

by Canada to compete, and there is a growing export group among Canadian fur manufacturers which is extending the horizons of this formerly largely domestic industry.

Wildlife

10.4

Wildlife is an important renewable natural resource. The original inhabitants of what is now Canada depended on it for food and clothing and still do in some remote areas. The coming of the Europeans brought development of the fur trade which guided the course of exploration and settlement. When the country was being developed, a number of mammals and birds became seriously depleted or extinct. As settlement progressed, wildlife habitat was reduced by cutting and burning of forests, pollution of streams, industrial and urban development, drainage of wetlands, building of dams, and other changes in the land.

Today, the arctic and alpine tundra, a major vegetational region, has begun to show serious man-made changes. The adjacent sub-arctic and sub-alpine non-commercial forests have been affected principally by increased human travel which has brought an increase in the number of forest fires, although the great forests farther south retain much of their original character despite exploitation. Arable lands, originally forest or grassland, have completely changed but they have, in some cases, become more suitable for some forms of wildlife than the original wilderness.

Canada is known for its varied and abundant wildlife. It maintains most of the world's stock of woodland caribou, mountain sheep, wolves, grizzly bears and wolverines. For a long time, certain species were protected from man and predator. Now, because of better understanding of how nature works, it has been recognized that many factors cause fluctuations in wildlife numbers, and hunting seasons and bag limits are based to a greater extent on population surveys and other scientific data.

In 1885, the Rocky Mountains Park (now Banff National Park) was established in Alberta, preserving an area of over 6475 km² 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 in 1907 a nucleus herd of plains bison was established at Wainwright, Alta. 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 the protection and management of migratory birds and for wildlife on federal lands.

The Canadian Wildlife Service

10.4.1

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 environment department.

The CWS conducts scientific research into wildlife problems in the Northwest Territories, Yukon 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