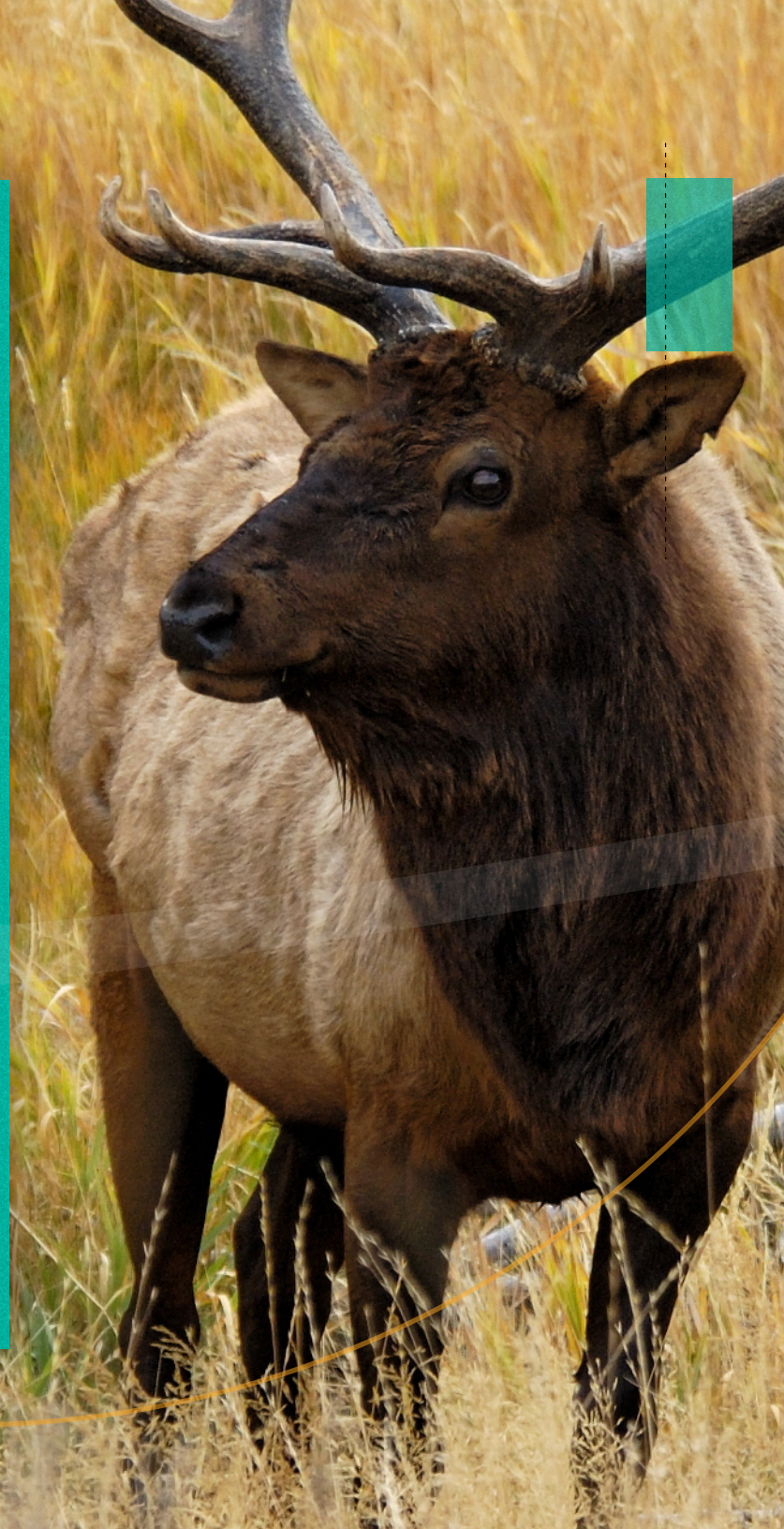


NATURE UNITES US

NATURE CANADA
STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2025

Nature
CANADA







WE ARE UNITED THROUGH NATURE

Nature Canada's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is centered on working with others to discover, defend and restore nature.

We have three strong tools to reach our goals: our Nature Nation of more than 250,000 members and supporters; our Nature Network of 900 nature-related organizations; and our Nature Policy influence on Parliament Hill and other levels of government.

Nature urgently needs our help.

Scientists have documented the decline of wildlife habitat, accelerating climate change, and the rapid collapse of species. In Canada, the North Atlantic and North Pacific Right Whale, Woodland Caribou, and the Eastern Meadowlark are among more than 600 species at risk.

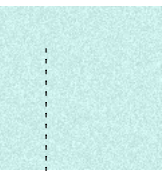
What we do in Canada has a real impact on the planet because our country features such large freshwater resources, wetlands, rainforests, boreal forests, and the longest coastline in the world.

Our strategic plan recognizes that equity and anti-racism are crucial to safeguarding nature, in opening it to all and to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. We see our shared reliance on and responsibility to nature as a force for unity in Canada.

Working collaboratively over the next five years, Nature Canada promises to make a difference.

Bill Ross
Chair, Board of Directors

Graham Saul
Executive Director



NATURE UNITES US AS A COUNTRY

The land now called Canada encompasses some of the world's largest natural environments, among them landscapes, seascapes, wetlands, forests that help keep planet Earth healthy.

People living across Canada have many distinct cultures and regional qualities. They do have one thing in common: they are part of nature with a responsibility to care for it. From the east coast to west, to the far north, in remote wilderness and urban centres, nature unites us.

Imagine what we could accomplish if all 38 million people in Canada united around the common goal of defending and restoring nature.

CANADA'S INSPIRING NATURE INCLUDES:

- 20% of the world's freshwater
- 24% of the world's wetlands
- 25% of the world's temperate rainforests
- 28% of the world's remaining boreal forest
- The longest coastline in the world, measuring 243,000 kilometres
- At least 80,000 species
- And more than three billion birds nesting in the boreal forest every year





NATURE IS THREATENED

The rapid pace of species collapse compels us to act quickly.

The latest science shows biodiversity is declining faster than at any other time in human history. Human activity has already severely altered three quarters of the land on earth, half of inland waterways, and 40 percent of the marine environment. Up to a million species are likely to face extinction, many within decades, if trends are not reversed.

Over half of the world's fish, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals have declined since 1970. More than 40 percent of the world's insect species are in decline, with a third endangered.

Nature in Canada is not immune. Half of species monitored in Canada from 1970 to 2014 were in decline. There are three billion fewer birds in North America than there were 50 years ago.

Species loss is caused by habitat destruction, toxic substances in the environment, and, increasingly, climate change as rising global temperatures outpace wildlife's ability to adapt.

Human activity is to blame, but we can act to defend and restore nature.



WHO WE ARE

Since 1939, Nature Canada has been a voice for nature. We connect the dots between local action and systemic change to solve the biodiversity crisis. Our advocacy has helped protect species and vast amounts of land in Canada. We facilitate mobilization in our extensive network of more than 900 organizations and more than 250,000 nature lovers to achieve our shared goals and generate the political will needed for transformation.

Nature Canada is committed to continuous action in support of racial justice and equity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. Achieving racial justice and gender equality is an ethical imperative and critical for the well-being of nature.

Our work supports hundreds of thousands of children and their families to get out and explore nature. We believe that when people get their hands and feet dirty in nature, they also get their heart and soul enriched. Like planting a seed, as children grow, so does their love of nature and their instinct to protect it. We are investing in the environmental leaders of tomorrow.

We aim to build lasting and more equitable connections between nature, people, and decision makers to drive systemic change that will protect species, ecosystems, and the planet for generations to come.

NATURE CANADA'S THREE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS IN 2021-2025

Nature Canada's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is centered on working with others to discover, defend, and restore nature.

