



The Wildlife Society
Manitoba Chapter



June 27th, 2017

Honourable Catherine Cox
Manitoba Sustainable Development
Room 314, Legislative Building
450 Broadway Ave, Winnipeg, MB
R3C 0V8

Conservation in Manitoba – Continuing Concern about Moose and Wetlands

Dear Honourable Minister Cox,

The Wildlife Society Manitoba Chapter is Manitoba's oldest scientific based wildlife management organization that represents approximately 150 wildlife professionals including scientists, professors, managers, biologists, educators, and planners.

We appreciated the opportunity to meet with you on July 18th, 2016, to congratulate you on your Ministerial appointment and discuss how the expertise of the Manitoba Chapter can support your mandate and benefit wildlife management in the province.

We are contacting you again to express our ongoing concern regarding issues that we discussed at that meeting – moose management and regulations to protect wetlands.

Moose Management - In 2015 the Manitoba Chapter took the unprecedented step of submitting an open letter (see attached) outlining our concern for Manitoba's moose population, which included a list of recommendations, informed by our membership's collective knowledge and experience. Since that submission we continue to remain critically concerned regarding the status of the province's moose.

It is our understanding that 2017 survey results indicate additional areas where moose populations have collapsed, or remain alarmingly low. The Chapter recognizes the challenges in addressing this province-wide complex issue. We feel that now is the time for new and bold management approaches to be implemented to ensure moose remain a functional part of Manitoba's biodiversity and available for future generations. We reiterate the three critical recommendations stated in our previous letter:

- The province must work towards a science-based moose management plan for Manitoba;
- Continued and increased implementation of full moose hunting conservation closures, where warranted, until populations have recovered to sustainable levels; and
- Conduct a province-wide moose population inventory for which survey results and management efforts are reported in a transparent and annual fashion.

While we have serious concerns and important suggestions for moose management we also recognize positive actions taken by your Department. In particular, your message in the 2017 Manitoba Hunting Guide describing an upcoming consultation process is an effort in which we are eager to engage. The Chapter also applauds your efforts to address unsafe hunting practices, provide increased resources for conservation enforcement, and the sponsorship of the 50th North American Moose Conference/8th International Moose Symposium held in Brandon.

Wetland Protection – As described in the consultation process for Manitoba’s upcoming Climate and Green Plan, it is clear that protecting our remaining wetlands is important from an economic and ecological standpoint for all Manitobans. The science around the benefits provided by wetland is clear – wetland remove nutrients from our water, store excess water during flood periods, provide important moisture during droughts, and serve as hotspots of biodiversity. When we last met, we all shared the importance of these issues and discussed the need to protect wetlands via regulations. We strongly believe that it is now time for regulatory action on the protection of wetlands.

We would kindly request an opportunity to meet with you this summer to discuss progress on these important issues, and discuss ways we can support this vital work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Gae Brun". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

The Wildlife Society
Manitoba Chapter

Cc: Bruce Gray, Acting Deputy Minister, Sustainable Development

Attachment: [TWS Moose Letter and Backgrounder - November 25th, 2016]