

Progress Report on Steps Taken to Protect Critical Habitat for the Woodland Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*), Boreal Population, in Canada



June 2019



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

Recommended citation:

Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2019. Progress Report on Steps Taken to Protect Critical Habitat for the Woodland Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*), Boreal Population, in Canada, June 2019. *Species at Risk Act Critical Habitat Report Series*. Environment and Climate Change Canada, Ottawa. 29 pp.

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Également disponible en français sous le titre
« Rapport sur les mesures prises pour protéger l'habitat essentiel du caribou des bois (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*), population boréale, au Canada (juin 2019) »

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ISBN: 978-0-660-31647-5
Catalogue no.: CW66-575/2019E-PDF

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Note: The Woodland Caribou, Boreal population is referred to as “boreal caribou” in this document.

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1. Introduction

This report provides a summary of steps taken and underway by federal, provincial and territorial governments, as well as Indigenous Peoples and stakeholders, which are relevant to the protection of boreal caribou critical habitat. Building on two [previous publications](#), this report focuses on the period of October 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019, and includes additional updates on steps taken prior to publication.

The Government of Canada has continued to seek, support, and invest in collaborative solutions towards the recovery of the species and protection of its critical habitat. We have continued to see momentum with partners and stakeholders since the last report. The Government of Canada is continuing to implement and build on the [Action Plan for the Woodland Caribou \(*Rangifer tarandus caribou*\), Boreal Population, in Canada: Federal Actions](#), and to leverage the federal government's partnerships to advance the protection of critical habitat for the species. The Action Plan set out a multi-pronged approach to boreal caribou recovery, which includes the development of conservation agreements with provinces, territories and Indigenous Peoples, and investments in Indigenous and multi-partner-led initiatives. The funding provided in Budget 2018, including the Canada Nature Fund, has been important to accelerating many of these actions.

Federal, provincial, and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples continue to make progress towards the negotiation and finalization of conservation agreements. These agreements aim to establish frameworks and codify measures, including commitments to range planning or other similar landscape-level planning approaches. Since the last report, the Government of Canada has signed three final conservation agreements and completed negotiations for two draft agreements.

The Government of Canada recently finalized a [protection order for boreal caribou critical habitat on federally administered lands](#) and [proposed the identification of critical habitat in Saskatchewan's Boreal Shield range](#). The Government of Canada also continued coordination of the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC), bringing together governments, Indigenous and non-governmental organizations, academics, and industry stakeholders to support information sharing and address knowledge gaps in order to inform decision making for boreal caribou conservation and recovery.

Boreal caribou are culturally important to many Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and the recovery of this species is important to the Government of Canada's commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous communities and organizations are continuing to lead and participate on a number of projects related to protecting boreal caribou critical habitat, such as identifying important areas for boreal caribou, population monitoring, and developing management plans, as well as engaging in collaborative approaches for caribou recovery with stakeholders and governments in Canada. Examples of this work are highlighted throughout this report.

Various stakeholders continue to be involved in boreal caribou conservation activities across the country, and this report highlights key examples of these activities. These efforts include work by industry sectors to advance caribou recovery research, implement habitat restoration, and reduce disturbance footprints. It also includes work by multi-partner groups of non-governmental organizations, industry, and Indigenous Peoples to advance range-level planning. In addition, municipal governments play a role in directing efforts for caribou conservation in some parts of the country. Moreover, forestry certification bodies have made notable steps to advance caribou and species at risk conservation in forestry.

This sustained momentum is encouraging. Provinces, territories, Indigenous Peoples, stakeholders, and other key partners are engaged, including in developing range plans and implementing conservation measures, to manage boreal caribou and its critical habitat. This ongoing collaboration of all parties is essential to the recovery of this species.

2. Steps Taken in Provinces and Territories

2.1. British Columbia

The Government of British Columbia has reported regarding the following steps that have been taken since October 1, 2018, for the recovery and protection of boreal caribou critical habitat in British Columbia:

- Release of a draft Boreal Caribou Habitat Restoration Framework, in October 2018, by the BC Oil and Gas Research Innovation Society. The draft Framework is anticipated to be finalized in 2019 and used by the Province as a resource for effective and practical restoration planning of boreal caribou habitat in British Columbia.
- Continued collaboration by British Columbia and Fort Nelson First Nation, with support from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), to advance collaboration on key elements of boreal caribou herd planning. Herd plans are part of British Columbia's recovery planning process for all caribou, and equate to range plans in the case of boreal caribou. The planning table has completed the spatial identification of priority areas for protection based on telemetry, habitat mapping, and local and Indigenous Knowledge, and is now in the process of developing associated management and habitat protection measures for these areas.
- Initiation of wolf control, through agreement with the Blueberry River First Nation, to support caribou recovery within the Chinchaga herd range in the winter of 2019. Wolf control is anticipated to continue for a minimum of three years.
- Initiation of engagement on the Chinchaga Herd Plan, in March 2019, by British Columbia and Doig River First Nation, with support from ECCC. The Province has also entered initial engagement discussions with other First Nations including Prophet River First Nation, Blueberry River First Nation, and Dene Tha First Nation to support herd planning and implementation.
- Updating sections of the *British Columbia Environmental Mitigation Policy* that refer to the use of offsetting to compensate for adverse impacts from industrial development. These sections will provide clarity and guidance around the assessment of the ecological and logistical feasibility of offsets.

