TRIPARTITE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON NATURE CONSERVATION

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT | MARCH 2026

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BRITISH COLUMBIA

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

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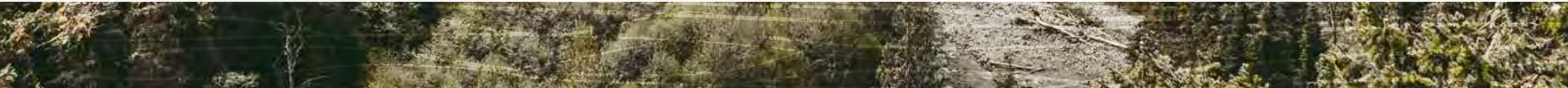

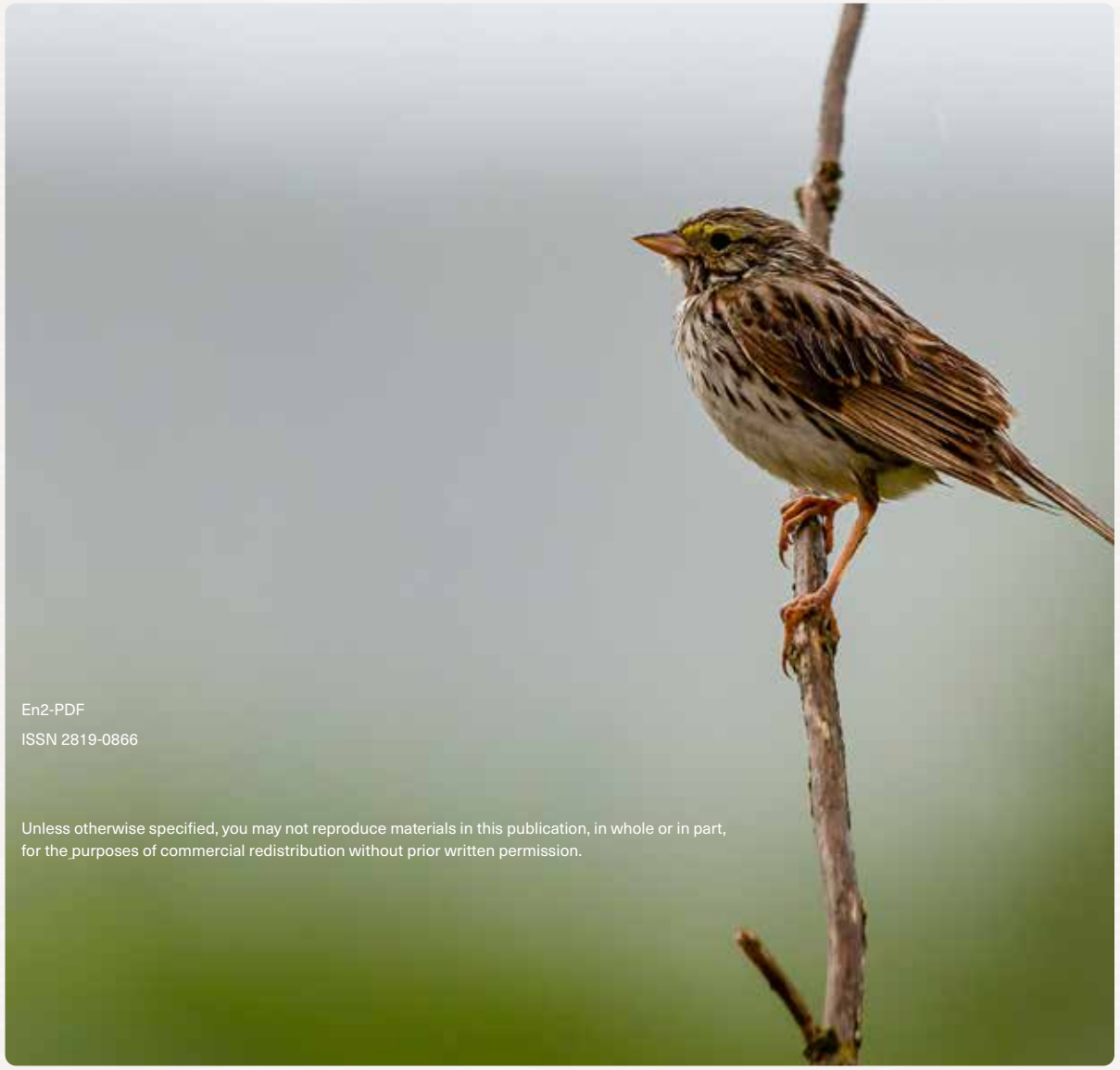

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Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation

The Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation establishes that the purpose of this Agreement is to establish a framework to achieve a more integrated and collaborative landscape based approach to ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation. The partners commit to ambitious and sustained actions to steward, protect, restore and recover diverse ecosystems, habitats, and species within the province of British Columbia.

This Second Annual Report covers projects and initiatives that contribute to the Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation. The data in this report covers the timeframe between March 2024 and March 2025.

Message from the Partners

Healthy ecosystems support our cultures, our economies, and our collective wellbeing. They are the foundation of food security, clean water, stable climates and cultural continuity. Nature sustains every person and community across British Columbia.

It is against this backdrop that the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia, and the First Nations Leadership Council continue to advance the Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation. Over the past year, we have all been tested by global pressures. Despite these stresses, our shared commitment to this work has not wavered. If anything, the past year has underscored the benefits of our collaboration as we strengthen joint governance and continue to advance conservation actions that uphold First Nations' title, rights and leadership through joint work towards implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We also collectively uphold the shared stewardship responsibilities of all peoples and communities to care for the land, water and living things. To that end, we are pleased to share our second annual report and the stories contributed by the various partners.

The accomplishments summarized in this annual report demonstrate what is possible when all levels of governments, communities, industry, and nongovernmental organizations work side by side. As we mark the second year of this partnership, we do so with gratitude for the perseverance and dedication shown by all involved.

Caring for and restoring nature requires sustained collaboration, inclusive planning and decisions that reflect the interconnectedness of ecosystems, economies, cultures and generations yet to come. Alongside conservation outcomes, we are working towards transparently tracking and communicating the economic co-benefits of this work so that British Columbians see how nature investments diversify and strengthen regional economies and competitiveness. We will continue to advance an integrated and collaborative, nature-based approach to ecosystem health, biodiversity conservation, and economic resilience.

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Meeting the challenge of climate change and global pressures with nature-based solutions

On November 3, 2023, the governments of Canada and British Columbia, and the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) signed the Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation (the Framework Agreement). This work aims to ensure sustainable economic growth, community well-being, and the long-term resilience of British Columbia's land, water and communities.

The Framework Agreement recognizes the urgent threat posed by climate change and biodiversity loss – to the environment, to economies and to human well-being. With commitments of more than $1 billion, it is one of the most significant nature investment plans in the history of Canada. It is an historic agreement to protect and restore habitats, support species-at-risk recovery, and promote conservation knowledge sharing to steward and sustainably manage terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems. These nature-based approaches[1] aim to address social, economic, and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively. At the same time, they support community well-being, ecosystem services and resilience, and sustainable economies.

The Framework Agreement is rooted in recognition of First Nations title, rights and interests. It is intended to advance implementation consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including free, prior, and informed consent. It demonstrates how governments can ensure that the values of sustainability, equity, reconciliation, and respect for title and rights can be at the forefront of conservation efforts that work for everyone.

1 The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) defines nature-based solutions as "actions aimed at protecting, conserving, restoring, and sustainably managing natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal, and marine ecosystems... which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits."

The Framework Agreement will:

- Help meet Canada and B.C.'s 30 X 30 goal to protect at least 30 per cent of the land and freshwater in B.C. by 2030,
- Protect key areas that support wildlife and contribute to climate resiliency,
- Reduce the cost of disaster recovery by better protecting the province from drought and floods, wildfire, and other natural disasters,
- Improve ecosystem health and contribute to Species at Risk recovery through the restoration of damaged ecosystems,
- Engage people across the province in conservation activities to improve community well-being,
- Support long-term economic resilience and sustainability, and
- Support the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and related Action Plan Measures provincially and federally.

The Framework Agreement partners acknowledge that:

- Global impacts on biodiversity and climate change affect everyone,
- Indigenous Peoples are disproportionately affected by global impacts on biodiversity and climate change,
- First Nations people have been stewards of this land since time immemorial, with a unique connection to the environment and place-based knowledge, and
- The leadership and knowledge of First Nations – combined with or complementary to science – is critical to deal with complex nature conservation challenges and is necessary to support both ecological and cultural resilience.

Through coordination and funding, the Framework Agreement enables Canada, B.C. and First Nations to:

- Identify priorities to halt or reverse biodiversity loss, with emphasis on old-growth forest conservation, ecological connectivity, and species recovery;
- Create more resilient landscapes in the face of increasing risk of wildfire, flood and drought;
- Work in alignment with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (See Annex A);
- Create opportunities for participation from all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, citizens, residents and industry; and
- Generate jobs, support sustainable industries and enhance local economies.

The Framework Agreement sets out objectives for coordination, communication, and reporting in four key areas

1. Habitat and Ecosystem Conservation and Protection
2. Habitat Enhancement and Restoration
3. Species at Risk Protection and Recovery
4. Foundational Knowledge and Information Sharing

The Framework Agreement is guided by the following principles

1. First Nations Leadership
2. Consultation and Cooperation
3. Recognition and Respect
4. Decision Making
5. Transparency and Adaptive Managment
6. Funding Coordination
7. Socio-Economic Considerations

Governance

The Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation is an agreement between the Government of Canada, the Government of B.C. and the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC).[2] Under the Framework Agreement, the federal and provincial governments and the FNLC work together to support implementation, while First Nations remain the rights and title holders within their territories.

Respecting First Nations title and rights is central to the Framework Agreement. The partners have adopted a distinctions-based approach. In B.C., this means the work acknowledges the specific rights, interests and priorities of First Nations rights and title holders. The Framework Agreement recognizes and respects the inherent right of First Nations to self-determination and self-government within their territories. The FNLC is not a title or treaty rights holder and cannot provide consent on behalf of individual First Nations. Therefore, the FNLC – along with B.C. and Canada – works with First Nations and Treaty partners directly to implement the Framework Agreement.

To facilitate implementation of the Framework Agreement, the partners have set up a Tripartite Nature Committee, alongside a bilateral committee and various subcommittees. This governance system creates a forum for discussing, planning and reporting conservation actions among the partners and for identifying and addressing gaps, priorities and opportunities. Together, the partners work to:

- Ensure work is aligned with conservation goals and First Nations' rights
- Facilitate data sharing
- Align programming
- Streamline investment
- Report on conservation actions, and address gaps, priorities and opportunities
- Capitalize on synergies among the partners

Key Responsibilities of the Tripartite Nature Committee:

- Provide dedicated leadership for the implementation of the Tripartite Framework Agreement
- Build an understanding of issues, priorities and interests in order to develop a common perspective between the parties and to provide informed advice to decision-makers on how to address those interests
- Develop joint terms of reference, work plans, protocols, processes communication plans and progress reports
- Support First Nations' effective and meaningful participation in the implementation of the Tripartite Framework Agreement

2 The FNLC works under the guidance of its members to advocate on issues impacting First Nations. The Council is made up of three organizations: the B.C. Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Summit, and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs. These three organizations provided the mandate for the FNLC to co-develop and sign the Framework Agreement.

