

From: Peel, Darcy E FLNR:EX <Darcy.Peel@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 12, 2019 1:36 PM
To: Michelle Connolly
Cc: Minister, FLNR FLNR:EX
Subject: Caribou Recovery in BC - letter to Darcy Peel

Reference: 252105

Dear Michelle Connolly,

Thank you for your letter dated November 03, 2019 regarding the recovery of Southern Mountain Caribou (SMC) in British Columbia. I appreciate that you have taken the time and effort to reach out and express your concerns. I also note that you are clearly concerned for caribou in British Columbia.

Our approach to predator management is based on recent research, our goals for caribou recovery and the Federal Recovery Strategy for SMC. The Federal Recovery Strategy for SMC identifies three wolves per 1,000km² as a target density required to support caribou recovery. I would also highlight that we are only proposing to utilize this approach in places where we have identified the immediate need for emergency predator management in order to stop dramatic population declines. Each of these herd areas currently has wolf densities significantly higher than the objective described in Canada's recovery strategy.

Habitat protection is a key to supporting caribou recovery as you have noted, and we continue to apply habitat protection as part of our recovery efforts. Identifying the need for and expanding habitat protections will continue to be a part of our approach for caribou recovery. This work will be a part of the herd planning process for each individual herd and is currently underway for several herds. However, the habitat caribou occupy and are adjacent to have seen changes which have made them more favourable for moose, deer and elk and their accompanying predators. Some of this is due to industrial development but insect infestation and fires have also contributed to this issue. We are in a situation where without dramatic action to address predator density while habitat is restored or allowed to grow, we will not have caribou populations to discuss. Our consideration of an emergency predator reduction program is to ensure that caribou populations are maintained while habitat protections are developed, and herd planning processes are completed.

The Provincial Caribou Recovery Program aims to take a collaborative and transparent approach to caribou recovery. We appreciate the points you have raised on wolves and predator management and we will ensure that this is included in our consideration of this emergency predator management program.

Thank you for your thoughtful contribution to this conversation.

Sincerely,

Darcy Peel – Director – Caribou Recovery Program
Cell: 778-220-3449



Vision: *Conservation and recovery of British Columbia's caribou through excellence in resource stewardship.*

Mission: *To lead caribou recovery through a comprehensive, collaborative and accountable provincial program*