Additionally, in the coming months, the Government of British Columbia plans to:

- Continue development and engagement on draft British Columbia species at risk legislation.
- Undertake engagement with First Nations, local communities, and industry on draft herd plans for boreal caribou and a revised Boreal Caribou Recovery Implementation Plan that is anticipated to be submitted to British Columbia Cabinet for approval in fall 2019. The plans will outline management measures including, but not limited to, habitat protection to be undertaken to recover boreal

caribou in British Columbia. Management measures for Chinchaga herd will be confirmed via a land-use planning process for the Fort St. John Timber Supply Area and will be appended to an approved revised Boreal Caribou Recovery Implementation Plan.

- Collaborate with the Fort Nelson First Nation to advance a First Nation-led initiative to restore linear disturbance in caribou habitat within the Snake-Sahtaneh range. The project encompasses an area of approximately 60,000 hectares (ha) in size and is envisioned to take place over three years. The project will focus on functional and ecological restoration on approximately fifty legacy seismic lines. ECCC has also provided funding to Fort Nelson First Nation for related work.
- Collaborate with the Blueberry River First Nation, with support from ECCC, to advance the Nation-led project to restore linear disturbance in caribou habitat within the Chinchaga range. The project is envisioned to take place over three years.

Additional Steps Taken in British Columbia

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of British Columbia, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the province are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded four Indigenous-led projects and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) funded one Indigenous-led project in British Columbia. These projects focused on collection of Indigenous Knowledge, conservation planning, engagement, population and habitat monitoring, and restoration.

For example, Fort Nelson First Nation undertook a systematic Indigenous Knowledge study of boreal caribou by conducting a series of interviews focused exclusively on boreal caribou and targeting specific knowledge holders. This information was used on a confidential basis by Fort Nelson First Nation in order to ensure the Indigenous Knowledge informs and is reflected in Fort Nelson First Nation's Medzih Action Plan. Specifically, the information was mapped and used in conjunction with other data to refine protection and restoration areas within the Medzih Action Plan.

Also since October, Canada, British Columbia, and Indigenous partners continued to negotiate draft conservation agreements for southern mountain caribou. In March 2019, British Columbia launched an engagement process regarding a draft conservation agreement between Canada and British Columbia, as well as a draft partnership agreement between Canada, British Columbia, Saúlteau First Nations, and West Moberly First Nations. Input from this engagement process will inform government decisions regarding next steps for those agreements. ECCC and British Columbia anticipate building on experience gained from development of the conservation agreements for southern mountain caribou in advancing the conservation of boreal caribou.

2.2. Alberta

The Government of Alberta has reported regarding the following steps that have been taken since October 1, 2018, for the recovery and protection of boreal caribou critical habitat in Alberta:

- Established the Kitaskino Nuwenënë Wildland Provincial Park on March 11, 2019, following collaboration by Mikisew Cree First Nation and other Indigenous communities, oil and gas industry members (Teck Resources, Imperial Oil, and Cenovus Energy), the Government of Alberta, and support from ECCC through the Quick Start program. This Park helps conserve and connect the species at risk habitat for both boreal caribou and wood bison, safeguarding the way of life of surrounding Indigenous Peoples. Over 82,500 ha of the park's 161,880 ha overlaps with the Red Earth and Richardson ranges.
- Initiation of three habitat restoration projects in the Cold Lake range in January 2019, under the Caribou Habitat and Recovery Program through the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA). The Devon Project, Woodlands North Project, and Cenovus Project are all 50% complete, with tree planting to occur this summer. Overall, the projects have accounted for approximately 135 km of seismic restoration between January and March 2019.

The Government of Alberta is also undertaking other actions to support the recovery of boreal caribou in the province, including multi-stakeholder range planning, wolf population reductions, and legacy seismic restoration, among others. In the coming months, the Government of Alberta will continue to:

- Update and improve operating and approval standards associated with industrial land use approvals within caribou ranges.
- Develop geographically focused forestry harvesting plans to manage and reduce forestry-related disturbance, such as exploring aggregated timber harvesting approaches.
- Work with multi-stakeholder groups on the development of action and range plans, notably:
 - The Cold Lake Multi-Partner Group has had regular meetings over several months and is continuing development of boreal caribou-related plans; and
 - The Bistcho Multi-Partner Group, led by the forest industry and with support from ECCC and Alberta, has presented Alberta with recommendations for a Bistcho range plan.
- Utilize Traditional Land Use information from Indigenous communities in caribou ranges in Alberta to inform restoration planning. This ongoing work is enabled by FRIAA and Alberta.

- Create an inventory of the current vegetation state of seismic lines for restoration within the Bistcho range. This ongoing work is enabled by FRIAA and Alberta.
- Deliver ongoing wolf population reductions in the East Side of the Athabasca, Cold Lake, Little Smoky, and Chinchaga caribou ranges.

Additional Steps Taken in Alberta

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of Alberta, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the province are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded five Indigenous-led projects and one stakeholder-led project, as well as two multi-partner tables. NRCan also funded two Indigenous-led projects in Alberta. These projects focused on collection of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific research, creation of protected areas, conservation planning, engagement, population and habitat monitoring, and restoration.

