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Working together to conserve caribou:

Public engagement on caribou conservation agreements

March 21, 2019



Why caribou are important in B.C.

- Designated at-risk under federal Species at Risk Act
- Require large amounts of contiguous habitat
- Are vulnerable to predators (wolf, cougar)
- Are sensitive to human disturbance
- Occur in areas of high potential industrial development (timber, coal, shale gas)
- Have significant value to some First Nations (Treaty, cultural)



Recent history of caribou recovery

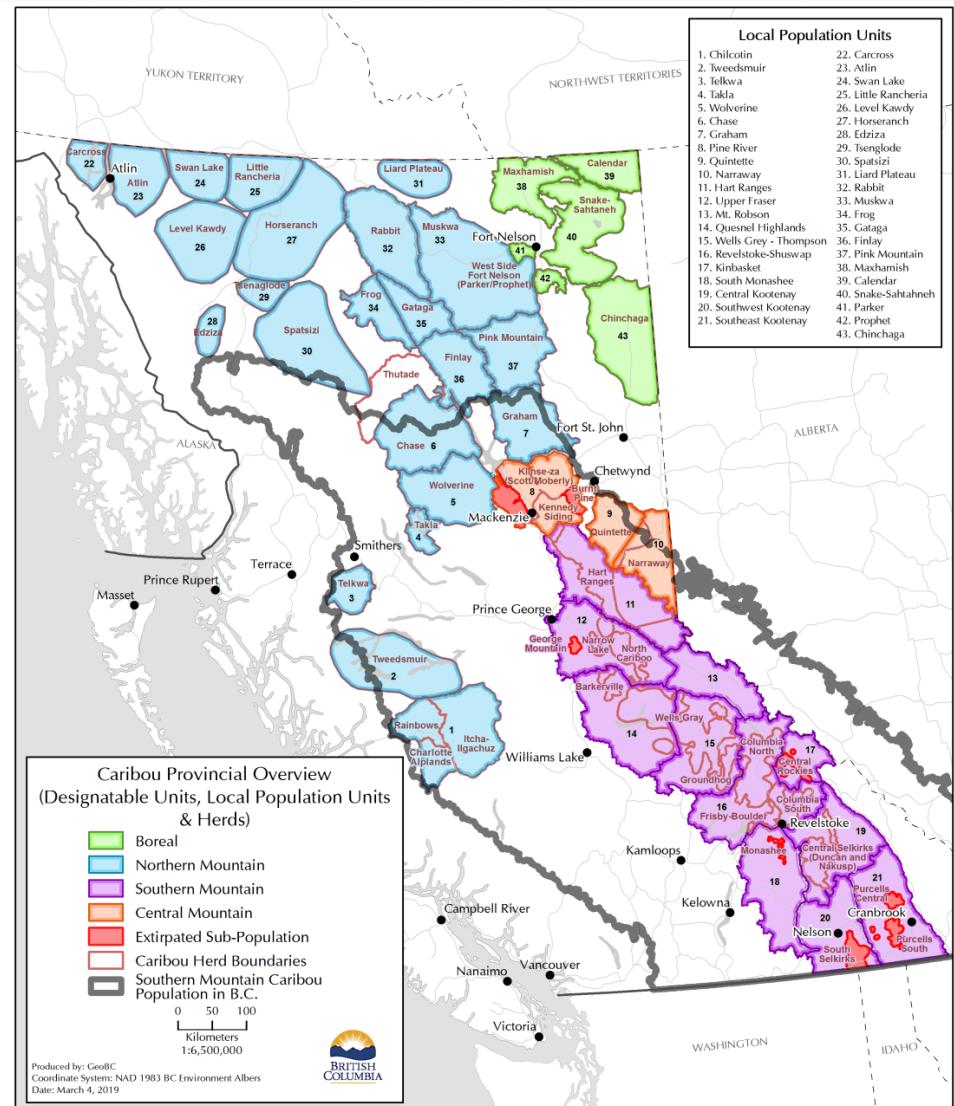
- 2012: Peace Northern Caribou Program to protect 80% high elevation habitat
- 2014: Federal Recovery Strategy mandates 100% high elevation habitat plus management in low elevation and matrix habitat
- Creation of Regional Coal Agreements and their associated protections
- 2017: SARA petitions (8 for S80; 6 for S61; 1 for S56; 1 for S34)
- 2017: BC commences negotiations for development of a S11 Conservation Agreement
- 2018: focused negotiations with West Moberly and Saulteau First Nations
- 2018: Federal determination of Imminent Threat to caribou recovery
- 2018: Federal Imminent Threat determination requires consideration of an Emergency Order by the Federal Cabinet



