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Alberta Northwest Species at Risk Committee



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**RE: ECCC’s Progress Report on Unprotected Critical Habitat for the Woodland Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*), Boreal Population in Canada**

Northwest Species at Risk Committee (NWSAR), a partnership of five Northwest Alberta municipalities (including the Town of High Level, Clear Hills County, County of Northern Lights, Mackenzie County and the Town of Rainbow Lake) established an ad-hoc Committee in late 2016, to collaboratively seek solutions for the recovery of five Boreal Caribou populations across Northwest Alberta. NWSAR’s work has involved extensive research, as well as public and stakeholder engagement, at local, regional, and national levels, to better understand the complexities and intent of management tools for Boreal Caribou survival and recovery. The Committee has been instrumental in encouraging municipal engagement with Federal and jurisdictional caribou recovery planning across Canada. NWSAR has developed multiple resolutions for Provincial and Federal municipal associations; advocating for municipal and local involvement in Boreal Caribou recovery planning, and for Provincial Regional Land-use planning to commence in Northwest Alberta, which holistically plans for the environmental, economic and social needs of the region. In 2017, NWSAR released a “Recommendations Report” for northwestern Boreal Caribou recovery, which was developed using input from local communities and other stakeholders during engagement. The three rural municipalities have also implemented predator management programs within their respective jurisdictional boundaries, in an effort to reduce predation levels on Boreal Caribou. This year, NWSAR has applied for funding to conduct an extensive research project with the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute (ABMI) and several local volunteers. The research project includes verifying habitat disturbance levels, developing vegetation inventories, estimating population densities for several focal species, and using spatial data with local land-user input to recommend candidate areas for habitat restoration, in two Northwest Boreal Caribou ranges.