



June 27, 2014

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M. P.
Minister of the Environment
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Aglukkaq,

On behalf of the Canadian Federation Agriculture (CFA) I am writing you in regards to the National Conservation Plan (NCP) which was announced on May 15, 2014. I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Robert Sopuck on June 10, 2014 where we discussed the potential impact of the NCP on Canada's agriculture sector. I believe that the NCP provides us with an excellent opportunity to build upon the good work that Canadian farmers are already undertaking to protect habitat and promote real on the ground conservation actions.

The CFA welcomes the focus that the NCP has placed upon private lands and on lands that are located in southern Canada where important habitat has been most threatened by development. It is my understanding that the NCP will focus on the areas that are most in need of conservation. It is within this context that the NCP should provide funding to implement small but effective projects at the local scale that are part of the working landscape. A focus on small projects delivered by local groups such as conservation authorities will result in a large impact on a national scale – surely more so than if one organization attempts to administer the funding all across Canada.

I would like to encourage the NCP to include restoration and conservation efforts on a broad range of habitat that would include different types of agricultural lands. This necessitates a careful consideration of the implications of potential projects under the NCP on agricultural lands and agricultural productivity. The NCP should be designed so that it meets the conservation needs of farmers and others who are part of the working landscape. The best way to do this is to build upon the initiatives that are already in place and have proven themselves to be effective, efficient and workable. One such example is the Alternative Land Use Services which has been well developed in some provinces such as Alberta and Prince Edward Island.

As farmers are the best positioned to manage habitat on agriculture land, the NCP must be farmer-friendly and delivered by local organizations that farmers are familiar with and may already have a working relationship with. This approach holds the most promise of making substantial gains in conserving important and threatened habitat across Canada. I would also like to make the recommendation that the NCP incorporate a robust review process that allows for continual improvement in implementation over the five years of funding.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with your office to ensure that the NCP is implemented in a manner that is effective and relevant to Canadian agriculture. If you have any

questions regarding this letter, please contact Drew Black, Director, Environment and Science Policy at 613-236-3633 ext. 2328 or via email at: envsci@cfafca.ca.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ron Bonnett', written in a cursive style.

Ron Bonnett
President

CC: The Honourable Gerry Ritz, P.C., M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
The Honourable Gail Shea, P.C., M.P. Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
The Honourable Robert Sopuck, P.C., M.P.