (via "twinning" principle) the designation of significant sites within Canada and internationally for migratory species;
- implement the Ramsar and Biodiversity Conventions;
- implement the Circumpolar Agreement on the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna;
- explore applications similar to Ramsar for the designation of sites for species groups other than waterfowl;
- promote the development of an international convention dealing with significant sites for colonial nesting species;
- lead and facilitate the implementation of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan in Canada;
- implement the wildlife components of the Canada/Russia Environmental Agreements;
- develop bilateral agreements with Denmark, Iceland and Ireland regarding marine birds;
- pursue the development of a bilateral agreement with France (St-Pierre-Miquelon) regarding migratory birds;
- implement the Canada/U.S.A./Mexico Agreement on the Conservation of Migratory Birds.
- pursue the development of other bilateral and multilateral agreements as may be appropriate;

- formalize an administrative arrangement with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to facilitate wildlife habitat conservation projects in other countries;
- seek CIDA funding for habitat management projects and staff exchanges;
- review CIDA proposals to determine if they have negative impacts on wildlife habitat, and recommend remedial actions;
- develop educational programs and materials to promote sound land use practices and the safe use of chemicals in developing nations;
- promote the development and use of biological alternatives to chemicals for use in developing nations;
- discourage the use of herbicides and pesticides not approved for use in Canada in CIDA-sponsored projects.

OBJECTIVE VI: **To support and promote the development of scientific expertise to improve the technical base for habitat conservation.**

In an increasingly complicated and sophisticated world, it is imperative that scientific knowledge associated with habitat conservation be advanced to ensure credibility in the various fora where decisions affecting habitat occur. As the federal wildlife advisor, CWS must continue to renew and update its science capital.

CWS Strategy: CWS will maintain and where necessary upgrade its scientific capabilities vis-a-vis wildlife habitat conservation, by:

- ° undertaking habitat research in conformance with the CWS Science Strategy;
- ° undertaking and encouraging the development of socio-economic tools in support of habitat conservation;
- ° undertaking and promoting research on the impact of contaminants on Canada's wildlife habitats;
- ° undertaking and encouraging research to improve monitoring and evaluation techniques in support of habitat management;
- ° undertaking and encouraging research to mitigate conflicts between wildlife and land use;
- ° undertaking and encouraging research on the habitat requirements for species; and,

- ° undertaking and promoting research on the impact of climate change on Canada's wildlife habitat.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- research methods of habitat management and enhancement;
- measure/evaluate ecological impacts of habitat management, and develop criteria to guide managers;
- support or facilitate research on international habitats for shared species;
- participate in interdisciplinary research as it relates to wildlife habitat;
- participate in joint or cooperative research projects to advance the understanding and implementation of habitat conservation, (eg. "Common Ground" report by CWS, Wildlife Habitat Canada and Agriculture Canada);
- participate with the Canada Centre for Remote Sensing in habitat-related projects/studies; and,
- provide scientific and financial assistance and support to habitat research via scholarship funds, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada grants, non-government organization programs and academic research initiatives.

OBJECTIVE VII: To ensure that the importance of wildlife habitat in Canada is promoted.

A knowledgeable public is the key to major advancements in habitat conservation. Public support, based on an understanding of issues and options, can be a powerful ally in the generation of support for habitat initiatives, and in the achievement of sustainable development objectives in Canada.

CWS Strategy: CWS will actively promote the importance of wildlife habitat in Canada, by:

- ° cooperating in the design and delivery of a Canada-wide public awareness program for habitat;
- ° ensuring research results are available in formats suitable for public use and information (eg. outputs targeted to decision-makers, planners); "
- ° ensuring effective consultation with the public, non-government organizations and the private sector;
- ° ensuring the status of wildlife habitat is included in State of Environment reports;

- ° expanding public awareness programs on National Wildlife Areas, where appropriate;
- ° promoting the establishment of demonstration areas as a means of educating the public in the importance of habitat conservation;
- ° encouraging the active public participation in habitat conservation (eg. award incentives, 4-H projects);
- ° providing information and expertise, i.e. extension services to landowners on habitat conservation practices; and,
- ° articulating and promoting a wildlife conservation ethic among Canadians.