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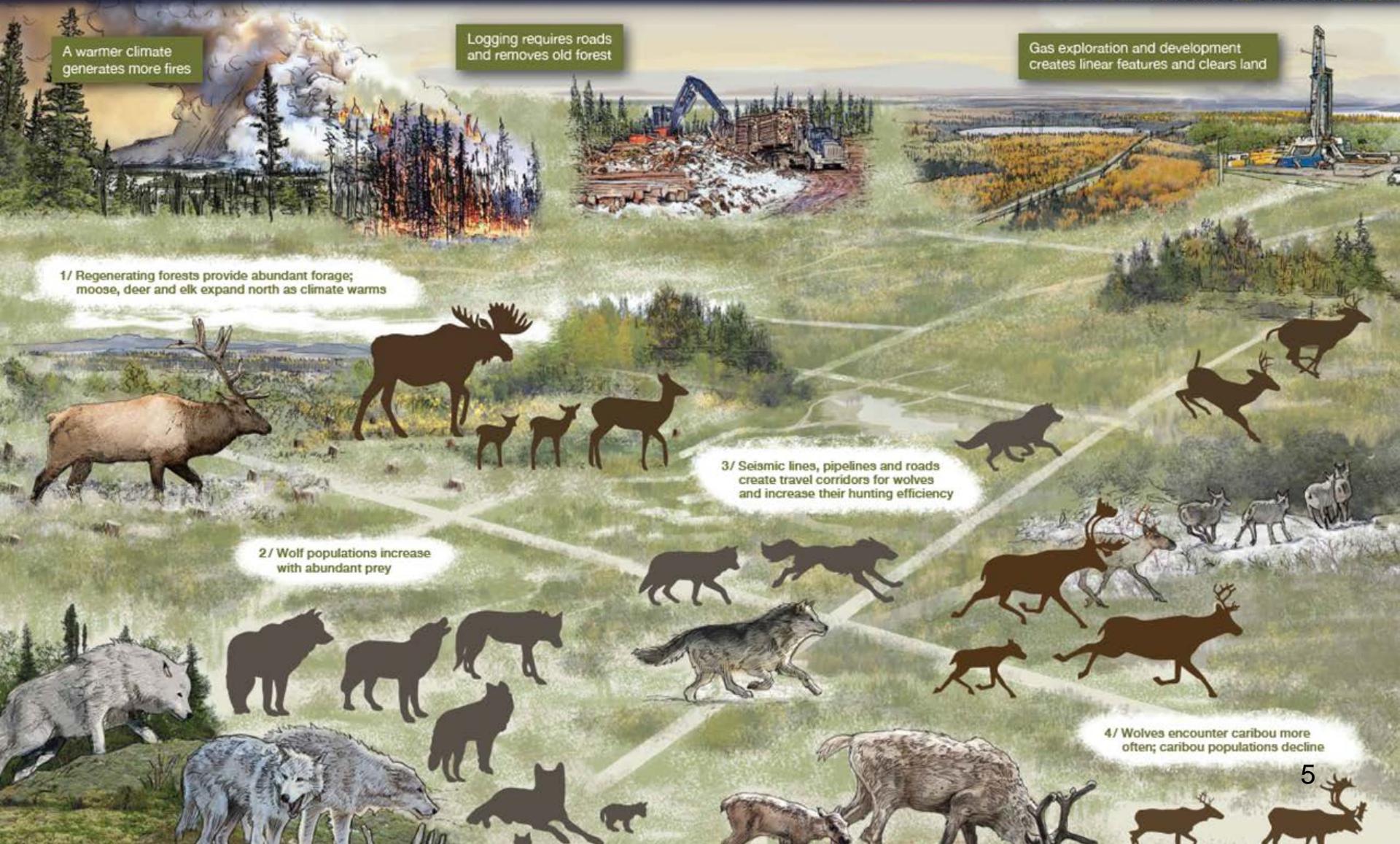


