

# Save Our Boreal Birds

Dear Prime Minister Harper and Canadian Premiers,

As a fellow Canadian, I am proud to live in a country that is home to one of the largest intact ecosystems left on the planet: Canada's Boreal Forest. The forests, peatlands, lakes and rivers of the Boreal support billions of breeding birds each year, representing over 300 bird species. This abundance has earned the Boreal Forest the title of North America's Bird Nursery.

Many of the most familiar of our migratory birds depend on the Boreal to support virtually their entire populations – species like Palm Warbler, Bufflehead, and even the endangered Whooping Crane.

Canada's Boreal Forest also provides critical habitat for some of the planet's last large populations of wildlife including wolves, grizzly bear, lynx, and endangered species like the woodland caribou. It is one of the planet's largest terrestrial storehouses of carbon, shielding us from global warming. And it is home to hundreds of aboriginal communities that rely on the land for a traditional way of life.

Our country is envied for its natural landscape and yet has permanently protected less than 10% of the Boreal while 30% has been allocated for industrial development. Already, we have witnessed severe declines in bird species for which Canada has the greatest responsibility – like Rusty Blackbird, Bay-breasted Warbler and Surf Scoter, all of which have declined by 50-90% in recent decades.

The pattern of unchecked oil and gas, hydro, timber, and mining development taking place in the Boreal is not the legacy that I want to leave for my children or grandchildren. Instead, I want to leave a legacy of conservation and sustainable development that allows future generations to continue to see the benefits of our Boreal Forest.

The Canadian Boreal Forest represents one of the world's last great conservation opportunities. Canada has the chance to protect the Boreal and show the world that responsible land stewardship and sustainable economic development can coexist.

As a concerned Canadian citizen, I ask that your government adopt the principles of the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework. The Framework calls for protecting at least 50% of the Boreal and supporting sustainable development practices in the remaining areas. Implementing this vision will necessitate:

1. Initiating conservation-based land use planning in consultation with aboriginal communities prior to approving any future development in the Boreal Forest.
2. Instituting planning that protects large areas of intact Boreal Forest, including critical habitat for bird species and wildlife as well as carbon-rich lands, recognizing that protecting these areas is critical in Canada's fight against global warming.
3. Requiring that future logging, mining, hydro, and oil and gas development that proceeds after land use planning meets the highest sustainable development standards, including Forest Stewardship Council certification and other best management practices.

Sincerely,  
60,000 International Signatories



Canada  
Warbler



Evening  
Grosbeak



American  
Black Duck



SaveOurBorealBirds.org