

# URGENT

## WOLVES IN WESTERN CANADA NEED YOUR HELP NOW!



Wolves in British Columbia are running out of places to hide. In January 2015, the provincial government announced plans to kill up to 184 wolves living in British Columbia before the snow melted. Though they were only successful at killing 84 wolves the first winter, that number more than doubled the next year with the use of Judas wolves, individuals that are radio-collared to unknowingly lead shooters to kill their entire family. Aerially gunning resumes each January and this wolf killing program is slated to continue for a minimum of 5 years. Wolves are chased by helicopters until they are exhausted, and then shot under the guise of helping to recover dwindling caribou herds in the South Selkirk and South Peace areas.

The war on wolves is playing itself out in Alberta and demands just as much attention and participation.

More than 800 wolves have been killed under the guise of protecting the Little Smokey Caribou herd in habitat 95% disturbed by oil and gas infrastructure. Wolves were killed in strangling snares, gunned down from helicopters and poisoned using elk and moose killed and laced with strychnine. Indiscriminate weapons, snares killed 676 other animals, *including 2 caribou*. There is no way to estimate how many non-target animals died of strychnine poisoning.

A sad reality is that caribou are in this situation because of us, not because of wolves. The provinces have knowingly allowed industry to destroy caribou habitat for more than 50 years. Activities such as energy development, logging, mining and high-impact recreation continue in critical caribou habitat. As a consequence of our neglect, the government has sanctioned the killing of one species to save another.

**FACT:** Wolves are emotional and intelligent beings whose predation on caribou is facilitated by habitat destruction.

**FACT:** Wolves are a **keystone species, capable of causing trophic cascades**. Wolves help to maintain biodiversity and facilitate large-scale processes in our wilderness ecosystems.

**FACT:** A death sentence for wolves will not save endangered caribou.

*We the public deserve to be informed on how our tax dollars are being spent, to what end, and for how long.  
We deserve to know how wildlife and wild places are being cared for.  
We deserve to have our input listened to and considered.*

The decision to kill more wolves is **scientifically unsound**. All evidence to date shows that killing wolves does not reduce predator numbers for more than a season since their behaviour allows populations to rebound quickly and fill in the vacant space created where resident wolves have been killed. No wonder this outdated management practice has consistently failed to increase ungulate populations long-term. This is not the first time wolf helicopter killing has occurred in these provinces. **However, with your voice, we can work to ensure it is the last.**

This is also a **question of animal welfare**. The morality of causing harm to hundreds of intelligent and sensitive animals for any reason should be questioned. Are we prepared to spend the next several decades shooting wolves from helicopters in a vain attempt to maintain small herds of caribou in degraded habitat? Areas that have been protected for caribou, such as in the South Selkirk region, are not only small, but they are isolated. Small, isolated populations of caribou will likely be wiped out by disease outbreak, natural disasters or hard winters whether or not every wolf family in the area is scapegoated and murdered.

**FACT:** Aerial shooting is not an approved method under Canada's current guidelines on Approved Animal Care.

These provincial caribou recovery plans are not built on an understanding of wolf ecology nor conservation ethics. Instead, an apparent pre-determined agenda which encourages killing wolves has been exposed. In addition to opposing the destruction of wolves in a last ditch effort to save caribou, we stress the importance of instituting effective conservation measures to preserve old-growth habitat critical to the survival of caribou, and to keep humans out of sensitive areas. To win this battle, industrial encroachment must be halted and habitat allowed to regenerate.

Please become informed and involved. This is a defining time for the values of Canadians.

Sadie Parr  
Executive Director, Wolf Awareness Inc.



**Contacting your local MLA and asking them to raise the issue at the provincial level is one of the best ways to provoke change.**

**Consider including your local editor and/or other newspapers too. Here are some other relevant contacts that influence these decisions:**

#### **In British Columbia**

The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier  
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E1  
**Phone:** [250 387-1715](tel:2503871715)  
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The Honourable Minister Steve Thomson  
Sustainable Resource Development  
PO Box 9049, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E2  
Phone: 250-387-6240  
**Email:** [FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

The Honourable Mary Polak,  
Minister of Environment,  
PO Box 9339 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC  
V8W9M1  
**Phone:** 250 387-9870  
**Email:** [ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

cc:  
NDP FLNR Critic and Harry Baines  
[harry.baines.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:harry.baines.mla@leg.bc.ca)

Green Party Leader Andrew Weaver  
[andrew.weaver.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:andrew.weaver.mla@leg.bc.ca)

*"The real responsibility resides  
with those who remain silent;  
they are allowing others to prevail".*  
-Martin Luther King

#### **In Alberta**

The Honourable Rachel Notley, Premier  
Executive Branch  
307 Legislative Building, 10800 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB  
T5K 2B6  
**Phone:** 780 427-2251  
**Email:** [Premier@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Premier@gov.ab.ca)

The Honourable Shannon Phillips  
Minister of Environment and Parks  
Executive Branch  
208 Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue  
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**Phone:** 780 427-2391  
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Deputy Minister Bill Werry  
Environment and Sustainable Resource Development  
915 – 108 Street  
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T5K 2G8  
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Travis Ripley  
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**Sue Cotterill**, Section Head  
Species at Risk, Non-Game and Wildlife Disease Policy  
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**Wolf Awareness**  
Research • Education • Conservation