



Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Estimates Binder April 2022

**ESTIMATES BINDER
FOR MINISTER JOSIE OSBORNE
APRIL 2022**

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Issue: Budget 2022 Summary

Recommend Response:

- The ministry budget of \$92M annually is the result of transfers from existing ministries of \$82M and Budget 2022 net new funding of \$10M to increase capacity in the new ministry to achieve its mandate.
- Functions and budget transferring to the ministry include:
 - land use policy and planning
 - watershed, fisheries and coastal policy and planning
 - implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act across the natural resource sector
 - integrated information, innovation, and technology
 - corporate services for the natural resource sector
 - cross-sector governance and solutions projects
- The budget largely represents the salary and benefits of the ~1200 staff (shifting at points in time) into the ministry.

Key Facts:

Ministry Budget by Core Business

	Ministry Transfers (000s)	Budget 22 Increase (000s)	2022/23 Estimates (000s)
Land Use Policy and Planning and Terrestrial Ecosystems	42,031	1,032	43,063
Information, Innovation and Technology	21,828	93	21,921
Executive and Support Services	7,818	5,207	13,025
Watershed, Aquatic Systems, Fisheries and Coastal Policy and Planning	5,998	833	6,831
Natural Resource Sector Secretariat	3,836	1,497	5,333
Reconciliation and Natural Resource Sector Policy	497	1,338	1,835
Ministry Operations sub-total	82,008	10,000	92,008

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Pursuant to Minister of State Cullen's mandate letter commitment, the Land and Natural Resource Operations Secretariat undertook an organizational effectiveness review and recommended that the three goals of supporting economic activity, environmental sustainability, and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples can be better achieved through restructuring and the creation of a new ministry.

The improved land, water and resource stewardship policy and regulatory frameworks will facilitate land-based decision-making leading to shared prosperity on the land-base and a strong sustainable economy.

Creation of a new ministry and resulting realignments will impact the Ministries of: Agriculture and Food; Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation; Environment and Climate Change Strategy; Forests; Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport; and Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation.

The new ministry will provide greater focus on sustainable economic growth, environmental sustainability and in partnership with the natural resource ministries, advance inclusive resource management with Indigenous peoples. The increased capacity within the new ministry will be focused on modernizing and updating policy frameworks to match the evolving priorities such as environmental needs (e.g., impacts of climate change and conservation objectives) and reconciliation (e.g., the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).

Date Prepared/Revised: April 28, 2022

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Alternate Contact for Issue:

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Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Issue: Budget Transfer Summary of Sector Reorganization

Recommend Response:

- LWRS received budget and staff transfers from five ministries to reflect the reorganization of functions with the Natural Resource Sector.
- LWRS base budget consists of \$82M of existing budget transfers and \$10M provided in Budget 2022 to increase strategic policy capacity for land, water, and stewardship priorities.

Key Facts:

Transfers by Ministry

Inter-Ministry Transfers to LWRS - \$82.008M:
\$55.535M from (former) Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
\$23.733M from Environment and Climate Change Strategy
\$1.304M from Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
\$0.848M from (former) Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
\$0.588M from Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

Transfers by Core Business

	Budget (\$000s)	FTEs
Information, Innovation and Technology		
GeoBC	5,073	51
IITD Divisional Budget	7,070	256
Regional Geospatial Resources	3,006	35
Knowledge Management Branch (ENV)	3,543	48
Groundwater Hydrometrics	3,136	5
Division Sub-Total	21,828	395

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Watershed, Aquatic Systems, Fisheries and Coastal Policy and Planning		
Assistant Deputy Minister's Office	485	4
Water Protection & Sustainability	4,042	35
Marine & Coastal Resources	695	7
Fish, Aquaculture & Wild Salmon Policy	776	9
Division Sub-Total	5,998	55
Reconciliation and Natural Resource Sector Policy		
First Nation Consultation System	497	5
Division Sub-Total	497	5
Land Use Policy and Planning and Terrestrial Ecosystems		
Ecosystems Branch	4,031	50
Assistant Deputy Minister's Office	510	3
Regional Land Use and Ecosystems Staffing	26,736	226
Environmental Stewardship Initiative	540	6
Resource Planning and Provincial Stewardship	3,309	35
Species at Risk Coordination	6,905	13
Division Sub-Total	42,031	333
Natural Resource Sector Secretariat*		
ENV Economics	258	2
FrontCounter BC	3,494	13
NRS Governance Secretariat	84	2
Division Sub-Total	3,836	17
<i>*Includes Sector Solution Teams</i>		
Executive and Support Services		
Minister's Office	290	3
Corporate Services	4,137	333
Ministry Overheads	3,391	0
Division Sub-Total	7,818	336
Total transfers	82,008	1,141
New Funding	10,000	99
Ministry Estimates Budget	92,008	1,240

