

## Appendix 1

from: **Minister, ENV ENV:EX** <ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca>  
to: "Bryce@pacificwild.org" <Bryce@pacificwild.org>  
cc: "OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX" <Premier@gov.bc.ca>  
date: Nov 8, 2022, 10:10 AM  
subject: RE: Memorandum of concern: Assault rifle recall in BC Public Service.  
mailed-by: gov.bc.ca

Reference: 393352

*November 8, 2022*

Bryce J. Casavant, PhD  
Director of Conservation Intelligence  
Pacific Wild  
Email: [Bryce@pacificwild.org](mailto:Bryce@pacificwild.org)

Dear Dr. Casavant

Thank you for your letter of October 25, 2022, addressed to David Eby, Premier Designate, regarding the use of assault-style rifles in the BC Public Service. As your enquiry falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, I am pleased to respond. Your email of October 11, 2022, regarding wolf culling, has also been shared with me for response.

To begin, please allow me to assure you that the Conservation Officer Service (COS) did not engage in the aerial gunning of wolves for the provincial predator reduction program.

I can tell you that the COS has utilized patrol rifles for more than two years, following a successful pilot project. The patrol rifle is a standard-issue firearm for Conservation Officers across the province, allowing them to do their jobs more safely.

Conservation Officers are often in situations where circumstances can change quickly, and the patrol rifle is more suited to the unpredictable nature of the job. Previously, the COS used rifles geared towards hunting, and some of these rifles were 30 years old—or more. The patrol rifle improves officer and public safety by replacing outdated firearms.

As the primary first-responder agency addressing human-wildlife conflicts and predator attacks, Conservation Officers face dynamic and fluid circumstances in all types of weather—such as a charging bear or other predator species—and require a firearm best suited to the task of defending themselves.

Training on patrol rifles is consistent with all other firearms training in the COS. As peace officers, the COS voluntarily complies with the same firearms training standards that meet or exceed other law enforcement agencies in Canada. The COS also follows all applicable regulations and policies regarding the handling and storage of firearms.

And just like other law enforcement personnel, Conservation Officers, in the course of their duties, are permitted to use firearms that might otherwise be prohibited for civilians.

I know the agency is always looking at technology to see if it can improve officer and public safety. The patrol rifle as a tool is consistent with many other natural-resource law enforcement agencies across North America.

Across B.C. every day, Conservation Officers are working hard to ensure that our environment, fish and wildlife resources are protected for future generations.

Further questions regarding the provincial predator reduction program are best addressed by the Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship.

Thank you for bringing your concerns forward. I hope you find this information helpful.

Sincerely,

George Heyman  
Minister

cc: David Eby, Premier Designate

**From:** Bryce Casavant <bryce@pacificwild.org>  
**Sent:** October 25, 2022 11:00 AM  
**To:** Eby.MLA, David LASS:EX <David.Eby.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX <Premier@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Memorandum of concern: Assault rifle recall in BC Public Service.

Good day,

On behalf of our organization, please see attached correspondence of today's date. In brief, **we are asking for you to recall the assault-style weapons currently in use within the BC Public Service.**

My cell number is included below for direct contact, but has been removed from the public open letter attached to this email. Within the next 24 hours, we will be posting a copy of this open letter publicly on our website.

I pause to note that recent changes in the freedom of information process, and the province's unwillingness to respond or meet with us, create unique challenges in verifying sensitive information like that discussed in the memorandum attached here. Despite these challenges, our team has done its utmost to seek responses from the province and verify, confirm, or deny certain matters, prior to going public. We anticipate a point of continued contestation being the definitions used to identify assault-style classes of weapons. We have offered a preliminary response that plain language regulations and policy are needed to remove ambiguity in the public service moving forward.

It is not our organization's intention to enter into broad debates regarding national firearms rights, nor will we do so as an environmental NGO. However, it is our intention to highlight for you what we view as serious gaps and errors in the current purchasing, use, and storage of these weapons by B.C. Public Service staff - which we see as ill-considered.

We look forward to discussing this matter with you further in greater detail, and to your response.

Yours in concern,  
Dr. Bryce J. Casavant  
Per,  
Pacific Wild Alliance, CANADA  
*Redacted personal contact information*