

TITLE: Municipal Partnership on Conservation Agreements under the Species at Risk Act

PREAMBLE: Municipalities are Canada's ground-level, grassroots order of government; we are the closest governing level to the people and the communities of this nation. We play an integral role in contributing towards the protection of the environmental, economic and social values of our regions for the people, as well as supporting responsible growth, development and sustainable prosperity. Municipalities across Canada are uniquely well-positioned to assist all other levels of government in fulfilling national objectives at the local level, for the benefit of all Canadians.

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Federal and provincial Acts of Parliament, such as the SARA, include decision-making authority that can and has superseded municipal authority, which has enabled the protection of lands directly impacting municipal operations without meaningful consultation with those municipal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 the Federation of Canadian Municipalities urge the Government of Canada to take measures in the near-term to ensure that municipalities are meaningful partners in recovery plans required under the SARA, including Range Plans for Woodland Caribou; and be it Further

RESOLVED: That the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (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.