OBJECTIVE ONE

HABITAT AND ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION

British Columbia's diverse landscape includes forests, grasslands, tundra, coastal waters, salt marshes, rivers, lakes and wetlands. Under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (See Annex B), the governments of Canada and B.C. have committed to protect and conserve 30%of B.C.'s lands and freshwaters by 2030.

This commitment is known as 30 X 30. It is a science-based goal that, in British Columbia, will be achieved through various planning processes in partnership with First Nations. This work will help to maintain healthy and representative ecosystems to support wildlife populations as well as water quality and quantity. Conserved lands will reduce the impact of climate change and help avoid complex and costly restoration efforts. Just as important, conserved lands will ensure access to natural and wild spaces for everyone in B.C.

Accomplishing this ambitious objective requires the collaboration and support of all people in B.C. and the use of different approaches and tools. Progress in B.C. is underway, with partners working together to conserve key habitat. For example, B.C. land use planning processes and forest landscape plans help identify and maintain protected areas while also considering the need to strengthen and diversify the province's economy. Habitats and ecosystems with high conservation values – such as old growth forests, wetlands and other habitat for species at risk – are important for meeting this objective. This work is not just carried out by governments. Partnerships with land trusts, conservancies and other non-governmental groups also support land conservation. An example is B.C.'s conservation lands program.

Getting to 30 x 30 – CPCAD and Other Effective Conservation Measures

Under the Framework Agreement (section 4.1 b), the area protected and conserved is reported to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Database. This database serves as the authoritative source for tracking, mapping, and reporting Canada's progress toward the 30 X 30 target.

Many partners are working collaboratively to implement and support various conservation approaches that will improve biodiversity outcomes and support the 30 X 30 target. Actions include:

- Areas protected specifically for biodiversity, like parks and conservancies,
- Areas protected for values other than biodiversity – such as drinking water – that achieve similar outcomes. These are called Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs), and
- Stewardship and Management Plans, regulatory orders and permit conditions to conserve biodiversity on working landscapes.

Parks and OECMs count toward the 30 X 30 target. These are reported into the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) (Target 3 in the Global Biodiversity Framework). Other levels of government and non-government organizations (for example, land trusts) also report into CPCAD.

Indigenous-led stewardship and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) may also contribute to the target, but IPCAs are diverse in content and scope. They often reflect Indigenous Peoples' multi-generational, holistic perspective on stewardship and cultural interests. The Tripartite Implementation Committee will support First Nations that have interests to report designations that are expected to meet the reporting guidelines and international standard.

For this reporting period, the amount of protected land captured in CPCAD rose by 0.2%, fully attributed to the contributions provided by local levels of government and land trusts. Additional interim protected areas and OECMs were developed but are not yet shown in CPCAD. That's primarily because regulatory consultations and other requirements will continue in 2026 before these protected lands are officially recognized.

For example, B.C. and Fort Nelson First Nation co-developed the Boreal Caribou Protection and Recovery Plan with collaborative input from the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. Implementation of the plan led to the designation of six new no-harvest Wildlife Habitat Areas in July 2025. These areas protect an additional 2.3 million hectares of forest from industrial forest activities.[3]

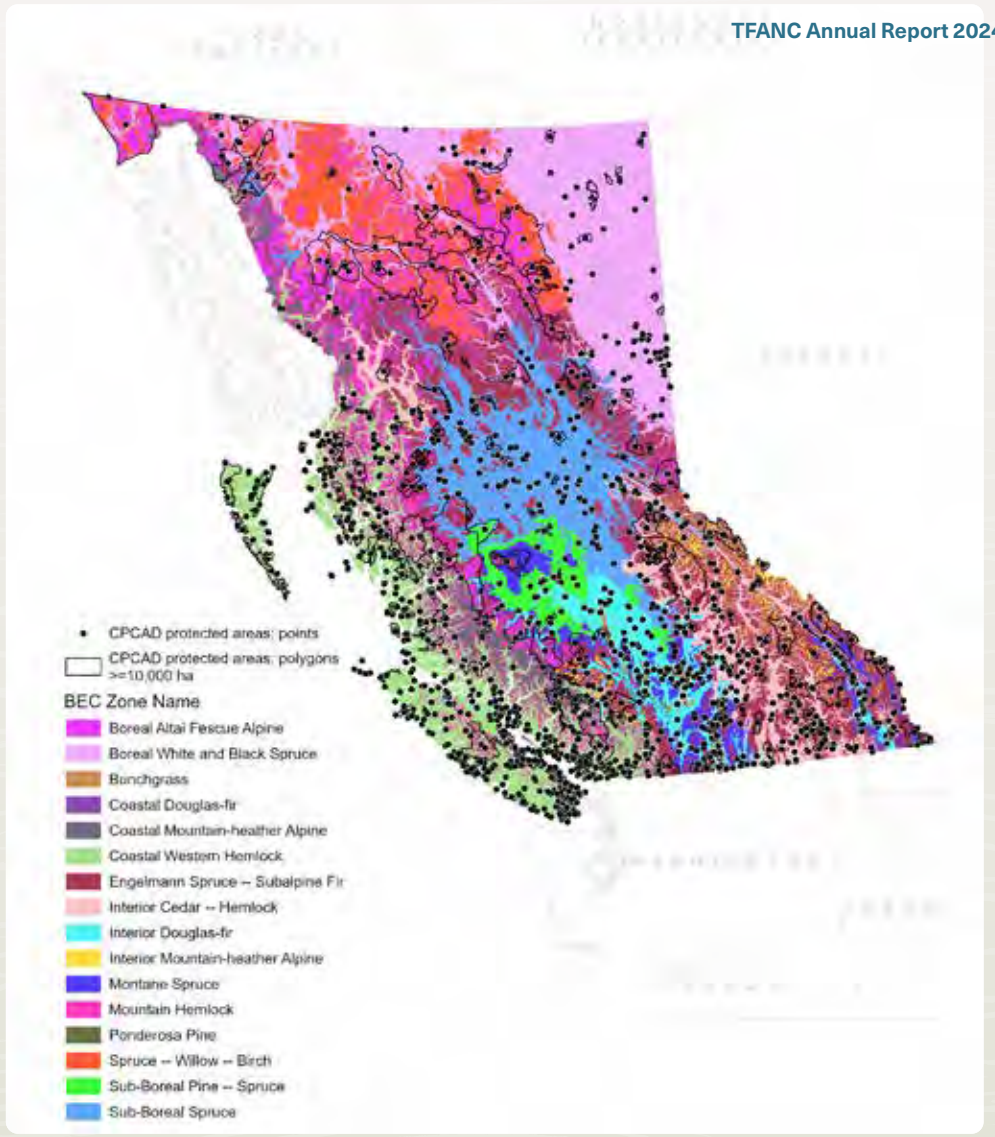
Additionally, the Province is assessing current OECMs and refining its policy and procedures to identify, steward, and report on new OECMs. This work will be undertaken in collaboration with First Nations to ensure that identification criteria and reporting processes respect First Nations governance and data sovereignty. This detailed assessment may add new areas to CPCAD or identify incremental actions needed to confidently meet the national and international standards of OECMs.

3 This brings the total protected Wildlife Habitat Area for boreal caribou to around 2.4 million hectares.

Protected and Conserved Areas in British Columbia by area type

Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) 2024: Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) - Open Government Portal

Province of British Columbia - Boundary Terrestrial: https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/30aeb5c1-4285-46c8-b60b-15b1a6f4258b



Protected and Conserved Areas by Biogeoclimatic Zones

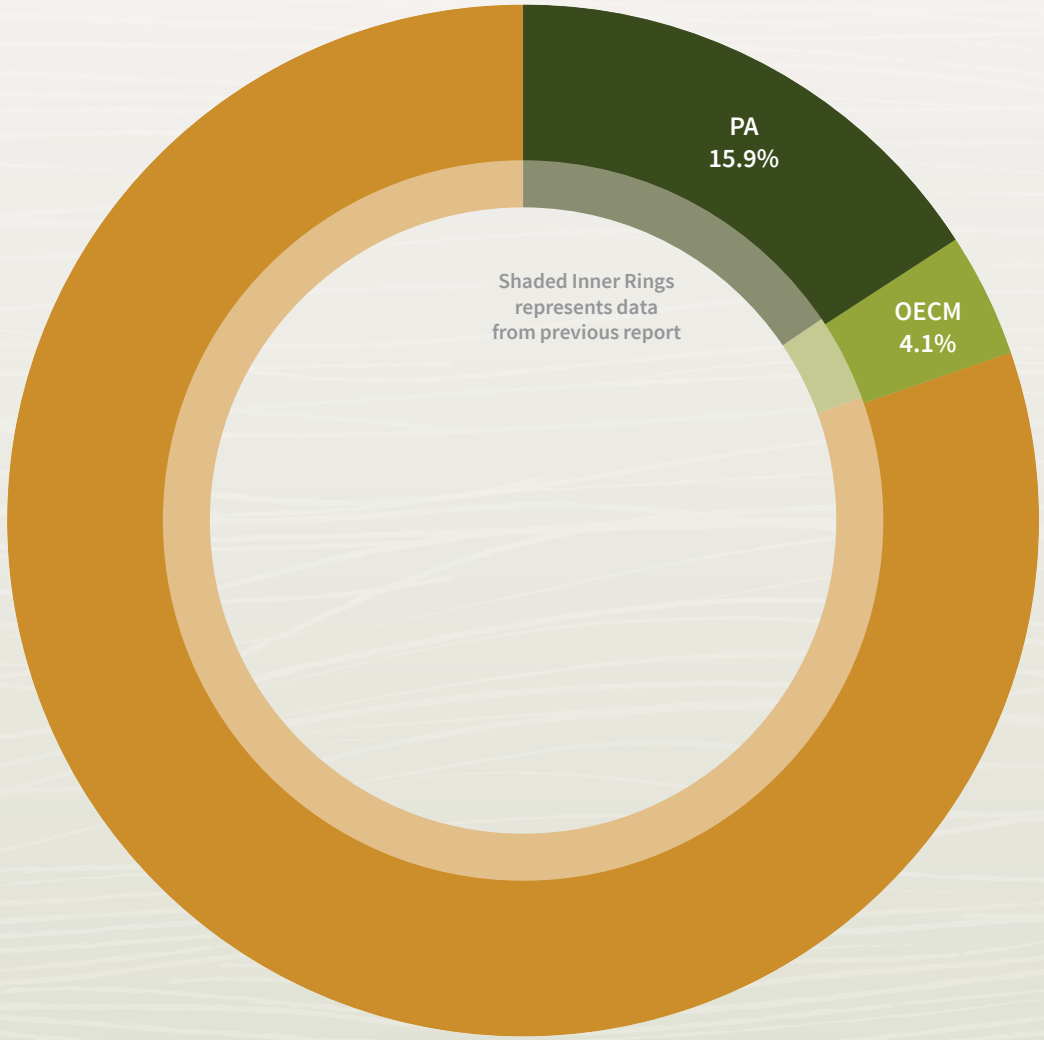
BEC Zones - Generalized (1:2M): https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/c293d8be-2db7-49e8-b149-4c266c0e8bb9 (for mapping only)

