

AGENDA INFORMATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular Meeting	Date: February 28, 2022
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Date: _____

_____ Dept. Manager	_____ GM/ Director	_____ CAO
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The District of North Vancouver REPORT TO COUNCIL

February 15, 2022

File:

AUTHOR: Councillor Megan Curren

SUBJECT: UBCM Resolution: Biodiversity Crisis Requires Urgent Species at Risk Protection and Legislation

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the UBCM Resolution: Biodiversity Crisis Requires Urgent Species At Risk Protection and Legislation as presented is supported:

WHEREAS British Columbia has the greatest biological diversity of any province or territory in Canada, the most species at risk, and is the only major jurisdiction in Canada without stand-alone Species At Risk legislation;

WHEREAS only 4 of the 1,336 species at risk recognized by the province are legally protected under the *Wildlife Act*, yet unsustainable land use and extractive development are causing BC's wildlife populations to decrease in abundance, with many species facing extinction;

AND WHEREAS the current patchwork of provincial laws and regulations has not effectively prevented species decline or extinction and is not consistent with British Columbia's commitment to enshrine the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into law;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Ministry of Environment to urgently enact Species At Risk Protection and Legislation in partnership with First Nations and in a manner that promotes and respects First Nations inherent, Treaty and constitutionally protected rights and interests along with adequate funding, consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

REASON FOR REPORT:

British Columbia has the most biodiversity of any province or territory in Canada¹ and also has the most species at risk of extinction². It is one of only a few provinces with no endangered species legislation.

British Columbia has not met the requirements it agreed to 25 years ago in the 1996 Accord for the Protection of Species At Risk in Canada³. In 2013, B.C.'s Auditor General found that the government was not doing enough to address biodiversity declines, particularly by not fully implementing or monitoring its own habitat protection tools.

Despite a mandate from the Premier of British Columbia for the Minister of Environment to legislate Species At Risk Legislation in 2017, to date there is **no legal framework to protect species at risk in British Columbia**.

Extractive industries including logging, resource development and urban sprawl continue to push species at risk towards extinction. Loss of habitat is the main cause of biodiversity decline⁴. According to the Intergovernmental Science Policy-Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services as many of half of all species may be headed towards extinction in the next 30 years.⁵

British Columbian's expect their government, in full partnership with Indigenous peoples, to develop binding, effective legislation that will protect species at risk and their critical habitats in the immediate and long-term. This requires transformative system change as outlined in the 2018 Report: Protecting Biodiversity in BC⁶ written by scientific and legal experts on species at risk biology, policy, and recovery who have served on numerous related provincial, national, and international panels and working groups. The report offers the government evidence-based recommendations for key features of legislation to identify and recover species at risk.

In particular, the report highlights that: Species At Risk listing must be timely, and recovery actions need to be prioritized by effectiveness, supported by best available evidence (including scientific and Indigenous knowledge), and subject to ongoing monitoring and reporting. The report identifies the need for legal accountability for lack of implementation and urges prevention and support for recovery actions to keep non-listed species from declining and becoming at risk in the first place.

¹ http://www.sfu.ca/~amooers/scientists4species/Protecting_Biodiversity_in_BC.pdf

² <https://ecojustice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/BC-Biodiversity-Report-Web.F.pdf>

³ <https://ecojustice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/BC-Biodiversity-Report-Web.F.pdf>

⁴ <https://ecojustice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/BC-Biodiversity-Report-Web.F.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/nature-decline-unprecedented-report/>

⁶ http://www.sfu.ca/~amooers/scientists4species/Protecting_Biodiversity_in_BC.pdf

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Options:

1. THAT the motion, as presented in UBCM Resolution: Biodiversity Crisis Requires Urgent Species at Risk Protection and Legislation, is supported; or,
2. THAT the motion is not supported.

Respectfully submitted,



Megan Curren
Councillor

REVIEWED WITH:					
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Clerk's Office	_____	External Agencies:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Planning	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Board	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Engineering	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> NS Health	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Services	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> RCMP	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering Operations	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> ITS	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> NVRC	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Parks	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicitor	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum & Arch.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bylaw Services	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Review and Compliance	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning	_____		

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