For example, ECCC has been working with Cold Lake First Nations to identify potential conservation measures, such as community capacity building, habitat restoration, population management, and monitoring to support boreal caribou conservation within the Cold Lake range.

Boreal caribou recovery in Alberta benefits from the work of multi-partner groups, some of which have been supported by ECCC, that are keen to build partnerships to further boreal caribou conservation and recovery. These collaborative projects, including the Bistcho Multi-Partner Group mentioned above, as well as a similar multi-partner group in northeastern Alberta, aim to contribute to range planning, identify protected area opportunities, and incorporate multi-species considerations.

The oil and gas sector has reported that some industry members, including those noted above, are working with the Government of Alberta to manage surface footprint in caribou habitat. Industry has also led research on the effects of restoration treatments on seismic lines in Alberta, and has carried out the habitat restoration activities described above. The Canada Oil Sands Innovation Alliance (COSIA) and the Regional Industry Caribou Collaboration (RICC) have continued to coordinate research and habitat restoration efforts in northeastern Alberta.

In addition to the initiatives noted above, the forestry sector in Alberta has continued their involvement in research programs, and has actively participated in multi-partner tables for the purpose of developing range plans. For example, forestry, energy, Indigenous, and research partners have collaborated to make recommendations to the Government of Alberta for the Little Smoky/A La Peche range plan.

Municipalities are also playing a role in the conservation of boreal caribou in Alberta. For example, Northwest Species at Risk Committee (NWSAR), a partnership of five northwest Alberta municipalities is continuing to seek options for the recovery of five

boreal caribou populations across Northwest Alberta. NWSAR's work has involved public and stakeholder engagement, at local, regional, and national levels, to better understand the complexities and intent of management tools for boreal caribou survival and recovery.

Canada and Alberta have made advancements and are continuing to engage on the negotiation of a draft conservation agreement under Section 11 of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) for boreal caribou in the province. The agreement would codify measures of relevance to the protection and recovery of the species and its critical habitat.

2.3. Saskatchewan

The Government of Saskatchewan has reported regarding the following steps that have been taken since October 1, 2018, for the recovery and protection of boreal caribou critical habitat in Saskatchewan:

- Completion of synthesis of experience and best practice, and operational gap analysis, in support of Saskatchewan's habitat mitigation framework, to provide insight and direction into operationalizing habitat mitigation efforts. Saskatchewan has been piloting the application of a boreal habitat mitigation approach with an industrial partner in the peat-mining sector in the Boreal Plain East Caribou Administration Unit.
- Revision of the Crown Resource Land Regulations by Saskatchewan to reduce overall footprint of authorized activities, ensure reclamation following use, identify additional conditions when authorizing activities, including provisions for mitigation, and promote compliance. These regulations govern the administration of Crown land in the northern part of the province, including all boreal caribou habitat. Administrative tools will be examined that could hasten or enhance the protection of boreal caribou habitat. The revised regulations were approved by Cabinet on March 27, 2019.
- Continued work towards the designation of four protected areas within the boreal caribou ranges: the Tazin Lake area (111,765 ha); the Misaw Lake area (239,216 ha); the Chappius Fontaine Lakes area (240,958 ha); and, with support from ECCC, the Lobstick area (97,235 ha). The Province has also engaged with some First Nations on the identification of a proposed Indigenous Protected Area within the Boreal Plain range's West Caribou Administration Unit.
- Posting of caribou habitat management areas, identified for the Boreal Plain East range plan, on the provincial Hunting, Angling and Biodiversity Information of Saskatchewan (HABISask) website, in spring 2019, to help industry, developers, and others identify sensitive habitat and plan accordingly.

Additionally, progress has been made in range plan development. Saskatchewan's Boreal Plain range is divided into three administrative units: West, Central, and East. In the coming months, the Government of Saskatchewan plans to:

- Release the final draft of the Boreal Plain (SK2) Central Caribou Administrative Unit range plan.
- Meet with the Boreal Plain West and East Caribou Administrative Unit planning table to present management scenarios and sensitivity analyses and obtain review, comment, and feedback from their respective viewpoints.
- With the assistance of a range plan implementation committee, identify the operational and policy requirements necessary to put the strategies and actions associated with the range plans into practice.

Additional Steps Taken in Saskatchewan

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of Saskatchewan, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the province are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded six Indigenous-led projects, two stakeholder-led projects, and two multi-partner tables. NRCan also funded one Indigenous-led project in Saskatchewan. These projects focused on collection of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific research, conservation planning, creation of protected areas, engagement, and population and habitat monitoring.

For example, Buffalo River Dene Nation developed a written and spatial summary of boreal caribou habitat in the Boreal Plain range. The summary identifies habitat areas (particularly calving areas, rutting areas, overwintering areas, and movement corridors) and a seasonal habitat ratings map based on an Indigenous Knowledge model that identifies key areas for protection.

Boreal caribou recovery in Saskatchewan benefits from the work of multi-partner groups that are keen to build partnerships to further boreal caribou conservation and recovery. Collaborative projects in northwestern and northeastern Saskatchewan, supported by ECCC, aim to contribute to range planning, identify protected area opportunities, and incorporate multi-species considerations.