BEC Map: https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/f358a53b-ffde-4830-a325-a5a03ff672c3 (for analysis)

PROGRESS TOWARDS CONSERVING 30% OF BC'S LAND AND INLAND WATERS BY 2030[1]

PA/OECM DEFINITION	AREA (ha) | %		Change
Protected Area (PA)	14,987,616.51	15.9%	+0.3
Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure (OECM)	3,848,351.71	4.1%	0
Total PA and OECM (excluding Interim)	18,835,968.22	**19.9%**	**+0.2**
Total BC Area	**94,498,991.36**		
Standard regulations apply (excluding PA and OECM)	75,663,033.14	80.1%	–0.2

[1] These numbers are based on the 2024 Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) - Open Government Portal



Protected Areas are defined as areas that are legally designated and managed with conservation as their primary objective. The legal designation ensures that permitted activities are compatible with the primary conservation objective. This typically excludes industrial resource extraction but may include activities such as recreation. Protected areas include national, provincial and territorial parks and national wildlife areas. B.C. also has 42 hectares of interim protected areas, that is, land in the process of being designated as protected.

Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM) are areas that are managed in a way that conserves biodiversity over the long term. Examples of OECMs may include areas such as research forests, community watersheds and recreational areas.

Old Growth Nature Fund
Protecting Some of the Rarest and Most Productive Ecosystems in Canada

Old forests in B.C. are among the most biologically diverse and productive ecosystems in Canada. They have deep-rooted cultural significance to First Nations, and the majority of people in B.C. are concerned about their protection.

The Old Growth Nature Fund ran between 2022 and 2025. Its priority areas of interest included productive, low-elevation, valley-bottom temperate rainforests more than 250 years old, or stands with large trees and recruitment old growth in three biogeoclimatic zones:

- Coastal Douglas-fir zone
- Coastal Western Hemlock zone
- Interior Cedar-hemlock zone

These areas have critical habitat for multiple species at risk and migratory birds. Examples include the Northern Spotted Owl, Marbled Murrelet, Northern Goshawk, Western Screech Owl, Grizzly Bear, and Southern Mountain Caribou as well as many smaller organisms like the Coastal Giant Salamander, Oregon Forest Snail and Phantom Orchid. The forests also include some of the largest natural carbon sinks in the world.

The Government of Canada provided $50 million to create the Old Growth Nature Fund. The Government of British Columbia contributed $80 million of cash and in-kind contributions from B.C. and its partners.

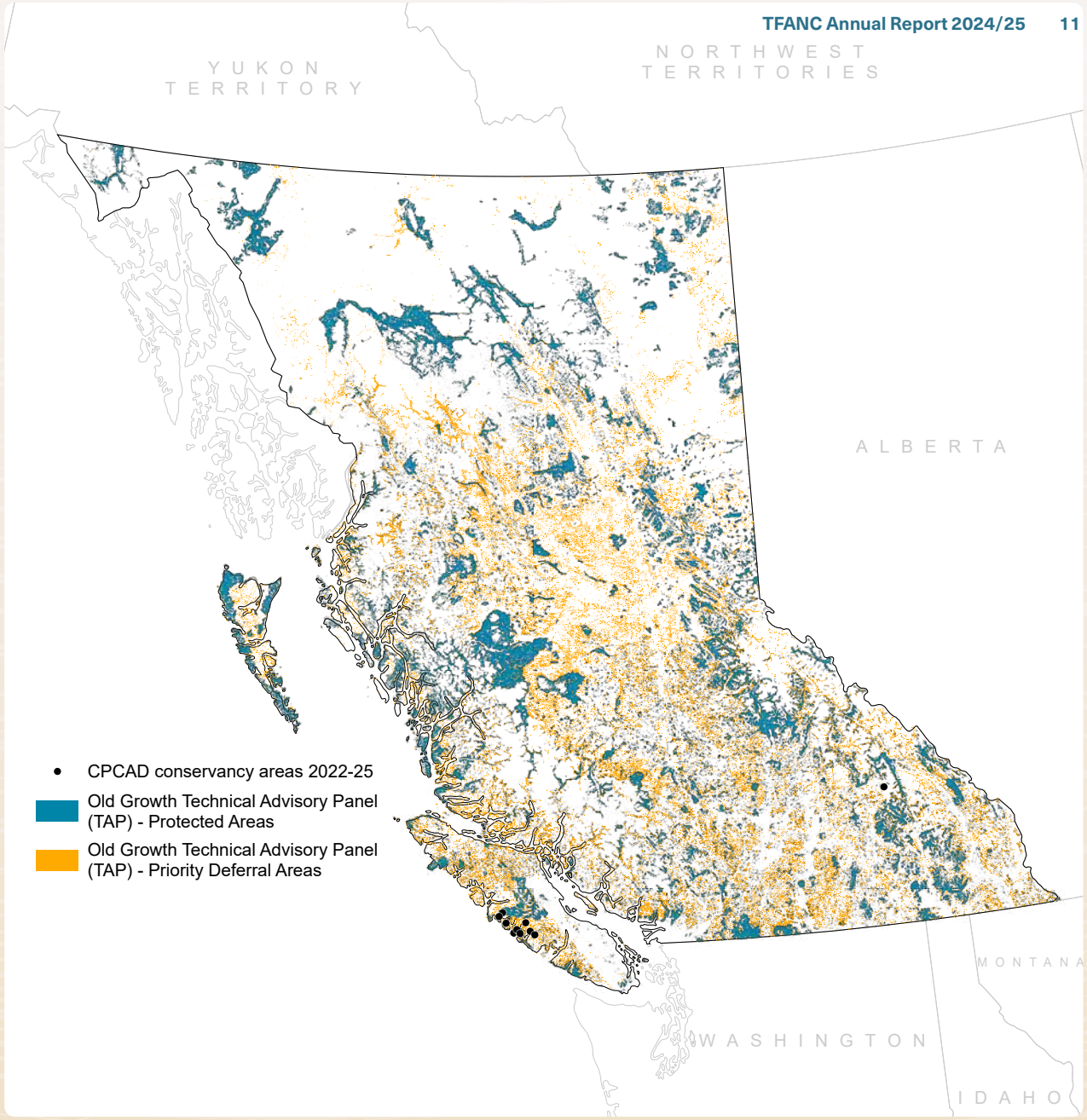
Activities financed by the fund were often carried out through collaboration with organizations like the BC Parks Foundation and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The fund supported both public and private land conservation as well as First Nations-led conservation projects.

In the 2.5 years the fund operated, the Old Growth Nature Fund permanently protected over 165,000 hectares including 70,287 hectares (just over 200 square kilometres) of old growth forests. Results included establishing:

- The 58,654-hectare Incomappleux Valley Conservancy and Forest Act Reserve (near Revelstoke, B.C.),
- 7,550 hectares of a Special Forest Management Area on the Central Coast,
- Ten conservancies (76,306 hectares) in the Clayoquot Sound, and
- 13,329 hectares of Wildlife Habitat Areas.

The fund also helped secure 9,250 hectares of private land, with another 36,000 hectares of private land secured in 2026 in the second phase of the Kootenay Forest project.

A legacy of the Old Growth Nature Fund is ongoing discussion and collaboration with First Nations partners, tenure holders, and local communities about additional areas that could be protected within and beyond the existing old growth deferral areas[4] the Province established in 2022. British Columbia and Canada continue to advance those projects using other sources of funds like Nature Smart Climate Solutions, working towards those original protection targets of 30% by 2030.



4 A deferral area is a designated area of forest where logging is temporarily paused or suspended. These are interim measures designed to stop the immediate loss of the most vulnerable ecosystems while the provincial government, First Nations, and industry develop long-term, sustainable management plans.

Protected Areas and Priority Areas of Old Growth Forest per the Technical Advisory Panel on Old Growth

Old Growth Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) - Protected Areas: https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/37752347-680a-4b6b-87e8-dedec6df4aa4

Old Growth Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) - Priority Deferral Areas: https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/5e257660-02ae-4f22-b861-4b2f53aefb4e

(7.5M) Provinces and States - The Atlas of Canada Base Maps: https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/dd64bde4-29a2-4b82-a69b-2ac5dc202cae (for base mapping)

Kootenay Forest Lands
Multiple Partners Unite to Safeguard Vital Rocky Mountain Landscape

Kootenay Forest Lands, Flathead River (photo Nick Nault)

A landmark partnership has conserved 45,000 hectares in Southeastern B.C. Announced in December 2025, Kootenay Forest Lands is one of Canada's largest private land conservation projects to date. The lands will be held under conservation stewardship for generations to come, delivering ecological, cultural and community benefits at a scale rarely seen in Canada.

This project was only possible through a partnership that included the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), the Ktunaxa First Nation, the Governments of Canada and B.C.,[5] Elk Valley Resources, and other public and private partners. Together, the partners are ensuring that one of North America's most ecologically significant landscape corridors will remain intact.

The Kootenay Forest Lands – located in the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa Nation – are vital for wildlife movement and ecological health. The lands support grizzly bears, wolverine, lynx and bull trout. The area also features rare high-elevation grasslands, ancient forests and a multitude of streams that feed into the Elk River, a waterway renowned for its world-class fly fishing.

Under the stewardship of the NCC, the Kootenay Forest Lands will transition from industrial-scale forestry to a conservation-focused management designed to restore ecosystems, enhance carbon storage and build resilience to wildfire and floods. Public recreation access will continue, and stewardship decisions will be shaped in collaboration with the Ktunaxa, communities and other partners to honour cultural traditions, protect wildlife and waters, and strengthen community well-being.

This achievement shows what is possible when governments, industry and communities commit to a shared vision. The result is not just land secured, but a model of collaboration that aligns cultural, social, ecological and economic priorities.

5 Government of Canada and British Columbia funding included contributions from Old Growth Nature Fund, Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund, and Target 1 Challenge Fund

OBJECTIVE TWO

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND RESTORATION

Habitat enhancement and habitat restoration are processes often used together to increase ecosystem resilience to climate change and human impact.

Habitat enhancement improves existing habitats to better support specific species or increase overall biodiversity. Examples include installing nest boxes or planting food sources, such as native plants that attract butterflies.

Habitat restoration aims to return degraded, damaged or destroyed ecosystems to their original, natural state. Examples include removing invasive species, re-introducing native vegetation and repairing soil structure.

