

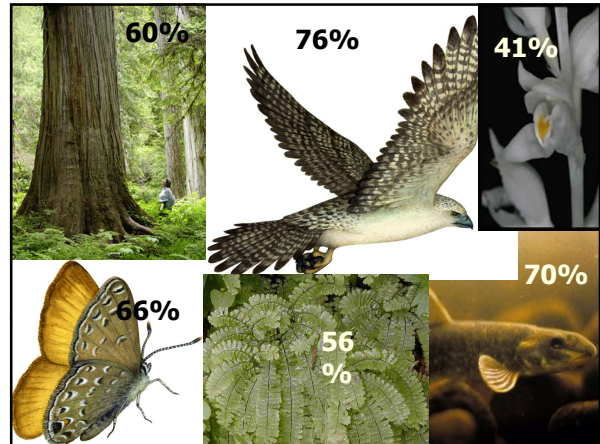
BC's transboundary species at risk



The case for legal protection

Devon Page, Executive Director
Ecojustice (formerly Sierra Legal)

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formerly Sierra Legal Defence Fund



BC's species at risk by group



Reptiles and turtles
67%



Vascular plants
43%



Freshwater fish
47%

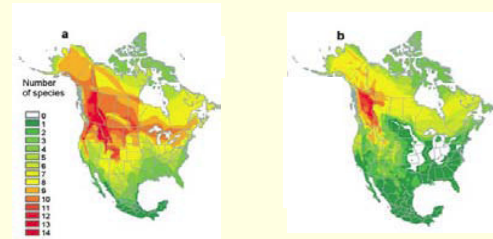


Birds
17%



Amphibians
47%

Historic (a) and current (b) species richness for 17 carnivore and ungulate species that have undergone significant range contractions in North America.

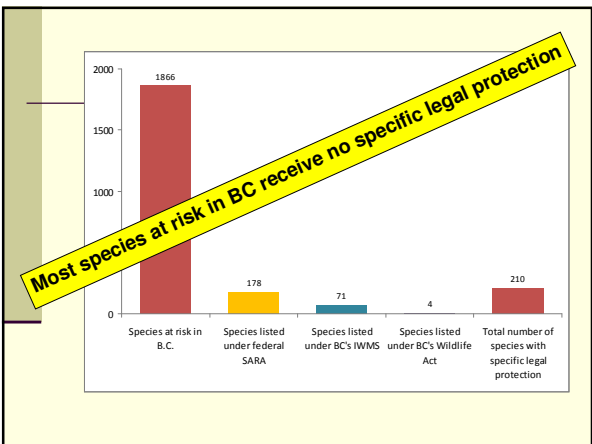


source: Laliberte, A.S. and W.J. Ripple.2004. Range contractions of North American carnivores and ungulates. Bioscience 54(2):123-138.

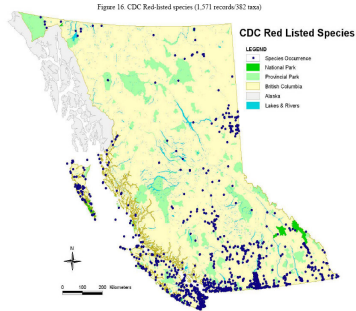
BC's biodiversity is transboundary

- BC has about 4300 known species, **91%** (3900) are transboundary
- 85%** (1580) of BC's 1800 species at risk are TB
 - only ~ 8% have legal protection
 - ~ 33% are found in the four regional districts that house 71% of BC's human residents.

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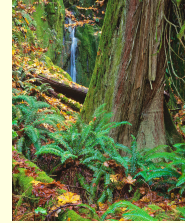


Parks are not the answer



Federal legislation (SARA): not a complete answer

- Automatic protection for only aquatic species, migratory birds, and species on federal lands
- All other species subject to discretionary protection (Spotted Owl)



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BC's laws aren't the answer

BC is only one of two Canadian provinces without an endangered species protection law.

What is the other province?

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BC forestry laws: Logging first, species _____?

Forest Planning and Practices Regulation - protects species only if timber supply not unduly reduced (s.7)

What's unduly? Anything greater than 1%

"there is a systemic failure in government policy to protect threatened species"
BC Forest Practices Board, March 2005

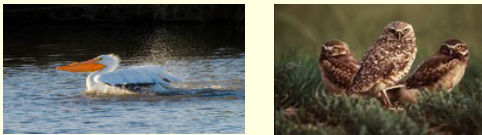
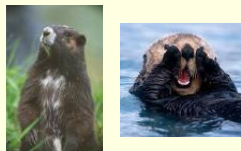
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BC's Wildlife Act

Only 4 species at risk:

- Burrowing Owl
- White Pelican
- Vancouver Island Marmot
- Sea Otter

Even for these 4 aren't required to have habitat protection



BC needs a new provincial law: proposed *Species and Ecosystem Protection Act (SEPA)*

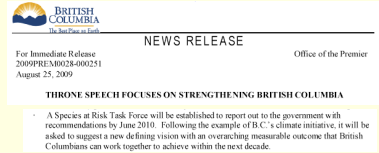
Principles:

1. Identify species & ecosystems at risk through independent, scientific process
2. Immediately protect habitat of listed species & ecosystems until final decision on how much long-term protection needed
3. Develop recovery strategies on the basis of sound science and implement to restore species & ecosystems to health
4. Require citizen, community and First Nations participation
5. Require accountability and transparency
6. Be funded and enforced

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BC Policy Response?

- De-prioritizing peripheral species?
- *Species at risk task force* – What's that? Whatever it is, it needs to be independent and expert



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A Species and Ecosystem Protection Law is a Key

ADAPTATION Strategy to Climate Change:

1. We must reduce the non-climate stressors on biodiversity in order to maintain the resilience of species and ecosystems to cope with the effects of climate change (IPCC)
2. Conservation strategies must both try to close existing gaps in biodiversity coverage and provide coverage to account for expected future habitat changes
3. Conservation strategies must accommodate predicted range and abundance shifts
4. Conservation strategies must provide for corridors, climatic refugia and maintain peripheral range

ENGO Coalition promoting SEPA



www.lastplaceonearth.ca

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