DISCOVER

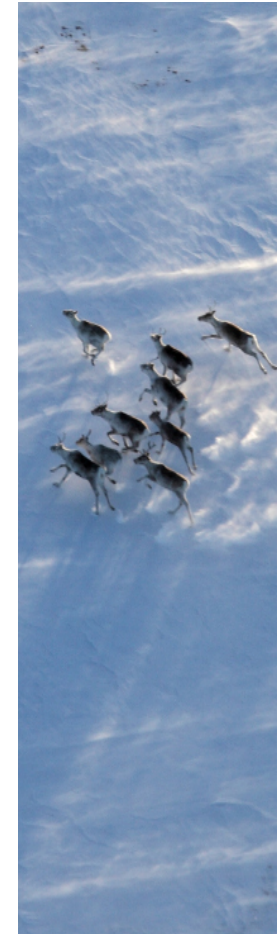
Help people connect with nature

DEFEND

Protect healthy natural areas from destruction

RESTORE

Rehabilitate damaged nature and species populations





DISCOVER NATURE

There are so many ways to discover nature, from scientific study to family walks, from camping or hiking in the wilderness to jogging along a river, from watching birds feed outside a window to tending a neighbourhood garden.

One of Nature Canada's core missions is to help people connect with nature and cultivate their interest and enjoyment. A significant benefit of connecting to nature is improved physical and mental health. Everyone should have safe and welcoming access to nature, to feel the amazement of seeing wildlife in their natural habitat or have their spirit lifted when urban areas make room for nature. A child's excitement about nature's wonders boosts happiness, builds confidence, and shapes attitudes that last a lifetime.

A profound respect for nature can inspire action to defend biodiversity and restore degraded habitat, the main cause of species collapse. The word 'discover' captures both the intellectual appreciation of nature's fascinating complexities and the wonder inspired by its beauty.

HOW WE WILL DISCOVER NATURE:

- Connect 250,000 children and their families to nearby nature
- Build dozens of partnerships with Black, Indigenous and racialized leaders and communities to address barriers to accessing nature, including urban nature
- Assist more than 1,000 racialized youth to find employment in nature appreciation and conservation
- Support 250 World Migratory Bird Day events to celebrate birds in Canada

In choosing to use the word ‘discover,’ we believe it is important to acknowledge that it has colonial connotations for many Indigenous Peoples.

We are on a path of unpacking and acknowledging the historical and continued injustices that Indigenous Peoples have experienced on their lands and with the nature community. For decades, government conservation and development policies pushed Indigenous Peoples from their traditional territories, abrogated their sovereignty, and suppressed their cultures and traditional knowledge systems, which had been safeguarding nature for millennia.

Nature Canada is committed to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, guided by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We are also inspired by the many contributions of Indigenous-led conservation across Canada. We will work to support the establishment of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, Indigenous stewardship initiatives such as Guardians programs, and other Indigenous-led conservation and climate initiatives.

HOW WE GET THERE:

- Ensure that at least half of the members of our Board of Directors are Black, Indigenous and People of Colour and at least half are women
- Integrate appreciation for Indigenous rights and culture into all Nature Canada programs and express land acknowledgements at all Nature Canada events
- Conduct an annual review to reflect on how we can better support reconciliation and Indigenous-led conservation in all our programs
- Integrate a commitment to equity and anti-racism outcomes through our own work and internal practice, and act as a catalyst for continuous improvement and learning in the conservation sector







DEFEND NATURE

Defending natural areas and species is central to Nature Canada's purpose.

Important ecosystems in Canada remain largely intact. These invaluable, diverse landscapes and waterscapes are critical to support life and to slow global warming. There is twice as much carbon stored in the boreal forest, for example, than in all the world's proven oil reserves combined.