CWS Action Plan: In pursuit of this strategy, CWS Headquarters and Regions will undertake the following actions:

- consult with the public, non-government organizations and the private sector in the further development, refinement and implementation of habitat conservation initiatives;
- provide opportunities for public review and evaluation of the federal government's performance relative to habitat conservation goals;
- develop thematic State of Environment reports and chapters regarding the status of key habitat areas in Canada;
- participate in land-related initiatives of other federal departments, sensitizing them to habitat conservation opportunities and issues;
- publishing and presenting habitat-oriented articles/papers in a wide range of publications and public fora;
- expanding wildlife socio-economic studies to include habitat values, and widely disseminate the results;
- promote landowner contact programs, to improve conservation practices;
- utilize various forms of media, eg. rural newspapers, radio, television, video cassettes, etc. to sensitize landowners to habitat values; and,
- organize/sponsor/participate in symposia, conferences and workshops highlighting the importance of wildlife habitat.

ANNEX

A Wildlife Policy for Canada

Policy Statement 2 and 6

—— PROVIDING FOR WILDLIFE ——
 IN ECONOMIC
 AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

2. WILDLIFE IN POLICY AND PLANNING

Responsibility for land vertebrates, fish and marine mammals, commercially exploited trees, and protected areas is often assigned to different agencies, and few agencies presently recognize responsibility for the majority of invertebrates and plants.

At the same time, most sectors and agencies have an impact on, and benefit from, wildlife and its habitats—yet are seldom required to provide for their conservation. The sectors include energy, mining, industry; defence, housing, transport, urban development, water, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, recreation, and tourism.

In policy making and development planning (including both urban and resource development, and projects of the sectors listed above), considering economic, social, and environmental factors together enables wildlife conservation to be incorporated in policies, plans, and projects from the start.

Policy making

2.1 Governments should review, strengthen, and adopt comprehensive, cross-sectoral conservation policies and strategies in consultation with the public. Governmental policies and legislation on resources and the environment (such as on water, air, minerals, forests, and wetlands) and strategies for sustainable development should provide for conservation of wildlife and its habitats, and should ensure that all uses of resources are sustainable.

2.2 Corporations and all resource users should adopt policies and strategies for sustainability, including conservation of wildlife and its habitats.

2.3 The objectives and mandates of all sectors and agencies should require them to coordinate and consult with the agencies or organizations responsible for wildlife on decisions with a potential

impact on wildlife populations or habitats. In turn, the agencies or organizations responsible for wildlife should consult with the public.

2.4 The objectives and mandates of agencies responsible for renewable resources and ecosystems (notably forestry, fisheries, agriculture, water, and wildlife as traditionally understood) should require them to conserve the biodiversity of the resources and ecosystems concerned.

2.5 Wildlife agencies and organizations should consult with the responsible agencies concerning any impacts their management policies may have on other resources, such as archaeological resources.

2.6 Permanent mechanisms for interagency consultation should be established to provide for effective cross-sectoral definition of policies and management of programs for conservation of air, soil, water, and wildlife. A central unit may be needed for this purpose.

2.7 All governments should prepare and publish "state of the environment" reports.

Economic and development planning and assessment

2.8 Development projects should include an assessment of potential effects on wildlife populations and habitats as part of the environmental assessment process. Assessments of the environmental effects of development projects should be carried out at the project's pre-feasibility and feasibility stages and throughout the development planning process.

2.9 Development projects should also include a plan to: (a) protect ecological processes and the ecosystems that sustain them; (b) maintain wildlife populations, their habitats, and sensitive sites likely to be affected by the project; (c) consider the needs of wildlife users affected by the project; and (d) compensate for habitat that is unavoidably destroyed. The interest groups affected by the project should be involved in the preparation of the plans.

2.10 Existing monetary and fiscal policies—including tax, revenue, and government expenditure policies—should be examined for their impacts on wildlife conservation. New technologies, policies, and laws—especially major macroeconomic, finance, and sectoral policies and laws that are likely to result in significant impacts on the environment — should also be assessed for their impacts on wildlife and biodiversity. Based on this analysis, governments should eliminate measures that favour overexploitation of biological resources or destruction of habitats.

2.11 Regional assessments are needed where a number of development activities with potentially cumulative impacts are planned for a particular area. Sectoral assessments are needed to review the impacts of sectoral policies and investments.

2.12 Approval and any public financial support should be provided only to those policies or projects that, on the basis of assessment, are found to have an acceptable impact on wildlife populations and habitats.

