

AR 95581

September 24, 2018

Ms. Hayley Gavin  
Regional Land Use and Environmental Project Manager  
Town of High Level  
[hgavin@highlevel.ca](mailto:hgavin@highlevel.ca)

Dear Ms. Gavin:

Thank you for your email of August 31, 2018, regarding the pilot project the Northwest Species at Risk (NWSAR) Committee is undertaking in Northwest Alberta. I am pleased to respond on behalf of the department.

Alberta remains committed to stabilizing, recovering and ultimately achieving naturally sustaining caribou populations. The caribou range plans are working documents that seek to find a balance that supports meeting federal requirements under the *Species at Risk Act* and addressing the social and economic futures of communities like High Level.

The Government of Alberta appreciates your interest in woodland caribou recovery as well as other species at risk. The topics identified in the project proposal are also of interest to Alberta, and work is currently underway to address these items.

- Population monitoring: Alberta has developed and implemented world class monitoring programs, in particular, for Woodland Caribou and Grizzly Bears.
- Vegetation inventory/monitoring: Alberta is moving forward on inventory projects through partnerships with the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA). To complete the inventory and tracking of changes over time for 258,000 kilometers of seismic line requires a consistent and robust process, along with a tracking system to make it cost-effective at a provincial scale. Keeping the inventory housed within a consistent single entity will enable the Government of Alberta to support prioritization and track and report on progress quickly and efficiently.

The effort demonstrated in the NWSAR proposal, to collect and leverage resources from a variety of sources, is similar to the approach being used by the Government of Alberta and FRIAA. Discussions are well underway with industry in the Northwest region to share existing data and resources, as well as fund and complete upcoming works and data acquisition. Funding for the completion of caribou habitat-related inventories is being directed through FRIAA and population monitoring is currently being managed directly by Alberta Environment and Parks.

The 2007 LiDAR data you have requested permissions for is owned by Agriculture and Forestry. Alberta Environment and Parks would be pleased to facilitate a conversation between NWSAR and Agriculture and Forestry related to acquiring that data.

To ensure efficient expenditures, we believe it is important to coordinate with local forestry companies as well as Government of Alberta initiatives. Additionally, if NWSAR would like to actively contribute to the monitoring of wildlife and vegetation; funding contributions can be made by contacting FRIAA directly. You may also contact George Duffy, Caribou Range Planning Lead, by email at: [George.Duffy@gov.ab.ca](mailto:George.Duffy@gov.ab.ca).

Thank you again for your interest in working with both the federal and provincial government to develop caribou range plans that work towards caribou conservation and recovery, while supporting our communities and local economies.

Sincerely,



Ronda Goulden  
Assistant Deputy Minister

cc: Brian Makowecki  
Executive Director, Planning Branch

Craig Dockrill  
Director, Environment and Land Planning – North

George Duffy  
Caribou Range Planning Lead