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Ipsos Reid

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Ottawa, ON - Three in five Canadians (62%) feel that the federal government is doing too little to ensure the survival of Canada's species at risk and should strengthen and better enforce Canada's endangered species laws, according to a new poll conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of the Canadian Wildlife Federation. One third (34%) think that the federal government is doing enough and is effectively protecting species at risk with tools like the Species at Risk Act, while only four percent say the federal government is doing too much.

When asked who is responsible for protecting Canada's species at risk, over half of Canadians (52%) believe that the federal government should bear the primary responsibility and lead role. One quarter (24%) believe that this responsibility should lie with provincial and territorial governments, while one in six (17%) point to environmental non-governmental organizations. Few see a role for private business (4%) or municipal governments (3%).

Nearly all (97%) Canadians consider the issue of protecting Canada's endangered animals and plants to be important (64% very/33% somewhat). Yet, familiarity is relatively low. While three in five Canadians (61%) are aware that Canada has a Species at Risk Act, designed to protect and recover endangered species, only one in four Canadians (23%) say they could name a species at risk.



When told that the federal government spends approximately 73 cents per Canadian citizen annually on protecting endangered wildlife, nearly half of Canadians (48%) believe that the government invests too little and should invest more in species at risk protection, while over two in five (44%) believe that this level of spending is adequate. Fewer than one in ten (8%) believe that the government invests too much in species at risk protection and that this amount should be reduced.

Canadians are divided regarding the usefulness of incentives for landowners to protect species at risk on their land: 52% say that incentives would help protect species at risk and that the government should more actively pursue this avenue, as it would minimize the impact of species protection laws on landowners, while 48% say that resources are better used in other ways to protect species at risk, and that landowners have a responsibility to help without incentives.

Species at Risk and the Economy

When asked to choose between two opposing statements over four in five Canadians (85%) say that federal laws protecting species at risk are crucial to the diversity and abundance of wildlife, which are in turn crucial to our economy and health. Fewer than one in five (15%) say federal laws protecting species at risk slow down industrial development, negatively impacting our economy and reducing job growth.

When asked whether it is acceptable to restrict the activities of business and industry that threaten species at risk, three quarters (74%) of Canadians say yes, that business and industry should only operate in a way that does not harm species at risk. Just over one in five (22%) also say it is acceptable to restrict the activities of business and industry that are a threat to



species at risk, but that it can be ok for business activities to impact species at risk if the economic benefits are valuable enough. Only three percent say that business and industry should not be impacted by the need to protect of species at risk.

When asked whether scientific advice or economic considerations should take precedence in making decisions regarding species at risk in Canada, over three in four Canadians (77%) say scientific advice should take precedence. Most of these respondents (62%) say that while scientific advice takes precedence, economic considerations should also carry some weight. Fewer (15%) believe that scientific advice is the most important factor and that economic considerations do not need to be considered. Just fewer than one in four respondents (23%) believe that economic considerations are most important, with most of these respondents (21%) saying that scientific advice should also carry some weight. Few (2%) say economic considerations are most important and scientific advice should not be considered.

Canadians do not encourage boundaries around federal laws to protect species at risk

Fewer than one in ten Canadians (8%) feel that federal laws protecting species at risk should only apply to species found on lands and waters under federal jurisdiction. Three in five (59%) Canadians believe that federal laws protecting species at risk should apply on both publicly and privately owned lands and waters. One third (33%) believe that federal laws should apply on all public lands and waters, be they federal, provincial or municipal.

Given that some species in Canada are rare and at risk of disappearing because Canadian territory represents the northern limit of where they can live, and most of their population occurs in the United States, over three quarters (78%) of Canadians agree that Canada should be responsible for species at risk in their Canadian range, even if they are common in the



United States, because they are an important part of our natural heritage. A similar proportion (77%) agrees that Canada should be responsible for all species at risk within our borders, regardless of whether or not they also live in the United States. Even if a species is at risk in Canada may be common elsewhere (e.g. in the United States), fewer than one in five Canadians (16%) say there is no need for the Canadian government to protect it.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between November 2 and November 6, 2012, on behalf of the Canadian Wildlife Federation. For this survey, a sample of 1,005 Canadians from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was surveyed online. Weighting was used to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data, and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 3.5 percentage points had the entire Canadian adult population been surveyed. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to, coverage error and measurement error.

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