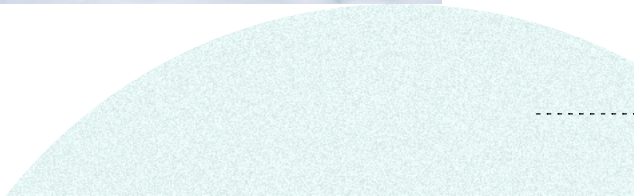
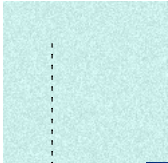
Our collective action is required to prevent habitat destruction, the main cause of species collapse.

The Canadian federal government made a historic commitment to protect 25 percent of Canada's land, freshwater, and ocean by 2025, and 30 percent by 2030. This is the most important nature protection initiative in Canadian history. We are committed to making it a reality and to ensuring that Indigenous-led conservation helps lead the way.

There are more than 600 species at risk in Canada. We are dedicated to working with our supporters, partners, and Indigenous Peoples to defend nature and to holding both government and industry to account on these important goals.

HOW WE WILL DEFEND NATURE:

- Help realize Canada's commitment to expand protected areas to 25 percent of Canada's land, freshwater, and ocean by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030
- Promote the benefits of protecting intact forests and other ecosystems, especially the boreal forest which contains 25 percent of the world's remaining intact forests
- Support the establishment of new urban parks with an emphasis on ensuring access to nature for racialized communities
- Educate the public about techniques to mitigate significant threats to bird survival which are common in urban areas with our Bird Friendly City program
- Support the establishment of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas on land and water as well as Guardian programs
- Foster U.S.-Canada cooperation for cross-border conservation by working with allies for bi-national action to protect and reconnect fragmented corridors to support the safe movement of wildlife





RESTORE NATURE

Nature Canada recognizes that in large parts of Canada, human harm to the environment has already gone too far. For example, most of Canada's endangered species are found in southern Canada where human activity has degraded landscapes and undermined nature.

In these areas, we need to focus our efforts on restoring nature's abundance.

The restoration of wildlife habitats allows nature to heal, providing an opportunity to welcome species back. Restoring forests, grassland, wetland, and coastal areas to a more natural state benefits biodiversity and helps fight climate change.

Improvements in fishing, farming, and forestry practices can restore nature, too. Potential restoration sites can also include damaged parts of boreal caribou ranges, abandoned mines, reclaimed oil wells, and logging roads.

Nature Canada is resolutely focused on the rights of nature. Our focus on restoring it not only benefits people, but we also recognize that nature has an intrinsic right to exist.

HOW WE WILL RESTORE NATURE:

- Work with thousands of individuals and hundreds of nature groups on community-based restoration initiatives
- Restore bird populations by working with partners to certify Bird Friendly Cities across Canada
- Advocate for major federal investments in nature-based climate solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by modifying land use and restoring degraded wetlands, grasslands, and ocean areas
- Restore forests by helping the federal government ensure the Two Billion Trees program plants the right trees, in the right places, for the right reasons
- Work to ensure that governments at all levels have clear biodiversity baselines, a commitment to reverse wildlife decline, and action plans to support species restoration
- Support Indigenous-led restoration initiatives

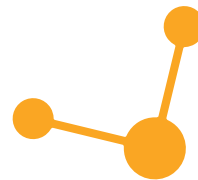


USING OUR STRENGTHS TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS

Nature Canada will build our three core strengths as an organization, working with others to help discover, defend, and restore nature by:



GROWING THE NATURE NATION



**STRENGTHENING
THE NATURE NETWORK**



**SHAPING NATURE POLICY
ON PARLIAMENT HILL AND
IN OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT**



GROWING THE NATURE NATION

Nature Canada brings together hundreds of thousands of nature lovers across the country. We engage both naturalists and environmentalists, building a community of advocates and having conversations about discovering, defending, and restoring nature. Together, we will identify opportunities to raise our voice for nature protection.

Growing the Nature Nation creates momentum toward our collective goals of protecting the natural spaces and wildlife we love.

