

Draft Conservation Agreement for Woodland Caribou (Canada-Alberta) Overview

Under Section 11 of the [Species at Risk Act](#) (SARA) the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) can enter into conservation agreements to benefit a species at risk or enhance its survival in the wild.

A draft conservation agreement between Alberta and the Government of Canada for woodland caribou has been negotiated, outlining actions that support conservation and recovery of populations and their critical habitat in Alberta that will be taken in the next five years.

The overarching goal of the draft agreement is to work towards achieving and maintaining self-sustaining caribou populations over the long term, in line with the population and distribution objectives and critical habitat outcomes outlined in the federal Recovery Strategies and aligned with *A Woodland Caribou Policy for Alberta*.

The draft agreement is not a range-plan, nor does it make land-use determinations. It commits to timing for completion of caribou range-plans in Alberta.

Benefits to Alberta

- Supports caribou habitat and population recovery in Alberta.
- Increases potential access to federal funding towards conservation efforts.

Draft Agreement Highlights

The draft agreement identifies a five-year timeline for advancing the following commitments:

- Completion of forest harvest sequencing plans, industrial access management plans and recreational access management plans.
- Completion of sub-regional plans that include recovery outcomes for all caribou populations.
- Continuation of critical habitat restoration activities that have already commenced, and

initiation of restoration of critical habitat in additional priority portions of selected ranges.

- Continued work with Indigenous peoples to identify desired access routes.
- Incorporation of caribou recovery values in Wildfire Management Plans.
- Integration of multi-species approaches when planning and implementing conservation measures for caribou.
- Evaluation and revision of existing project approval conditions for energy, forestry and other land uses to reduce impacts to caribou critical habitat, individual caribou and caribou populations, including cumulative effects.
- Continuation of wolf population management in select ranges.
- Establishment of a rearing facility in the Little Smoky range and commencing a five-year pilot program.
- Continuation of annual caribou population growth and distribution monitoring.
- Continuation of work to estimate range-specific caribou population size.
- Development and implementation of a critical habitat monitoring and reporting framework.
- Refinement of critical habitat delineation for southern mountain caribou.
- Identifying possible effects and outcomes of climate change on Alberta's boreal conditions.

Context for Recovery

In Alberta, two types of woodland caribou, southern mountain and boreal, are designated as Threatened under both Alberta's *Wildlife Act* and Canada's *Species at Risk Act*. Two different federal recovery strategies outline the population and distribution objectives and critical habitat outcomes for these two types of caribou.

Information about these species can be found at: www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry.

There are 12 boreal and three southern mountain local populations on provincial land and one additional local population of southern mountain caribou in Jasper National Park which is under federal jurisdiction. Federal actions pertaining to the population in Jasper National Park can be found in the Multispecies Action Plan for Jasper National Park of Canada: www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/action-plans.

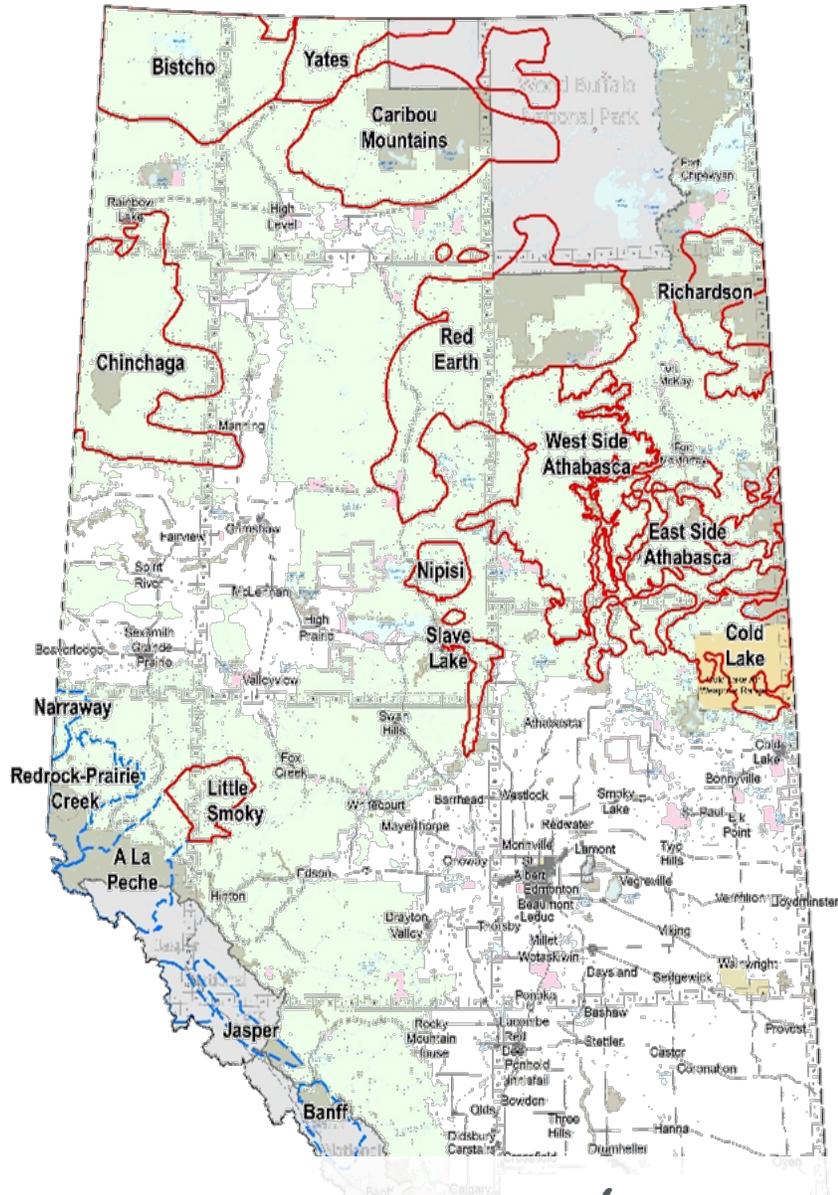
All of Alberta's woodland caribou ranges are currently below the critical habitat thresholds outlined in the federal recovery strategies and most of the caribou populations are decreasing. Many of the ranges overlap important forest and energy resources that support local communities and the provincial economy. Woodland caribou are an important part of the lives and traditions for Indigenous peoples, as well as many other Albertans. Determining the appropriate mix of conservation measures is a complex undertaking that requires analysis of biological, jurisdictional, social, and economic factors, natural resource related tenures, and the rights and interests of Indigenous peoples.

Engagement and Next Steps

The Government of Alberta is taking feedback on the draft agreement until October 6, 2019.

Signing of the final agreement is anticipated to be late fall of 2019. Implementation results will be reported annually.

Alberta is also continuing efforts to restore critical habitat, and manage and monitor caribou and other affected wildlife species.



Alberta
Government

ALBERTA CARIBOU RANGES

