

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

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October 25, 2021

Honourable Katrine Conroy
Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources
Via Email Only: FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

RE: Ending the Wolf Cull Program and Addressing Misguided Wildlife Management Policy

Dear Minister Conroy:

The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) is writing to express our strong support for the work of Pacific Wild to save BC wolves and to call upon the provincial government to immediately halt the wolf cull program that it commenced in the South Selkirk and South Peace regions in 2015.

The cull has resulted in the deaths of over 1,000 wolves and is a direct result of your government ignoring the destruction and human encroachment that has pushed BC's mountain caribou to the edge of extinction, placing blame instead on wolves who are now being targeted for inhumane aerial killings and expanded legalized hunting and trapping. UBCIC calls on your government to take accountability for the gross mismanagement of a species at risk and the failure to safeguard and recover enough habitat for the caribou. The government knowingly made decisions years ago to destroy critical caribou habitat with logging, access roads, and other human activities. Today the continued institutional killing of wolves makes no sense and is utterly purposeless; it will not bring back caribou in the absence of habitat protection.

The government's priority should be securing and protecting enough habitat for a viable caribou population, not the senseless slaughtering of wolves that has since opened the floodgates to "wolf-whacking" tournaments that your government turned a blind eye to.

UBCIC wrote to your government on April 8, 2019, expressing extreme condemnation and horror at the "wolf-whacking" and "predator tournaments" in the interior that has led to the gratuitous and ruthless slaughter of wolves. We remind you again that unethical culls and predator tournaments are fundamentally against the spirit of Indigenous hunting practices. First Nations hunt, fish, and trap sustainably and ethically for social, economic, or ceremonial reasons – never for unwarranted bloodshed and the glorification of violence. The UBCIC Chiefs Council

passed Resolution 2015-11 and Resolution 2021-05 to strengthen this position and to articulate a renewed UBCIC mandate on hunting and wildlife management that is founded upon strong principles of conservation, stewardship, and accountability. Our actions when it comes to wildlife management and hunting should be rooted in responsible, sustainable conservation and stewardship of wildlife, including protecting wildlife from any killing contests or unethical hunting practices that oppose Indigenous traditional values, ways of life, and fundamental rights.

We would also like to remind your government that wolves are highly intelligent and social animals; they are a sacred species that Indigenous peoples have coexisted with since time immemorial. Habitat destruction, not wolves, are responsible for the decline in caribou species. UBCIC urges you to end the wolf cull program immediately and to cease efforts to extend the program for another five years. We continue to raise our voice in support of the Pacific Wild who are fighting in the courts to stop the short-sighted, dangerous cull that has gone on for far too long.

On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
President



Chief Don Tom
Vice-President



Kukpi7 Judy Wilson
Secretary-Treasurer

CC: Hon. George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Hon. John Horgan, Premier of BC
UBCIC Chiefs Council
First Nations Summit
BC Assembly of First Nations
Pacific Wild
BC SPCA
Fur Bearers