



February 15, 2018

The Honourable Shannon Phillips
Minister of Environment and Parks - Government of Alberta
208 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Re: ACTWS Response to the Government of Alberta's Draft Woodland Caribou Range Plan

Dear Minister Phillips,

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ACTWS) is an organization representing over 300 wildlife professionals in the province of Alberta. As such, we have the benefit of having many of Alberta's woodland caribou experts and managers within our membership. We have had the opportunity to review Alberta's draft Woodland Caribou Range Plan and would like to offer our comments.

We applaud the detail provided regarding the population and habitat status for each herd; however, we are dismayed at the lack of commitment to achieving the minimum 65 percent minimum undisturbed habitat within the plan. More specifically,

- 1) The plan only reviews "strategies" that might be considered rather than committing to the implementation of changes to land management that would bring about habitat recovery.
- 2) The plan lacks any obligation through legislation to ensure the recovery of woodland caribou in each range.
- 3) There is no information provided regarding how each range will achieve the 65 per cent undisturbed habitat over time.
- 4) There are no restoration targets or mechanisms for each range-specific 5-year reporting period until 65 percent undisturbed habitat will be achieved (as required by SARA).
- 5) There are no maps provided to illustrate how the 65 percent undisturbed habitat will be achieved in each range at 10-year intervals.

As such, we find the draft range plan seriously deficient. We are also concerned about the lack of progress towards developing range plans given the 5-year deadline that passed in October of last year.

We are pleased to have had one of our members of the ACTWS Conservation Committee selected for your multi-stakeholder sessions being held in Edmonton on February 7-8 and March 13th. Thank you for your consideration of our comments and we look forward to being of assistance in the following few months in the preparation of the final Range Plan by April 2018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Delinda Ryerson", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Delinda Ryerson
Executive Director – Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society

ALBERTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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