Date Prepared/Revised: April 28, 2022

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Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Vote 38: Ministry Operations

FINAL
April 14 2022

**MINISTRY OF LAND, WATER AND RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP
2022/23 Budget Highlights**

OPERATING BUDGET: (\$92.008 M - an increase of \$10.0M M or 12.2 % from 2021/22 Restated)

The Ministry operating budget changes include:

In Plan Changes - \$0.0 M

- o As the ministry was created in fiscal 2022/23, there are no previous in plan change amounts.

Inter-Ministry Transfers - \$82.008M :

- o \$55.535M from Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
- o \$23.733M from Environment and Climate Change Strategy
- o \$1.304M from Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
- o \$0.848M from Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
- o \$0.588M from Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

Add to Plan Changes - \$10.000 M :

- o \$10.000M approved budget lift for Natural Resource Sector Restructuring

CAPITAL BUDGET: \$0.245 M (an increase of \$0.245M or 100% from 2021/22 Restated)

- o **Ministry Capital budgets are estimated on an annual basis based on requirements submitted and prioritized across government**

Total Plan Changes - \$0.2450 M:

- o \$0.245 M for one time lift to purchase office furniture and equipment for new staff

FTEs and Staffing

FTEs - Continue to be budgeted at a summary level for the Province.

Staff - A total of 1,189 staff have been transferred to the new ministry effective April 1, 2022.

**Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship
2022/23 Budget Briefing**

THREE YEAR BUDGET CHANGES FROM FEBRUARY 2021 PLAN

OPERATING

\$000s

	2021/22 Estimates	2022/23 Estimates	2023/24 Plan	2024/25 Plan
A April 2021 Plan				
Vote 38 - Ministry Operations				
Total April 2021 Plan	-	-	-	-
<i>Year-to-year change in 2021/22 Service Plan</i>		-	-	-
B Inter Ministry Transfers (See Inter-Ministry worksheet for details)				
From Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Ops and Rural Development	55,535	55,535	55,535	55,535
From Environment and Climate Change Strategy	23,733	23,733	23,733	23,733
From Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304
From Agriculture, Food and Fisheries	848	848	848	848
From Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation	588	588	588	588
Total Inter Ministry Transfers	82,008	82,008	82,008	82,008
C Budget Lifts and Reductions				
TBS Decision - Natural Resource Sector Restructuring		10,000	17,060	17,060
Total Budget Lifts and Reductions	-	10,000	17,060	17,060
Total Transfers and Adjustments	82,008	92,008	99,068	99,068
<i>Change from 2022/23 Service Plan</i>	82,008	92,008	99,068	99,068
	2021/22 Restated Estimates	2022/23 Estimates	2023/24 Plan	2024/25 Plan
D February 2022 Plan				
Vote XX - Ministry Operations	82,008	92,008	99,068	99,068
Total February 2022 Plan	82,008	92,008	99,068	99,068
<i>Year-to-Year Change in 2022/23 Service Plan</i>		10,000	7,060	-
		12.2%	7.7%	-

Footnote(s):

Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship
2022/23 Budget Briefing
THREE YEAR BUDGET CHANGES FROM FEBRUARY 2021 PLAN

CAPITAL				
\$000s				
	2021/22 Estimates	2022/23 Estimates	2023/24 Plan	2024/25 Plan
A April 2021 Plan				
Vote 38 - Ministry Operations	-	-	-	-
Total April 2021 Plan	-	-	-	-
<i>Year-to-year change in 2021/22 Service Plan</i>		-	-	-
<hr/>				
B Intra-Ministry Transfers				
	-			
Total-Intra Ministry Transfers	-	-	-	-
Budget Lifts and Reductions				
One time budget lift to purchase office furniture & equipment for new staff		245		
Total Budget Lifts and Reductions	-	245	-	-
Total Transfers and Adjustments	-	245	-	-
<i>Change from 2022/23 Service Plan</i>	-	245	-	-
	-	-	-	-
<hr/>				
	2021/22 Restated Estimates	2022/23 Estimates	2023/24 Plan	2024/25 Plan
C February 2022 Plan				
Vote XX - Ministry Operations	-	245	-	-
Total April 2021 Plan	-	245	-	-
<i>Year-to-Year Change in 2021/22 Service Plan</i>		245	(245)	-
		-	(100.0%)	-

