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OF CANADIAN  
MUNICIPALITIES

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July 17, 2018

The Honourable Catherine McKenna, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister:

On behalf of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), thank you once again for your ongoing and productive partnership with local governments. I look forward to continuing to work closely with you and your officials on our shared federal-municipal priorities this year.

Each year at FCM's March and September Board meetings, and again at our Annual Conference in June, FCM's Board of Directors considers resolutions submitted by its membership. Resolutions adopted by FCM's Board of Directors help inform FCM's policy and advocacy priorities with the Government of Canada. Adopted resolutions represent municipal issues of national significance that fall within federal jurisdiction and therefore require a strong federal partner to help find a solution. The attached resolution, **Municipal Partnership on Conservation Agreements under the Species at Risk Act**, was adopted by FCM's membership at its 2018 Annual Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) the federal government has the ability – through Sections 12 and 13 of the Act – to enter into conservation agreements with local governments to benefit and enhance the survival of threatened species. However, this option is currently being underutilized. Municipalities are environmental leaders who understand the need to balance economic activity and environmental protection as complementary priorities. As the order of government closest to its citizens, and with responsibility for land-use planning, provision of drinking water and environmental management, municipalities have local knowledge that can contribute positively to the recovery of threatened species, while balancing the local needs for economic development.

In support of the attached resolution, FCM urges the federal government to prioritize partnerships with municipalities through conservation agreements under SARA and, additionally, to take measures in the near-term to ensure that municipalities are meaningfully consulted in the development of species recovery plans, including range plans for woodland caribou in Alberta.

FCM looks forward to working with you and your government to ensure the protection of critical habitats for threatened species through development of deeper partnerships with municipalities. If you or your staff have any questions, please feel free to contact Matt Gemmel, Acting Manager, Policy and Research at [mgemmel@fcm.ca](mailto:mgemmel@fcm.ca) or 613-907-6390.

Yours sincerely,

Vicki-May Hamm  
Mairesse, Ville de Magog  
FCM President

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May 3, 2018

**EISD-2018-03- Municipal Partnership on Conservation Agreements under the Species at Risk Act**

**WHEREAS**, The purpose of the federal Species at Risk Act, known as SARA, is to prevent wildlife species in Canada from disappearing, to provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are extirpated, endangered, or threatened, as a result of human activity, and to manage species of special concern to prevent them from becoming endangered or threatened; and

**WHEREAS**, Woodland Boreal Caribou are listed as *Threatened* under the federal Species at Risk Act, located in 51 ranges across seven provinces and two territories, covering over 233 million hectares of land; and

**WHEREAS**, The “*Federal Action Plan for the Woodland Caribou, Boreal Population, in Canada, 2018: Federal actions*” lists only Provincial and Territorial orders of government as partners in exploring conservation agreements with; and

**WHEREAS**, Federal and provincial Acts of Parliament, such as the SARA, include decision-making authority that can and has superseded municipal authority, which has enabled the protection of lands directly impacting municipal operations without meaningful consultation with those municipal partners; and

**WHEREAS**, It is anticipated that, final Caribou Range Plans for some local caribou populations across Canada, will be implemented later this year, with potential for new stringent regulations and permanent land-use designation changes; and

**WHEREAS**, Lands protected under conservation areas, Emergency Safety Net Orders or Emergency Protection Orders under the SARA have the potential to remove or hinder growth and development within municipal economic areas; and

**WHEREAS**, Municipalities are well-positioned to assist other levels of government to achieve at-risk species’ recovery objectives under sections 11 and 13 of SARA; Therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) urge the Government of Canada to endorse municipal involvement as recognized partners in the exploration of conservation agreements under sections 11 and 13 of the Species at Risk Act; and be it Further

**RESOLVED**, That FCM urge the Government of Canada to take measures in the near-term to ensure that local governments are meaningfully consulted in recovery plans required under SARA, including Range Plans for Woodland Caribou in Alberta; and be it Further

**RESOLVED**, That FCM urge the Government of Canada to recognize that the objective of the Species at Risk Act is to ensure the survival and recovery of at-risk species’ populations, rather than establishing the permanent protection of lands considered to be at-risk species’ critical habitat.

*Town of High Level, AB  
Mackenzie County, AB  
County of Northern Lights, AB  
Clear Hills County, AB  
Town of Rainbow Lake, AB  
Town of Manning, AB*

**2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE DECISION: Category “A”: RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

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