



Sept. 7, 2021

Open Letter to New Brunswick Candidates, Federal Party Leaders, on Nature Protection and Climate Change

Dear Candidate,

With the Canadian Federal Election on September 20th, 2021, the Nature Trust of New Brunswick, Nature NB, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society — New Brunswick Chapter, and the Conservation Council of New Brunswick would like your response regarding critical issues that are important to our thousands and thousands of members and supporters across New Brunswick.

Nature and Climate Change

In August, 2021, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a new report on the state of the climate. U.N. Secretary General António Guterres has called the findings “code red for humanity.” The report confirms many fears—that we are already experiencing human induced climate change, and headed for 1.5 degrees of warming by the 2030s. This report serves as a stark reminder of the urgency of the crisis we face.

Healthy and robust ecosystems provide efficient, successful, and cost-effective tools to reinforce the local economy, protect people’s health and security, buffer communities from extreme weather like flooding, ice storms and sea-level rise, and reduce greenhouse gas levels.

The Government of Canada has committed to meeting the Paris Agreement’s emissions reduction target by 2050. In order to reach this target, Canada must continue to support non-profits, local governments, and industries to maintain and enhance the biodiversity and carbon-storage capacity of forests, grasslands, farmlands, wetlands, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems.

- 1. What will you do to protect wetlands, mature forests, and coastal habitats, which are essential to protecting our communities from flooding, ice storms, sea level rise and other adverse effects of climate change and rising carbon emissions?**

Conservation

Protecting, restoring, and managing land and ocean to flourish reduces the risks and impacts from extreme climatic events, curbs species and biodiversity decline, and promotes healthy communities for Canadians. The Government of Canada has committed to our largest nature conservation target in Canadian history; however, without investments in funding to manage and steward these protected areas we will not reach these targets or effectively conserve nature for the long-term. In New Brunswick, with one of the country's lowest protected area rate at 4.7 per cent, providing additional support to ensure the Province of New Brunswick reaches its current goal of 10 per cent protection, as well as removing any barriers to establishing and stewarding new protected land and ocean is vital.

The protection of marine areas provides a number of benefits to Canadians, including contributing to a healthy environment through conserving and protecting marine species and contributing to economic well being by supporting sustainable industries, local economies and coastal communities.

- 2. What will you do to ensure the federal government achieves its commitment to protect 25 percent of land by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030?**
- 3. What will you do to ensure the federal government achieves its commitment to protect 25 percent of oceans by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030?**
- 4. How will you support environmental organizations to help you achieve Canada's commitments to land and ocean protection?**

Private land protection

Within New Brunswick, a large portion of the land is privately owned. Privately protected land can increase connectivity between habitats allowing species to travel for food, shelter and reproduction. When combined with Protected Areas, private lands are critical for expanding the landscape that is managed for ecosystem resilience especially under climate change. Engagement with and uptake of private land management programs focused on conservation are important to promote shared responsibility and shared solutions for land protection at the local level.

- 5. What will you do to empower and incentivize New Brunswick landowners to become involved in advocating and managing for conservation and protected areas as a part of community climate response?**

Indigenous Engagement

The Government of Canada must take a leadership role in implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and in empowering Indigenous Nations to develop Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). IPCAs balance conservation and Indigenous rights and can play a role in both the path to reconciliation and the Canada Pathway to Target 1, which include the development of IPCA's in the goal to conserve 17 percent of Canada's lands and freshwater by 2023. It is vital to promote Indigenous leadership in conservation, including decision-making and ongoing stewardship of protected areas and in determining new conservation goals and activities. The Indigenous Circle of Experts (ICE) encourages the civil society sector to support capacity building and partnership with Indigenous governments and organizations for the planning, implementing, and managing of IPCAs and broader conservation efforts. The Government of Canada must take an active role in removing barriers in the shared path of developing and managing of IPCAs and partnered conservation efforts.

We need to ensure Indigenous Nations receive the support to establish their proposed IPCA projects, and we need support in the development of meaningful relationships and partnerships between Indigenous Nations and environmental organizations.

- 6. What will you do to further the Canada Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly the empowerment of Indigenous Nations in environmental conservation?**
- 7. What will you do to invest in Indigenous-led land-use planning in New Brunswick, including the establishment of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas and their stewardship by Indigenous Guardians, Indigenous-led efforts to restore and steward species-at-risk and habitat, and recognize and respect Indigenous knowledge in all aspects of nature conservation?**

Respectfully yours,

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Who we are:

The Nature Trust of New Brunswick is New Brunswick's provincial land trust, dedicated to conserving land, stewarding the ensuing nature preserves, and engaging the people of our province in conservation and stewardship work. We are a dynamic charitable organization that has established broad support in the province from a wide range of stakeholders, volunteers and donors, while protecting some outstanding natural sites. To date, the Nature Trust has conserved over 10,000 acres on 69 nature preserves, from pristine forests and shorelines, to coastal islands and wetlands, brimming with biodiversity including species at risk.

Nature NB is a provincial conservation organization comprised of a dozen naturalist clubs from across the province and hundreds of members. Our mission is to celebrate, conserve and protect New Brunswick's natural heritage through education, networking and collaboration.

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NB Chapter is part of the nation-wide charity CPAWS, with a mission to work with governments, Indigenous peoples and communities to protect more of Canada's publicly managed lands and water – for the benefit of both wildlife and people. We work cooperatively with all parts of society to find solutions to nature conservation challenges and to connect people to the nature that supports us all. CPAWS-NB has led public campaigns that have resulted in over 150,000 hectares of new protected areas in New Brunswick.

Conservation Council of New Brunswick / Le Conseil de conservation du Nouveau-Brunswick established in 1969 and has remained the province's leading public advocate for environmental protection. A member of the UN's Global 500 Roll of Honour, we work to find practical solutions to help families and citizens, educators, governments and businesses protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, the precious marine ecosystem and the land, including the forest, that support us.