DU	Population	SARA
Northern (blue)	26 herds with a total of ~15,000 animals	Special Concern, a few herds Threatened
Boreal (green)	6 herds with ~700+ animals down from ~1500 in early 2000s	Threatened
Central (orange)	6 herds ~219 animals down from ~800 animals in the early 2000s	Threatened
Southern (purple)	15 herds with a total of ~1,200 animals down from ~2500 in the mid 90s	Threatened





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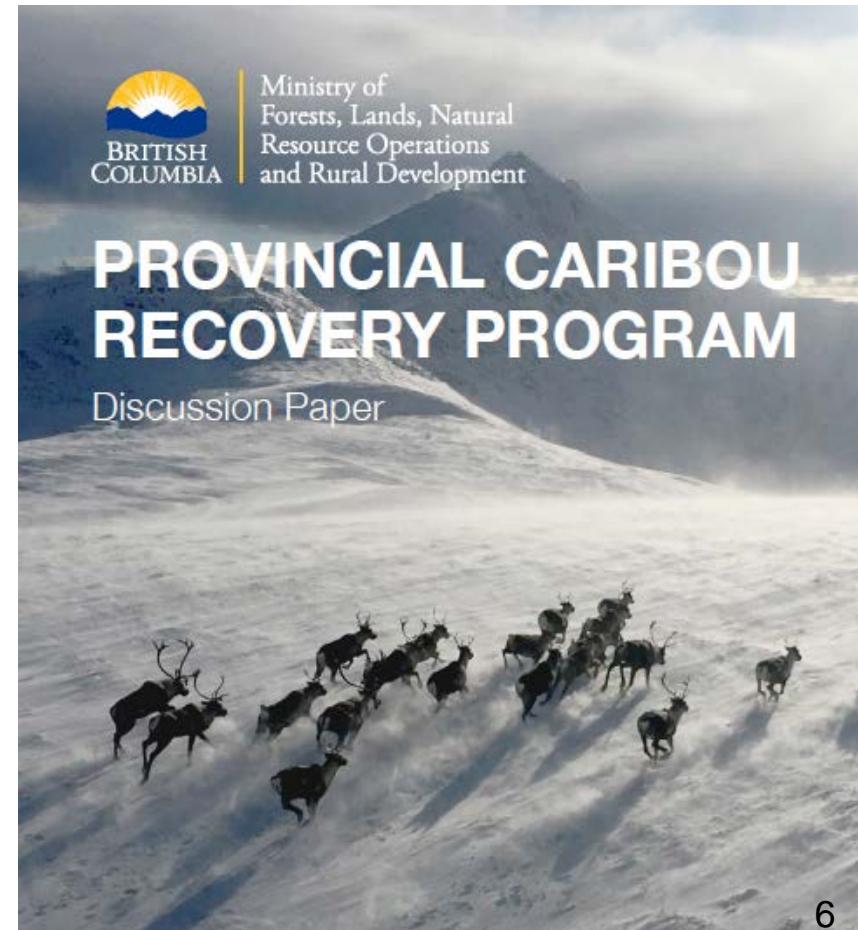


