



Location: MS Teams Meeting



Date: Monday, November 22, 2021



Time: 1315-1615 Pacific

Revelstoke Complex and Central Selkirks Caribou Technical Working Group

Members (grey indicates not in attendance)

Genevieve Lachance (moderator)	Christine Friedrichsmeier (notes)	Guests:
Tim Eugene	Deb McKillop	Aaron Deans
Rieva McCuaig	Rob Steenweg	Robyn Laubman
Aaron Reid	Celia Nord	Leo DeGroot
Gwen Bridge	Brier Cadden	Laura Machial
Corey Bird	Allison Pagett	Darcy Peel
Tina Donald	Colleen Marchand	Mark Thomas
	John Krebs	Bevan Ernst

AGENDA

1:15-1:30	Welcome and Action Items (Genevieve Lachance)- Actions in Red were completed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genevieve to add restoration to agenda to follow up for next meeting. • Deb will connect with Erin after the call regarding the data. • Erin to send data, maps to Genevieve to place in the group's online folder. • Deb to provide Genevieve with presentation • Genevieve to add Gwen to next agenda to speak about the recovery and mapping work that she's been working on with Rob Serrouya • Robin Steenweg to send more information about the application process, and proposal example or other info to Genevieve • Genevieve to add Aaron to the agenda (next meeting or two) to talk about recreation
1:30-2:00	Old Growth Deferrals and Caribou habitat (Deb MacKillop)
	<p>Where are the OG deferral areas within the Revelstoke Complex and Central Selkirks herds boundaries; are there overlaps with critical habitat?</p> <p>Link to the old growth technical advisory panel deferral information: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/old-growth-forests</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please see the presentation for details. - will be posted to the ftp site when I receive it • 11.1 million ha of old growth on non-private land

- Deb described what old growth is, and where it can be found
- Remnant old ecosystems
- Big-treed old growth – higher targets of preservation in highest risk of loss of biodiversity – 30% of expected natural amount of old growth (not current amount)
- No one has decided the acceptable risk – will be doing this over the next couple of years
- Packages have gone to the Nations at the beginning of November
- This is just for the OG deferrals, not the linkages to caribou
- Deferrals only apply if there is a proposed cutting permit
- Not a complete picture. OG has many values. OG is a main value because it takes so long to grow back.

DISCUSSION:

- How often is core caribou habitat mapped? Is core habitat related to current use?
Leo answered:
 - Current mapping only 2-3 years old. Mapping has been evolving over time – e.g., matrix hasn't been mapped up until 10 y ago. As well, core habitat is capable of supporting caribou, not just where they are right now.
 - Will be continuously amended. The lines can be controversial. Not on a schedule.
 - Will need more habitat for larger herds as they recover
 - Also need enough habitat to compensate for future events outside of our control – pests, fire
- Need to figure out the costs of deferring these areas

2:00-2:30

Protection for the Revelstoke Complex and Central Selkirks herds
(Science Team and TBD)

Looking in details at the existing disturbance, protection, core and matrix, telemetry and where habitat protection is needed.

- Bevan Ernst presented to the group, using Central Selkirks at first.
- Started with what area is protected versus disturbed, broken up by current disturbance (cutblocks, with buffers; roads, with buffers; fires; pests; static (private land, urban, etc))
- Then compared the result to current protections overlap
- Caribou habitat priorities for protection:
 - currently undisturbed areas and not already protected,
 - 100 +years old forest, or old forest recruitment areas of 80+ years,
 - areas of current use, highest priority is within current caribou use (telemetry points) areas. Let the habitat and the animals guide us what to protect, not the THLB.
 - slope <60%,
 - 500 m buffer from roads (due to predator use)
 - Migration corridors between herds
- Prioritizing areas of highest benefit to caribou
- No point on spending protection budget on areas that are not in danger (too steep for logging) or that won't be of use to caribou
- Buffers make it more biologically effective
- Need large, contiguous tracts of land, not little snippets
- Disturbance analysis done in 2019, needs to be updated with large fires
- We would rather protect some habitat that is made less effective by climate change than not protect it and be wrong about it being impacted by climate change.
- Tyler Muhly's work takes climate into account
- Central Selkirks are already highly protected, but Columbia North has far fewer protections
- All the little patches would be buffered and then become a nice, bigger patch – which makes more sense for caribou. Will need to be well-defended in terms of economic impacts

- **ACTION: ALL: Review maps provided on the ftp site and send priorities areas for protection to Genevieve**
- Not a static map – will change over time

DISCUSSION:

