



Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing

AWA's mission is to "defend Wild Alberta through awareness and action". That is, our goal is to defend and preserve big wilderness. Hunting, trapping, and fishing are not central issues to wilderness protection. Consequently AWA's position on hunting is neutral: we are neither for nor against it, as long as it is well managed in ways that are humane, sustainable, and scientifically sound. Hunting is not the primary threat to wilderness, habitat degradation and destruction is, and that is where our focus must remain.

AWA believes that hunting, trapping, and fishing should be carried out humanely and sustainably. These activities must not damage the long-term health of wild populations. We recognize and support traditional harvest by Indigenous peoples and its role in reconciliation, and this too must be sustainable. Ecological integrity, the mandate of the National Parks is the first priority.

We oppose the hunting of species that are threatened or endangered, as this is a threat to the ecology of large wilderness. The precautionary principle should prevail: hunting, trapping, and fishing should only be practiced where they can be proven, by valid and independent scientific studies, to not harm wild populations.

Hunting must be done ethically and follow the concept of fair chase. AWA believes that the hunting practice of bear baiting is unethical and wants its immediate end. AWA has a separate position on Wildlife Economies and Game Farming. AWA has always opposed the domestication of wildlife through game farming, including any sort of "hunting" associated with it. AWA does not support trophy hunting, in keeping with the principle that the entire animal should be used. AWA does not support the inhumane methods that may be used in trophy hunting, such as the use of dogs to hunt cougars.

AWA has a very large and diverse membership base, which includes hunters, trappers, and fisherpersons, as well as people who oppose one or all of these practices. The one common goal of all of our members is the preservation of wilderness which is primary wildlife habitat, and that is and will remain to be our number one directive.

References:

1. Alberta Fish and Wildlife: Fishing, hunting and trapping regulations
<https://www.alberta.ca/fishing-hunting-and-trapping-regulations.aspx>
2. Alberta Fish and Wildlife: Hunting in Alberta
<https://www.alberta.ca/hunting-in-alberta.aspx>
3. Alberta Fish and Game Association
<http://www.afga.org/>
4. Canadian Wildlife Service: Migratory Birds Regulations in Canada: 2022
<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/consultation-process-regulations/report-series/july-2022.html>
5. Survey on the Importance of Nature to Canadians: A Federal-Provincial-Territorial Initiative
<https://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications?pid=18641>
6. Alberta Government: Alberta guides to hunting, trapping, and fishing regulations
<https://albertaregulations.ca/>





Other Organizations' Positions

American Forestry Association:

American Forests believes that wildlife and fisheries are a critical component of healthy forest ecosystems. Hunting and fishing under proper regulation are valuable tools in the professional management of forest ecosystems.

Recreation on our forests is an important and growing use of the resource on both public and private lands. Hunting and fishing under appropriate regulation are legitimate forms of forest recreation.

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society:

CPAWS is opposed to hunting/trapping in national parks or national parks reserves, with the exceptions of hunting by Aboriginal people whose hunting rights are established by legislated land claims agreements, treaties, or other constitutional rights or where provisions for local sport hunting rights for a limited time period were made for the national park or park reserve during its establishment provided that these activities do not compromise ecological integrity or harm the long term health of habitats or species.

CPAWS supports hunting in provincial/territorial parks and protected areas by Aboriginal people with established rights, provided that these activities do not compromise ecological integrity or harm the long-term health of habitats or species.

Canadian Wildlife Federation:

The CWF is a national conservation organization focusing on issues affecting Canadian wildlife as a whole such as endangered species legislation and conservation education in schools across Canada. We do not promote hunting, however, we are not opposed to it provided there is an adequate number of species to sustain the population, there is no abuse involved, and it is carried out according to established provincial rules and regulations.

Defenders of Wildlife:

Defenders advocates policies which are in the best interests of all wildlife, by analyzing wildlife management programs to determine the appropriate response. We do not take a position for or against hunting. Defenders opposes all trapping that inflicts pain or causes injury, damages ecological systems, is non-selective, or is conducted for profit or for recreation.

Ducks Unlimited Canada:

Ducks Unlimited Canada supports the sustainable use of renewable resources based on sound science. We regard waterfowl hunting, conducted in a legal and sustainable manner, as a legitimate and acceptable use of a renewable resource. Ducks Unlimited Canada does not direct its resources toward the influence of firearm or hunting legislation unless the legislation is clearly and directly related to waterfowl habitat conservation.