Footnote(s):

	FTES	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Ministry Operations		0	0	0	0
FLNRO Transfers In					
T003266	51	5,073,000	5,073,000	5,073,000	5,073,000
T003267	38	3,819,000	3,819,000	3,819,000	3,819,000
T003269	296	40,920,000	40,920,000	40,920,000	40,920,000
T003296	333	4,137,000	4,137,000	4,137,000	4,137,000
T003295	3	290,000	290,000	290,000	290,000
T003292	0	1,296,000	1,296,000	1,296,000	1,296,000
	721	55,535,000	55,535,000	55,535,000	55,535,000
MIRR Transfers In					
T003270	5	497,000	497,000	497,000	497,000
T003273	0	807,000	807,000	807,000	807,000
	5	1,304,000	1,304,000	1,304,000	1,304,000
ENV Transfers in					
T003272	39	4,527,000	4,527,000	4,527,000	4,527,000
T003274	50	4,031,000	4,031,000	4,031,000	4,031,000
T003275	53	6,679,000	6,679,000	6,679,000	6,679,000
T003287	256	7,070,000	7,070,000	7,070,000	7,070,000
T003288	0	1,168,000	1,168,000	1,168,000	1,168,000
T003290	2	258,000	258,000	258,000	258,000
	400	23,733,000	23,733,000	23,733,000	23,733,000
EMLI Transfers in					
T003279	6	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000
T003280	48	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
	54	588,000	588,000	588,000	588,000
AFF Transfers in					
T003281	9	776,000	776,000	776,000	776,000
T003282	0	72,000	72,000	72,000	72,000
	9	848,000	848,000	848,000	848,000
	1,189	82,008,000	82,008,000	82,008,000	82,008,000
TBS Adjustments					
NRS Restructuring			10,000,000	17,060,000	17,060,000
		82,008,000	92,008,000	99,068,000	99,068,000
BCOA as of Jan 21, 2022		82,008,000	92,008,000	99,068,000	99,068,000
Variance		0	0	0	0

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Issue: Minister's Office Budget & GCPE Resources

Recommend Response:

- For 2022/23, the Minister's office budget is \$614,000.
- As this office was created in 2022/23, there is no opportunity for historical comparison of budget and actuals against prior years.
- The Minister's office budget is comparable to other minister's offices in the Natural resource sector. (ENV and EMLI)
- There is a salary and benefits budget of \$0.540M that supports five staff members in the Minister's Office:
 - Senior Ministerial Assistant (Roari Richardson)
 - Ministerial Assistant (Tristan Jones)
 - Executive Assistant (Jack Garnier)
 - Administrative Coordinator (Trudy Maygard)
 - Administrative Assistant (Jane Constable)
- LWRS is supported by five Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE) staff:
 - Communications Director, Band 4 (Tania Venn)
 - Communications Manager, Band 3 (Nova Pierson)
 - Senior Public Affairs Officer, Band 2 (Thomas Winterhoff)
 - Public Affairs Officer, Band 1 (Chitra Arcot)
 - Public Affairs Officer, Band 1 (vacant)

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Key Facts:

Minister's Office Budget by STOB

STOB	Descriptions	2022/23 Budget
50EA	Salaries	384,000
52EA	Employee Benefits	116,000
54EA	Legislative Salaries - Indemnities	40,000
	Salaries and Benefits Sub-Total	540,000
57EA	Public Servant Travel	42,000
63EA	Information Systems - Operating	7,000
65EA	Office & Business Expenses	7,000
82EA	Legislative Assembly	9,000
85EA	Other Expenses	9,000
	Operating Expenses Sub-Total	74,000
	Grand Total	614,000

Date Prepared/Revised: April 28, 2022

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Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Issue: Salmon Aquaculture Policy and Decisions

Recommend Response:

- The June 2018 policy makes it clear that, effective June 30, 2022, no new tenures will be approved unless:
 - Meet all existing and future federal aquaculture license conditions that assures protection of the health of wild salmon;
 - Demonstrate support from relevant First Nation(s) in whose territory they propose to operate via industry/First Nations agreements; and,
 - Meet all provincial *Land Act* policies related to the siting of finfish aquaculture sites.
- This approach provides clarity to industry and outlines our expectations moving forward for a sustainable industry that protects wild salmon, embraces reconciliation, and provides good jobs for local communities.
- The Province is dedicated to meaningful engagement with First Nations as demonstrated by this new policy, the work done in the Broughton, and Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA), new legislation passed in 2019 to implement the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- Many operators already have agreements with several partnering First Nations. Those types of partnerships will grow and lead to more predictability over the long term as First Nations and industry work together.

