



# The Alberta Fish & Game Association

6924 – 104 Street Edmonton, AB T6H 2L7

Phone: (780) 437-2342 Fax: (780) 438-6872

email: [office@afga.org](mailto:office@afga.org) Website: [www.afga.org](http://www.afga.org)

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May 5, 2014

The Honourable Robin Campbell  
Environment and Sustainable Resource Development Minister  
323 Legislature Building  
10800-97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

Dear Robin:

On behalf of the more than 24,000 members of the Alberta Fish and Game Association, I am writing to reiterate our support for the introduction of a Sandhill crane hunting season in Alberta. Resolutions to this effect have been passed multiple times by our membership, and regulated recreational hunting of Sandhill cranes is supported by sound scientific facts.

Sandhill cranes are hunted in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and virtually every US state where the Mid-continent population exists. This population has increased 60 % over the last ten years and is 20 % above the established upper population targets. As it is anticipated that a Hunting season in Alberta would contribute to less than 1% of the overall harvest, it would not have any negative effect on the population, and it would provide Albertans with the same opportunity to manage crop depredation issues, an additional opportunity for outdoor recreation, and economic benefits that exist in other jurisdictions.

As they are primarily herbivorous, Sandhill cranes not only contribute to agricultural crop depredation, they are reported to provide excellent table fare by harvesters in adjacent jurisdictions where they are hunted. Further, as stated in the Wildlife Act, Revised statutes of Alberta 2000 Section 41(1) and in the Alberta Hunting regulations summary, it is unlawful to abandon, destroy, or allow the edible flesh of and game bird to become unfit for human consumption. Concerns that harvested Sandhill cranes will not be used for human consumption are not based on fact.

The concern expressed by some that mistaken identity could lead to the loss of endangered Whooping Cranes is also not supported by fact. The majority of Whooping Cranes migrate through Saskatchewan, and in the 60 years that Saskatchewan has held a hunting season for Sandhill cranes, there are no documented cases of this happening.

Hunting is part of the modern day game management system. It is a tool that both your people and the Canadian Wildlife Service have said will have no negative impact on the population and in fact will have a positive impact on the overall population with a more stable population level.

We respectfully request that your ministry continues with the implementation process for a Sandhill crane hunting season in Alberta.

Sincerely,



Gordon Poirier  
President, Alberta Fish and Game Association

CC

AFGA Executive

Jason Caswell  
Provincial Game Bird Specialist