In the electricity sector, SaskPower is providing support to surveys, developing internal best practices, and participating in regional range planning consultation.

On December 18, 2018, Canada and Saskatchewan completed and published a draft conservation agreement under Section 11 of SARA on the Species at Risk Public Registry for a 45-day public comment period. Building on comments received, on June 21, 2019, Canada and Saskatchewan published a [final conservation agreement](#) on the Species at Risk Public Registry. This agreement codifies measures to support the conservation of the species and the protection of its critical habitat, and sets out commitments, some of which have been highlighted above, to range planning, restoration, and monitoring, as well as setting short and long-term habitat and population goals.

2.4. Manitoba

The Government of Manitoba has reported regarding the following steps that have been taken since October 1, 2018, for the recovery and protection of boreal caribou critical habitat in Manitoba:

- Multi-partner collaboration, including with Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and Ducks Unlimited Canada, with support from ECCC, to explore opportunities to support range planning activities.
- Review and assessment of development proposals with potential impacts to boreal caribou. These efforts involve consideration of current range condition data, detailed assessment of potential effects on caribou and their habitat, and the identification of avoidance, mitigation, and conditions of authorization.
- Completion of population and habitat data analysis for all management units. The results will form the basis for describing the current state of populations and habitat for boreal caribou within individual boreal caribou management units.

In the coming months, the Government of Manitoba intends to take the following steps:

- Completion of a draft provincial range plan document that outlines the broad management initiatives that Manitoba intends to implement as part of individual range plans.
- Development of a draft range plan for the Owl-Flintstone Management Unit.

Additional Steps Taken in Manitoba

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of Manitoba, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the province are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded four Indigenous-led projects and one multi-partner table in Manitoba, which focused on collection of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific research, conservation planning, engagement, population and habitat monitoring.

For example, Wuskwi Sipiik First Nation engaged community members in land use planning activities, such as gathering knowledge about population size, distribution, and habitat use of the Swan Pelican and Red Deer Lake caribou herds in the Manitoba South range, considering important areas within Ancestral Lands for protection, communicating shared knowledge that would support a suitable sustainable protected habitat range for the boreal caribou located in the Ancestral Lands of the Wuskwi Sipiik First Nation, and outlining a process by which government can engage First Nations in the planning of conservation activities for boreal caribou.

Boreal caribou recovery in Manitoba benefits from the work of multi-partner groups that are keen to build partnerships to further boreal caribou conservation and recovery.

Collaborative projects, including the multi-partner group in northwestern Manitoba mentioned above, aim to contribute to range planning, identify protected area opportunities, and incorporate multi-species considerations.

Manitoba Hydro has continued monitoring and engaging communities for several herds in the province. One member of the mining industry in Manitoba has contributed to a boreal caribou collaring and mapping exercise as part of the work of the Northwest Woodland Caribou Research and Monitoring Committee.

Canada and Manitoba have made advancements and are continuing to engage on the negotiation of a draft conservation agreement under Section 11 of SARA for boreal caribou in the province. The agreement would codify measures of relevance to the protection and recovery of the species and its critical habitat.

2.5. Ontario

The Government of Ontario has reported regarding the following steps that have been taken since October 1, 2018, for the recovery and protection of boreal caribou critical habitat in Ontario:

- Continued development of a management approach for the Lake Superior Coast range (i.e., the Coastal range) and Discontinuous Distribution. An Indigenous and stakeholder workshop was held in March 2019 to provide background information about boreal caribou in the Lake Superior Coast range and Discontinuous Distribution and to discuss and obtain feedback to inform the development of a management approach for this range.
- Under the Ontario Forest Management Guide for Boreal Landscapes, continued incorporation of requirements for the management of boreal caribou habitat through space and time, including the development of a Dynamic Caribou Habitat Schedule, into forest management plans that intersect with boreal caribou ranges. Individual management plans are at various stages of completion depending on plan renewal schedules.
- Ongoing monitoring of the translocated caribou in the Lake Superior Coast range, and monitoring collars were deployed in the Ozhiski range (part of the Far North range) in March 2019.
- Collaboration and increased knowledge for boreal caribou conservation, through continuation of Ontario-funded stewardship and research projects. For example, the Wildlife Conservation Society of Canada is examining the relationship between disturbance and site fidelity, at multiple scales, by boreal caribou in Ontario.
- Ongoing boreal caribou habitat mapping work to delineate Category 1 high use areas (nursery and winter use areas).
- Continued implementation of the Range Management Policy in Support of Woodland Caribou Conservation and Recovery, including the detailed

assessment of potential adverse effects on caribou and their habitat and the identification of avoidance, mitigation, and conditions for authorization.

Additional Steps Taken in Ontario

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of Ontario, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the province are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded four Indigenous-led projects, two stakeholder-led projects, and one multi-partner table. NRCan also funded one Indigenous-led project in Ontario. These projects focused on collection of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific research, conservation planning, creation of protected areas, engagement, and population and habitat monitoring.

