

NATURE

CANADA PROGRAM

Quarterly Update • Summer



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From our Director

The story we tell about nature is changing—and so is the future we're building together.

For decades, the dominant narrative claimed that nature conservation and economic growth were opposing forces. That prosperity demanded trade-offs. But that story is unraveling. Today, we know that nature is not a liability; it's a cornerstone of our future—the foundation of healthy communities, resilient economies and sustainable growth.

Our plan, which builds on our solid foundation of partnership and impact, calls for bold, collaborative action over the next five years. We'll unite governments, communities and businesses to deliver solutions none of them can achieve alone. Our approach also commits us to learning from our progress and evolving our strategies for the greatest impact.

The challenges are complex, but the solutions are within reach—if we act together. Every partnership, every hectare conserved and every policy shaped is building towards a future for nature and people. Thank you for being part of this work.

Hadley Archer,
Executive Director



"Science shouldn't just explain problems—it should help us make better decisions," says Dr. Ronnie Drever. "Our research shows how planting trees in the right places for the right reasons can conserve nature while balancing climate, biodiversity and community values." This image captures an aerial view of forest meeting freshwater in Boreal Manitoba. © Andre Brandt

Scaling with science

When Dr. Ronnie Drever stepped off the stage at the Forests Canada Conference, a restoration analyst approached him and said, "We've planted 15 million trees in the areas your team identified." It was a quiet but powerful moment for our senior conservation scientist—proof that the research we helped lead was in the hands of practitioners shaping Canada's landscape.

This journey began with the Natural Climate Solutions for Canada study led by our team and published in 2021, which revealed a surprising insight: Trees take a long time to grow, but they are the single most impactful nature-based climate solution over the long term. While tree planting has been a critical tool for conservation, we noticed that there wasn't much information about the best places to plant trees in Canada. Recognizing a gap in strategic guidance, we stepped in.

We convened scientists, policymakers and restoration experts to ask a critical question: Where should trees be planted to deliver the greatest climate, biodiversity and community benefits?

The result was a groundbreaking analysis published this year in *One Earth* journal. Our research shows how planting trees in the right places for the right reasons on historically forested lands can ensure the full range of long-term benefits for communities and ecosystems. The research was leveraged into an interactive online tool that helps decision-makers identify the best places to plant trees based on project goals—such as fast-growing sites in Ontario that support at-risk species and offer lower climate mitigation costs.

[Learn more](#)



Ecosystems with high biodiversity are incredibly effective at drawing carbon from the atmosphere, combatting drought, filtering water and growing the foods that nourish us and the materials we use to house and clothe ourselves—all while stimulating our psyches and animating our cultures. This image captures a bee collecting pollen from a black-eyed susan flower. © Laura Ingram/TNC Photo Contest 2022

From family values to global impact: Cathy Rustermier's conservation journey

A long-time donor to the Canada Program, Cathy Rustermier brings an intergenerational love of nature and a global perspective to her giving. Here, she shares the values that guide her philanthropy.

What has inspired your giving?

My commitment to conservation and philanthropy is deeply rooted in both my upbringing and personal experiences. From a young age, I was surrounded by role models—my parents and grandparents—who instilled in me a love for nature and a sense of responsibility to give back. Spending time outdoors was a family value, and that connection to the earth has always been central to my life.

As I grew older, my interest in conservation expanded through board experiences with The Nature Conservancy's Canada and Caribbean programs. I was especially drawn to international work and the opportunity to engage with diverse cultures and Indigenous communities. Learning about Indigenous ways of life deepened my appreciation for nature and the interconnectedness of all living things.

What motivates your environmental giving today?

I feel a great sense of urgency and empathy for nature. We need to move the pendulum. If people can pull together, the large transformational projects become real. Giving to opportunities that can make a real difference is my motivation.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to learn about or support the environment?

I believe everyone should start with an emotional connection to the Earth. Ask yourself: What moves you? What does your heart tell you about a place or an issue? That personal connection is the foundation for meaningful environmental action.

Good environmentalism goes hand in hand with connection. You can't care for the Earth in isolation; we need relationships, community and an understanding of how our actions fit into the bigger picture. Find what moves you and support organizations that align with your values.

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Your support makes a difference

Are you looking to make a tax-deductible donation? A gift to the Canada Program is an investment in both local and global innovation. You can be part of a powerful movement for change that brings Canadian leadership and expertise to the biggest challenges facing our planet.

"Like any good investor, we thought about the talent we were giving our money to. We were so impressed by the team, and we trusted that the Canada Program would put it to the best possible use."

—Arlin Hackman and Judith Wright
Legacy Club Members

Our history in Canada

Over the past 40 years, the Canada Program has helped set the stage for remarkable conservation gains across Canada—including the landmark Great Bear Rainforest agreement which protected and sustainably managed 19 million acres and the establishment of the 6.5-million-acre Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area. Along with Nature United, our Canadian affiliate, we work in partnership with Indigenous and local communities, governments and businesses to create change. We are part of an ambitious global effort to change the trajectory of our future by 2030.