



July 27, 2018

Re: British Columbia Wildlife and Habitat Strategy

Dear Minister Donaldson,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide further input to the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development wildlife and habitat conservation strategy for British Columbia. To date, the Private Forest Landowners Association (PFLA) has been actively involved, providing input at the 2018 stakeholder round table sessions. We have forwarded several ideas for consideration based on the vast experience of our membership in the management of B.C.'s wildlife and associated habitats.

The PFLA is a non-profit association that represents managed forest owners across the province of British Columbia—from the coast to the interior, the large to the small, the veteran forester to the novice tree farmer. While our membership is diverse, we are committed to the same goals:

- Ensure the safety of forest workers and the public,
- Understand that conservation of natural resources benefits society as a whole,
- Protect water quality, fish habitat, soil productivity and critical wildlife habitat,
- Apply best management practices in the planning and implementation of forest management operations; and,
- Achieve successful sustainable forest renewal after harvesting.

As an association, our main goals are to advocate and to educate for the private managed forest program. The PFLA continually strives to lead proactive initiatives with forest landowners, provincial and federal governments, First Nations and stakeholders to ensure the balance of environmental sustainability, community interests and economic realities. This balance is continually evolving and adapting with advances in science, operations and technology. The annual result in BC is over 4750 well paying local jobs, \$1 billion dollars in economic activity and \$150 million in tax revenues.



The owners in the managed forest program have invested significant time and resources into the lands on which they operate and thus, have a very good understanding from the ground up: site level habitat features (such as nests and dens) to the surrounding landscapes. Many of the members in our program are smaller operators (25 hectares) and have been managing the land in their families for decades. Where practicable, we see advantages of coordinating PFLA member knowledge with provincial and federal information when researching habitat needs and landscape-level habitat conservation strategies for species at risk.

An adequately funded provincial program that prioritizes regional and site-specific species at risk strategies needs to be coordinated across the various ministries. Prioritization of activities in a timely manner on crown land and incentivizing landowners (as seen in the agriculture sector with banked offsets, compensation and/or other innovative systems) will ensure long term success of the Canada-British Columbia Agreement on Species at Risk.

We look forward to working in a collaborative and coordinated manner to advance the short and long-term strategies for wildlife and habitat management while ensuring the success of the private managed forest landowners program and its significant contribution to British Columbia.

Sincerely,

Megan Hanacek, RPF, RPBio
CEO Private Forest Landowners Association