

In 1885, the Rocky Mountain Park (now Banff National Park) was established in Alberta, preserving an area of over 6 475 square kilometres in its natural state; in 1887, the continent's first bird sanctuary was established at Last Mountain Lake in Saskatchewan; in 1893 when wood bison faced extinction, laws were passed to protect them and a nucleus herd of plains bison was established at Wainwright, Alta. in 1907. These were among the early attempts at wildlife conservation in Canada.

As a natural resource, wildlife within each province comes under the jurisdiction of the provincial government. The federal government is responsible for wildlife on federal land and for research and management of migratory birds.

The Canadian Wildlife Service

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The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) began as an agency to administer the Migratory Birds Convention Act passed in 1917. It was expanded in 1947 to meet the need for scientific research in wildlife management and is now a part of the environmental management service of the fisheries and the environment department.

The CWS conducts scientific research into wildlife problems in the Northwest Territories, the Yukon Territory and the national parks. Research projects in various areas of Western and Northern Canada continue on both polar and grizzly bear populations. Caribou and muskox in Northern Canada are species of concern and the CWS is conducting long-term studies of both species in co-operative programs with the Northwest Territories fish and wildlife service.

The CWS also carries out research in the national parks. Studies in limnology, ornithology, mammalogy and general ecosystem relationships are in progress. Long-term studies on wolf and grizzly bear ecology have just begun and a biophysical inventory of the mountain parks is continuing in Jasper and Banff national parks. A bison-livestock interaction study is proceeding in and around Wood Buffalo National Park. Shorter duration projects are defined each year and undertaken for Parks Canada according to its priorities.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora was signed by Canada in July 1974. The CWS was designated the scientific and management authority for the convention in Canada. The Canada Wildlife Act, passed by Parliament in 1973, provides the federal government and the CWS with a legislative basis for undertaking joint federal-provincial management programs. Under the act, the CWS has initiated a rare and endangered species program. Continuing studies on the wood bison, whooping crane and peregrine falcon are to be augmented with new projects on other species. The International Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears came into effect on May 26, 1976. Canada was the first of the five signatories to ratify it. As administrator of the Migratory Birds Convention Act the CWS, in consultation with provincial wildlife agencies, recommends annual revisions of the regulations which govern open seasons, bag limits and hunting practices. The RCMP with CWS and provincial co-operation enforces the act and regulations.

The loss of wetlands to drainage and filling for agricultural and other purposes poses a serious threat to waterfowl. To counteract this the CWS in co-operation with provincial agencies began a major program in 1967 to preserve wetlands by purchase or long-term lease. Since then, 19 000 hectares have been bought for \$9 million. The CWS also has charge of 80 bird sanctuaries covering 115 000 square kilometres.

The CWS conducts two annual surveys of waterfowl hunters, selected from the 471,500 holders of the Canada migratory game bird hunting permits, to obtain estimates of the species and age of the major waterfowl species taken by hunters. Other continuing projects related to migratory game birds include a national goose harvest survey, annual surveys of crop damage in the Prairie provinces and of waterfowl populations and habitat conditions in Western Canada and a program to reduce hazards caused by birds flying near airports. Bird-banding provides valuable information on migration and biology of birds, and is especially useful in waterfowl management. CWS headquarters in Ottawa keeps sets of continental banding records and controls the activities of banders operating in Canada.

Special attention is given to species greatly reduced in number or in danger of extinction. The program in which 21 young were raised from whooping crane eggs taken