For example, Matawa First Nations Management tribal council is conducting a two-year project focused on knowledge gathering, research, and capacity building on boreal caribou within the traditional territory of the Matawa Member First Nations. Beginning in December 2018, delegates from nine member communities gathered to discuss current boreal caribou research and data, collection of Indigenous Knowledge and “caribou stories,” future research interests, and environmental monitoring. This information will contribute to a video, Story Map and hardcopy publications that will become valuable communication tools for community impact assessment work and informed decision-making. Community outreach sessions, which targeted youth and interested community members, occurred in two First Nation communities, and included lessons on caribou ecology, research, and species at risk status.

Boreal caribou recovery in Ontario benefits from the work of multi-partner groups that are keen to build partnerships to further boreal caribou conservation and recovery. Collaborative projects, including in the Kesagami range, supported by ECCC, and in the Brightsand and Churchill ranges, aim to contribute to landscape-level planning, identify protected area opportunities, and incorporate multi-species considerations.

Canada and Ontario have made advancements and are continuing to engage on the negotiation of a draft conservation agreement under Section 11 of SARA for boreal caribou in the province. The agreement would codify measures of relevance to the protection and recovery of the species and its critical habitat.

2.6. Quebec

The Government of Quebec has reported regarding the following steps that have been taken since October 1, 2018, for the recovery and protection of boreal caribou critical habitat in Quebec:

- Continued delineation of large areas of land to maintain habitat quality in low-disturbance landscapes and to restore disturbed forest landscapes frequented by boreal caribou.

- Worked to adapt forest management planning and control disturbances in study areas, in particular by protecting forest patches, decommissioning and restoration of forest roads, maintaining the caribou habitat protection provisions of existing integrated forest management plans, and deploying harvesting sites under new forest management arrangements adapted to caribou habitat.
- Completed surveys in winter 2019 on the Lower North Shore, in Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean, in Northern Quebec and in Charlevoix. Radio collars were placed on individuals in the Val-d’Or population, which will make it possible for a survey to be carried out in fall 2019. Since the last report, the number of boreal caribou equipped with tracking collars increased from 230 to 244. In all, surveys carried out in four administrative regions covered an area totaling 123,250 km².
- Commenced a research project with the Centre for Forest Research to assess the disturbance thresholds of Quebec caribou populations as a function of forest productivity and dynamics.
- Continued research to characterize the use of old roads by boreal caribou, moose, wolves, and bears, in collaboration with the University of Quebec at Rimouski.
- Initiated a research project, with the participation of Rexforet, to characterize road networks to identify potential for decommissioning and reforestation, with an aim to restore habitat and increase connectivity.
- Announced an additional \$61.5 million over four years, through the 2019-20 budget, to:
 - Establish test areas for deployment of the new operational approach to logging sites adapted to boreal caribou habitat;
 - Begin decommissioning and reforestation of logging roads;
 - Continue the caribou population monitoring and management program; and
 - Support companies in the progressive implementation of appropriate forest planning.
- On April 3, 2019, announced the next steps in the development of the strategy for boreal and mountain caribou, which focuses on a collaborative approach involving key partners. The data currently being collected on the forest, and caribou habitat, population condition and population dynamics, will contribute to the development of the strategy by 2022.
 - The objective of the strategy will be to ensure the sustainability of the species and the socio-economic vitality of Quebec and its regions.
 - A proposal for the areas considered for the strategy, which covers about 80% of the preferred habitats of boreal caribou, has been made public. Forestry activities will be adapted to:

- Maintain quality habitat in large areas of habitat with little or no disturbance;
 - Promote active restoration in moderately to highly disturbed habitat; and
 - Increase connectivity in these areas.
- Regional operational groups will be established to bring together forestry companies and Indigenous communities to identify solutions to potential technical issues and economic impacts, based on local values and knowledge.

Additional Steps Taken in Quebec

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of Quebec, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the province are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded ten Indigenous-led projects and one multi-partner table, and NRCan funded one Indigenous-led project in Quebec. These projects focused on collection of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific research, conservation planning, creation of protected areas, engagement, population and habitat monitoring, predator control, and restoration.

For example, Innu Essipit First Nation Council is currently in the last year of a three-year project to monitor the use of closed forestry roads by boreal caribou, moose, bears and wolves, as well as other area users including fishermen, hunters, and trappers. Beginning in July 2018, 230 cameras were installed in the project area and were in operation for nearly 16 weeks. Results indicate a significant decrease in the use of the area by caribou compared to the 2017 season, and an increase in observations of moose and bears. Additionally, Le Conseil de la Nation Huronne-Wendat completed the first year of a five-year project focused on the implementation of recovery measures for boreal caribou in the Charlevoix range. In March 2019, an aerial survey for boreal caribou was completed in collaboration with the Government of Quebec, equipment was purchased to set up a black bear control project, boreal caribou disturbance awareness training was held for snowmobilers, and project planning for the following years was completed. The next four years of this project will include a number of actions, in collaboration with several partners, for the recovery of boreal caribou in the Charlevoix range.

Boreal caribou recovery in Quebec benefits from the work of multi-partner groups, some of which have been supported by ECCC, that are keen to build partnerships to further boreal caribou conservation and recovery. These collaborative projects, including one group in northwestern Quebec, aim to contribute to landscape-level planning, identify protected area opportunities, and incorporate multi-species considerations.

