

Wild Sheep Society of BC

To: WildlifeAndHabitat@gov.bc.ca

Date: July 17th, 2018

Re: BC Government Habitat and Wildlife Engagement

The engagement approach is a positive step and we appreciate the opportunity to provide input, however, we feel the timeline is too long. We have been vocal for a long time that the downward trajectory of BC's wildlife and habitat needs to change. With little to no results we are very skeptical that this lengthy consultation will lead to meaningful action in time to recover some species of wildlife.

I feel that reconciliation and consultation with First Nations is a critical part of wildlife recovery in BC. I also believe that the process should be open and transparent and inclusive of legitimate stakeholder groups in a roundtable format while protecting First Nation's rights. Transparency and inclusiveness will allow all groups to have meaningful input without alienating any one group.

The BC Government can "increase involvement and shared stewardship" by creating a new wildlife organization made up of First Nations, stakeholder groups and professionals in wildlife management. This new group would use science, measurable objectives and increased land use planning to make informed decisions on management of wildlife and their habitat. Funding could be generated through wildlife and habitat user groups such as hunting licenses sales, outdoor gear sales tax, logging and mining contributions. Finally, this group would gain social support for these actions through the responsible stewardship of the resource.

The Wild Sheep Society of BC is a strong proponent of prescribed burns to restore wildlife, increase the resiliency of our forests and protect property. We have been working hard to initiate and fund prescribed burns for wild sheep and other species. While we have funding in place we have found it very difficult to navigate the government process to have successful prescribed burns within the current framework. Mandating regional burn plans with multiple pre-approved sites annually to take advantage of burn conditions when they occur is imperative.

Sincerely,

Kyle Stelter
President
Wild Sheep Society of BC