Provincial Caribou Recovery Program

- Made in B.C. approach that aligns B.C.'s work with the federal *Species at Risk Act* objectives

Goals & Principles

- Recover caribou populations in identified herds
- Provide certainty to industry
- Advance collaboration and reconciliation with Indigenous communities
- Collaboration with partners
- Actively engage with all interested parties and ensure transparency in decisions





Federal Species at Risk Act

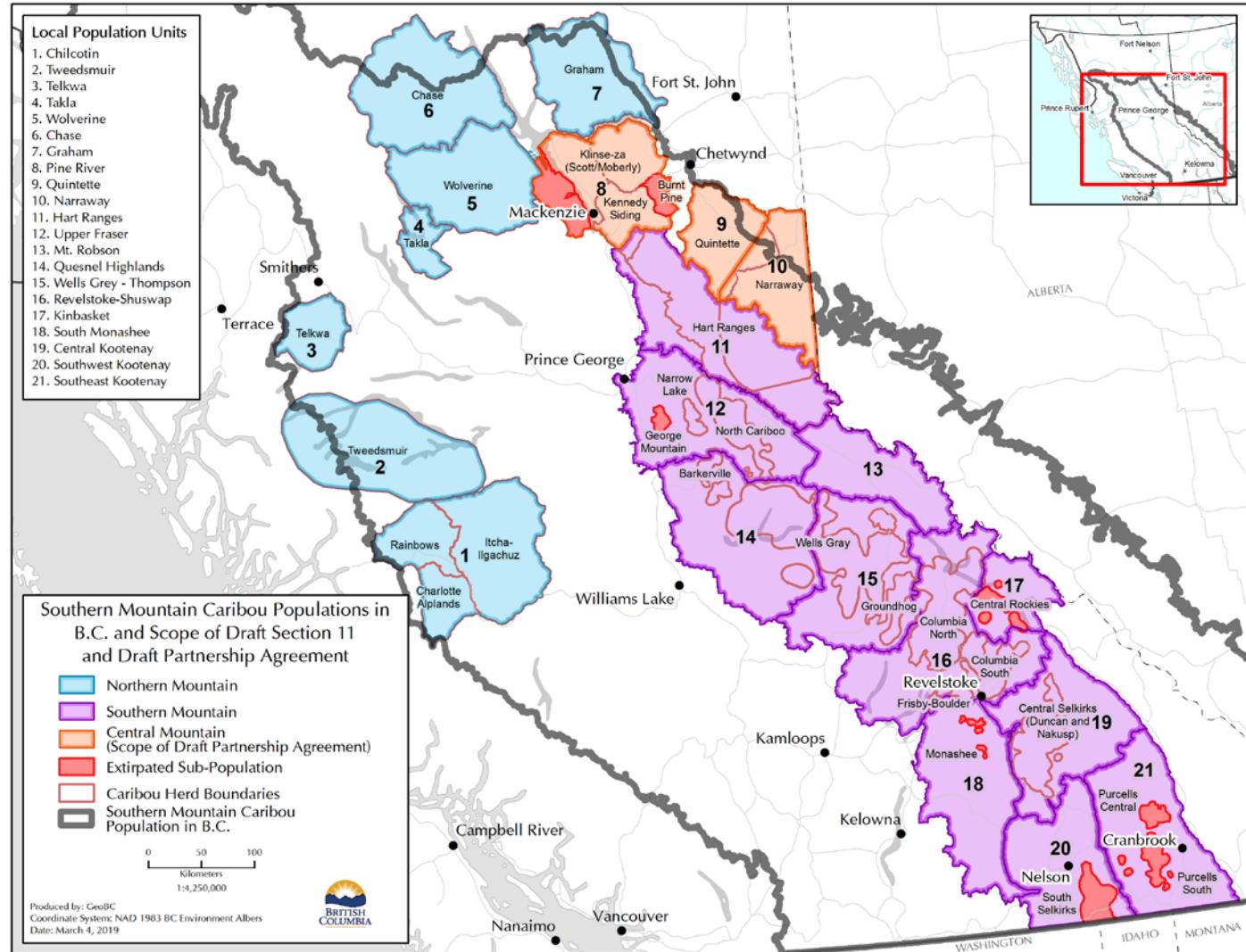
- Under SARA, Canada may intervene in land management through the use of an 'Emergency Order' when a species is determined to be facing imminent threats to its survival or recovery.
- Canada has received multiple public requests for 'Emergency Orders' (petitions) under SARA Section 80 related to caribou in BC.
- In May 2018, the Federal Minister concluded that Southern Mountain Caribou are facing imminent threats to their recovery. 10 local population units were noted as being of particular concern including 2 in the central group.
- Under SARA, Federal Minister must make a recommendation for an Emergency Order to the Federal Cabinet.
- Commitments to protection and recovery measures within Section 11 Agreements can be considered by Cabinet when deciding whether to make an Emergency Order.



