

February 9, 2026

Dear Premier Eby and Minister Parmar,

On behalf of BC Nature, representing 64 member naturalist clubs and approximately 7,000 members across British Columbia, we are writing to provide comments on the proposed August black bear hunt in the Lower Mainland.

BC Nature recognizes that black bears are generally abundant across much of the province; however, this proposal raises important conservation policy, wildlife management, and public-interest considerations that warrant careful reconsideration. In particular, we are concerned about expanding lethal harvest opportunities where wildlife conflicts arise largely from human activities and land-use decisions, rather than from population-level conservation concerns.

Human–bear conflict in agricultural and peri-urban landscapes is often driven by attractants associated with land use and management practices. While the proposal has been framed primarily as an agricultural issue, its implications extend beyond crop protection. From a conservation perspective, wildlife management should prioritize preventative, non-lethal approaches that reduce conflict at its source and address the underlying drivers of human–wildlife interactions.

BC Nature’s concerns are not rooted in opposition to wildlife management per se, nor in a claim that black bear populations are at risk. Rather, we are concerned about the broader conservation and governance implications of relying on lethal control of public wildlife resources to address private agricultural impacts, particularly in complex, human-dominated landscapes. Wildlife in British Columbia is a public resource, and management decisions should prioritize long-term conservation outcomes and responsible stewardship over short-term or localized solutions.

We are also concerned about the proposed timing and location of this hunt. An August season coincides with an important biological period when bears intensively forage to build fat reserves for winter. In addition, the Lower Mainland’s dense mix of agricultural, urban, and recreational land use raises practical considerations related to enforcement, public safety, and unintended management consequences that merit careful evaluation.

Effective tools are available to reduce conflict without expanding lethal harvests. BC Nature therefore encourages the Province to consider alternative approaches, including:

- Increased investment in non-lethal conflict prevention measures such as electric fencing, crop protection infrastructure, and attractant management programs;
- Improved support and incentives for agricultural producers to implement coexistence strategies that reduce conflict at its source;

- Use of current, region-specific population data, clearly articulated management objectives, and transparent biological rationale to guide wildlife management decisions.

These approaches are more consistent with evidence-based conservation and responsible stewardship of public wildlife resources. Expanding lethal harvest opportunities to offset private agricultural impacts in complex, human-dominated landscapes risks setting a precedent that undermines the long-term coexistence strategies needed in these regions.

BC Nature respectfully requests a written response outlining the Province's rationale for this proposal and how conservation considerations, including non-lethal conflict prevention and long-term coexistence strategies, have been evaluated. This information would allow BC Nature to accurately inform our member organizations and the broader public about the basis for this decision.

We respectfully request that the Province reconsider this proposal and engage with conservation organizations, Indigenous Nations, agricultural communities, and the public to develop solutions that support both agricultural resilience and long-term conservation objectives. BC Nature would welcome the opportunity to participate in further dialogue on this issue.

Yours in Nature,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Flood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy Flood, PhD.,  
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