



FUR INSTITUTE OF CANADA  
INSTITUT DE LA FOURRURE  
DU CANADA

October 21, 2024

Raymond St. Martin

Committee Clerk

Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry

Senate of Canada

Via email: [agfo@sen.parl.gc.ca](mailto:agfo@sen.parl.gc.ca)

RE : AGFO study on impacts of wildfires

To whom it may concern,

Please consider this letter a request to appear as a witness in the study currently undertaken by the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry on the growing issue of wildfires in Canada and the consequential effects that wildfires have on forestry and agriculture industries, as well as rural and Indigenous communities, throughout the country.



The Fur Institute of Canada (FIC), created in 1983 by Canada's Wildlife Ministers, is the national voice for trappers, sealers, and the broader fur sector. Responsible for Canada's trap testing and certification program in accordance with the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards, the FIC advocates for a sustainable, well-managed fur sector and furbearer conservation on behalf of Canada's 50,000 trappers.

The FIC's work supports not only the commercial fur trade, but wildlife research, predator management, human-wildlife conflict work and livestock protection. The Institute is also home to the Seals & Sealing Network, a national collaboration of sealing-involved businesses, Indigenous organizations and harvester groups.

Canada's trapping industry, and the fur trade it supplies, though not strictly an agricultural or forestry industry, are important parts of Canada's forest economy. Trapping plays not only an economic role but is also an essential part of culture and heritage for many rural and Indigenous communities across Canada. Trappers also play a pivotal role in supporting important scientific research and supporting recovery of endangered species like caribou.

Losses associated with wildfire for trappers can be twofold: Not only can fires impact or displace furbearers as their habitat is destroyed by wildfires, but important infrastructure such as trappers' cabins can be destroyed as well. The impacts of climate change are being acutely felt by trappers throughout the year, as wildfires threaten their trap lines through the summer and fall, while changing and unpredictable ice conditions in the winter and spring can make it difficult and dangerous to access their trap lines during the winter.



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I believe that the members of the AGFO Committee would benefit from understanding this broader suite of impacts brought by wildfires in addition to their impacts on forestry and agriculture. This would allow the Committee to make more comprehensive recommendations on forest, wildlife and fire management.

Should there be no opportunity to appear as a witness, the Fur Institute of Canada intends to submit a written brief to the Committee.

Doug Chiasson  
Executive Director  
Fur Institute of Canada