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Section 11 Agreement All Southern Mountain Caribou Populations





Section 11 Conservation Agreement

- **Scope:** Southern Mountain Caribou Federal Recovery Strategy Area (green boundary on map)
- **Parties:** Environment Climate Change Canada and Province of British Columbia
- **Summary of commitments:** Outlines key principles and broad recovery actions that B.C. and Canada agree will advance recovery for southern mountain caribou populations
- **Benefits:**
 - Aligns B.C.'s Caribou Recovery Program Plan with federal objectives and expectations.
 - Positive, collaborative approach to caribou recovery.
 - Could reduce potential for a federal protection order that considers caribou habitat needs only and not communities.
 - Access federal funding.
- **Implications:** Agreement does not include prescribed protected areas. Development of herd plans through collaborative process with Indigenous peoples and stakeholders could identify habitat in need of protection or restoration.



Section 11 Conservation Agreement

Purpose & Goals

- Establish a framework for cooperation between Canada and BC and articulate immediate measures support caribou recovery

Overview

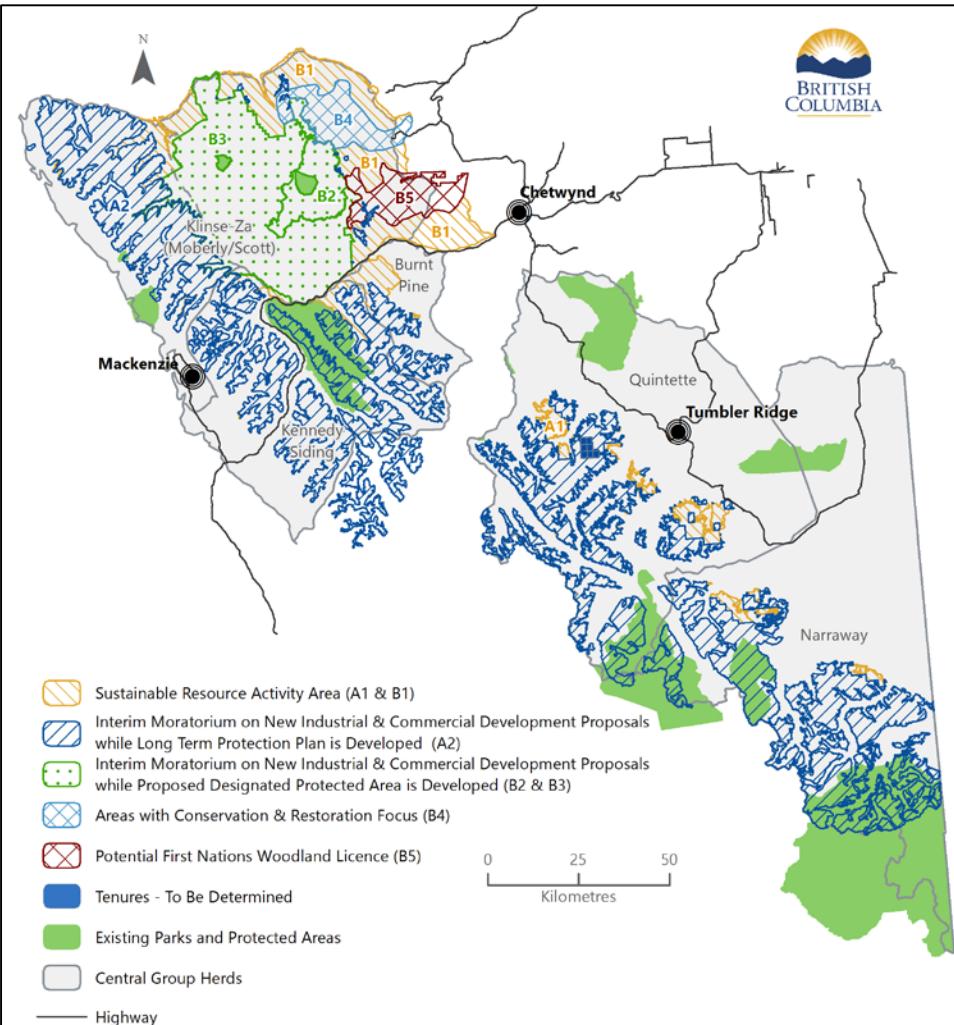
- Acknowledges BC's current work that is underway and builds a shared path forward
- Canada commits to support SMC recovery in BC via a 3 Year Funding Agreement
- Body of Agreement includes a description of principles and general commitments
- Annex 2 includes a list of current and planned measures that are to occur between now and 2020

Implementation, Monitoring & Reporting

- Canada and BC will develop, implement and annually update a Joint SMC Work Plan
- Canada (with support from BC) will produce an annual report that will be publicly available reporting on progress, effectiveness, and research findings



Partnership Agreement



- **Scope:** Pine, Narraway and Quintette populations.
- **Parties:** Canada, B.C., West Moberly & Saulteau First Nations.
- **Imperative:** Change resource practices in this area to ensure caribou recovery, minimize legal risk of a federal order, meet Indigenous and treaty rights, manage and minimize impacts to communities and forestry and mining stakeholders.

West Moberly & Saulteau First Nations Leadership in Caribou Recovery



Klinse-Za Maternal Pen



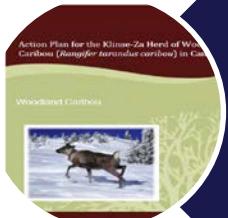
Twin Nations
Restoration



Ground Predator
Management



Twin Sisters Native
Plant Nursery



Habitat Mapping
(7 Herds Report) &
Planning (Klinse-Za
Recovery Plan)

