

Funding Work Plan DRAFT 2021-03-03

Working group	Funding
Fiscal year	2021-22

Overview of the current situation

The Province spends about \$56M annually on wildlife and habitat stewardship. FLNRORD spends approximately \$43M on its basic program for wildlife and habitat, including new Together for Wildlife funding (e.g. staffing, inventory, monitoring, service delivery, wildlife health, research, policy and legislation, engagement). Other ministries spend approximately \$13M.

External agencies and partners (Crown Corporations, NGOs, etc.) also spend *public* funds on activities that benefit wildlife and habitat.

External agencies also spend *private* funds on wildlife and habitat stewardship. For example, the Environmental Assessment Office directs private companies to collect habitat and wildlife information and monitor effects on ecosystems. Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Nature Trust of British Columbia partner with all levels of government, private donors and First Nations to protect, restore and manage wildlife habitat on both private and Crown lands.

It is estimated that \$220M (TBC) is required annually to deliver on Together for Wildlife. The budget gap is \$220M (TBC) – \$56M, or \$164M.

What has the Council set as its goal for this Working Group?

(from T4W Strategy)

Action 13: In 2021, in collaboration with the Minister’s Wildlife Advisory Council and the First Nations–B.C. Wildlife and Habitat Conservation Forum, we will review existing and potential new creative funding models and make recommendations to ensure sufficient, dedicated, long-term funding for wildlife and habitat stewardship in British Columbia.

(from letter to Minister)

The Council will recommend a **new dedicated funding model** and **opportunities for innovative partnerships to leverage** dollars for wildlife and habitat, starting with the \$10 million permanent lift to the Wildlife and Habitat budget.

What is one challenge MWAC is uniquely positioned to solve/provide advice on?

Recognising that there are many challenges, where can the working group start and what is the MWAC uniquely positioned to do (as opposed to other initiatives, advisory bodies, staff, etc.)?

MWAC can non-representationally advise the Minister on effective funding options, the level of funding required, and appropriate governance and accountability mechanisms.

Defining the Challenges

Comments from Phase 1/2 engagement included:

- ♦ Current funding amounts are below past levels and are low compared to the United States, other provinces and other countries.
- ♦ More funding is needed for inventory, monitoring and research.
- ♦ There is a need for independent oversight of funding.
- ♦ Funds derived from hunting and trapping licenses and fees should be dedicated to wildlife and habitat conservation
- ♦ A range of new and innovative funding sources and models should be carefully considered.
- ♦ There is need for engagement with Indigenous partners in funding models and delivery.

Why are these challenges?

- *Clearly define the challenge – What is wrong with the status quo, how will new funding solve this, and what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats*
- *Consider asking “why” to dig into the problem more deeply. E.g., A lack of SMART objectives to influence wildlife and habitat stewardship decisions. Why? Because there’s no clear process for wildlife objective-setting. (There are other barriers as well, but the process aspect is one component that the MWAC could address).*
- ♦ B.C. has very high biodiversity, including Canada’ richest diversity of mammals, butterflies and breeding birds.
- ♦ BC is home to numerous wildlife enthusiasts, including birders, wildlife watchers and over 100,000 hunters.
- ♦ However, BC spends much less per capita on wildlife management in all U.S. states and some Canadian jurisdictions.
- ♦ Some groups that impact wildlife and habitat (e.g., industry, urban development, outdoor recreationists, wildlife watchers) do not contribute to wildlife and habitat funding in large amounts.
- ♦ Dedicated funding is the predominant wildlife funding model in the US. However, in BC there is only a modest amount of dedicated wildlife and habitat funding. Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation is the only province-wide source of dedicated wildlife revenue. HCTF receives ~\$xxM per year in wildlife-related revenue (mainly conservation surcharges on hunting and trapping licenses).
- ♦ The HCTF Board determines how funds are distributed. HCTF Board “Appointees come from government, the BC Wildlife Federation, the Guide Outfitters Association of BC, and the BC Trappers Association, who recruit additional individuals to bring diverse perspectives and experience from across BC1.” Indigenous groups and others have expressed that they do not feel that the current

¹ Hctf.ca accessed March 3, 2021

HCTF governance model addresses their interests and provides for sufficient diversification of projects.

- ♦ Any request for public funds requires Treasury Board approval. This includes simple budget uplift, transfer of funds from other provincial income streams, tax shifting or co-funding of collaborative initiatives.
- *What are potential ways to address this problem? What level of funding could be raised? What is the likelihood of success? Stay high level!!*

What is ONE tangible outcome that MWAC can realistically deliver within 1-2 years?

Outcome 1: Find Significant New Sources of Dedicated Provincial Funding

Review options and recommend options that will generate at least \$25 M annually in new revenue to support wildlife management in BC. Collectively, proposed options should deliver ~\$164 M annually in new revenues.

Outcome 2: Identify Opportunities for Leveraging Provincial Funding

Review and recommend best options for leveraging the T4W funds and new dedicated funds through partnerships with all levels of government, NGOs, and philanthropic sector. (Example: Federal Natural Heritage Conservation Program funds land trusts to protect wildlife habitat but it launched with a 2:1 matching requirement. BC has one of the smallest pools of eligible provincial matching funds so land trusts in BC are competitively disadvantaged versus other provinces.)

Outcome 3: Build a governance and accountability model to ensure \$ are spent wisely and strategically to deliver T4W

Recommend how the new Provincial funding is administered: *a non-representational (or balanced representational) funding governance model that is inclusive of Indigenous partners*

Recommend how the funding is allocated:

Recommend how funding reporting should be done to maintain transparency and accountability to the people of BC.

(There may also be other outcomes that this WG would like to address, but these can come later)

What steps are needed, who should do them, and by when should they be completed?

- *What is realistic given other commitments for Council members and staff?*
- *What resources are needed to prepare a recommendation to Council? (e.g., information, staff time, research)*

- *Who else do you need to consult with? (e.g., Forum, other ministries, external advice).*

Step	Who?	When?
Reach out to the Forum to determine best ways of collaborating	Working Group	Winter & Spring 2021
Develop principles for new funding models	Working Group	Winter & Spring 2021
Learn about what works in other jurisdictions (e.g., Missouri, other provinces)	Working Group	Spring 2021
Learn about successful funding models in BC	Working Group	Spring or Summer, 2021
Develop proposed options for new dedicated funding	Working Group	Summer/Fall 2021
Develop proposed options for leveraging funds	Working Group	Summer/Fall 2021
Check in with full Council	Working Group	Fall 2021
Advice to Minister on funding option recommendations	MWAC	Early to mid Fall 2021 (due to budget 2022 timeframes)
Explore governance models	Working Group	Fall 2021
Advice to Minister on governance model recommendations	Working Group	Winter 2022
Next steps:		