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3. EVALUATING AND INCREASING THE SUSTAINABLE BENEFITS FROM WILDLIFE

Wildlife and wild resources make major economic contributions, but their conservation is grossly underfunded. Better information on all values of wildlife is required to improve understanding of the diversity of wildlife values and beneficiaries, show the importance of biodiversity to development, assist in decisions on competing uses of wildlife and ecosystems, and justify expenditures on conserving wildlife and ecosystems.

A bigger investment is needed in maintaining wildlife and ecosystems. At the same time, the sustainable benefits from wildlife can be increased. This would also strengthen public support for wildlife conservation and make it easier for governments to incorporate it as a high priority of economic and development policy.

IMPROVING WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

6. CONSERVATION OF WILDLIFE HABITAT

The extent and quality of wildlife habitat are declining in Canada. Lost or changing habitats, particularly in southern Canada, have reduced the abundance, diversity, and distribution of many wild species. Habitats may change or disappear at an accelerating rate as a result of climate change, adding to the pressures of unsustainable resource use, urbanization, and pollution.

Protection of habitats and ecosystems is the cheapest and most effective way of conserving wildlife and must always take precedence over other means. Moreover, restoring habitat is difficult, expensive, and often impractical.

Habitat conservation requires four mutually supportive approaches: comprehensive systems of protected areas, integration of habitat conservation in the management of public lands, habitat conservation on private lands, and habitat conservation on aboriginal lands. Applying the principle of public stewardship to wildlife that depends on privately owned habitat is a major challenge of wildlife management.

6.1 Governments, in cooperation with aboriginal peoples and nongovernmental organizations, should plan and implement comprehensive programs to maintain the diversity and distribution of wildlife habitats within major ecosystems in Canada. Program planning should classify and evaluate wildlife habitat, including the identification of critical habitats, and define wildlife habitat goals.

6.2 Governments, in cooperation with aboriginal peoples and nongovernmental organizations, should monitor and assess ecosystems and their wild populations in a form and to a schedule compatible with "state of the environment" reporting. This should include:

- Assessing the capability of habitats to support wildlife
- Assessing the effects on habitats of changing land use, pollution, introduced species, and other disturbances
- Assessing the extent and quality of habitat to determine gains and losses
- Monitoring habitat conservation measures

6.3 Governments and other organizations should provide financial and other incentives and remove disincentives, to mitigate impacts and encourage activities that enhance wildlife habitats. Costs of mitigative measures to protect wildlife habitat should be met by those whose actions require mitigation. Costs of rehabilitation of degraded habitat should be met by those causing the degradation.

6.4 The discharge of pollutants that threaten ecosystems or the accumulation of unacceptable levels of pollutants in wildlife should be prevented. Where such contamination presents a significant risk to consumers, access to the resource must be closed or the consumers must be advised of the risks.

6.5 All laws that protect habitat will be strictly enforced, and, where necessary, new legislation with adequate penalties will be passed to protect wildlife habitat.

6.6 Governments will complete and maintain comprehensive systems of protected areas, through legislation and/or policy, that include representative ecological types and give priority to the protection of endangered or limited habitats. To allow species to change their local and regional distributions in response to climate change and other factors, the protected area systems must be designed to:

- Protect the diversity of Canada's physical environments
- Contain a range of environments within each protected area
- Link protected areas by corridors of suitable habitat

6.7 Governments should include conservation of wildlife habitats as a management objective of all sectors using public lands and also provide for conservation of the full range of wildlife habitats in land use planning, setting regional goals for this purpose.

6.8 Landowners and land users should adopt a land ethic of sound conservation practices and stewardship of resources in managing their lands.

6.9 Governments should encourage conservation of wildlife habitats on private land by providing tax credits, reduced property taxes, subsidies, or other benefits for the establishment of nature reserves or other protected areas, or other measures to conserve habitats. They should ensure, by legislation if necessary, that conservation obligations undertaken in return for such benefits can survive changes in ownership of the land. They should explore the potential for entering into private management agreements with landowners who are not prepared to dedicate land as nature reserves. Governments and landowners should also develop cooperative programs to conserve wildlife populations and habitats.

6.10 Aboriginal peoples, governments, and nongovernmental organizations should promote the establishment of protected areas managed by aboriginal peoples where such areas correspond to traditional aboriginal lands.