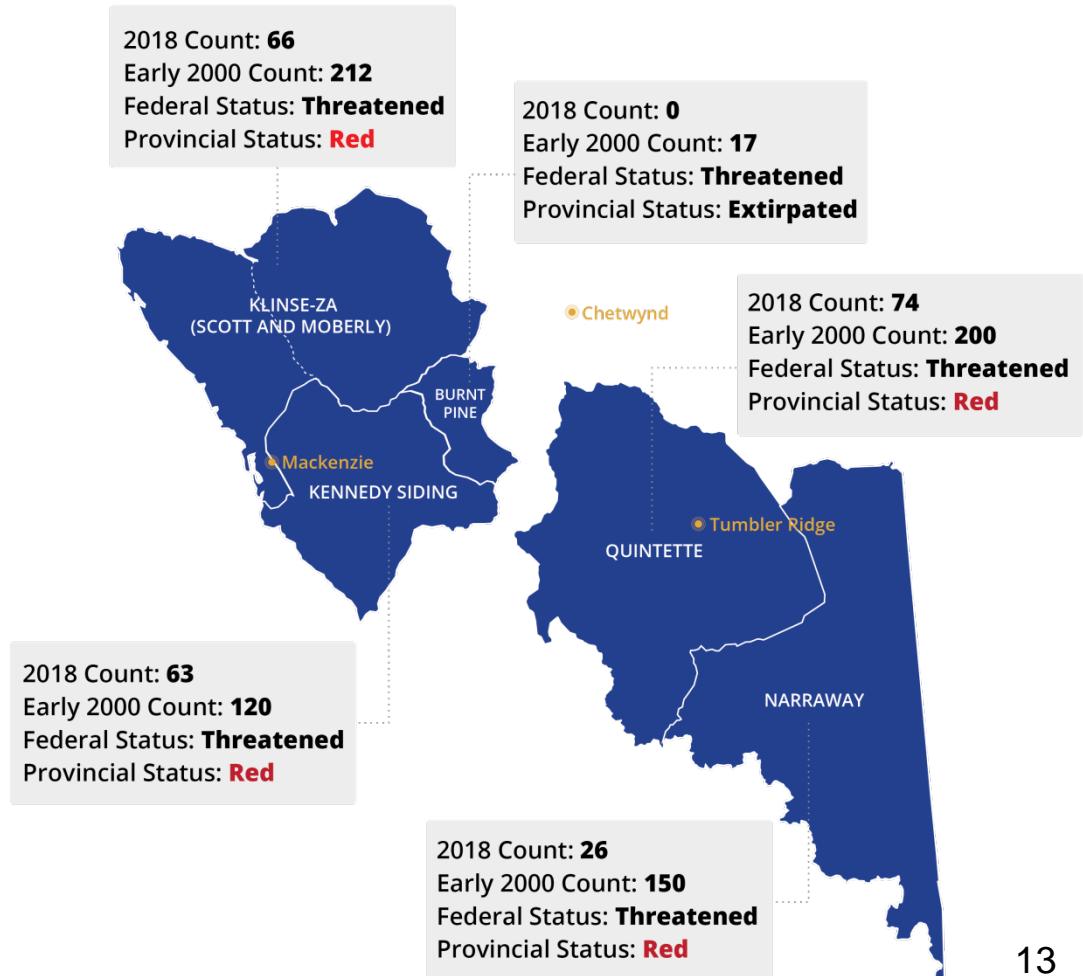


Moratorium on caribou
hunting since 1970s



Central Group Population Decline