If asked about the December 2020 federal government decision to cease licensing of open-net pen salmon farming in the Discovery Islands by 2022:

- B.C. respects the federal government's position and their authority on the decision of licensing in the Discovery Islands.

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However, we remain committed to working in close collaboration with our federal counterparts to mitigate the impact of this decision on the affected companies and communities.

- I'm aware of the court's April 2022 decision. We'll continue to work with the federal government to protect, restore and enhance wild salmon populations, including through B.C.'s Wild Salmon Strategy
- But as Premier Horgan indicated in his March 10 letter to Prime Minister Trudeau, we are urging the federal government to commit to a transition plan that supports families, companies and coastal communities, and we are committed to working with them on this.
- Like B.C., the federal government is committed to partnering with Indigenous communities to ensure the aquaculture sector is sustainably managed and we will continue to encourage DFO to incorporate the principles of UNDRIP in related decisions.

If asked about the federal government's 2025 Transition Plan from open-net pen salmon farming in B.C:

- The federal government is currently deciding whether to renew 79 remaining salmon farming licences in the province when they expire in June 2022.
- On March 10, 2022, our Premier sent a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau making clear that any plan developed by 2025 to transition from current open-net pen technology must be built on meaningful and principled engagement involving industry, First Nations, local governments, and the Province.
- Our government has brought together ministers from key portfolios to call upon the federal government to commit to a transition plan that supports families, companies, and coastal

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communities, and we are committed to working with them on this.

- Any federal transition plan needs to align with our commitments under the Declaration Act and considers the economic needs of impacted First Nations and communities on the B.C. coast.
- At the same time, we will continue to collaborate with our federal colleagues on the important work of protecting and rebuilding B.C.'s critical wild salmon stocks.

Key Facts:

- Representatives of LWRS are members of the Strategic Oversight Committee to collaborate on the transition away from open net aquaculture. Additionally, LWRS advocates for the industry and represents the province in discussions with DFO.
- The Ministry of Forests issues crown land tenures and develops policies to ensure Indigenous Reconciliation is incorporated into decision making towards aquaculture licensing.
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food is lead on farmed salmon as it relates to a food commodity.
- On June 20, 2018, the Province announced new conditions for the disposition of Crown land for salmon aquaculture that replaced the “pause” announced in the 2015 bulletin. These new conditions come into effect for new and replacement tenures as of June 2022 and require that operators:
 - Meet all existing and future federal aquaculture license conditions that assures protection of the health of wild salmon;
 - Demonstrate support from relevant First Nation(s) in whose territory they propose to operate via industry/First Nations agreements; and,
 - Meet all provincial *Land Act* policies related to the siting of finfish aquaculture sites.
- As of February 1, 2022, B.C. has again notified operators whose tenures expire before June 30, 2022, of their requirements to provide proof of meeting these conditions to continue operations. 29 sites will be immediately subject to the policy on June 30, while other sites across B.C. have expiry dates ranging from 2023 to 2045.
- After consultation with First Nations in December 2020, and in response to Justice Cohen's response, then Minister Bernadette Jordan announced that DFO would phase out salmon farming operations in the Discovery Islands by June 2022, with

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the stipulations that no new fish be introduced into the facilities during this time, and that all farms be fish free by June 30, 2022.

- This will affect approximately 26 percent of B.C. farmed salmon capacity, representing 20 percent of provincial aquaculture revenue (\$132 million in 2019).
- Currently, four operators in the area have filed a judicial review to the Federal Court of Canada in Vancouver asking the courts to find the decisions made by DFO as unreasonable. A ruling is pending and anticipated for spring 2022.
- Farm operations are contingent on DFO licensing, which is typically granted in one-to-six-year terms. All 79 remaining farm licenses expire June 30, 2022. Industry and affected communities are concerned that DFO may decide on renewal options that shuts the industry or creates uncertainty of future operations.
- On April 22, 2022, Madam Justice Heneghan decided on the issue of Procedural Fairness within the Judicial Review. She found that the Discovery Islands decision was in fact a licensing decision and was therefore subject to procedural fairness. She also found that while there was a heavy burden of the applicants to show that the decision was unreasonable, this threshold was met. As a result, the application for Judicial Review was granted, the decision of the Minister set aside, and the injunction granted on April 5, 2021, will remain in effect. The judgement also now gives the applicants the opportunity to make submissions to the court on costs related to the breach of procedural fairness.
- DFO will likely not reissue licenses in this area to remain consistent with their policy direction to remove these farms. Furthermore, it is possible that the current federal Minister may decline transfer licenses under a more defensible rationale. Therefore, it is unlikely that any of the affected farms will restock at these locations. It is currently unclear if this judgement can or will be used by the operators to further litigation efforts to re-establish finfish aquaculture in the Discovery Islands area post-June 2022.

Date Prepared/Revised: March 30, 2022

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Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Issue: Watershed Security Strategy and Fund

Recommend Response:

- Protecting clean water is a priority for the government of B.C.
- We have recently completed the first period of engagement on a Watershed Security Strategy Discussion Paper.
- We will be publishing a report on what we have heard from engagement to date in summer 2022. This report will inform development of the Strategy and Fund.
- We are jointly developing a BC-First Nations water table to discuss ongoing provincial-level water policy.
- Through this Water Table and ongoing relationships with First Nations leadership, treaty nations, Métis nations, and existing government-to-government tables, we will strive towards co-development of the Watershed Security Strategy.
- We expect to release a draft Strategy for further public engagement in fall 2022.
- The proposed Watershed Security Fund will support implementation of the Strategy and build on our experience with the Healthy Watersheds Initiative (\$27M) and watershed security funding (\$30M).
- Coordination with work on the Coastal Marine and Salmon strategies and work in drinking water will be key.

Key Facts:

- LWRS leads the development of the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund through the Water Protection and Sustainability Branch. As part of this work, the ministry coordinates with other ministries who have interests in and play a role in water and watershed management in B.C.
- Advice/Recommendations

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- Drought, flood, climate change, urban development, industrial demand for water, and community sustainability are key watershed issues driving development of the Strategy.
- Between Jan 25 and March 18, 2022, government engaged British Columbians on a Discussion Paper that outlined the opportunities for a possible Strategy. More than 1,600 submissions from the public, stakeholders, and other levels of governments (including First Nations) were submitted for consideration.
- A broad range of funding mechanisms will be evaluated including water rental revenues, taxation, cost sharing with Canada, endowments, among others.
- Developing the Strategy and Fund is of significant interest to many First Nations because of their relationships with water. It is an opportunity to advance reconciliation through new partnerships with First Nations that support and build on shared interests and goals for water.
- Building on past engagement with First Nations on water-related issues, multiple pathways to participate in the development of the Strategy have been developed, with the goal of building enduring, collaborative relationships around provincial-level water policy and legislation, consistent with our commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to implementing the Declaration Act.
- Aligning approaches to water management with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* is critical to our work.
- Government continues to collaborate internally and engage with local and federal governments, environmental non-government organizations, industry and business groups, the agricultural sector, and other external stakeholders as the Strategy and Fund options develop.
- There is a broad range of related work underway across government to align and coordinate with related mandates, including, but not limited to:
 - Drinking water strategy,
 - Wild salmon and coastal strategies,
 - Climate action;
 - Together for Wildlife;
 - Forest and Range Practices Act renewal and the Old Growth strategy;
 - Biodiversity and conservation; and,
 - Economic recovery initiatives.
- Staff anticipate presenting Strategy and Fund proposals to government for consideration in spring-summer 2022.

Date Prepared/Revised: 30 March 2022

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Prepared for 2022/23 Estimates Debate

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Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Issue: Development of a Coastal Marine Strategy

Recommend Response:

- Without a strategic vision, it's challenging for the Province to plot its own course to ensure our shared natural assets are sustained and protected for future generations.
- A Coastal Marine Strategy (CMS) can help articulate how and what future actions government can take to be better stewards for our coastal marine environments, mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, advance reconciliation with First Nations, develop a sustainable blue economy and foster community resilience in the face of increasing pressures.
- A public CMS will be a first of its kind for B.C.
 - It is anticipated that the strategy will articulate a vision, principles, goals and critical actions that matter most to the people of B.C.
- We are currently in the process of working with coastal First Nations to draft and initial 'intentions' paper this spring and will then engage Canada, local government, B.C. stakeholders and the broader public later this spring and summer.

Key Facts:

- British Columbia's (B.C.) coastal marine zone is home to the majority (~72%) of British Columbians, encompasses the traditional territories of approximately 84 B.C. Indigenous Nations, and around 300 communities dot the coast.
- Marine based economic sectors contribute ~\$21.5B annually to the economy and employs approximately 131,000 jobs in British Columbia.
- B.C.'s coastal and marine areas are also extremely biologically diverse - home to many iconic wildlife such as Pacific salmon, killer whales and many other birds, mammals, fishes and invertebrates.
- However, B.C. is one of few maritime jurisdictions in North America that does not have an articulated coastal marine strategy and/or law.

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- Given the close connection B.C. residents have with the ocean and the importance it has in terms of B.C.'s cultural identity, the Province has committed to develop a CMS for B.C.
- This commitment is included in four ministerial and parliamentary secretary mandate letters across government: Minister of Lands, Water and Resource Stewardship Josie Osborne and Parliamentary Secretary Fin Donnelly; Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy George Heyman and Parliamentary Secretary Kelly Greene.
 - Minister Josie Osborne has been asked to lead the development of the CMS with her colleagues.
- Goal 3 of the LWRS service plan "*Stewardship of Marine and Coastal Values for Environmental Protection, Economic Development, and Reconciliation*" outlines the key objectives and strategies for the ministry.
- To date, staff have held over a dozen engagement sessions with over 30 First Nations across the coast (including eight treaty nations), six First Nations organizations and have held information sessions with 40 stakeholder groups and 11 of the 17 coastal Regional Districts.
- LWRS staff are in the process of engaging with other Ministries to clarify where interests overlap. For example, LWRS will be working with:
 - The Ministry of Forests on potential strategies related to provincial decision-making on authorizations in coastal marine areas;
 - The Ministry of Agriculture and Food on opportunities to grow the sustainable seafood sector and related 'blue economy';
 - The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy on climate change mitigation and adaptation in the coastal zone, as well as long-term protections for the coastal marine environment; and others.
- Given this is still in the development stage, fiscal resources remain focused on First Nations engagement (\$380,400 to date) and internal capacity building – six FTEs.
- Implementation budgets requirements remain uncertain. It is anticipated that full cost accounting will be required to implement over time and to successfully position the strategy to be implemented over time. Based on other progressive jurisdictions, this could be in the tens of millions per year.
 - However, this can be combined with Federal and other sources of funding where synergies exist.

Date Prepared/Revised: April 6, 2022

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Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Issue: Wild Salmon Strategy & Action Plan

Recommend Response:

- We have a renewed mandate to develop new strategies to protect and revitalize B.C.'s wild salmon populations, which are critically important to B.C.'s environment, history, economy and way of life.
- We are working closely with partners to develop a suite of strategies that address existing recommendations that will be directly beneficial to salmon in B.C.
- We are committed to helping restore abundant wild Pacific salmon stocks while supporting sustainable fisheries and communities around B.C.
- We are working across government to ensure that all of Governments work aligns with the goal of restoring wild salmon, and that this objective will be built into other strategies that B.C. is undertaking.
- Currently, options for the strategy are being developed that build off the vast amount of work and recommendations from First Nations, stewardship groups and others. Further consultation will take place in coming months.
- We are also aware of the significant commitment from the federal government through their \$647M Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative, and will work closely to ensure there is a coordinated strategy to recover wild salmon in partnership with First Nations in B.C.
- Since 2019, B.C. and the federal governments have been working together to protect wild salmon through the B.C. Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund.
- This government has pledged to invest an additional \$42.85M in the B.C. Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund, doubling the largest provincial financial commitment to protect wild salmon in the past 20 years.

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- Most importantly, we will work to ensure strong and healthy wild salmon stocks are available for future generations of British Columbians.

Key Facts:

- LWRS is leading the development of the Wild Salmon Strategy. This strategy will protect salmon in conjunction with the Coastal Marine Strategy and a Watershed Security Strategy and Fund which are also being developed by LWRS.
- Other natural resource ministries are providing a support role, particularly Ministry of Forests with regards to permitting of industries and activities that impact salmon and their habitats.
- The Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship (LWRS) has a mandate commitment to continue implementing the B.C.'s Wild Salmon Strategy and work with the federal government to double the BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund (BCSRIF).
- Options for a Wild Salmon Strategy and Action Plan (WSSAP) are under discussion with the First Nations Fisheries Council, Pacific Salmon Foundation and DFO.
- Options focus on areas of provincial jurisdiction (land and water management) with the main policy focus being a 'salmon lens' and the main program focus being the BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund.
- The salmon lens is a policy concept that would ensure there is clear direction to all provincial natural resource decision makers (permitting, tenures, etc.) that salmon recovery should be prioritized when considering effects of decisions.
- The Province is also developing a Coastal Marine Strategy and a Watershed Security Strategy and Fund, each of these will address and support issues that affect wild salmon.
- In June 2021, DFO announced the Pacific Salmon Strategic Initiative. The strategy's objective is to stem the steep decline of Pacific salmon populations and protect and rebuild stocks where possible by implementing a series of immediate and long-term solutions. B.C. and DFO meet regularly to ensure alignment of provincial and federal strategies.

Date Prepared/Revised: March 30, 2022

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Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Issue: Canada-BC Nature Agreement

Recommend Response:

- Canada and BC are collaborating toward the development of a Nature Agreement to advance joint objectives for the protection of biodiversity and species at risk and to invest in new and expanded conservation areas.
- The agreement may include joint commitments on:
 - the recovery and protection of species at risk;
 - ecosystem and habitat stewardship and restoration;
 - Indigenous-led conservation initiatives and partnerships; and
 - ecosystem knowledge and information.
- The agreement is expected to be signed this summer.

Additional Response points (if needed):

- LWRS is leading the development of the agreement in close collaboration with BC's other natural resource ministries including the ministry of Forests, Environment and Climate Change Strategy, Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Initiatives.
- While the agreement is between Canada and BC, there is a high level of sensitivity by both governments to the collaborative governance approach being developed by British Columbia with First Nations. There is a desire to align agreement commitments with, and in support of, that approach to ensure that First Nations are partners in shaping the path forward for land stewardship.

Key Facts:

- LWRS is responsible for leading the negotiation of the BC-Canada Nature Agreement. As implementation of the agreement will be supported by all ministries in the natural resource sector, LWRS is leading this work and collaborating with all other ministries in the sector.
- In July 2021 Cabinet provided approval for BC to begin negotiation for the Nature Agreement based on 5 provincial interests
 - Respect for provincial jurisdiction in decision making and collaborative and shared decision-making agreement with First Nations

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- Commitment from Canada to modernize the approach to the implementation of the federal Species at Risk Act
- Shared understanding and support for BC economic interests, the economic impact and benefits of new conservation measures and co-funding to mitigate impacts,
- Collaborative but BC led engagement of Indigenous Nations
- Improving Canada's understanding of BC new and more integrated approach to conservation and stewardship.
- Reaching a Nature Agreement with BC is identified as a deliverable in the mandate letters for Ministers Steven Guilbeault of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and Minister Jonathan Wilkinson of Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN). ECCC is the lead ministry.
- The Government of Canada's 2022 budget allocated \$50M for a BC Old Growth Nature Fund to be established in collaboration with the province, non-governmental organizations, and Indigenous and local communities on the condition of matched provincial funding.
- Canada has indicated willingness to draw on several conservation related funds including the Enhanced Nature Legacy (\$2.3B across Canada); the Nature Smart Climate Solutions fund (\$1.4B); the \$50M BC Old Growth Nature Fund, and others to support the development of a Nature Agreement with British Columbia.
- As part of the Nature Agreement, Canada may expect a provincial position on federal conservation targets to conserve 25% of lands by 2025 and 30% by 2030. BC currently has no formal mandate to expand parks and protected areas to 25% or 30%, however BC has been a leader among provinces and territories with one of the highest percentages of its land base in protected and conserved areas. Additional conservation areas in development with First Nations partners will advance BC towards the 25% target

Date Prepared/Revised: April 28, 2022

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Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship

Issue: Caribou Recovery Program Predator Reduction

Recommend Response:

- The decision to remove animals of one species to benefit a species at risk is difficult.
- We understand how some people may find the idea of deliberately removing wolves unsettling, even though this approach is supported by science.
- Our monitoring and analysis of ongoing predator reduction confirms that this will make the difference between caribou herd recovery and the complete loss of caribou in particular areas.
- It is a tool used in coordination with other recovery tools including habitat protection and restoration.
- Data from collared wolves is extremely valuable in determining pack territories, overlap with caribou herds, and pack size. This ensures that decisions to remove wolves are well informed by evidence confirming that their removal will benefit caribou recovery. In addition, when a decision to remove a pack is made collared wolves make the removal more efficient and effective.

Key Facts:

- LWRS is responsible for leading all species at risk recovery in BC including leading the Provincial Caribou Recovery Program. This work includes leading public facing engagement and consultation with affected stakeholder groups.
- Ministry of Forests is responsible for the regulatory components (permits and authorizations) required to support recovery strategies.
- In the case of predator management to support species at risk recovery, the overall strategy and implementation planning is led by LWRS through the Provincial Caribou Recovery Program. Implementation and permitting for predator management is done by Ministry of Forests.
- In situations where there is a compliance and enforcement component the Conservation Officer Service, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy is responsible.
- Over the last few decades, woodland caribou have declined significantly in many parts of BC, and across Canada. Scientific evidence indicates that habitat change (loss/fragmentation) is a main factor driving these declines.

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- These habitat changes support a greater number of moose, elk, and deer in caribou ranges than historically occurred. This, in turn, leads to a greater number of wolves, which leads to more caribou being depredated by wolves.
- Caribou herds cannot tolerate high rates of predation.
- Predator reduction can and has had immediate, positive impacts on caribou populations, particularly when used with multiple management tools as is done in British Columbia. For example, the Klinse-za herd in the Peace Region has grown from 42 animals to 101 since wolf reduction measures began in 2015 in conjunction with maternity penning.
- Given the length of the program the previous government will be familiar with these difficult decisions.
- Wolves are abundant and widely distributed across BC. Wolf population dynamics make them resilient to high rates of reduction/mortality, therefore this targeted management action does not create other conservation risks.
- Helicopter-based shooting of wolves is the most humane and effective to sufficiently reduce population density across broad, remote landscapes.
- BC's ensures careful consideration to ethics, animal welfare, and humaneness through veterinarian oversight of animal care standards and protocols. Collaring wolves helps to confirm removing the wolves will benefit caribou, that the removal is targeted, efficient and effective, and for that reason, are sometimes called Judas wolves.
- Authorizations are now in place for a predator reduction program for 14 caribou herds throughout BC, following a consultation and public engagement process completed in 2021.
- The 2021 consultation and engagement process indicate that British Columbians have a range of opinions about this caribou recovery management action. EngageBC survey results showed:
 - 98% of the 15,196 respondents feel that caribou recovery is important to them
 - 42% of the respondents from British Columbia were in support of predator reduction
 - **People in areas where caribou occur indicated greater support for application of this management tool (53% to 82%), compared to other areas of the province (22% to 47%)**

2022 predator management:

Program Area	Wolves Removed 2022	Cougars Removed 2022	Total cost 2022	Comments
Southern Mountain - Southern Group				
Central Selkirks	11	2	\$100,000	Cougar removal ongoing
Columbia North	3	5	\$130,000	Cougar removal ongoing

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Program Area	Wolves Removed 2022	Cougars Removed 2022	Total cost 2022	Comments
Hart Ranges	30	-	\$177,000	Complete
North Cariboo	7	-	\$50,000	Complete
Southern Mountain – Northern Group				
Graham	10	-	\$179,600	Complete
Itcha-Ilgachuz	66	2	\$180,000	Cougar removal ongoing
Tweedsmuir	36	-	\$267,600	Complete
Southern Mountain – Central Group				
South Peace	26	-	\$320,000	Complete
Northern Mountain				
Pink Mountain	50	-	\$225,300	Complete
Boreal				
Chinchaga	41	-	\$120,000	Complete
TOTALS	280	9	\$1,749,500	

Annual breakdown of wolf removal	
Year	Number
2015	68
2016	210
2017	119
2018	152
2019	180
2020	482
2021	237
2022	280

Date Prepared/Revised: April 29, 2022

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Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
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ISSUE: Cumulative Effects Framework

Recommended Response:

- My mandate letter includes direction to *“Increase the Province’s capacity to manage for cumulative effects through integration of science-based land, aquatic, resource, geographic and Indigenous knowledge to evidence informed policy and decisions can be made by statutory decision makers”*
- Cumulative effects (CE) assessments under the BC Cumulative Effects Framework (CEF) are a foundational component of Government’s stewardship of natural resources. They assess the cumulative effects of natural and human-caused disturbances on key provincial values to inform planning and decision-making throughout BC and across natural resource agencies. CE outputs provide a common understanding of value condition and trend.
- The Province of British Columbia is committed to considering cumulative effects in natural resource decision-making. Improving cumulative effects assessment and management will be a vital part of sustainable and integrated resource management. Transparently reporting on cumulative effects assessment information and management considerations will enable coordinated, consistent management of cumulative effects across the natural resource sector
- Cumulative effects assessments are a key interest and priority for Indigenous Stewardship Forums, to collaboratively build trusted data and assessments that will inform operational and strategic decision making. The Cumulative Effects Framework provides foundational information for those collaborations.
- CEF products are used to inform: (1) modernized land use planning and forest landscape planning; (2) implementation of the provincial Old Growth Strategic Review.