In B.C., the federal 2 Billion Trees program offers funding that benefits species at risk and enriches ecosystems through tree planting. The program remains committed to providing B.C. with up to $104 million by March 2031 to fund these habitat restoration projects.

In 2024-2025, B.C. documented 4,773,000 hectares of restoration projects that support implementation of priorities identified in the Together for Wildlife Strategy and other initiatives.

Restoration and enhancement initiatives create numerous economic opportunities and benefits, particularly in northern, remote, rural and First Nations communities. These initiatives are also building capacity for long-term environmental stewardship.

The partners are working together to improve identification and communication of restoration priorities, as well as conservation and economic indicators. The priorities will help ensure enhancement and restoration activities have the greatest impact possible. The indicators will ensure consistent reporting. Restoration is widely recognized as a growing economic sector with both labour and service-based benefits. The Global Land Initiative estimated that restoration could generate $1.5-$2 trillion (USD) in economic value globally.[6]

6 From degradation to opportunity: advancing the global restoration economy at CRIC23

Planting Trees to Support a Climate-Resilient Future

The Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation (sections 7.3.4 and 11.1) commits funding for new habitat restoration activities. This includes $104 million of funding for habitat restoration tree planting in B.C. through the federal 2 Billion Trees (2BT) program.

Launched in 2021, 2BT recognizes that getting from seeds to trees takes years. 2BT's approach created long-term agreements to ensure project partners have the certainty they need to complete their work and create long-term benefits for people throughout Canada. These benefits include:

- Restored biodiversity and habitats,
- Carbon capture and storage,
- More forest cover, and
- Better human health.

In 2024/25, 2BT funded the planting of 67,000 trees in 207 hectares for habitat restoration in B.C. This in addition to the close to 100 million trees planted for reforestation and restoration, which will also benefit ecosystems and biodiversity.

B.C. will continue to work with Canada to allocate the total of $104 million of 2BT funding through March 2031 identified to support this Agreement. The funded tree planting activities will enhance and restore natural and modified ecosystems that benefit species at risk. This in turn will provide benefits to biodiversity and human well-being, in line with the goals of the Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation.

TRACKED HECTARES RESTORED AND ENHANCED BY FEDERAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FUNDS[1]
AS OF MARCH 2025

YEAR	HECTARES RESTORED AND ENHANCED[2,3]
2021-22	–
2022-23	~8,800[4]
2023-24	~20,800[5]
2024-25	~28,300

1 This count is a subset of funding with standardized reporting. It does not include Canada Nature Funds, 2 Billion Trees or National Program for Ecological Corridors. It also does not include funds associated with Southern Mountain Caribou.

2 Actual footprint of hectares enhanced (i.e., actions to improve existing conditions) or restored (actions to improve from a degraded state) are measures of effort and may overlap or include repeated treatment over time at the same locations. All hectares reported had specific prescriptions for habitats.

3 Insufficient data was available to include results from Indigenous Guardians and Indigenous-Led Natural Climate Solutions (a subcomponent of Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund). Additionally, as of January 2026, 4 out of 157 reports for 2024-25 (2.5%) were not yet available (excluding Guardians and ILNCS). Standardized tracking will improve future reporting.

4, 5 Figures are different from those reported in the first annual report as they now include data that was unavailable at the time the first annual report was published.

Okanagan Mountain K'nmalka Wildlife Corridor Action Plan

For animals to thrive, they need space to move around. In urban and agricultural areas, planning and management actions are required to ensure natural areas are connected and support animal movement. The pressures in the Okanagan Valley brought together local and provincial government agencies, conservation organizations, and representatives of the Syilx People of the Okanagan Nation to find better ways to steward the land and wildlife.

Together they developed the Okanagan Mountain-K'nmalka Wildlife Corridor Action Plan. The plan, which was released in 2023, aims to protect and restore habitat connectivity. Habitat connectivity is a term for the interconnected network of habitat patches and migration corridors that are essential for animal species to survive.

The Okanagan Mountain-K'nmalka Wildlife Corridor Action Plan focuses on a corridor that is 65 kilometres long by one kilometre wide and links Okanagan Mountain and Kalamalka Lake Provincial Parks. This corridor connects essential grassland and ponderosa pine ecosystems as well as critical wildlife habitat.

Habitat connectivity is needed for the long-term survival of many species. These corridors support wildlife migration, help maintain genetic diversity, boost ecosystem resilience and enhance food security. They also support benefits such as ground water recharge, flood and fire control, and pollination which all provide important economic benefits. Protecting and restoring ecosystem connectivity corridors is also recognized as a key climate adaptation strategy. North-south and low-elevation corridors like the Okanagan Mountain-K'nmalka Wildlife Corridor are particularly important because they allow species to find suitable habitats as temperatures rise. The project also connects with two cross-border ecological corridor projects: the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative and the Sagelands Heritage Program by Conservation Northwest.

This initiative was partially funded by the Priority Places program of Environment and Climate Change Canada through contributions to the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program. The conservation program is led by staff working for the Regional District of the Central Okanagan.

Local governments support the protection and restoration of ecosystem connectivity corridors identified through the Okanagan Mountain-Kalamalka Wildlife Action Plan. The research associated with the plan will assist with land-use planning, development review, parks planning and infrastructure design.

For example, the City of Kelowna now requires subdivision and development within mapped ecosystem connectivity corridors to demonstrate how wildlife movement, habitat function and corridor integrity will be maintained. Priority will be given to proposals that also restore corridor function by clustering development, restoring native vegetation and using wildlife-friendly design.

OBJECTIVE THREE

SPECIES AT RISK PROTECTION AND RECOVERY

Under the Government of Canada's Species at Risk Act (SARA), "species at risk" refers to an extirpated, endangered, or threatened species, or a species of special concern[7]. These are wildlife species (animals or plants) facing danger of disappearance due to human activity or natural factors – or a combination of both. They require protection to survive. Reducing the number of species at risk is a tangible indicator of ecosystem health and community well-being.

The recovery of a species population can be complex and require the simultaneous implementation of multiple activities. It is important to integrate multiple perspectives into decision-making maximize the chances for successful recovery. This is especially true for species that are culturally significant to Indigenous Peoples. The Framework Agreement is intended to support collaborative and effective approaches to protecting and recovering species at risk.

The protection of critical habitat is often important to ensure the recovery of a species. Critical habitat, as defined by the federal Species at Risk Act, is the habitat necessary for the survival or recovery of a listed wildlife species. It is identified as the species' critical habitat in the recovery strategy or in an action plan for the species.

Working with First Nations and stakeholders, B.C. and Canada will ensure continued progress towards critical habitat protection. A key objective of the Framework Agreement is to accelerate the protection and management of critical habitat

7 ***Extirpated*** means a wildlife species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada but exists elsewhere in the wild.

Endangered means a wildlife species that is facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

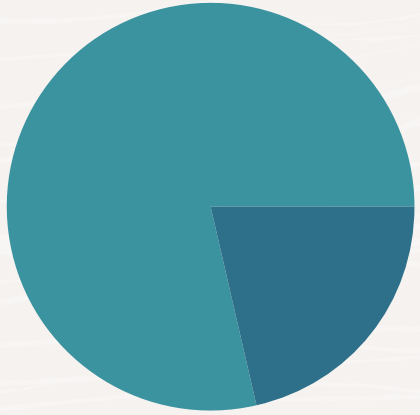
Threatened means a wildlife species that is likely to become an endangered species if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction.

Special concern is a wildlife species that may become threatened or endangered due to a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats, making it particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events.

PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION[1] OF CRITICAL HABITAT[2] FOR ENDANGERED AND THREATENED TERRESTRIAL SPECIES AT RISK[3]

78.6% 76.6%*

of Species with Identified Critical Habitat are found in Protected and Conserved Areas



88 82

Species with Identified Critical Habitat in Protected and Conserved Areas

24 25

Species with Identified Critical Habitat Not in Protected and Conserved Areas

489,819.92

404,082

Area (ha) of Identified Critical Habitat that is within Protected or Conserved Areas

3,749,240.90

3,802,285

Total Area (ha) of Identified Critical Habitat

18,835,968.22

18,594,523

Total Protected and Conserved Area (ha)

* SECONDARY NUMBERS INDICATE COMPARABLE DATA AS OF MARCH 2024

1 Protected and conserved areas are based on the 2024 Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) - Open Government Portal

2 Final Posted (Critical Habitat for federally-listed species at risk (posted) - Datasets - Data Catalogue) and Secure (Critical Habitat for federally-listed species at risk (secure) - Datasets - Data Catalogue) Critical Habitat data created up to December 2025.

3 Critical Habitat for Southern Mountain Caribou, Boreal Caribou, Marbled Murrelet, Whitebark pine, Little Brown Myotis and Northern Myotis are excluded.

ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES AT RISK CRITICAL HABITAT[1,2] IN SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS[3,4]

231,603.29
171,101.28
Total Critical Habitat in the Special Management Area (ha)[1,2]

9,149,451.11
7,776,976.16
Total Area (ha) under Special Management

43
–
Species at Risk with identified Critical Habitat in Special Management Area

2
–
Species at Risk with identified Critical Habitat found only in Special Management Area

* SECONDARY NUMBERS INDICATE COMPARABLE DATA AS AT MARCH 2024

Changes in hectares are expected over time as recovery strategies and modelling approaches are updated and added.

1 Final Posted (Critical Habitat for federally-listed species at risk (posted) - Datasets - Data Catalogue) and Secure (Critical Habitat for federally-listed species at risk (secure) - Datasets - Data Catalogue) Critical Habitat data created up to December 2025.

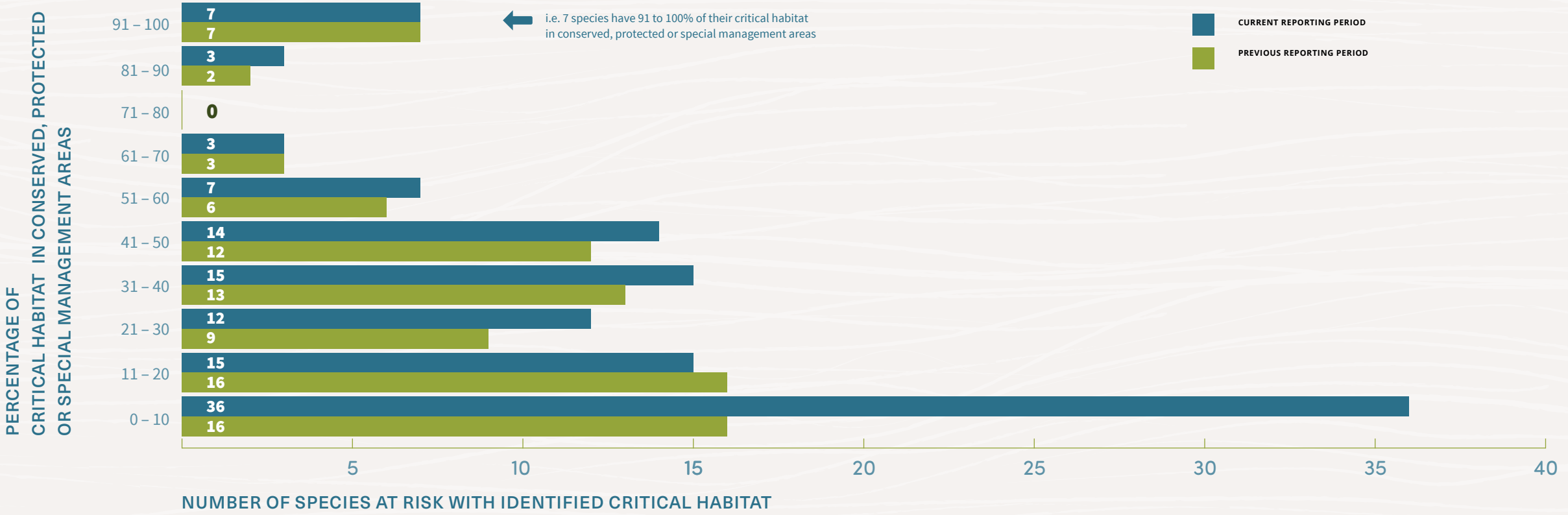
2 Critical Habitat for Southern Mountain Caribou, Boreal Caribou, Marbled Murrelet, Whitebark pine, Little Brown Myotis and Northern Myotis are excluded.