In April 2019, Hydro-Québec completed a ten-year telemetric monitoring program of caribou in the Romaine River hydroelectric complex construction, located in the Quebec

range. This study aims to document the impact of the construction and exploitation of hydroelectricity-generating facilities and powerlines, and their cumulative effects, on boreal caribou. In association with a university partner, Hydro-Québec is now analyzing the data and expects to communicate results in 2020. The hydroelectric company is also proposing a mitigation measure in the impact assessment of a powerline, which would be designed to allow the maintenance of forest cover under the transmission conductors, as well as deploying special access management and restoration. This measure is currently under review.

In addition to the one-year agreement for boreal caribou conservation that Canada and Quebec signed in August 2018 under the Cooperation Agreement for the Protection and Recovery of Species at Risk in Québec, the governments of Canada and Quebec have concluded the negotiation of a draft four-year conservation agreement for boreal caribou in the province. Canada and Quebec will seek to finalize the agreement in the coming months, following engagement with First Nations and stakeholders in the province, using existing provincial engagement channels for boreal caribou. The agreement codifies measures to support the conservation of the species and the protection of its critical habitat, and sets out commitments to landscape-level planning, habitat management, population monitoring and management, and creation of protected and conserved areas.

2.7. Newfoundland and Labrador

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has reported regarding the following steps that have been taken since October 1, 2018, for the recovery and protection of boreal caribou critical habitat in Labrador:

- Continued monitoring and management of caribou habitat on the landscape through various legislated processes that manage land use activities.
- Continued recovery and management planning activities, which will feature and support future land use planning, and habitat protection through forest management processes.
- Continued limitation of forest harvesting during the sensitive calving period.

Additional Steps Taken in Newfoundland and Labrador

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the province are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded four Indigenous-led projects in Newfoundland and Labrador, which focused on collection of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific research, conservation planning, engagement, and population and habitat monitoring.

For example, NunatuKavut Community Council produced factsheets and conducted outreach activities to increase awareness for community members to be the “eyes on the land,” taking an active role in stewardship. A monitoring app was developed and is contributing to a geodatabase of caribou sightings. In addition, guardians conducted detailed observational studies on the foraging habits, habitat preferences, movements, general health and interactions of boreal caribou. This work involved visual observations and images collected from field cameras. The information is available to the Indigenous Knowledge Circle and the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC) to support recovery.

Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador have concluded the negotiation of a draft conservation agreement under Section 11 of SARA for boreal caribou in the province. The [draft conservation agreement](#) was published on the Species at Risk Public Registry on June 28, 2019, for a 30-day public comment period. The draft agreement codifies concrete measures to support the conservation of the species and the protection of its critical habitat, and sets out commitments to range planning, and population monitoring and management.

2.8. Northwest Territories

The Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) has reported regarding the following steps that have been taken since October 1, 2018, for the recovery and protection of boreal caribou critical habitat in Northwest Territories:

- Completed public engagement and Indigenous consultation on the Territory’s draft *Boreal Caribou Range Planning Framework* (released in May 2018), to guide the development of regional range plans.
- Continued working on the proposed Phase II regulatory amendments under the Northwest Territories *Wildlife Act*, which would require Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plans (WMMPs) to demonstrate how developments will minimize impacts on boreal caribou and its habitat. Regulations are expected to come into force in July 2019. Guidelines for the process of requiring, submitting, reviewing, and approving WMMPs, and for what should be included in the plans, have also been completed.
- Continued development of a new *Protected Areas Act* through a partnership approach, which will enable collaboration with Indigenous governments and organizations to establish and manage protected areas in a way that protects biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural continuity. The proposed bill was brought to the Legislative Assembly in March 2019 for its first and second readings, and the Standing Committee conducted public consultation on the legislation in April 2019.
- Ongoing implementation of the *Healthy Land, Healthy People: GNWT Priorities for Advancement of Conservation Network Planning 2016-2021*, a five-year work plan for collaborative conservation network planning in the Northwest Territories. This includes two priority outcomes to conclude planning exercises for eight

existing candidate areas and develop a renewed strategy for conservation network planning. The GNWT is currently working in partnership with Indigenous governments and organizations to use the proposed *Protected Areas Act* for the establishment of two candidate areas within the boreal caribou range: Dinàgà Wek'èhodì (approximately 790 km²) and Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta (approximately 15,000 km²).

- In November 2018, renewed four interim land withdrawals under the *Northwest Territories Lands Act* until December 2020. These will support Indigenous land claim agreement negotiations and prevent the creation of interests related to activities that could destroy critical habitat in approximately 59,404 km² of the Northwest Territories range.
- Continued development of a Species at Risk and Caribou Habitat Viewer and Online Mapping Tool, with supporting funds from the Government of Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, to help developers and regulators identify, avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts of proposed development projects on critical habitat, and continued development of new Northwest Territories boreal caribou guidelines to reflect current best practices for different types of industrial development and public infrastructure projects.

Additional Steps Taken in Northwest Territories

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of Northwest Territories, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the province are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded seven Indigenous-led projects in Northwest Territories focused on collection of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific research, conservation planning, engagement, and population and habitat monitoring.