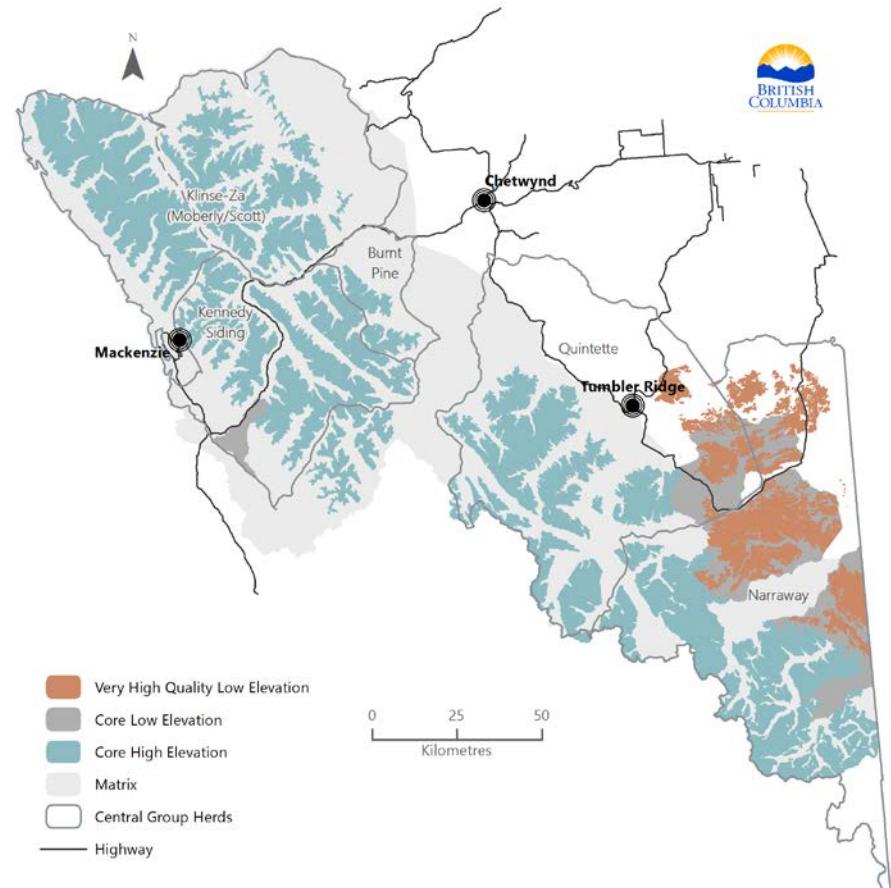
Population has declined from approximately 800 animals in the early 2000s to approximately 220 animals today.





