



PROTECT WENTWORTH VALLEY

Minister Timothy Halman

[Minister of Environment and Climate Change](#)

Department of Environment and Climate Change

Barrington Tower, 1894 Barrington Street, Suite 1800

P.O. Box 442, Halifax, NS, B3J 2P8

Phone: 902-424-3736

Minister.Environment@novascotia.ca

Re: The need for action in Nova Scotia to halt and reverse nature loss and ensure a win for people and the planet at the Montreal Nature Summit (CBD COP15)

Dear Premier Houston and Minister Halman:

In less than two months, the world will gather in Montreal for the *15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD COP 15). World leaders will try to agree to a new set of ten-year goals and targets to turn around the current crisis of biodiversity loss and ensure the shared vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050 is fulfilled. This is a critical make or break Nature Summit. With over a million species headed to extinction, the health and survival of the planet's essential life support systems – land, air, waters, wildlife – are at stake.

Canada's leadership matters, not just to secure a strong new Global Biodiversity Framework, but to act meaningfully at home on our own commitment to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030. With 30% of the planet's remaining intact forest, 25% of the world's fresh water and the world's longest coastline, 7500 km of it right here in Nova Scotia, how we protect nature matters to all. The loss of nature accelerates and is accelerated by climate change. These twin environmental crises are integrally linked, and we must address them together or we will solve neither.

Once-abundant species like the Canada lynx, piping plover, mainland moose and Atlantic whitefish are approaching the brink of extirpation from our province. Such staggering loss is the result of decades of habitat mismanagement and reflects an

ongoing failure to accept how completely dependent we ourselves are on a healthy environment.

The federal government needs a comprehensive national action plan for halting and reversing nature loss by 2030. And they need to work in partnership with provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments to achieve this. What role will Nova Scotia play?

Already your government has shown leadership by passing the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act into law, but much more must be done.

Later this month, federal Environment Minister Stephen Guilbeault will be convening provincial counterparts in a virtual meeting to discuss working together for a successful outcome at COP 15. We believe this is a key moment to showcase Nova Scotia's leadership and our commitment to partnership for nature and a healthy future for all.

There is undoubtedly strong public support among Nova Scotians for ambitious action to safeguard nature and the climate for our children and grandchildren. Consider the unprecedented level of public engagement during the Owls Head debacle, the impassioned debate preceding the passing of the Wildlife Act, or the ongoing push among community groups and individual Nova Scotians to see that a shift toward ecological forestry is fully realized.

As Nova Scotians with deep concern for the health of our planet, we urge you to commit to the following as key actions our province will take to do our part

1. The provincial government must develop a provincial landscape level Land Use plan for conservation, biodiversity, forestry and energy. This is needed to support your mandated future goal of protecting 20% of Nova Scotia land and water mass by 2030, protecting biodiversity, establishing critical ecological corridors's across the province and protecting the remaining old growth forest. Once that work is complete, only then can the province responsibly determine what areas are appropriate for industrial projects.

2. Implement the Mainland Moose Recovery Plan and enact protection of their essential and core habitat. This recovery plan was released one year ago. One of the locations of the proposed industrial wind turbine projects in the most recent RFP in Nova Scotia coincides with extremely important core and essential habitat for the mainland moose. For ecologically sound wind development, wide areas of wildlife habitat and wildlife quarters must first be protected and conserved and then the sightings of wind turbines,

roads and other structures created outside of these areas. Presently the province does not have a landscape level land use plan so wind development proponents who mainly live outside our province and or country are determining where they set up their large industrial projects at the expense of our endangered species.

3. The Nova Scotia government complete carbon emission modelling prior to the issuance of any further RFPs for wind turbines so that they and all Nova Scotians understand the true reduction and carbon admissions for such projects. We must consider the loss of forest and other devastation to our land and environment that takes place when these large industrialized wind turbines that stand over 623 feet are built. Biodiversity is declining at unprecedented rates globally and provincially. We need to act responsibly if we are to ensure climate control goals are met.

4. Implementation of the Lahey Report to ensure gold standard practices of Forestry take place in our province.

5. The mandate of our current government is to protect 20% of the land by 2030. We ask that the government establish a process for identifying new protected areas. This process must involve meaningful public consultation.

Acting on the priorities above is no small feat. But as we are once more learning in the wake of Hurricane Fiona, the economic and social costs of inaction are too high, and Nova Scotians are ready to support you in making these commitments a reality.

Your sincerely,

Catherine Johnston
on behalf of Protect Wentworth Valley