3 Area under Special Management includes legal orders made through regulation specifically to manage the habitat values for Species at Risk and mitigate threats. This includes Ungulate Winter Range (No Harvest), Wildlife Habitat Areas (No Harvest), Old Growth Management Areas (Legal Current), Biodiversity Mining and Tourism Areas, Special Wildland RMZ in Muskwa-Kechika MA, VQO Preserves and Retention, Flathead Watershed Area, Class 2 Coast Grizzly Bear Habitat (Coast LUP) and South Chilcotin Mountain Mining and Tourism Areas as of December 2025.

4 The Protected and Conserved Areas reported in the 2024 Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) - Open Government Portal were removed from the Special Management Areas to avoid double-counting.


Photo credit: Adam Taylor

PROPORTION OF CRITICAL HABITAT[1,2] IN PROTECTED[3], CONSERVED[3] OR SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS[4,5]



1 Final Posted (Critical Habitat for federally-listed species at risk (posted) - Datasets - Data Catalogue) and Secure (Critical Habitat for federally-listed species at risk (secure) - Datasets - Data Catalogue) Critical Habitat data created up to December 2025.

2 Critical Habitat for Southern Mountain Caribou, Boreal Caribou, Marbled Murrelet, Whitebark pine, Little Brown Myotis and Northern Myotis are excluded.

3 Protected and conserved areas are based on the 2024 Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) - Open Government Portal

4 Area under Special Management includes legal orders made through regulation specifically to manage the habitat values for Species at Risk and mitigate threats. This includes Ungulate Winter Range (No Harvest), Wildlife Habitat Areas (No Harvest), Old Growth Management Areas (Legal Current), Biodiversity Mining and Tourism Areas, Special Wildland RMZ in Muskwa-Kechika MA, VQO Preserves and Retention, Flathead Watershed Area, Class 2 Coast Grizzly Bear Habitat (Coast LUP) and South Chilcotin Mountain Mining and Tourism Areas as of December 2025.

5 The Protected and Conserved Areas reported in the 2024 Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) - Open Government Portal were removed from the Special Management Areas to avoid double-counting.

A Long-Term Strategy Aims to Save the Rarest Owl in Canada

The Northern Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) is critically endangered in Canada. Once numbering in the hundreds, competition from Barred Owls and habitat loss from old-growth logging have reduced the population to near extirpation, making them the rarest owl in Canada.

Spotted Owl recovery actions include habitat management, conservation breeding and release, and invasive species management. There are 40 First Nations whose traditional territories overlap the known historic range of Spotted Owl. Ongoing engagement with First Nations is vital to learn how their members can and expect to be involved in stewarding Spotted Owl recovery.

The known Spotted Owl population currently comprises 18 females and 27 males at the breeding center, two released conservation-breed males last observed August 2025, and one wild-born female last observed in 2022, for a population total of 48. Conservation breeding is successfully supporting a rapidly growing population, with enough owls being produced to support ongoing trials to release spotted owls to the wild done in partnership with Spuzzum First Nation.

On June 5, 2025, ECCC posted the Amended Recovery Strategy for the Spotted Owl. The strategy was prepared in cooperation with the province of B.C., affected stakeholders, and Indigenous organizations.

An Implementation Plan developed in 2025 by the Province of B.C. aims to ensure survival of Spotted Owl over the next five years (2025-2030) and to support the species' ongoing recovery over the next 50 years. A federal Action Plan under the *Species at Risk Act*, is being developed by ECCC in collaboration with B.C. and First Nations. This plan will include elements of the B.C. Implementation Plan.

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has provided more than $4.5 million to B.C. to support Spotted Owl recovery, including $2.65 million towards land acquisition for the Spotted Owl conservation breeding facility.

First Nations Lead Projects to Protect Caribou

Herds of caribou have roamed British Columbia for thousands of years, contributing to the province's rich biodiversity and ecosystems. Caribou are a true northern species that thrive in cold and harsh landscapes. They depend on large, undisturbed areas for food resources, reproductive success, and protection from predators and the weather.

Caribou play an important role in the culture and history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. They are an important source of food and other activities that are part of some Indigenous Peoples' culture and spiritual relationship with the land.

Caribou populations across Canada have declined significantly in recent years due to habitat disturbance. Industrial, commercial and recreational land uses – combined with natural disturbances such as forest fires and insect outbreaks – have caused high levels of habitat disturbance in many areas. These disturbances can entirely remove habitat or change it so it is less suitable for caribou. Loss of habitat can prevent caribou from accessing important areas for calving or feeding. Changes to habitat can make it easier for predators to kill caribou.

Indigenous-led caribou conservation protects not only the caribou but also Indigenous ways of living with the land and maintaining balance between Indigenous cultures and biodiverse ecosystems. The following are three examples of First Nations-led projects in B.C. to protect and restore caribou populations.

Monitoring to Measure the Success of Caribou Recovery

A monitoring project in the territory of the Fort Nelson First Nation aims to build a long-term set of data to support the recovery of the endangered Woodland Caribou in Northeast B.C.

Key elements of the project include monitoring the effectiveness of habitat restoration activities and tracking the populations of both caribou and their predators, which include wolves, bears, cougars and wolverines.

Members of the Fort Nelson First Nation play a lead role in this project from planning to implementation. For example, First Nations knowledge of the terrain, landscape, and local animal populations helped to identify monitoring locations and timing. Nation members are also involved in monitoring and in habitat restoration work, with federal funding covering training and salaries.

The monitoring project is part of the Boreal Caribou Protection and Recovery Plan that was developed by the B.C. government and Fort Nelson First Nation, with contributions from the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. The plan is designed to meet federal and provincial targets for species-at-risk recovery while supporting opportunities to strengthen the natural-resource economy in the region.

Collaboration Key to Protecting Southern Mountain Caribou

A collaborative approach has proven key to caribou recovery planning in the territory of the Splatsin First Nation in the northern Okanagan region.

The Splatsin play a leading role in the project, including:

- Setting priorities for the restoration of habitat critical for the Southern Mountain Caribou,
- Developing site-specific restoration plans,
- Monitoring the effectiveness of habitat restoration activities,
- Hosting the three-day Ungulate Knowledge Forum for members of Secwépemc First Nation communities, and
- Ongoing engagement with B.C., Canada, local communities, and other stakeholders about caribou recovery planning.

Federal funding has supported the capacity development with Splatsin Nation members to carry out field site reconnaissance and monitoring and other work to manage and implement the project.

Maternity Pen Protects Caribou in Northeastern B.C.

In 2013, the number of caribou in the Klinse-za Southern Mountain Caribou population had fallen to a mere 36. The sharp decline pointed to the imminent elimination of the population in the Peace region of Northeast B.C. Today, this population has increased to 187 thanks to activities such as habitat restoration, predator-prey management and a practice called “penning.”

The West Moberly and Saulteau First Nations are key partners in this success story, which is considered the most successful maternity pen project in Canada.

Caribou calves are most vulnerable to predators like wolves during the first few months of their lives. They are especially at risk the first week after they’re born. The recovery project involves capturing pregnant caribou cows and protecting them in large enclosures for about five months.

The cows are captured with nets dropped from helicopters. They are then sedated for transport to the maternity pen enclosure, which is about 16 hectares of forested land, or the size of 30 football fields. They are tagged and their blood sampled. All the caribou are released back into the wild when the youngest calf is at least six weeks old.

The work involves a team of wildlife veterinarians, technicians, First Nations wildlife guardians, caribou and wildlife experts, maintenance crews, and capture and transport helicopter pilots and their crews.

Priority Places – A New Approach to Protecting Endangered Ecological Areas

The Priority Places are part of the Pan-Canadian Framework to transforming species-at-risk conservation. The framework is an approach to conservation that focuses on multiple species and ecosystems. This is a shift from a single species approach, which can be narrow and costly.

"Priority Place" is a term used for a geographic area that has three characteristics:

- The people who live and work there consider it a distinct ecological area,
- It has high biodiversity value, for example, it is home to multiple wildlife and/or plant species, and
- It faces threats such as residential development, agriculture, fire or invasive species.

British Columbia has two Federal-Provincial Priority Places:

- Dry Interior and
- Southwest B.C.

It has two Community-Nominated[8] Priority Places:

- Kootenay Connects and
- Southern Rocky Mountain Trench.

In total, 149 federally listed species at risk benefit from work in these areas. This work has included the enhancement or restoration of 29,744 hectares of conservation lands since 2021.

8 A Community-Nominated Priority Place is identified through a community-driven, collaborative approach to conservation

The Dry Interior Priority Place is made up of the southern interior valley bottoms of British Columbia. It contains some of the rarest and most at-risk ecosystems in the province. It also has the highest density of species at risk in the interior (83). In addition, more than 200 migratory bird species regularly breed, over-winter, or migrate through this Priority Place, including 97 designated as priority bird species.[9] The Dry Interior British Columbia also includes the Vaseux-Bighorn National Wildlife Area. This protected area provides significant habitat for many bird species and other wildlife such as bighorn sheep.

Examples of conservation activities in this Priority Place:

- Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc has partnered with the provincial government to incorporate drift fencing into road culvert replacements. This fencing guides wildlife – such as at-risk amphibians and reptiles – to use culverts in an important migration corridor. This helps reduce deaths from collisions with vehicles.

- Stswecem'c Xget'tem First Nation is working to restore habitat for Lewis's Woodpeckers, the American Badger, and other species of conservation concern. Activities include installing wildlife-friendly fencing to keep livestock out of sensitive habitats, thinning in-filling forests, and planning prescribed burns to revitalize grasslands and open dry forest habitats.

The Southwest British Columbia Priority Place is made up of the Fraser Valley, southeast Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. There are many different types of ecosystems in this area, including the entire Coastal Douglas Fir biogeoclimatic zone (the rarest and most threatened zone in the province).