On March 13, 2019, the Government of Canada and the GNWT completed and published a [final conservation agreement](#) under Section 11 of SARA for boreal caribou in the territory. The agreement describes how the governments of Northwest Territories and Canada, the Conference of Management Authorities (CMA) and Indigenous governments, organizations, and communities will work together to support a healthy and sustainable population of boreal caribou in the Northwest Territories. Specifically, the agreement commits to the following measures based on the recommendations of the *Recovery Strategy for the Boreal Caribou (Rangifer tarandus caribou) in the Northwest Territories (2017)*:

- Engagement and consultation on range-planning framework;
- Development of regional range plans;
- Implementation of the southern range plans; and
- Evaluation of sustainable harvest rates.

In the agreement, the Government of Canada has committed to working with the GNWT, Indigenous governments, and northern Wildlife Management Boards to protect critical habitat in a manner that respects the *Northwest Territories Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement* and the GNWT's authorities to administer and control public lands and rights in respect of waters under the devolution agreement.

2.9. Yukon

The Yukon Government completed final consultation on the recommended Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan in late 2018, with final release planned for 2019. The Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan, along with related land management regulatory tools, is expected to provide protection for boreal caribou critical habitat in the territory.

In line with the commitments made under the Section 11 agreement noted below, in 2018-19, Yukon surveyed parts of the Yukon portion of the Northwest Territories range, recorded boreal caribou locations and tracks, and mapped observed distribution relative to previous collar data.

Additional Steps Taken in Yukon

In addition to the steps reported above by the Government of Yukon, initiatives to support recovery and protection outcomes for boreal caribou and its critical habitat in the territory are also being led by Indigenous governments, organizations and communities, and stakeholders. In 2018-19, ECCC funded one multi-partner project in Yukon, which focused on the creation of protected areas and engagement.

The Government of **Canada**, the Yukon Government, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, and the Gwich'in Tribal Council completed a [final conservation agreement](#) under Section 11 of SARA for boreal caribou in the territory on June 14, 2019. The agreement was published on the Species at Risk Public Registry on June 28, 2019. The multi-lateral agreement codifies the commitments of the parties to habitat protection measures for boreal caribou, in alignment with the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan.

3. Federal Steps

The 2018 [Action Plan for the Woodland Caribou \(*Rangifer tarandus caribou*\), Boreal Population, in Canada: Federal Actions](#) reaffirms that the recovery of boreal caribou requires unprecedented commitment and cooperation among the various groups involved in the conservation of the species. On that basis, it sets out a multi-pronged approach to meaningfully advance boreal caribou conservation. The Government of Canada continues to implement this approach by, for example, putting in place protection on federal lands, continuing its engagement to develop conservation agreements, supporting the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC), and providing funding to multiple partners to implement on-the-ground action and other initiatives.

3.1. Protection on Federal Lands

Pursuant to the federal Action Plan, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change published a [final Critical Habitat of the Woodland Caribou \(*Rangifer tarandus caribou*\) Boreal Population Order](#) in the *Canada Gazette*, Part II on June 26, 2019. This Order prohibits the destruction of any portion of boreal caribou critical habitat found on over 300 properties directly managed by federal government departments, agencies, and Crown corporations. These properties make up a combined area of more than 14 500 km². While only a small fraction of the area containing critical habitat is located on federally administered lands, putting in place this order is nevertheless one important step towards conserving the species through the protection of its critical habitat.

3.2. Conservation Agreements

As noted in Section 2 of this report, federal, provincial and territorial governments have made significant progress towards the negotiation and finalization of conservation agreements. These agreements aim to support the conservation of the species and the protection of its critical habitat through incremental concrete measures, for example, commitments to range-level planning, habitat protection, habitat and population management, and population monitoring.

The Government of Canada has signed final conservation agreements under Section 11 of SARA with the Government of Northwest Territories and with the Government of Saskatchewan, as well as a final multi-partite agreement with the Yukon Government, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, and the Gwich'in Tribal Council. The Government of Canada has published these [agreements on the Species at Risk Public Registry](#). The negotiation of a draft agreement under Section 11 of SARA has been completed with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition, a draft four-year agreement has been completed between the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec. Advancements have been made and parties are continuing to engage towards the completion of draft conservation agreements under Section 11 of SARA with the Governments of Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario.

3.3. Investments to Support On-the-ground Caribou Recovery Actions

Budget 2018 confirmed Canada's commitment to species at risk conservation, through a historic investment of \$1.35 billion over 5 years to advance nature conservation outcomes in Canada. Enabled by this investment, ECCC is undertaking a multi-pronged approach to boreal caribou conservation, through support for implementation of conservation agreements with provinces, territories and Indigenous Peoples, and for Indigenous and stakeholder-led on-the-ground initiatives. Grants and Contributions are being administered under a number of funding programs, including the Habitat Stewardship Program, the Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk, as well as other directed and application-based funding programs under the Canada Nature Fund, such as the Challenge and Quickstart funds. Grants and Contributions administered by other federal departments, e.g., NRCan, are also supporting caribou conservation actions.

