

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 network. Accordingly, we conduct environmental assessments for our network projects and apply mitigation measures to minimize 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 instance, we avoid the use of treated wood poles in sensitive areas, using 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 these environmentally sensitive areas over time.

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.

Tree management

Biodiversity conservation is a primary way to protect the integrity of our waters, soils, and climate, and 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 cut or prune trees and handle wood residues.

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

Pest management

The outdoor application of pesticides on the company'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 restrict access to telecommunication cables, for instance, and for safety. 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. Since the use of reduced-risk pesticides may also cause environmental impacts and pose risks to human health, Bell generally requires that the use of physical and mechanical methods, such as pruning and clearing, to control the spread be attempted before any other method can be used. We permit the use of pesticides in extenuating circumstance and/or only once these other methods have proved to be unsuccessful.

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