Central Group Habitat

- High Elevation (light blue)
- Core Low Elevation (dark grey)
- Very High Quality Low Elevation (orange)
- Caribou in the Central Group rely on both high elevation and low elevation winter habitat.
- High elevation habitat - calving and security from predators.
- Lower elevation habitats provide the necessary winter season forage and security across annual snow and winter conditions. Matrix habitat is important to predator / prey dynamics.





Partnership Agreement

Components:

- High elevation habitat protection.
- Additional protected area in specific low and matrix habitat
- Establish a Caribou Recovery Committee with representatives from B.C., Canada and West Moberly and Saulteau First Nations.
- Establish recovery objectives to guide resource development applications.
- Additional measures and components:
 - Recreation management
 - Maternity penning
 - Restoration
 - Predator control
 - Reduction of disturbance
 - Cooperation to manage any socio-economic effects



Economic Impacts and Analysis

- A federal Emergency Order could result in billions of dollars in economic losses in British Columbia, with unpredictable effects on jobs and local communities.
- The Section 11 and Partnership Agreements will minimize the risk of an Emergency Order.
- The recovery measures in the Partnership Agreement are based on science and designed to minimize effects on local communities.
- The Province is committed to working with its partners and with local governments to understand potential economic effects and identify appropriate supports.
- Concurrent with public engagement the province is commissioning an independent economic analysis in collaboration with communities and local businesses.



Engagement

- Public sessions will be held in the northeast and other key communities relevant to the Section 11 Agreement. Public sessions will be facilitated by Fraser Basin Council.
 - Concurrent with the public engagement, specific conference calls with Indigenous communities will also be booked to ensure all potentially impact Indigenous communities are engaged.
- Feedback will also be accepted online at engage.gov.bc.ca/caribou until the end of April.
- A “what we heard” report will be prepared and publicly released.



Snowmobile Engagement

- There are no snowmobile closure areas set out in the Agreements. The protected areas in the Partnership Agreement apply only to “resource development activities”
- Both agreements support engaging with stakeholders to determine the best approach to addressing recreational vehicle restrictions in relation to caribou recovery objectives.
- B.C. is launching an engagement process for snowmobile management that will begin in early May, after communities have engaged on the draft Agreements.
- B.C. has hired a neutral, third party facilitator with expertise in backcountry motorized recreation management to lead the engagement process.



Post-Engagement

Results from the public engagement process will be used to inform the final agreements and final decisions by Canada and B.C.

Both the B.C. and federal Cabinets will need to decide respectively on whether to sign the agreements.

These decisions are expected by summer.