



**Submission to
Manitoba Wildlife
Federation**

September 7th, 2019

- 1. Shared Management – The enactment of Bill 29 (Safe Hunting and Shared Management) provides important mechanisms to limit the dangerous practice of night hunting, as well as to create a more inclusive and collaborative approach termed Shared Management. These are extremely important issues to our members. Will you support the development of legislation (regulations) under the Act to fully implement the restrictions on night hunting and implement the process for Shared Management in 2019?**

Our PC government has followed through on our 2016 commitment to end night hunting in populated areas, despite the NDP's efforts to delay and oppose this legislation. Following the passage of Bill 29 which set out the framework for night hunting restrictions in 2018, a re-elected Progressive Conservative government will complete our consultations and put regulations in place to end this dangerous and unsustainable practice.

A re-elected PC government will also further step up enforcement across southern Manitoba, dedicate Crown prosecution resources to these infractions and begin naming individuals charged for night hunting under the Wildlife Act.

Work on a meaningful and respectful shared management framework for wildlife and fish resources will continue under a re-elected PC government. If we are re-elected we would expect to begin the establishment shared management regimes within six months of the election, prioritizing areas where populations are under the most pressure.

- 2. Enforcement – The number of Conservation Officers in Manitoba has declined significantly in the last 20 years, from 140 to approximately 90. We have the utmost respect for these guardians of our fish and wildlife resources, but officers are now spread too thinly over the province to effectively enforce fisheries and wildlife regulations. Enforcement of the commercial fishing regulations on Lake Winnipeg over the last few years has almost been absent. What will you do to enhance recruitment and retention of officers, as well as to return the number of field officers to a more appropriate level, thereby ensuring an adequate level of enforcement?**

There are currently 93 Conservation Officer positions in Manitoba and there are 9 future Conservation Officers in training. Thanks to a new dynamic deployment model developed by our PC government, enforcement activities will be more concentrated in problem areas where more frequent Wildlife Act breaches have occurred. We expect this will make our overall enforcement effort more effective.

Under the current PC government, the Deputy Minister's Delivery Team in the Department of Sustainable Development was tasked to review Conservation Officer Recruitment and Retention in Manitoba. A re-elected Progressive Conservative government will act on the results of this review to improve to officer recruitment and retention.

3. **Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) – is a fatal disease of members of the deer family (deer, elk, moose, caribou) and has been propagated globally by the practice of game ranching. CWD has been detected in wild populations of deer in Saskatchewan, within a few km of the Manitoba border. The prion that causes the disease can be taken up by agricultural crops, potentially jeopardizing Canada’s multibillion-dollar agricultural industry, and can potentially impact human health (as occurred with a related disease – mad cow). What specific actions will you take to a) keep Manitoba CWD free, b) support the enhancement of monitoring for the disease in wild populations in Manitoba, and c) respond should CWD be detected in Manitoba?**

Our PC government expanded surveillance activities to monitor wildlife movement and the disease. This include a stronger cooperation with farmers and ranchers, particularly along the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border. In addition, our PC government has stepped up its efforts to grow awareness about the disease.

A re-elected PC government will continue with these expanded efforts. This includes a new laboratory to analyze samples of wildlife and other animals. Through the future Dauphin Big Game Health Laboratory, all samples will be analyzed much faster, which will also allow a quicker response under the emergency response plan should the disease be detected in a Manitoba sample. The laboratory contract has been tendered and a re-elected PC government will ensure that construction begins this fall.

4. **Third Party Certification of Manitoba’s Great Lakes Fisheries – third party certification processes are extremely common in the forest industry and are becoming more common in marine and inland fisheries. Certification greatly improve resource management, enhances sustainability (something that our fisheries on Lake Winnipeg, in particular require), enhances data collection on which better informed decisions can be made and provides a much-needed process for all stakeholders/partners to have a hand in decision-making of the resource. Will your party support and resource the effort needed to have the fisheries of our great lakes certified to third party systems such as the Marine Stewardship Council standards?**

In 2016 when we took over from the NDP government, independent assessments had concluded that Manitoba’s fisheries were “among the worst managed in the world”. Our PC Government has taken substantial steps to remedy that state of affairs. We remain committed to the goal of achieving the highest standard of management regime for our major lakes, including Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba.

Our government launched a successful \$5 million Lake Winnipeg quota-buyback program earlier this year. This program sold out immediately and led to the retirement of 520,000kg of commercial fishing quota, an historic step towards sustainability and reversal of the irresponsible quota increases that took place under the previous NDP government. In addition, the mesh sizes for commercial fishers on Lake Winnipeg were reduced and angling restrictions put in place.

A re-elected PC Government would strategically deploy an additional \$5M to buy back further quota and bring our commercial harvest to sustainable levels. We will also continue our record of making our available survey data public to foster reasoned discussions on management decisions with all of the stakeholders.

We believe that these steps will benefit all of those who use and enjoy the Lake Winnipeg fishery, including commercial fishers, Indigenous subsistence harvesters, anglers and resource tourism outfitters.

We recognize we have more to do to reverse 17 years of neglect under the previous NDP government, but we have made great strides and are determined to continue that progress.

- 5. Hunter and Angler Recruitment and Retention – Our organization administers the provincial Hunter Safety (Education) program as well as provides other hunting and shooting skills training. In 2019, we also began developing training programs for people (including immigrants to Manitoba) who have not fished before in our Province. How will your party support our efforts of introducing a new generation of hunters and anglers to these life-long activities?**

MWF has done a great job administering the Manitoba Hunter Education Program on behalf of the government for 19 years. A re-elected Progressive Conservative government looks forward to continued cooperation in the field of hunter safety education and working with MWF to address the recommendations of the Hunter Education Working Group Committee.

In addition, a re-elected Progressive Conservative government will improve customer service by converting Manitoba's paper-based licensing system for hunting and fishing to a new E-Licensing platform. This will make access to hunting and fishing activities easier and support enforcement of licensing issues.