

Protecting nature and helping every kid learn to camp

Canada is unmatched in its natural beauty, and Canadians of all ages should have the opportunity to enjoy our National or Provincial Parks and learn more about our country.

At the same time, those natural gifts are under threat. The climate is changing and global wildlife populations have declined by 60 per cent in just over four decades.¹ We need to do more to protect our forests, lakes, rivers, and oceans. That's why our Liberal government protected more of Canada's nature than any other government in history. Still, we have to go even further.

From coast to coast to coast

Canada is home to the longest coastline in the world. The Conservatives spent a decade ripping up protections for nearly all Canadian waters. When we came into office in 2015, only about one per cent of Canada's marine and coastal areas were still protected. To safeguard wildlife like whales, polar bears, seabirds, and endangered turtles, we boosted protected coastal and ocean areas to nearly 14 per cent.²

We also worked in partnership with Inuit in Nunavut to protect the Arctic's last year-round sea ice, as well as sensitive areas in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and glass sponge reefs off the coast of British Columbia.

Protecting Canada's land and wildlife

Globally, Canada has about a third of the remaining boreal forest, 20 per cent of freshwater resources, and a quarter of all wetlands and temperate rainforest areas.³

We invested \$1.35 billion to protect more of Canada's land and wildlife — the largest investment in nature conservation in our country's history. We've conserved terrestrial areas equal to about 3.5 times the size of Nova Scotia. This includes creating Rouge National Urban Park, North America's largest urban park, and the Edézhíe Protected Area, the first Indigenous protected area — done in partnership with the Decho in the Northwest Territories.

Still, we have to do more to halt habitat loss, protect wildlife, and conserve more natural spaces — and Canadians agree.⁴ A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Conserve and protect 25 per cent of Canada's land and 25 per cent of Canada's oceans by 2025, working towards 30 per cent in each by 2030; and
- Ground this work in science, Indigenous knowledge — recognizing Indigenous peoples longstanding stewardship and leadership — and collaboration with all levels of government, respecting their areas of jurisdiction.

→ Advocate at international gatherings that countries around the world set global 30 per cent conservation by 2030 goals as well.

A camping experience for every kid in Canada

Today, the average age of visitors to Canada's National Parks is over 50, and many young people have never visited. This gap is even more stark with newcomers and recent immigrant families. It's time to give a new generation of Canadians the chance to visit our National or Provincial Parks, learn how to camp, and build a life-long appreciation for Canada's natural beauty.

A re-elected Liberal government will help more families enjoy Canada's great outdoors by:

- Expanding the successful Learn to Camp program so every young Canadian, by grade eight, is taught the skills to camp;
 - This means, each year, 400,000 more young Canadians will learn the skills to enjoy the great outdoors;

→ Create a national Experience Canada program, helping 75,000 lower-income families spend up to four days in one of Canada's National or Provincial Parks every year;

- This includes camping accommodations and a travel bursary of up to \$2,000 to experience places across the country like Killarney, Banff, Gros Morne, and the Cape Breton Highlands; and
- Partnering with Via Rail to make these opportunities accessible and affordable for even more Canadian families.

Costing

These measures will have a net cost of \$75 million in 2020-21 rising to \$150 million in 2023-24. Further details related to costing will be released over the course of the campaign.

¹<https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/living-planet-report-2018>

²<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/conservation/areas-zones/index-eng.html>

³<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/news/2018/11/the-government-of-canada-is-protecting-nature-through-investments-in-canadas-natural-heritage.html>

⁴<https://abacusdata.ca/theres-a-conservation-consensus/>