

Ministre de l'Environnement et
du Changement climatique



Minister of Environment
and Climate Change

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H3

Cariboo Regional District
File No. 400-40

MAY 24 2019

Ms. Margo A. Wagner
Chair
Cariboo Regional District
mwagner@cariboord.ca

MAY 24 2019
Referred To ... CAO (Chair)
Board
June 7/19

Dear Ms. Wagner:

Thank you for your correspondence of November 14, 2018, concerning caribou in British Columbia. I regret the delay in responding.

The Government of Canada is committed to the protection and recovery of southern mountain caribou and to fulfilling the Government's obligations under the *Species at Risk Act*. In May 2018, I determined that southern mountain caribou face imminent threats to their recovery. My finding underscores the importance of immediate action to recover and protect this iconic species.

It is unfortunate that the time it took to arrive at a stable draft of the partnership agreement negotiated between the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia, the Saulteau First Nations and the West Moberly First Nations did not allow for substantive discussions with the Peace River Regional District to take place earlier. However, now that the engagement process on the draft partnership agreement as well as the draft section 11 agreement between Canada and British Columbia is well underway, I encourage you to provide feedback online via EngageBC or in person until May 31, 2019. The feedback from local communities (including that received at community meetings and from the Peace River Regional District in early April 2019) is essential to inform government decision making with regard to the next steps for these agreements.

You may be interested to know that on April 24, 2019, my Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. Sean Fraser, had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Blair Lekstrom, whom Premier John Horgan appointed as a community liaison. They had a productive conversation around the partnership agreement and the concerns of the citizens in the Peace River Regional District.

I assure you that Environment and Climate Change Canada is actively engaged with the Government of British Columbia in finding solutions that will recover caribou and support economic and recreational activities on the landscape.

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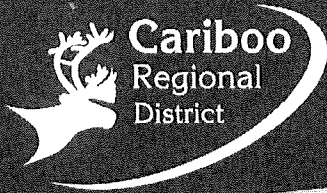


I appreciate your bringing the concerns of the Cariboo Regional District to my attention. Please accept my best regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C McKenna', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Honourable Catherine McKenna, P.C., M.P.



OFFICE OF THE CHAIR

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File: 400-01

November 14, 2018

VIA EMAIL

The Honourable John Horgan
Premier, Province of British Columbia
premier@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Doug Donaldson
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Scott Fraser
Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
ABR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Catherine McKenna, MP
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, MP
Minister of Natural Resources
Amarjeet.Sohi@parl.gc.ca

Dear Honourable Premier and Ministers:

Re: Caribou Habitat Protection in British Columbia

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Cariboo Regional District (CRD), to express my dismay and concern over the discussions that are ongoing between the Federal, Provincial and First Nations Governments regarding the Section 11 Species at Risk legislation.

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building communities together

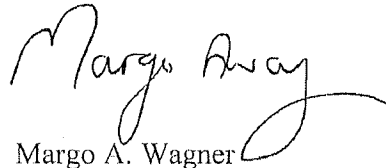
We at the CRD are dismayed and outraged that local Governments have been totally left out of these conversations, despite the fact that we are hearing from both the Provincial and Federal Governments that there will be significant economic impacts to our communities. These impacts will be felt in the initial loss of the estimated 400,000 cubic metres of timber from the creation of the 110,000 hectare critical habitat area and the potential loss of 500 related jobs to the forestry industry, plus the highly probable loss of one mill.

Spin off economic impacts include those to tourism, trapping & guide outfitting, and back country use with either ATV or snowmobiles, to name a few. All of these activities are an integral part of our survival, as our lumber industry is constantly under pressure from either a variety of beetle infestations or wildfires. Your decision will come on the heels of two of the most devastating wildfire seasons on record, which saw well over 2 million hectares of forest burned in central and northwestern BC. The fires caused an economic downturn that will take us years to recover from fully, if ever.

None of us in local Government are opposed to saving the caribou herds that grace our area; all we are asking for is a seat at the table, so that we can be part of the solution rather than being the last level of Government to be apprised of a plan. I implore you to offer local Governments a seat at the discussion table, so that you can hear, firsthand, from those that will be impacted the most, and know the land and the challenges that the caribou face in order to flourish. Many Regional District Chairs and Mayors of Central and Northern Communities are willing to travel to Victoria to facilitate a meeting; we just need the opportunity to be part of the discussion.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours truly,



Margo A. Wagner
Chair

- c: Todd Doherty, MP, Cariboo-Prince George
- Donna Barnett, MLA, Cariboo-Chilcotin
- Coralee Oakes, MLA, Cariboo North

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