Friends of Animals, Inc.:

We oppose hunting and animal-killing contests. FoA was one of the first international advocacy organizations to challenge the long-held belief that regulated hunting can be a valuable conservation tool for endangered animals. We educate the public that killing is not conservation—protection of habitat and reintroduction of threatened and endangered species is. When faced with the question of right and wrong, many hunting apologists resort to manipulated statistics and far-fetched theories and pseudo-science to justify killing. FoA publishes research that refutes the arguments such as “controlling overpopulation.”

The Humane Society of the United States:

The Humane Society of the United States is strongly opposed to the hunting of any living creature for fun, trophy, or for sport, because of the trauma, suffering and death to the animals which results. The HSUS also opposes such killing because of the negative effect upon the young who may learn to accept





and live with needless suffering and killing. The HSUS believes that a civilized society should not condone the killing of any sentient creature as sport.

The National Audubon Society:

Audubon supports hunting when sound scientific data indicates that it is necessary for the continued welfare of a particular species. While we are not a hunting advocacy organization, and we do not actively promote hunting, we do not oppose it when and where it is legal. The same goes for trapping, both commercial and sport.

National Geographic Society:

The Society is a scientific and educational organization. As such, we do not take a stand for or against legal hunting or trapping activities; we simply report on these activities and any consequences when appropriate.

When we report on any topic, we work hard to present it accurately and objectively. With hunting, we are careful to differentiate between modern sport hunters, whose hobby supports conservation efforts, and poachers, who kill animals – often endangered species – illegally.

National Wildlife Federation:

Wildlife populations are a renewable resource and under scientific and professional management can safely sustain hunting and fishing. In these situations and with public input into wildlife management decisions, NWF supports providing opportunities for those who choose to hunt or fish.

While many people would like us to spend considerable effort with promoting or opposing hunting, they lose sight of the fact that the real and fundamental problem facing wildlife is not hunting, but habitat degradation and destruction.

The Sierra Club

Acceptable management approaches include both regulated periodic hunting and fishing when based on sufficient scientifically valid biological data and when consistent with all other management purposes and when necessary total protection of particular species or populations. Because national parks are set aside for the preservation of natural landscapes and wildlife, the Sierra Club is opposed to sport hunting in national parks....The Sierra Club opposes “game ranching” with non-native species and the use of captive wildlife for sport hunting (“canned hunts”) or commercial products. “Game ranching” of native species may be appropriate only when activities will not degrade natural ecosystem and endanger populations and when commercial activity will not encourage poaching... The Sierra Club opposes the use of non-selective and often misused predator control techniques such as poisons, bounties, and aerial shooting... The Sierra Club considers body-gripping, restraining and killing traps and snares to be ecologically indiscriminate and unnecessarily inhumane and therefore opposes their use. The Sierra Club promotes and supports humane, practical and effective methods of mitigating human-wildlife conflicts and actively discourages the use of inhumane and indiscriminate methods.

The Wilderness Society:

The Wilderness Society views hunting as a legitimate use in wilderness areas, national forests, lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management and certain wildlife areas, subject to appropriate regulation for species protection. Because they provide such strong protection for wildlife habitat, wilderness areas offer some of the highest quality hunting experiences found anywhere.

Wildlife Conservation Society

WCS does not have “official” stances on either hunting or trapping per se. However, WCS is against any activity that is unsustainable for wildlife populations, or any activity that harms endangered or threatened species. That said, WCS is in favour of human activity that does not harm wildlife populations over the long term...





As long as there is no threat, the WCS would not take a definitive stand against hunting or trapping for sport, recreation, wildlife management or commercial purposes.

Wildlife Society

Professional wildlife biologists are charged with the responsibility of managing wildlife populations in a scientific, sustainable, and socially acceptable manner. Hunting, when based on biological information and properly regulated, can be used effectively to help meet this responsibility. In addition, hunting regulated through licenses, stamps, permits, and taxes provides the major source of financing for habitat acquisition and improvement, research, and management programs for all wildlife, both game and non-game.

World Wildlife Fund

WWF opposes any hunting that threatens species survival, and WWF does not support the hunting of an animal solely as a trophy.

WWF respects and supports the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities to choose how best to live alongside and use natural resources in ways that advance wildlife conservation and their own sustainable development.

