

**Andrea Richardson-Lipon, Liberal Party, Elmwood-Transcona**

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Thank you for writing to me regarding support for Canada's wetlands.

The Liberal Party of Canada is committed to protecting our freshwater, including our wetlands. A Liberal government will rapidly develop a road map to meet Canada's international commitment to protect 17 percent of our land and inland waters by 2020. As a first step towards this goal, we will invest \$50 million per year to advance the development of Canada's parks system, as well as manage and expand National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries. We will increase science spending in our National Parks by \$25 million per year to allow for early identification of ecological stresses and avoid permanent degradation. Our open science commitment also ensures that the federal government's environmental research will be freely available to the public.

We will also deepen our commitment to work with other governments to protect Canada's freshwater through education, geo-mapping, watershed protection, and infrastructure investments in the best waste water treatment technologies. We will renew our commitment to the protection of the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River Basin, and the Lake Winnipeg Basin. We will work with the provinces of Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba – as well as our American partners – to prevent the spread of invasive species, undertake science-based initiatives to better understand and manage water levels, and clean-up of coastal contamination. We will restore \$1.5 million in federal funding for freshwater research, which was cut by the Conservatives, and make new investments in Canada's world-leading IISD Experimental Lakes Area.

Mr. Harper's amendments to the Fisheries Act and elimination of the Navigable Waters Protection Act have weakened other important environmental protections. A Liberal government will conduct a wholesale review of these changes and restore lost protections, and incorporate more modern safeguards. The protection of our freshwater resources will be an imperative. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples will be included in the reshaping of federal environmental laws and policies to ensure respect of rights and to reflect Indigenous values in federal legislation and regulations.

We will also work to better protect Canada's endangered species. This means responding faster to scientific advice on listing species, meeting mandatory timelines for responding to Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) recommendations, and completing robust species at risk recovery plans.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your concerns. It is through dialogue with Canadians like you that we can continue to ensure that the policies we support and create are representative of the values and needs of Canadians.