- Impact to THLB? (Bevan has a table with data) – being discussed at senior levels of govt right now – Deputy Minister level (Rick Manwaring). Next is discussion with interest groups in greater detail.
- Next steps & trade-offs? The ability to make a living off the land is important for Splantsin. What maps, info will be shared out? – **All on FTP site, knowing that it is not to be shared to the public, as the Nations knowledge would also not be shared. Group to view info, maps, and then come back to group to discuss.**
 - Tyler can come to group and present about economic impact
 - We can't share anything that's at the political level; being discussed at the political level
 - Also need to make sure it's accurate enough to share with the public – it would further muddy the waters of caribou conservation
 - Concern over the lack of socio-economic/cost analyses, as well as its potential for inaccuracies and subjection to political whim. First Nations need access to this information so that they can do their own independent analyses, and present their information to their own political people before being subject to the biases of the process

2:30-2:40

Break

2:40-3:10

Recovery plan for caribou subpopulations within the Okanagan Indian Band Territory (Gwen Bridge)

Gwen to present the OKIB recovery plan for the Southern Mountain Caribou subpopulations within or overlapping the boundary of the Okanagan Indian Band. The herds included in the plan are part of the Southern Mountain Caribou and include the Central Rockies, Central Selkirs, Columbia North, Columbia South, Frisby-Boulder, Groundhog, and Monashee subpopulations.

- High elevation may not be logged, but could be heli-cat areas – important for protection
- Priority restoration areas
- Comprehensive recovery plan from 2020, done with Rob Serrouya, and approved by Chief & Council. BC has this. Interested in feedback.
- Recap of the recommended actions, priorities from the report
 - Economic considerations, not forthcoming, so hard to have reconciliation conversations
 - Consistent with what BC is doing, comprehensive report
 - Not talking about some impacts – mining, oil & gas, heli-cat
 - Restoration is a high priority; high priority areas have been defined
 - Most of the work has been funded by the Canadian Wildlife Service
 - Tradition knowledge is a large gap in current plans, trying to address this with this report
 - How to conduct appropriate moose & deer harvests
 - Holistic, comprehensive
 - IPC of 500K ha near Glacier NP, Revelstoke to protect area for multiple species & ecosystems of concern
 - 100% of old growth should be protected
 - Closing recreation year-round in core areas
- Gwen reiterated her points about needing the socio-economic data, especially in light of reconciliation, UNDRIP, DRIPA. Always politically told “it will cost jobs”, but no more information than that.
- As always, funding is insufficient for the work needed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry & FN have begun collaborations <p>DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When will this doc be released more widely? Strategy for public relations, will bring up on the 29th with OKIB Chief and Council. Have a strategy. Any questions, please contact Gwen. 	
3:10-3:40	Recreation (Aaron Reid)
<p>Where does recreation and caribou overlap?</p> <p>Management of closures for the recreation sector in the Central Selkirks and Revelstoke Complex.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caribou are most vulnerable to recreation in the winter months Caribou don't move much in the winter – 500m/day Lichen has only 3% protein, caribou are in a negative energy budget in the winter – not enough to keep them going Snowmobilers and caribou like the same habitat, Behavioural (avoidance) and physiological responses (stress, reduced reproductive output) to disturbance in the winter Have done a good job with closures – but could do better Will discuss with the snowmobile clubs in the spring, need to be well-prepared Automatically updated website showing whether a club can access certain areas in the Central Selkirks Collared caribou make the system work – as herds grow there'll be less collared animals, and the maps won't be as accurate. Currently, 60-70% of cows collared. Compliance & enforcement aspects? (esp. heliski – do they show flight data?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No compliance ability, but working on it Beneficial management practices – not legal Engagement with the heliski sector right now – all the data (Darcy Peel) for caribou and mountain goats Re-doing the winter recreation guidelines, dictates how close helicopters can get. Right now, it's 500m from animals or fresh tracks – not adequate We want 2000m avoidance for machines and skiers Tenure documents don't specify flight tracking; Tech is there, needs to be turned on Engagement with Helicat Canada Compliance in helicat is getting better. ACTION: Aaron to send Corey the COS reports Do they have conditions on their tenure permits that could include a requirement for these flight logs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We don't see all the tenure documents – go through Lands Branch, though we try to coordinate Right now, there's no language in the tenure documents to require helicat operations to provide flight data or landing sites Parks (park permits) tend to be more prescriptive, so they have more data 	
3:40-4:00	Roundtable (All)-
<p>Update to the group on caribou related topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many in group noted that this meeting had a lot of info to digest Leo – effects of disturbance – number of caribou that die in avalanches is very high. Extra movement from one drainage to another can exacerbate this. E.g., last caribou in Banff all died in one avalanche John – OKIB presentation great – how do we align ourselves and get to the important work for caribou. Government has a few loose ends for recreation. 	
4:00-4:15	Next Steps Next meeting topics (Genevieve Lachance)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ToR. Agreement, Funding, next meeting 	

- **ACTION: Genevieve will be calling RCCSTWG members (if she hasn't talked to you already), re: the TOR & funding**
- Next meeting Dec 20
- To consider for spring – face to face meeting, field trip