

Helpful tips on engaging decision-makers.

It's as easy as 1 - 2 - 3!

1. Write a letter to your MLA

The BC government recently engaged in a public consultation process on species at risk and will consider this sufficient – but it is not. This consultation was weak and didn't even mention provincial species at risk legislation.

Your MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) is your elected representative in the provincial government. Writing a letter to your MLA explaining how you would like BC to have a strong endangered species law is an effective way to show that British Columbians care about protecting our wild plants and animals.

Short letters written in your own words and phone calls to your MLA carry an enormous amount of weight – particularly before an election. Let them know your vision of BC includes an endangered species law.

To find out who your MLA is and how to contact them go online to:

<https://www.leg.bc.ca/learn-about-us/members>

Here are some suggested points to include in your letter:

- 👤 BC now lists over 1,900 species at risk.
- 👤 BC is the most ecologically diverse province or territory in Canada, with more different types of habitats and species than any other jurisdiction in the nation.
- 👤 BC is one of only a few places in Canada without its own endangered species law.
- 👤 I urge my MLA to support a strong endangered species law that will:
 - Be based on sound science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge.
 - Identify, protect and recover endangered species and ecosystems across BC.
 - Protect the habitat of species at risk.
 - Be enforced and adequately funded.
 - Have public accountability and transparency.

2. Write a letter to the editor of a BC newspaper

Writing a letter to the editor of a BC newspaper lets readers know just how important a strong BC endangered species law is.

We have included a list of publications in your area for your convenience. To find more BC newspapers online go to:

<http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/canadabc.htm>

Most BC newspapers have an Opinion section that will publish your letter. **Here are some points to consider when writing your letter to the editor:**

- 🐾 Keep your letter short – 250 word or less.
- 🐾 Keep your letter on message – be sure to state clearly that BC does not yet have an endangered species law and that you would like to see one enacted.
- 🐾 Your letter is more likely to be published if the newspaper has written a story on species at risk – tie your letter back to this.
- 🐾 Write about why you like BC's diverse fauna and flora so much – share your experiences with the readers.
- 🐾 Send your letter to the editor via email.

3. Ask a question at an All Candidates' Meeting!

The next general election in British Columbia will take place on **May 9, 2017.**

Prior to election day, candidates will often participate in public open-house meetings called All Candidates Meetings, where audience members may be given the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates about their views on policy issues.

All Candidates Meetings near you will be advertised in your local newspaper and online at <http://www.elections.bc.ca>

Ask candidates if they will commit to introducing a BC endangered species law that is based on science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, will protect habitat and is properly funded (see our BC species at risk newsletter for the criteria that need to be included in a strong endangered species law).

Here are guidelines for asking your question:

- 🐾 Speak slowly and respectfully. Introduce yourself and explain why you are concerned for the endangered wildlife of BC.
- 🐾 Ask all candidates if they support introducing endangered species legislation in BC.
- 🐾 Be sure to state clearly that BC does not yet have an endangered species law, and that you would like to see one enacted.
- 🐾 Ask a follow-up question if your question is not answered adequately.



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