



## **BC Parks Foundation and Province of BC pledge \$300 million to tackle biodiversity loss with First Nations**

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The BC Parks Foundation and Province of BC are jointly announcing funding to improve biodiversity and climate security in BC in collaboration with First Nations.

The Province of BC is committing \$150 million, and the BC Parks Foundation commits to secure an additional \$150 million through its crowdsourcing and partnership model.

“The rich diversity of life around us keeps us safe and is the wellspring of our health, security and economy,” says Foundation Chair Ross Beaty. “Taking care of it is part of our identity as British Columbians. The Provincial government’s funding is a truly great investment and we are matching it so that everyone who loves British Columbia can join in this transformative effort to keep BC beautiful, forever.”

The commitment is part of a unique ‘made in BC’ public-private partnership approach where the Foundation guarantees the matching funds to the Province, donors can contribute to projects knowing their dollars will be matched by Provincial funding, and First Nations and other partners can propose projects knowing long term stable funding is available. Funds will be managed within the Foundation and overseen independently from government by a special committee made up of experts, half of whom will be First Nations.

“This is a unique opportunity to address biodiversity loss and climate change based on both Indigenous knowledge and western science,” says Cynthia Callison, Vice-Chair of the BC Parks Foundation. Callison, who is a member of the Tahltan Nation, will serve as chair of the interim committee that will be seeking input and designing a Fund in the next six months. “This funding is for the benefit of all of us - the collective we - and the things we all need and care about-- good health, clean air and water, fewer fires and floods, sustainable jobs and wealth, safe homes for wildlife, and food security.”

The funding aligns with international commitments to protect 30% of the world’s lands and water by 2030 as a way of trying to maintain the essential life support systems that nature provides people. The “30x30” commitment comes on the heels of the World Economic Forum identifying biodiversity loss and climate change as an urgent global threat, and a global index of animal life on earth showing that, on average, the populations of almost 4,400 monitored mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish declined by a staggering 69 percent in 50 years between 1970 and 2022.



“Most British Columbians aren’t aware we have more biodiversity than anywhere else in North America, but also one of the highest numbers of species at risk,” says Andy Day, CEO of the BC Parks Foundation. “The good news is that by creating more protected areas, restoring nature, and increasing awareness and education, we can make a difference if we act now. That’s why this funding is absolutely critical.”

One of the goals of the funding will be to support First Nations who want to create protected areas in their territories. Terry Teegee, Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief and a Board member of the BC Parks Foundation says, “First Nations have always believed that if we take care of nature, it will take care of us. Many Nations are creating indigenous protected areas and wildlife corridors as well as looking for ways to have an economy that is in harmony with nature. This funding will help support Nations who have a vision of restoring abundance in their territories. That will benefit everyone.”

Day gives praise to the Provincial government for its commitment, and says it shows what British Columbians can do when they work together. “The real heroes behind this funding are the tens of thousands of individuals, businesses, organizations, and First Nations who care about the land, water and wildlife and have worked together to protect it. Their passion, action, and shared values are what inspired our commitment to this Fund. We are excited to amp up our work with British Columbians so that they can enjoy and protect more of BC for now, forever, and for everybody.”

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### **Media Contact**

Randene Neill  
Communications  
[Randene.neill@bcparksfoundation.ca](mailto:Randene.neill@bcparksfoundation.ca)  
604.970.1652

### **About the BC Parks Foundation**

The BC Parks Foundation is an independent public foundation. It serves as official charitable partner to BC’s world-class system of parks and protected areas. Our vision is a connected system of parks and indigenous protected areas that is full of life, resilient, and cared for by all.

### **Media Resources**

[Global and Provincial Status of Species in British Columbia Report](#)

[WWF Living Planet Report 2022](#)