



CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY (CPAWS)

Policy on Hunting

Policy Category	Conservation Advocacy Positions
Last Date Modified	September 8 th , 2025
Policy Application	This policy applies to all entities entitled to use the CPAWS brand/logo and people acting on behalf of CPAWS, in any capacity.
Authorized Steward	National Director of Conservation
Final Approval	National Executive Director
Recommended Review:	Every three years or as needed.
Access:	External and Internal

DEFINITIONS

“**CPAWS**” is being used in this policy in its broadest definition and not only refers to all organizational entities nation-wide who are legally entitled to use the CPAWS brand (logo) and all those who in their different capacities support and/or work on behalf of CPAWS.

PURPOSE

This policy details CPAWS national policy on hunting.

POLICY DETAILS

- 1) CPAWS is supportive of hunting outside of protected areas that conforms with the rules and regulations determined by the governing authority (e.g. provincial & territorial governments), providing these activities are well managed, so as not to undermine ecological and cultural values or harm the long-term health of habitats or species.
- 2) CPAWS is not opposed to hunting in Provincial Parks, Territorial Parks and other protected areas where it is allowed, including Indigenous-led conservation initiatives such as Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCA's). These

activities must be well managed, to ensure the safety of other users and so as not to undermine ecological and cultural values, harm the long-term health of habitats or species or interfere with other identified values for the protected area, such as cultural or tourism uses.

- 3) CPAWS understands that National Parks and National Parks Reserves have different goals and operational realities that may make hunting incompatible within their boundaries. With that in mind, CPAWS is generally supportive of hunting in National Parks and National Park Reserves in the following circumstances:
 - a. When hunting is undertaken by First Nations, Métis or Inuit in accordance with their inherent and legal rights.
 - b. Hunting by non-Indigenous hunters, when it is deemed to be in alignment with the goals of the National Park or National Park Reserve and built into the management plan. These activities must be well managed, so as not to undermine ecological and cultural values, harm the long-term health of habitats or species or interfere with the enjoyment and safety of other park users.

PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the following principles:

- Humans are part of nature and hunting and harvesting are integral to the ways many people live and remain connected to this value.
- For many people in remote communities, food instability and high prices threaten their livelihood. For these people, hunting is critical to their health and wellbeing. It means being able to feed themselves, their family and their community.
- Indigenous people across Canada have practiced sustainable hunting and harvesting since time immemorial.
- Indigenous people across Canada have an inherent right to continue to undertake cultural activities like hunting and harvesting. CPAWS acknowledges and supports this right.
- Hunting is a legitimate outdoor recreation activity. Many hunters are life-long conservationists and hunters have been promoters of conservation (including the establishment of parks and protected areas) across Canada for decades.

- Hunting is rarely the sole reason for wildlife population decline. The leading cause of wildlife decline is habitat loss due to factors that include over-development, the approval of development in key habitats, fragmentation and other human impacts. Managing these activities is key to sustaining hunting practices.
- Western science and Indigenous knowledge systems (e.g. traditional ecological knowledge) are unique but equal. It is critical to not prioritize or elevate western science in decision making when it comes to sustainable hunting and harvesting practices.
- Acknowledging the above, it's important to ensure hunting is practiced sustainably – both within and outside of protected areas. This is why regulations and enforcement remain key to protecting species from being over-hunted.
- Research is essential to avoid putting wildlife populations at risk. Research should include assessing the sustainability of hunting wildlife populations and determining the cumulative effects likely to result from hunting and all other human activities in the area.