



Conserving
Canada's
Wetlands

Attn: Honourable Doug Donaldson
Minister of Forest, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development
Room 248 Legislature Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Re: Private Managed Forest Land Program Review

July 22, 2019

Dear Minister Donaldson,

Ducks Unlimited Canada is a conservation organization devoted to the conservation and restoration of habitats that support waterfowl, birds and many other species. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide comment on the Private Managed Forest Land Program Review.

Well managed forest lands are a key part of the landscape and are important for supporting abundant waterfowl as often water sources for wetlands, lakes and rivers occur in the forested landscape. We support the concept of privately management forest lands, which provide a management incentive for landowners to manage their lands in a sustainable manner and which advance a culture of conservation in natural resource management in BC. We also applaud the requirement to protect key environmental values as part of maintaining classification as managed forest land, pursuant to the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* and regulations.

As part of the long term management of these lands, we encourage the continued and enhanced consideration of wetlands and riparian area as a critical ecological feature. Furthermore, we encourage the widespread use of Best Management Practices (BMP) as a way to ensure that ecological outcomes are achieved. As a conservation solutions oriented organization, we have devoted significant time and resources to working with industry on the development of BMPs related to wetlands, riparian areas, water and associated habitats. Some of these tools can be found here:

<https://boreal.ducks.ca/solutions/best-management-practices/>

As a conservation organization, we know that partnerships are key to durable success and we pride ourselves on some important partnerships with forest companies in BC with whom we share values – both on private and crown lands. An example of one such partnership is our partnership with Timber West.

Ducks Unlimited Canada has an established long-term working relationship with TimberWest Forest Corp (TimberWest), dating back to 1990s. Through this partnership, TimberWest has worked with DUC as a landowner to protect and enhance habitat for fish and wildlife on Vancouver Island. This includes several projects in the Black Creek Watershed, where DUC enhanced wetland habitats under long-term agreement with TimberWest. One of the best examples is the TimberWest donation of the Somenos



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Lake bed to DUC, which was subsequently leased to the Province to designate the S'amunu (Somenos) Wildlife Management Area in 2018. This project contains about 155 hectares of highly productive lake, seasonally flooded wetlands and riparian habitat as well as significant cultural features. As a manager of private forest Lands, TimberWest remains an important partner with DUC to protect wetlands in BC. We encourage the province to recognize, value and encourage these such partnerships and the potential for the Private Managed Forest Land Program to support further partnerships like this one.

Once again, we thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Sincerely,

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