



Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society

“The mission of the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society is to foster excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education among wildlife professionals in Canada”

June 30, 2013

Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister
Langevin Block
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3
Canada

Right Honourable Stephen Harper;

The **Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society (CSTWS)** is a professional organization representing wildlife professionals, managers and researchers in all the Canadian provinces and territories. We are seeking the Government of Canada to reconsider its options for transitioning federally managed pasture lands under the *Prairie Farm and Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA)* in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. The Government of Canada, the staff and managers of PFRA are to be congratulated on their efforts to restore over 145 000 acres of badly eroded lands to productive grass cover. Canada can be proud of the efforts of those involved to achieve productive, bio-diverse rangelands, while at the same time promoting environmentally responsible land use practices. These lands support some of the most threatened wildlife species in Canada. An added socioeconomic benefit of the program was the ability to utilize these areas of native prairie and grass cover as a resource to complement livestock production.

We believe the investment that Canadians have made in achieving these outcomes needs to be solidified in the transition to the provincial governments of Manitoba and Saskatchewan and the Department of National Defence by obtaining a commitment from these respective entities that the lands will be managed for the same objectives. Excellent range management and wildlife science has been invested in restoring these lands; future generations should expect these entities to continue to deliver the same level of commitment and management regardless of the agency or jurisdiction managing those lands. Co-commitment with this objective is the obligation to retain these lands in public trust in perpetuity. Devolution of the lands ownership to private use would be prejudicial and counter-productive to the Government of Canada's current and on-going commitment to assist non-government conservation organizations (e.g.,

Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ducks Unlimited) to secure important privately held conservation lands.

The *Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society* is committed to maintaining a world where humans and wildlife co-exist. It has direct linkages with the international parent body of *The Wildlife Society* whose mission is to represent and serve the professional community of scientists, managers, educators, technicians, planners, and others who work actively to study, manage, and conserve wildlife and its habitats worldwide.

The members of *The Wildlife Society* manage, conserve, and study wildlife populations and habitats. They actively manage forests, conserve wetlands, restore endangered species, conserve wildlife on private and public lands, resolve wildlife damage and disease problems, and enhance biological diversity.

We remain hopeful as the Prime Minister of the Government of Canada you will reconsider the parameters set out for the devolution of PFRA lands to ensure the achievements made by generations of Canadians can continue to be realized by the generations of Canadians to come.

Respectively yours;

Jim Allen



Chair, Conservation Affairs Committee

CC:

The Honourable Gerry Ritz
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5

Peter Kent Minister
Environment Canada
10 Wellington Street
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0H3
Canada