We are committed to engaging with diverse communities in the nature movement, and to amplifying important voices that are often marginalized. That means reducing barriers and increasing connections with Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour and with girls and women across the country.

We will provide avenues for all who care about and appreciate nature to engage with government decision makers.

HOW WE WILL GROW THE NATURE NATION:

- Add 175,000 new supporters to our Nature Nation and activate them to communicate with decision makers on behalf of nature
- Attract 5,000 new individual donors each year and encourage their sustaining support month after month
- Reach Canadians more than 200 million times on social networks and mobilize them to use their voices for nature
- Bring a gender equality lens on nature issues, including with participants in our Women for Nature program
- Provide Young Nature Leadership bursary grants and offer mentoring to young women environmentalists who are demonstrating leadership on nature initiatives





STRENGTHENING THE NATURE NETWORK

The nature community is the largest arm of Canada's environmental movement. No matter where you go, or how small the community, you will find birding groups, botanist clubs, trail associations, canoe and kayak clubs, wildlife centres, and local land trusts.

There is an amazing ecosystem of local nature groups across the country. Nature Canada works to support and mobilize them to engage more people in nature appreciation and to have an impact on nature policy by coming together.

It is not enough to simply love nature – nature groups must join together to speak up for nature and demand decision makers protect and restore our ecosystems. We are stronger together.

Nature Canada is proud to bring these community leaders and organizations together to advance our collective goals of discovering, defending, and restoring nature.

The Nature Network helps connect more than 900 organizations from coast to coast to coast. We aim to strengthen their capacity for civic engagement at all levels of government.

When we work together to achieve common goals, we create real change. We are unified in advocating on behalf of nature which is good for people and the planet.

HOW WE WILL STRENGTHEN OUR NATURE NETWORK:

- Mobilize all 900 organizations in our network to engage in advocacy at a scale that is comfortable for them, including letters, calls, tweets, and meetings with decision makers
- Share best practices in engagement with our partners so we can all become stronger advocates for nature
- Increase our support to groups led by and focused on racialized communities and breaking down barriers to accessing nature
- Engage more than 200 partner organizations to join us in our anti-racism activities
- Engage more than 500 community groups to create nature-based climate solution action plans using the power of nature to fight climate change
- Continue to be one of the Canadian partners with BirdLife International and contribute to a shared vision of bird and habitat conservation across the Americas





IMPROVING NATURE POLICY

We will speak up as a national voice for nature on Parliament Hill, engaging with the federal government and Parliamentarians to shape national policy, support ambitious conservation goals, and demand ongoing action to defend and restore nature.

Nature Canada was originally created to serve as a national voice for nature in Ottawa. Nature Canada's experienced staff are passionate about protecting our land and waters, saving species from extinction, and slowing global warming while adapting to climate change.

Nature Canada is well positioned to advocate for nature with the federal government, securing funds for nature appreciation activities and influencing policies and laws. We will also encourage federal initiatives to address systemic racism in all aspects of conservation policy and programs.

We will maintain our work with partners at the local level to establish bird friendly cities, expand protected areas, advance nature-based climate solutions, and ensure more equitable environmental outcomes and equal access to nature for all.

HOW WE WILL SHAPE NATURE POLICY:

- Advocate for a comprehensive federal biodiversity strategy that will implement our international commitments to nature protection and restoration, revitalize species at risk, and improve regulatory, enforcement and accountability measures to conserve nature
- Champion the needed billions of dollars in investment to reach the goal of protecting 30 percent of Canada's land, water, and ocean by 2030
- Promote nature-based climate solutions such as the federal government's two billion tree program, restoration initiatives, and improve management and carbon accounting of natural assets.
- Advocate for increased federal support and funding for Indigenous-led conservation, such as Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas and Guardians programs
- Host the Green Budget Coalition and participate in other national nature coalitions
- Pursue legislative reform and court cases to strengthen Canada's environmental laws such as the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, Species at Risk Act, and the Impact Assessment Act



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