



Alberta Wilderness Association  
"Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action"

September 27, 2019

## An Open Letter to Party Leaders

### Top Federal Conservation Priorities - Alberta Wilderness Association

Dear Party Leaders,

Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) is writing to document top federal conservation priorities. AWA would like to see the next federal government and the opposition members address these important issues throughout the next four year term:

- **Protect Species at Risk:** The risks to threatened wildlife species continue to grow from a failure to list endangered species and protect their habitat as the *Species at Risk Act* intended. For example, Alberta's bull trout waited seven years to be listed as threatened. Woodland Caribou are *still* waiting on critical habitat protections. Solutions are possible, we need to act.
- **Support the creation of new protected areas, especially within endangered ecosystems and in collaboration with provinces/territories, local communities, and Indigenous Peoples:** AWA commends all parties for their public support to protect at least 17% of Canada's lands by 2020. Timely action is needed to achieve the commitment and ensure meaningful representative protections. For example, threatened and vital native grasslands are poorly represented in the current protected areas network.
- **Support stronger environmental protections:** AWA appreciates that habitat protections within the *Fisheries Act* have been reinstated. *Impact Assessment Act* changes however, did not restore credibility and trust. The next four years must focus on enforcing the new environmental laws with strong regulations, policies, and staffing with adequate funding for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Impact Assessment Agency, and the Canadian Wildlife Service.
- **Take meaningful action to eliminate Chronic Wasting Disease:** The enormous risk that Chronic Wasting Disease poses to Indigenous food security, human health, wildlife, and the economy must be dealt with. Cervid farming must be eliminated and appropriate methods of dealing with infected animals and the lands they have occupied as captive cervids must be mandated.

Founded in 1965, AWA works throughout Alberta towards more representative and connected protection of the unique and vital landscapes that are the source of our clean water, clean air and wildlife habitat. With more than 7,000 members and supporters in Alberta and across Canada, AWA is committed to ensuring the protection of wildlife and wild places in Alberta for all Canadians.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of these priorities. We would be pleased for opportunities to discuss these priorities further.

Sincerely,  
ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION



Christyann Olson,  
Executive Director

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