ECCC allocated over \$5.1 million in funding for the 2018-19 fiscal year to support the implementation of conservation agreements with provinces and territories, with approximately \$12.6 million in additional commitments currently expected over the next four years. For example, in fiscal year 2018-19, ECCC provided \$3 million to Alberta, through FRIAA, to support restoration of linear disturbances in the province (see Section 2.2).

ECCC allocated over \$5.2 million for the 2018-19 fiscal year to support 43 Indigenous and stakeholder-led initiatives for boreal caribou conservation, with over \$4.6 million in additional commitments over the next four years. Additionally, NRCan provided \$75,000 to fund six Indigenous-led projects in 2018-19, and has allocated \$1.2 million over the next four years.

The funding for Indigenous-led projects supported a variety of actions, including:

- Indigenous Knowledge gathering;
- Development of restoration, recovery and community forest-use plans;
- Implementation of restoration actions;
- Conducting population surveys for caribou, predators and alternate prey species
- Monitoring wildlife occurrence in caribou habitat and their use of disturbed features; and
- Building capacity within communities.

Examples of these projects across the boreal caribou range can be found throughout Section 2 of this report. ECCC's investment also includes funding to support six Indigenous-led activities under the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC), which supports information sharing and addressing knowledge gaps in order to inform decision making for boreal caribou conservation and recovery, established in

accordance with the commitments made within the federal Action Plan (see Section 3.4).

The funding for stakeholder-led projects includes support for multi-partner tables in jurisdictions across the country, bringing together governments, industry, Indigenous Peoples, and non-governmental organizations to advance boreal caribou conservation measures, including through contributions to range planning, recommendations for protected areas, and with an interest in multi-species conservation benefits.

The Government of Canada funding for Indigenous- and multi-partner-led projects in 2018-19 supported a number of outcomes, such as the collection of Indigenous Knowledge and science, conservation planning, engagement, population and habitat monitoring, and predator control. For example:

- Fifteen projects supported the collection of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific research through the use of interviews, questionnaires, meetings, workshops, participatory mapping exercises, and field research as well as the consolidation of historical Indigenous Knowledge on boreal caribou, predators (wolves) and alternate prey. Some projects provided training for local individuals to collect Indigenous Knowledge and to complete studies on the lands. Several of these projects also focused on developing methodology to ensure Indigenous Knowledge is incorporated and woven into future recovery planning initiatives, including provincial range planning as well as using Indigenous Knowledge to identify community priorities for conservation moving forward.
- Twenty projects focused on multi-partner conservation planning, with the intention of supporting future activities. Several projects involved working with communities to develop goals and objectives for boreal caribou recovery, including the development of communication strategies, the establishment of working committees, and the creation of a collaborative knowledge portal. Working groups met to develop frameworks for range and recovery planning, supported through the analysis of spatial data. Literature reviews were conducted on caribou monitoring, predator and prey interactions, industry standards, habitat restoration, and improvement of forestry practices.
- Three projects provided educational materials to communities, students, industry, and the public. For example, one project updated educational booklets on boreal caribou recovery for students, industry, and the public, outlining boreal caribou's history, biology, and threats. Another project developed activities for a *Caribou Camp* targeted for youth, to occur in summer 2019, which will focus on teaching methods of caribou monitoring and Indigenous Knowledge collection. Another three projects focused on providing awareness to snowmobilers and back-country users on the effects of off-road travel on boreal caribou through the use of posters and face-to-face communication. Two projects disseminated information through media outlets, providing information about the threats to boreal caribou through a radio show and a newspaper article. Another project conducted video interviews from community elders about boreal caribou, which

will be shared at a later date. Members of a number of communities were informed of ongoing work related to boreal caribou, including information related to climate change, forestry management, geospatial data collection, monitoring methods, and range planning. Work was presented through workshops, posters and various meetings. A portion of total project funding was provided for travel to the meetings and workshops, as well as translation to local languages. The goal of these outreach activities is to increase community capacity and collaboration.

- Twelve projects supported caribou population and habitat monitoring activities. Funding for three of these projects supported the completion of aerial surveys for boreal caribou, including Indigenous participation where the aerial surveys were provincially led. Three projects supported surveys for boreal caribou on the ground, which also included observations of other wildlife. Four monitoring projects captured occurrences of boreal caribou, predators, and alternate prey species through the use of remote and thermal cameras. One project conducted training of camera use and selection of areas based on Indigenous Knowledge, interviews and mapping exercises with community members.
- Three projects related to predator management within boreal caribou ranges, including trapping wolves and black bears, and establishing a black bear control program.
- One project developed a restoration-training program for field technicians relating to implementation and monitoring of habitat restoration treatments for seismic lines.

In addition, funding has been provided to other initiatives that may help protect boreal caribou critical habitat and support recovery. In 2018-19, ECCC provided over \$6.2 million to 13 projects through the Quick Start Program for projects related to the development of protected and conserved areas that fall within or adjacent to the distribution of boreal caribou. For example:

- Three projects resulted in the creation of protected areas through either the relinquishment of mining and oil leases or direct land purchase. Two of these projects contributed to the creation of Kitaskino Nuwenëné Wildland Provincial Park in Alberta, as described in Section 2.2. The third resulted in two nature reserve sites totaling 217 ha on Michipicoten Island, