



**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF
ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGISTS**

**P.O. Box 962, Station F
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The Honourable John Baird
Minister of the Environment
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington Street, 28th Floor
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0H3

October 22, 2007

Dear Hon. John Baird,

Subject: Frozen budgets within Environment Canada

The Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists is a non-profit society, whose primary focus is to further the conservation and prudent management of Canada's natural resources based on sound ecological principles. Members are professionally trained biologists and biology students. CSEB currently has over 200 members, found throughout the workforce and in all Canadian provinces and territories.

As biologists, we are very aware that human activity can have serious effects on Canada's natural environment. These impacts must be managed carefully, using a solid foundation of scientific knowledge. Canadians are fortunate to have a strong contingent of environmental scientists in your department. Indeed, Environment Canada has an international reputation as a leader in scientific research related to environmental management.

It has come to our attention that several budgets within Environment Canada have recently been "frozen" or cut. We have learned of huge cutbacks to the budgets of the Migratory Bird program, the national Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Network, and our Canadian treasures, the National Wildlife Areas. The overall budget of the Canadian Wildlife Service has apparently been frozen.

Among the important benefits of these programs, they all contribute to our understanding of the effects of global warming, a top environmental priority of your Government. We agree with the observation in the recent Throne Speech that "the North needs new attention...." and we support your Government's proposal for a world-class Arctic

research station. However, these current budget cuts in Environment Canada work against this new direction and will hinder our responses to global warming.

The CWS has been a key player in many important achievements that Canadians take for granted, such as the banning of DDT and recovery of endangered species, like the peregrine falcon, whooping crane, swift fox and burrowing owl. CWS scientists continue to expand our knowledge about many northern species. Yet these cutbacks prevent scientists from completing their fieldwork and other important activities. Field seasons missed can never be regained. The strength and value of research programs are often carefully nurtured over many years. Gaps in data collection can threaten a significant financial investment. And without a clear commitment to research, Environment Canada will have difficulty continuing to attract the high-quality scientists Canada needs.

Ongoing research is very important for fisheries and wildlife managers, forest managers and others who must make key decisions in a timely manner. As well, decision-makers in industry and in other Canadian governments rely heavily on Environment Canada's excellent research.

The CSEB wants you to understand the long-term consequences of these budget freezes and cuts. In a time when public support for the environment is strong and growing, it is hard to understand the rationale behind these decisions. Please see that these budgets are restored and Environment Canada continues its pursuit of the highest quality scientific research and environmental management.

Respectfully,

Shawn Martin
President,
Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists

cc: The Right Hon. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister