

Wilson 5 Foundation pledges \$100 Million to preserve and protect British Columbia's natural spaces

The donation marks the largest private donation in Canadian conservation history, aimed at protecting threatened ecosystems and safeguarding globally important biodiversity.

VANCOUVER, BC, Sept. 15, 2022 – The largest private donation in Canadian conservation history has been announced by the BC Parks Foundation and the philanthropic organization, Wilson 5 Foundation. The gift of \$100 Million from the private foundation started by Chip and Summer Wilson of Vancouver, B.C. will directly contribute to the protection and enjoyment of British Columbia's globally significant natural spaces and help advance Canada's efforts to reach its international commitment to protect 25% of land and sea by 2025.

“It's our hope that this gift will mark a major step change in BC's efforts to protect its incredible natural wealth,” **said Chip Wilson, founder of lululemon athletica.** “This donation supports our family's charitable focus and we hope that it will inspire additional donations from British Columbians and friends from around the world to the BC Parks Foundation, joining them in pursuit to ensure that BC has the greatest parks system on earth.”

The [BC Parks Foundation](#), started in 2018 with a mission to enhance and expand BC's world class parks system. It has already protected 15 beautiful places, inspired millions of observations of nature, and launched a national park prescription program with medical associations. All its work has been done through a crowdsourcing approach that has grown exponentially each year.

“The level of support we have received from all sectors of society has been incredible” said **Andy Day, CEO of the BC Parks Foundation.** “It has made it possible for us to do really big things. Now, with this generous gift from the Wilsons, we have the ability to go even higher, and inspire the world.”

The commitment from the Wilson 5 Foundation is a matching challenge to

governments, philanthropists, businesses, and other British Columbians. It coincides with the BC Parks Foundation's launch of [25x25](#), a multi-year campaign to protect 25% of land and waters, in partnership with indigenous people. The campaign will also inspire all British Columbians to help collect 25 million observations of life, enjoy 25 parks or outdoor activities responsibly and safely, and spend a minimum of 2.5 hours a week outside, getting healthy by nature.

"These are very ambitious targets. But around the world, this is a critical decade to take action on climate change and biodiversity loss," said Day. "It's also critical to increase responsible and safe enjoyment of nature and improve mental and physical health through connection with nature. The 25x25 campaign will be transformative in our country's — and the world's — future, as we aim to lead the world with the way we tackle these challenges."

The Foundation is wasting no time in putting the Wilson gift to work, joining with others in preserving and protecting three ecosystems:

- **Falling Creek Sanctuary (528 acres)**, at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Northeast BC., in Saulteau, West Moberley and McLeod First Nations territories, the area is particularly important as an overwintering habitat for moose, caribou, deer, and other ungulates coming down from the nearby mountains. It also has big-treed old growth forests on and surrounding the property and is zoned industrial with multiple offers for gravel extraction operations.
- **Teit's Sanctuary (200 acres)**, located beside Spences Bridge, at the confluence of the Thompson and Nicola rivers in Nlaka'pamux First Nation territory, it is pristine grassland habitat for species like Bighorn Sheep, who have faced steep declines in recent years due to disease from domestic sheep and habitat loss. James Teit, a famous ethnographer, lived and worked in the area.
- **Bourguiba Springs (41 acres)**, situated within BC's hottest and driest biogeoclimatic zone, is a well-known national biodiversity hotspot, however there are relatively few protected areas. The property and surrounding lands are historically important for supporting the South Okanagan herd of bighorn sheep, as well as being the habitat for seven

federally listed species-at-risk.

“We appreciate seeing land protected from industrial development to preserve wildlife corridors, support an ecological balance, and facilitate the meaningful exercise of our treaty rights,” said **Chief Justin Napoleon, Saulneau First Nations.**

Day added that several other announcements will be made in the coming weeks. Moreover, he emphasized it is fitting that British Columbia show leadership, because of its global value and importance. “We have the largest intact temperate rainforests in the world, and some of the richest biodiversity in the world’s temperate zone. From the depths of the Pacific Ocean to the height of the Rocky Mountains, BC has it all. But we can’t take it for granted. We have to protect it now, so we can enjoy it forever.”

About the Wilson 5 Foundation

Our goal is to make a lasting contribution to Vancouver and Southwestern British Columbia by supporting land conservancy, parks, and public art to encourage recreation and movement.

Learn more at www.wilson5foundation.org.

About BC Parks Foundation

The BC Parks Foundation is an independent registered charitable foundation with a mission to enhance and expand BC's world-class parks system in a spirit of gratitude and celebration. Learn more at BCParksFoundation.ca

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