

# Protecting biodiversity

Bell recognizes that the first step to protecting the environment and at-risk species is to be vigilant when deploying and maintaining our networks. Accordingly, we conduct environmental assessments for our network projects, and apply mitigation measures to minimize the potential impact on natural habitats and to obtain regulatory approvals, especially when working in sensitive areas. Bell strictly adheres to all conditions of regulatory approvals when such approvals are required.

We have developed an internal program for evaluating and minimizing the impact that network projects may have on the environment. The evaluation process is intended mainly for project managers and applies to all project steps, including planning, design, construction, maintenance and decommissioning. For example, we strive to avoid the use of treated wood poles in sensitive areas and use cedar poles instead. Cedar is a natural rot-resistant alternative that has none of the chemicals associated with treated wood, which can leach from our poles into environmentally sensitive areas over time. We also strive to avoid interfering with birds and their habitats during nesting season, opting to reschedule our work when possible (if a nest is located on our infrastructure) or to safely relocate them with the assistance of the appropriate governmental bodies and organizations.

Bell also protects biodiversity through property landscaping management. We developed measures to minimize the use of products that have adverse effects on natural habitats and at-risk species.

GRI 304

SDG 15

## Did you know?

Only 2% of our network projects have the potential to negatively impact wildlife and natural habitats.

Here are some examples of how we manage these impacts:

When pests affect operations, we use mechanical, physical, and biological control methods before resorting to pesticides. We use higher-impact pesticides when reduced-risk pesticides have failed, and only with the evaluation by and permission from the Corporate responsibility and environment governance team

When small animals chew through our cables, we use non-harmful mechanical and physical methods to discourage them

When birds nest in areas targeted for construction, we rearrange work schedules accordingly as much as reasonably possible



## Tree management

Biodiversity conservation is a primary way to protect the integrity of our waters, soils and climate. Reducing the potential for resource scarcity is essential to our business continuity. We therefore take steps to minimize tree trimming, cutting and clearing during network deployment, while maintaining network integrity. In the interest of biodiversity protection, employees are educated through our tree management framework about when and how they can prune trees and handle wood residues.

## Pest management

The outdoor application of pesticides on Bell's properties is another environmental concern that may present a risk to biodiversity and human health. However, the nature of our business sometimes requires that we control the proliferation of vegetation, insects and small animals so that they do not, for example, restrict access to telecommunication cables. This is also done as a safety precaution. To address these issues, Bell's pest management framework establishes guidelines for indoor and outdoor pest control, in compliance with applicable legislation and best practices. The use of reduced-risk pesticides may also cause environmental impacts and pose risks to human health. Therefore, Bell generally requires that the use of physical and mechanical methods to control the spread (such as pruning and clearing) be attempted before any other method can be used. We permit the use of pesticides in extenuating circumstances and/or only once these other methods have proven to be unsuccessful.

*To the extent this information sheet contains forward-looking statements including, without limitation, outlooks, plans, objectives, strategic priorities, commitments, undertakings and other statements that do not refer to historical facts, these statements are not guarantees of future performance or events, and we caution you against relying on any of these forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are subject to inherent risks and uncertainties and are based on assumptions that give rise to the possibility that actual results or events could differ materially from our expectations expressed in, or implied by, such forward-looking statements. Refer to BCE Inc.'s most recent annual management's discussion and analysis (MD&A), as updated in BCE Inc.'s subsequent quarterly MD&As, for further information on such risks, uncertainties and assumptions. BCE Inc.'s MD&As are available on its website at [bce.ca](http://bce.ca), on SEDAR at [sedar.com](http://sedar.com) and on EDGAR at [sec.gov](http://sec.gov).*