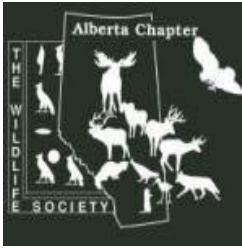


Box 4990 . Edmonton, AB, Canada . T6E 5G8

Ms. Suzanne Legault, Information Commissioner of Canada
Office of the Information and Privacy
Place de Ville, Tower B
112 Kent Street, 7th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1H3



Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society

June 7, 2013

Ms. Suzanne Legault, Information Commissioner of Canada
Office of the Information and Privacy
Place de Ville, Tower B
112 Kent Street, 7th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 1H3

Dear Ms. Legault,

On behalf of the Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society (ACTWS) and its 250 members throughout Alberta, I am writing in support of your recent decision to investigate current Government of Canada policies which restrict access to scientific knowledge held by federal scientists.

Our organization actively promotes science-based decision making, and we feel the current approach by the Government of Canada to restrict media access to scientists and to issue 'approved lines' significantly restricts public dialogue about resource management in Canada. A distinguishing aspect in our intervention is the need for the public having unfettered access to scientific knowledge. We accept the Government of Canada prerogative pertaining to the release of recommendations. Canada currently faces unprecedented challenges with respect to species at risk, protection of our watersheds and adapting to climate change. Canadians require greater access to federal scientists and their scientific knowledge to ensure a balanced discussion about the risks and opportunities associated with resource development in Canada.

We fully acknowledge that science should be seen as supporting decision making and not making it, however, this can only occur when there is open access to leading scientists in our country. Our organization fully supports the request submitted by the University of Victoria Environmental Law Centre pursuant to s. 30(1)(f) of the Access to Information Act, and we look forward to hearing the results of your investigation.

We hope that through your investigation the Canadian public will have renewed faith that our federal scientists will once again be able to support democratic decision making in Canada.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized, elongated shape that resembles a 'D' or a similar character, followed by a long horizontal line.

Dee Patriquin

President, Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society