Southwest British Columbia includes three National Wildlife Areas, five Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, and the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. There are 111 species at risk and 121 priority bird species.

Examples of conservation activities in this Priority Place:

- The Stqeeye' Learning Society is restoring wetlands and endangered Garry Oak ecosystems in Xwaaqw'um (Burgoyne Bay Provincial Park) on Salt Spring Island. This is a significant spiritual site for the Quw'utsun People. The Society's work aims to bring back native species, store clean water and carbon, and build climate resiliency. At the same time, the work fosters traditional First Nations cultural practices and community engagement.

- The West Coast Conservation Land Management Program is a partnership between the Government of B.C., Government of Canada, the Nature Trust of BC and Ducks Unlimited Canada. The program efficiently uses the same team of staff for management and restoration actions on conservation lands stewarded by the various partners.

9 A priority bird species is a bird designated by the Canadian Wildlife Service and partners as needing immediate, targeted conservation action due to high risk of population decline, small population size, or high stewardship responsibility.

The Southern Rocky Mountain Trench is a long, narrow complex of ecosystems that runs between the Columbia Mountains and the Rocky Mountains. The trench is a significant natural corridor through the mountainous region. Its diverse ecosystems include grasslands, forests, and wetlands. These ecosystems support important bird habitats as well as those for fish, amphibians and reptiles. It is also home to an abundance of wildlife, such as elk, moose, bighorn sheep, cougar, coyote, and grizzly and black bears. At least 65 species at risk live in this Priority Place. The trench includes the Columbia National Wildlife Area, which is a region critical for migratory birds on the Pacific Flyway and serves as a home for species at risk such as the American Badger, Lewis's Woodpecker, and the western painted turtle.

Examples of conservation activities in this Priority Place:

- The ʔAq'am and Yaquit ʔa·knuqɬi'it First Nations are working to reduce wildfire risk on their reserve lands while restoring habitat for endangered American Badgers and threatened Lewis's Woodpeckers. Wildfire risk reduction activities include thinning ponderosa pine forest, de-limbing standing trees, removing brush piles, and prescribed burning through a combination of Western science and traditional knowledge. These First Nations successfully applied for support under the Community Nominated Priority Places program to participate in the broader Rocky Mountain Trench Ecosystem Restoration Program that the Province of B.C. and other partners initiated in the surrounding valley more than two decades ago.
- The Rocky Mountain Trench Ecosystem Restoration Program is a partnership of government, industry, First Nations, NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and the public that works to restore East Kootenay and Columbia Valley low-elevation grasslands and dry Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir forests to their natural state. Restoration is taking place on Crown land, in provincial and national parks, on private conservation properties, and on First Nations reserves from Radium Hot Springs to the U.S. border. Restoration activities involve removing excess trees from grassland and open forest sites. Tree removal is followed by prescribed burning. This controls tree regeneration and rejuvenates native grasses, shrubs and forbs.[10]

10 Forbs are non-woody, flowering plants. They include most wildflowers and many "weeds" that play vital roles as food and habitat for wildlife.

Helping Badgers Cross the Road – the B.C. Badger Connectivity Initiative

Badgers play a key role in the health of grassland ecosystems. They are impressive diggers that aerate and mix the soil, helping plants to grow. Abandoned badger burrows are often used as homes by other animals, including the endangered burrowing owl and several rare species of snakes. Badgers are also important natural predators of pocket gophers, marmots and ground squirrels that keep these species from overpopulation and reduce damage to land and crops.

Unfortunately, badgers are an endangered species in B.C. Only about 245 mature American badgers (subspecies *Taxidea taxus jeffersonii*) live in the Cariboo, Thompson and Okanagan regions combined. There are up to 160 in the Kootenay Boundary region. Badgers are considered a species at risk after years of habitat loss, road mortalities and secondary poisoning from rodenticides.

Poisoning is no longer the hazard it once was, but humans are still the biggest threat to badgers. This is because the animals are very vulnerable to being run over by vehicles. There are several reasons for this:

- Badgers typically live in valley bottoms where roads are built.
- Badgers travel long distances, which increases their chances of crossing roads.
- Badgers are most active at night, making them difficult for drivers to see.
- Roadsides can be attractive to badgers because the soil there is often easy to dig for burrows.
- Roadsides can also be good habitat for ground squirrels, a key food source for badgers.

Road mortality rates for badgers can be as high as 80 per cent in some areas, reaching its peak from July to August. In an effort to reduce the number of badgers killed on B.C.'s roads the Badger Connectivity Initiative was launched in 2021. The initiative is led by the BC Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship in partnership with the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Transit, local First Nations Simpcw, T'Kemlups, and Skeetchestn and NGOs (non-governmental agencies). The initiative aims to create safer road crossings for badgers. It started with mapping road mortality "hot spots" using badger sightings – dead or alive – reported by the public to the Badgers in B.C. website.[11]

The team has trapped badgers to put harnesses on them with GPS devices to track their movements.

Cameras have been installed in culverts under roads on Highways 1, 5, and 97 in B.C.'s Interior at sites where badgers are most likely to be killed by road traffic. The team monitors the use of these culverts by badgers and other wildlife. The information gathered is used to design and install road infrastructure to reduce road mortality.

The BC Badger Connectivity Initiative employs a collaborative approach that embeds wildlife mitigation[12] into transportation planning. By adopting a collaborative approach, the B.C. Badger Connectivity Initiative ensures shared stewardship and respect for First Nations leadership. By embedding wildlife mitigation into transportation planning, the initiative demonstrates a shift from reactive measures to proactive, science-based solutions. It sets a precedent that can be scaled across the province to restore connectivity and protect species at risk through the creation of best management practices, digital tools and road infrastructure design.

11 These reports are still welcome

12 Wildlife mitigation involves actions to avoid, minimize, or compensate for the negative impacts of human activities on animal populations and their habitats.

OBJECTIVE FOUR

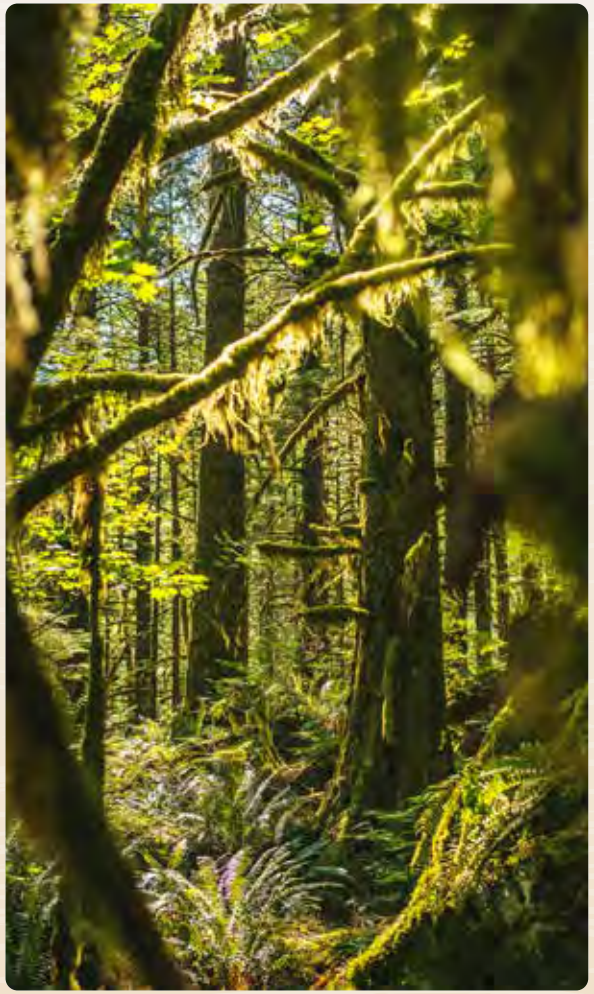
FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION SHARING

Foundational knowledge – encompassing both Western scientific data and First Nations knowledge and science – is the cornerstone of effective conservation. It provides the baseline understanding of ecosystems, species behavior, and historical context necessary to steward biodiversity. It also supports the creation of targeted, sustainable and culturally sensitive strategies to achieve the objectives of the Framework Agreement.

The commitment of the Framework Agreement partners to share knowledge and information includes a commitment to the principles of First Nations data sovereignty, commonly known as OCAP: Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession. OCAP principles respect the fact that First Nations are stewards of their own information, much the same way they are stewards of their own lands.

The partners of the Framework Agreement continue to collaborate to enhance data and information collection, management, analysis, and extension with the OCAP principles in mind. Work to date has focused on creating, maintaining and sharing databases.

Action for Adaptation: Protecting Biodiversity in a Changing Climate



A newly developed resource is helping local and First Nations governments protect important habitats in southeastern Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast and islands in the Salish Sea.

This area includes the Coastal Douglas-fir Moist Maritime Biogeoclimatic subzone, the smallest and most at-risk zone in B.C. In addition to Coastal Douglas-fir and other forests, the zone includes a wide variety of ecosystems, including Garry Oak ecosystems and wetlands. These ecosystems host Canada's most diverse overwintering bird species and the highest number of species and ecosystems at risk in the province.

In response to these pressures, the Coastal Douglas-fir Conservation Partnership (CDFCP, www.cdfcp.ca) and UBC Botanical Garden (UBCBG) joined forces to launch the Action for Adaptation (A4A) project in 2022. Most funding for the project has come from the federal NatureSmart program, with additional funding from the provincial government and other partners, such as the Nature Trust of B.C., the Nature Conservancy of Canada and a private donor through UBCBG. The project has developed mapping and policy tools to support local governments and First Nations planners across Southwest B.C. (an area spanning 63 First Nation territories).

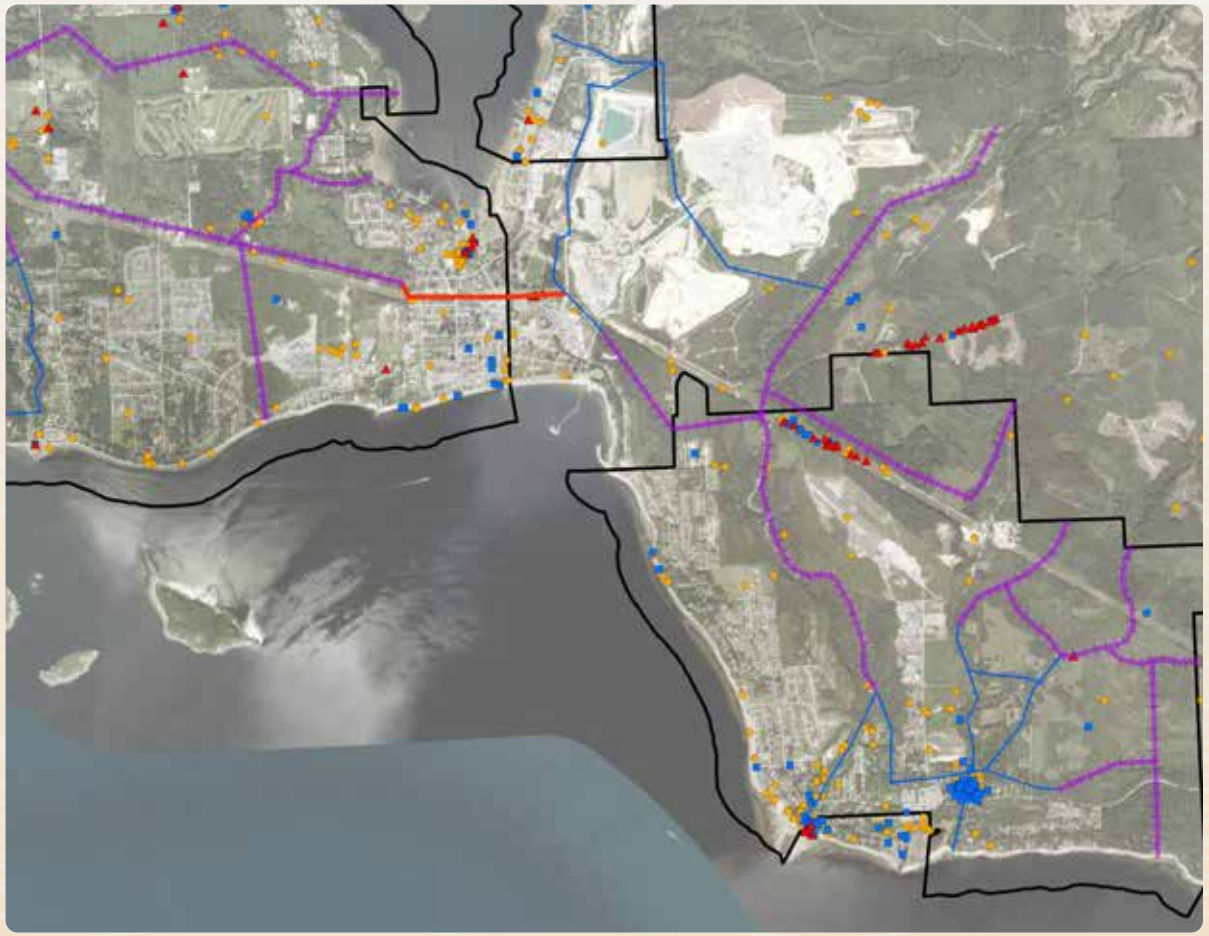
A Biodiversity Atlas is an important part of the project. The atlas is a peer-reviewed online platform developed by researchers and is made up of many spatial layers – distinct datasets representing geographic information, like land cover, tree canopy and habitat for species at risk. These layers create a comprehensive interactive map useful for analysis and planning. The wealth of information shown in the Biodiversity Atlas also includes:

- Sensitive Ecosystems (rare, fragile or ecologically important areas that require special care because they are vulnerable to disturbance from human activities or environmental changes);
- Potential Ecosystems at Risk (ecosystems facing significant threats that could lead to their collapse or severe degradation);
- Climate Microrefugia (small, localized areas with unique microclimates that provide more stable conditions than the surrounding landscape, allowing vulnerable species to survive regional climate change impacts); and
- Land Cover, Forest Carbon and Tree Canopy (three layers created from remote sensing products and satellite imagery at a 3m to 15m resolution).

The Biodiversity Atlas and the other resources developed in the A4A project (a Local Government Policy Toolkit and a Land Stewardship Toolkit for First Nations) improve access to timely, relevant, and decision-ready data for First Nations and local governments. Together, these tools support work on climate adaptation, carbon storage, and long-term ecosystem resilience. Already, the atlas has been used by Tla'amin First Nation for forest management planning and by Sunshine Coast Regional District planners through their Natural Asset Inventory.

The tools will be available on an A4A website to be launched in 2026. They provide a scalable framework that can be replicated across B.C. and Canada to advance the goal of protecting 30% of land and water by 2030.

Connectivity Mapping Projects



Biodiversity Mapping in South-west BC 2023 - Coastal Douglas-fir Conservation Partnership

Many of us think of maps as straightforward wayfinding guides, but they can be so much more. Maps can offer perspective, reveal connections and act as crucial tools for understanding our environment. That is the case with two province-wide mapping projects underway in B.C.

The Provincial Ecological Corridors Opportunities map and the BC Inventory of Habitat Connectivity Features map are complementary projects focussed on habitat connectivity. Improving access to habitat and connecting habitat patches is a recognized strategy for improving species biodiversity, ecosystem health, and resilience of species and ecosystems.

Once published, the ecological corridors maps will support conservation planning initiatives. The maps and associated information can help identify broad corridor objectives. These objectives include conserving, maintaining or restoring areas to promote wildlife movement across the landscape. The maps provide a common starting point for corridor planning discussions and can help focus resources on areas to be prioritized. It is expected they will be used with regional or local knowledge of wildlife movement to confirm or identify specific candidate priority areas.

The BC Inventory of Habitat Connectivity Features map identifies where the province has already invested in preserving wildlife movement. The map is a visual depiction of where B.C. has committed to managing wildlife connectivity in parks, protected areas, wildlife management areas, wildlife habitat areas, ungulate (hooved animal) winter ranges, various land use plans, vehicle prohibitions, wildlife overpasses, underpasses and wildlife fencing.

The map links to details such as management strategies, connectivity goals and objectives, legal tools, reference documents, key species and threats to connectivity. It is intended to inform the Priority Ecological Corridor map.

These important databases will help to effectively visualize, integrate and implement a plan for provincial wildlife corridor management into the future.

Tracking to Manage Effectively – a Cross-Sector Reporting Approach

Good information supports successful activities. However, comparing the large number of diverse ecological activities carried out by the Province of British Columbia might be considered akin to comparing apples and oranges. Doing so effectively and accurately is the idea behind a new approach to reporting.

The province is made up of many types of ecosystems that provide habitat for a wealth of animal and plant species. One way the province supports the stewardship of these species is through management activities related to wildlife, fish and habitat. Examples of these activities include inventory and monitoring surveys, species health surveys, and research about inter-dependent species and habitat. The B.C. government also carries out land use planning, habitat enhancement, restoration and conservation activities.

The province now compiles a one-stop view of these activities by collecting summaries of work across many program areas and funding agencies. This approach ensures cross-sector coordination and consistency in reporting year over year. It also incorporates quality assurance standards that support the accuracy of the information gathered.

This centralized, standardized reporting makes it easy to compare investments across program areas, regions and funding sources. It improves access to data as well as transparency to the public, partners and decision makers.

FUNDING

The Framework Agreement represents a commitment to a combined investment of more than $1 billion over seven years from November 2023 to March 2030 to protect and conserve biodiversity, habitats, and species at risk. The governments of Canada and B.C. are each contributing $500 million. In-kind and philanthropic donations from other partners increase this amount.

The Government of Canada is contributing primarily from the:

- Enhanced Nature Legacy,
- Old Growth Nature Fund,
- Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund, and
- 2 Billion Trees Program

(Note: while most federal funds have been committed through these and other programs, only funds already spent are reported on below).

The Government of B.C. is matching the federal funding by leveraging existing programs and funding commitments, such as those related to:

- land use planning,
- caribou recovery,
- Together for Wildlife Strategy,
- Collaborative Indigenous Stewardship Framework,
- B.C. Conservation Fund (in collaboration with the B.C. Parks Foundation),
- Watershed Security Fund (in collaboration with the Real Estate Foundation of B.C.
- and the First Nations Fisheries Council),
- and the Guardian and Stewardship Training Initiative (in collaboration with New Relationship Trust).

The federal and provincial investments have and will continue to generate jobs, support sustainable industries, build capacity for environmental stewardship, and enhance local economies. Investing in conservation efforts helps protect B.C.'s natural resources, promoting long-term environmental, cultural, and economic resilience.

The tables in this section cover the period between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025.

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FUNDING BY RECIPIENT TYPE BY YEAR

FROM APRIL 2021 TO MARCH 2025 [1,2]

RECIPIENT	2021 – 22	2022 – 23	2023 – 24	2024 – 25	TOTAL
First Nations	–	9,397,606	29,537,576	**25,335,832**	**64,271,014**
Provincial Government	10,000	10,302,000	34,291,200	**40,521,700**	**85,124,900**
Local Governments	–	125,000	275,750	**201,025**	**601,775**
Academia	–	131,044	118,058	**411,560**	**660,662**
ENGO[3] / Non-Profit	3,500,000	31,268,754	53,562,158	**38,157,756**	**126,488,668**
Other[4]		502,208	897,210	**776,118**	**2,175,536**
TOTAL	**$ 3,510,000**	**$ 51,726,612**	**$118,681,952**	**105,403,991**	**$279,322,555**

1 This count does not include Canada Nature Funds, 2 Billion Trees or National Program for Ecological Corridors. It also does not include funds associated with Southern Mountain Caribou.

2 Funds are scaled to the B.C. portion of national-scale agreements.

3 Environmental non-governmental organization

4 Other recipients include for-profit consulting firms, conservancies, and individuals.

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FUNDING AGREEMENTS[1] BY RECIPIENT TYPE FROM APRIL 2021 TO MARCH 2025

RECIPIENT	NO. OF FUNDING AGREEMENTS
First Nations	139
Provincial Government	21
Local Governments	7
Academia	4
ENGO[2] / Non-Profit	82
Other[3]	11
TOTAL	**264**

1 This count does not include Canada Nature Funds, 2 Billion Trees or National Program for Ecological Corridors. It also does not include funds associated with Southern Mountain Caribou.

2 Environmental Non-Government Organizations

3 Other recipients include for-profit consulting firms, conservancies, and individuals.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT (FTE) SUPPORTED BY FEDERAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FUNDS[1] FROM APRIL 2021 TO MARCH 2025[2]

YEAR	FTES FUNDED DIRECTLY BY ECCC[3]	FTES SUPPORTED BY RECIPIENT MATCH	TOTAL
2021-22	0.17	0.17	**0.34**
2022-23[4]	163.31	289.23	**452.54**
2023-24[5]	336.00	461.08	**797.08**
2024-25	518.89	710.95	**1,229.84**
TOTAL	**1,018.37**	**1,461.43**	**2,479.80**

1 This count does not include Canada Nature Funds, 2 Billion Trees or National Program for Ecological Corridors. It also does not include funds associated with Southern Mountain Caribou.

2 These numbers are underestimated as insufficient data was available to assess the amount of FTE supported by Indigenous Guardians and Indigenous-Led Natural Climate Solutions (a subcomponent of Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund). Additionally, as of as of January 2026, 4 out of 157 reports for 2024-25 (2.5%) from other programs were not yet available.

3 These calculations are based on salary data from Statistics Canada which can be accessed here. As 2025 wage data was not available at time of analysis, 2024 data was utilized to estimate median salaries for the final quarter of fiscal year 2024-2025.

4,5 Figures are different from those reported in the first annual report as they now include additional data that was unavailable when the first annual report was published; and calculations for the final quarter of fiscal year 2023-24 have been updated with 2024 median wage data.

