



Dear {FIRST_NAME|Wilderness Defender},

A 2015 hunting season for Alberta's sandhill cranes is being proposed. Proposals in previous years have been turned down but increased pressure from hunting groups has once again revived the consideration of a hunt. AWA has consistently opposed hunting sandhill cranes in Alberta for several reasons listed below. Please take a few minutes to write to ESRD Minister Robin Campbell and urge him to turn down a 2015 hunt of the magnificent sandhill crane.

-Brittany Verbeek, AWA Conservation Specialist

In This Issue:

Help Prevent a 2015 Sandhill Crane Hunt

AWA

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The Issue

Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) has recently learned that the Alberta government is considering opening a 2015 hunting season for sandhill cranes. Although AWA is not opposed to hunting when it is unmistakably sustainable, there is a reasonable doubt that this would in fact be the case with sandhill cranes, and so AWA does not support the proposed crane hunt for the following reasons:

- Low annual recruitment rates. Female sandhill cranes do not breed until 2-7 years old and rarely raise more than one young to fledging. This is a limiting factor on the ability of this species recovering from population declines.
- Misidentification of sandhill cranes for 'endangered' whooping cranes. Whooping cranes and sandhill cranes share a similar migratory path, part of which is in Alberta. The accidental shooting of the very threatened whooping crane was one of the main reasons that Alberta did not legalize sandhill crane hunting when many other provinces and states did. Whooping crane deaths due to misidentification would likely be under-reported from fear of prosecution.
- Continuing degradation of sandhill crane breeding habitat. Alberta Wild Species General Status Listing 2010 lists sandhill cranes as "sensitive to human disturbance and vulnerable to

wetland loss.” All forms of industrial development (roads, logging, tar sands, pipelines, etc.) are increasing pressure on breeding areas in Alberta’s boreal forests.

- Who are the stakeholders in this issue? Fish and Wildlife Policy Branch believes only hunters, who make up only 5% of Albertans, should have a say in what is or is not hunted. Meaningful consultation with all Albertans is needed before a sandhill crane hunt is considered.

[Link to AWA's briefing notes for ESRD Minister Robin Cambell](#)

Background

A sandhill crane hunt has been proposed several times over the past decade. A proposal in 2009 was turned down by then ESRD Minister Ted Morton, and in 2012 Minister McQueen received a request for the hunt by the Policy Branch. A 2012 Environment Canada document, *Proposals to Amend the Canadian Migratory Birds Regulations [Including Regulation Proposals for Overabundant Species]*, proposed allowing a limited crane hunt in several southeastern Alberta townships.

[Link to AWA's letter to ESRD Minister Ted Morton in 2009](#)

[Link to AWA's letter to ESRD Minister Diana McQueen and Federal Environment Minister Peter Kent in 2013](#)

Take Action

Please write ESRD Minister Robin Campbell urging him to turn down the proposed 2015 sandhill crane hunt.

Tell him a sensitive species such as the sandhill crane, its endangered cousin the whooping crane and many other migratory bird species need our long term consideration and care. Allowing a hunting season for sandhill cranes, especially without meaningful consultation with all Albertans, can place undue stress on their populations and adversely affect other wildlife.

Honourable Robin Campbell
Minister Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
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And please copy AWA at bverbeek@abwild.ca.

Thank you for taking action!

Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action

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