PROVINCIAL SPENDING BY PROGRAM AREAS

FROM APRIL 2024 TO MARCH 2025

	PLANNED 3 YEAR SPEND	EXPENDED
REPRESENTATIVE FUNDING STREAM[1]	FY24 - FY26	FY24/25
Conservation Financing Mechanism[2]	150,000,000	–
Modernized Land Use Planning[3]	23,000,000	4,000,000
Collaborative Indigenous Stewardship Framework[4,5]	22,500,000	7,300,000
Guardian and Stewardship Training Initiative[6,7]	8,900,000	3,800,000
Together For Wildlife[8]	30,000,000	5,700,000
Watershed Security Fund[9]	100,000,000	–
Restoration in the Northeast[10]	200,000,000	47,500,000
Caribou Recovery Program[11]	30,000,000	7,700,000
Complementary BC Investment (on-the-ground investment only)[12]	–	24,600,000
TOTAL	**$ 564,400,000**	**$ 92,900,000**

1 Table of the primary B.C. funding streams that represent the work under the Agreement. The funding streams are not comprehensive.

2 Funding was released to the BC Parks Foundation in FY 23/24 to create the BC Conservation Fund to improve biodiversity, promote climate resiliency, and galvanize interest in conservation financing in British Columbia (BC). See: https://bcconservationfund.ca/

3 Land Use Planning includes efforts to set the strategic direction to guide sustainable resource stewardship and management of provincial public land and waters to meet economic, environmental, social, and cultural objectives. Funds noted include Land Use Cumulative Effects staffing.

4 In the FY24 Annual Report $21M was erroneously reported instead of $22.5M in the Communicated Column for FY24/26.

5 Collaborative Indigenous Stewardship Framework provides funding to Nations to engage in new and existing collaborative stewardship forums, ongoing conservation projects and monitoring work; the number for FY 24/25 does not include funds for B.C. staffing.

6 The Province has co-developed the Guardians and Stewardship Training Initiative (GSTI) with First Nations participating in a Guardians Working Group and conducted broader engagement with all First Nations in B.C. In 2024, WLRS entered into an agreement with the New Relationship Trust to administer the training initiative funding. At this time, funding has been fully allocated to First Nations and First Nations organizations in B.C.

7 In the FY24 Annual Report $9 million was erroneously reported for FY24-26 Communicated column due to a rounding error. The correct number should be $8.9 million.

8 Implementation of the Together for Wildlife Strategy started in 2020 to achieve positive impacts for wildlife and their habitats; the expended fund includes $1.9 million for supporting B.C. staff.

9 B.C. transferred $100 million in funding to the Real Estate Foundation of BC and First Nations Fisheries Council in FY22/23 as a permanent endowment to support work needed to improve outcome for the province's watersheds. Investment yields from the Fund are expected to amount to $5-7 million per year depending on interest rates. See: https://watershedsecurityfund.ca/funded-projects/

10 Investment from B.C. in Nan wúújǫ anawúúdle (formerly, the Blueberry River Restoration Society). Industry also paid ; an additional $12,527,000 in industry disturbance payments.

11 Investment in caribou recovery planning and implementation (Boreal, Northern Mountain, and Southern Mountain).

12 This category is for B.C. funding for on-the-ground investment that directly contributed to performance measures reported and/or used to match federal funds for biodiversity and conservation. This includes funds managed by the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Ministry of Transportation and Transit, and Ministry of Forests. Not all data sources were available at the time of this report, and an updated number reflecting the final numbers will be included in the Third Annual Report.

Going After Greenhouse Gas Emissions With Natural Climate Solutions

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions blanket the earth and trap the heat of the sun. The main source of GHG emissions is burning fossil fuels but land-use change from deforestation and agriculture also causes emissions. Climate change is the result, and what follows are extremes in weather, rising sea levels, melting glaciers, disruption to ecosystems, and risks to human health and security.

Natural climate solutions rely on the power of nature itself to add and keep GHGs in plants, soil and wetlands. Three government programs help deliver these solutions by funding projects that provincial governments, Indigenous groups, local governments, conservation land trusts and other partners propose and complete:

- 2 Billion Trees (2021-2031), by planting trees across Canada;
- Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund (2021-2031), by protecting or restoring carbon-rich ecosystems across Canada; and
- Old Growth Nature Fund (2022-2025), by protecting British Columbia's carbon-rich old growth rainforests.

Measuring GHG emission reductions is complicated. Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, each country produces a National Inventory Report to describe how they reduce GHG emissions. All contributions are converted to one common measurement: tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents per year (tCO2e/yr). When completed, each project reports how many trees were planted, or hectares of land protected or restored, and this information is evaluated using a Carbon Budget Model. When this information is available, summaries will be provided in future annual reports of the Trilateral Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation in British Columbia.

NEXT STEPS & ONGOING EFFORTS

Priorities for the next year:

- Review performance indicators and data sources captured in the annual report to further support transparency and accountability, and develop TFANC indicators to track and report on socio-economic, greenhouse gas and climate change adaptation benefits in relation to our major conservation initiatives.
- Continue seeking opportunities to optimize the positive economic benefits of conservation efforts.
- Continue working collaboratively to protect critical ecosystems across all levels of government (federal, provincial, First Nations, local) and communities, workers, industry, organizations, and in a manner that upholds First Nations title and rights, advances UNDRIP implementation, and supports consent-based decision-making, inclusive of economic growth that benefits all people in B.C.
- Support efforts to identify priority areas for restoration and conservation sites and communicate these opportunities effectively.
- Enhance public reporting on habitat outcomes, funding flows, and conservation designations to improve transparency and accountability.
- Strengthen mechanisms to support Nation-level engagement and participation in TFANC implementation, including improved information sharing, regional coordination, and community-informed priority setting.
- Secure stable capacity support to enable sustained First Nations participation in governance, implementation, and monitoring under the Framework Agreement.
- Advance Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) through coordinated federal and provincial support.
- To advance the creation of more conserved and protected areas, the Province will advance its policy on Other Effective Conservation Measures to be able to designate specific lands and waters that provide conservation benefits and will co-develop identification criteria and reporting processes to ensure alignment with all parties.

ANNEX A

Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation Sections that Refer to UNDRIP

In terms of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), there are references in the Framework Agreement that state:

Pursuant to Canada's and B.C.'s respective commitments to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and, in particular, Articles 24-29, Canada and B.C. will consult and cooperate with First Nations to develop agreements, understandings or other constructive arrangements that respect First Nations decision-making authorities and inherent rights of self-determination and self-government, and to ensure appropriate processes and resources are in place so that First Nations may effectively engage in the implementation of this Agreement.

Decision-making: Work in a manner that is consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including:

- **Article 18**, which affirms that First Nations "have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own Indigenous decision-making institutions."
- **Article 19** which affirms that government "shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them."
- **Article 32.1** which affirms that First Nations "have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources."
- **Article 32.2** which affirms governments "shall consult and cooperate in good faith with Indigenous Peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources"

ANNEX B

Linkages between the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Tripartite Framework Agreement for Nature Conservation

	1. Reducing threats to biodiversity	2. Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing	3. Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming
GBF THEMES			
GBF TARGETS	1. Reducing land and sea-use change 2. Restoration of degraded ecosystems 3. Protect and conserve areas 4. Halting species extinction and reducing extinction risk 8. Minimize impacts of climate change	11. Restore, maintain, and enhance nature's contribution to people, including ecosystem functions and services	21. Ensure data, information, and knowledge, are accessible to decision makers, practitioners, and the public 22. Respecting rights and cultures of Indigenous peoples and local communities
B.C. FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT GOALS	Working with B.C. to reach our shared objective of protecting 30% of land and water by 2030, as well as implementing interim protections that could contribute to Canada's goal of protecting 25% by 2025. Improving the ecological health of landscapes and watersheds in B.C. through conservation, restoration, and enhancement actions. Improving the conservation and population status of species, particularly species at risk, through enhanced collaboration between Canada, B.C., and First Nations.	Management of a province-wide network of land inclusive rare ecosystems, enduring features, biological diversity, and high cultural or ecological value persists in B.C.	Improving the transparency, accessibility, reliability, and integration of information management to ensure collaboration among partners as well as inform decision makers and citizens. Cooperation between Canada, B.C., and First Nations based on shared interests and priorities, in a manner consistent with the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

ANNEX C

Lessons Learned

A key element of the Tripartite Agreement is a commitment to transparency – sharing both progress and challenges – so that other jurisdictions exploring similar approaches can benefit from the experience. Over the past year, three lessons have been consistently reinforced: (1) good governance and relationship building takes time; (2) external events outside the control of the committee or secretariat require strong project management and flexible timelines; and (3) while interpreting data and trends is important, understanding the stories and relationships behind them is also essential. The following paragraphs expand on these lessons and outline opportunities for improvement.

LESSON 1
Good governance and relationship building take time

Throughout 2025, the Framework Agreement partners refined the organizational structure of their sub-committees and secretariat to strengthen coordination and create clearer pathways for participation. These refinements included new processes for onboarding participants, as well as improved communications materials to help the public understand the Framework Agreement's goals, progress and accomplishments.

A critical aspect of this work has been taking the time to fully understand each partner's core objectives. Developing this shared understanding across committees helps clarify what each group is striving to achieve and how these goals align with collective priorities such as 30 X 30, data sharing, First Nations representation, restoration, and species-at-risk initiatives. Building trust, shared language and clarity of purpose has taken time and will continue to evolve, but it forms the foundation for long-term success. Sustained support for First Nations participation will remain essential to implementation of the Framework Agreement.

LESSON 2
External events require strong project management and flexible timelines

Despite strong collaboration, several key events in 2025 delayed planned work. These included a federal election, union job action in the Government of B.C., and several organizational changes. In particular, indicator development stalled and the Government of B.C.'s OECM policy was not completed in time to support additions to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD). Because some delays stemmed from circumstances beyond the control of the committee or secretariat, the experience highlighted the importance of adaptive project management, realistic timelines, and clear contingency plans.

OPPORTUNITY: ***Moving forward, partners will strengthen work planning by setting clear, prioritized deliverables and ensuring contributions from all parties are aligned with shared timelines. Work is being done to support onboarding of new participants in the governance structure.***

LESSON 3
Data and trends matter—but so do stories and relationships

Annual Reports provide valuable point-in-time summaries of accomplishments and progress, and they highlight impressive collaborative projects across the province. However, they capture only part of the picture. Quantitative data and trend analysis are essential for understanding outcomes, but they must be complemented by qualitative insights – the stories, relationships and lived experiences that shape decision-making and collaboration.

OPPORTUNITY*: Collaborative priority-setting, particularly around habitat and species support, can help integrate both data and lived experience into future planning. Strengthening this balance will support more holistic decision-making and create clearer pathways for advancing biodiversity outcomes across jurisdictions. Moving forward, partners will also continue to look for opportunities to share their experiences within the organization and with their broader community.*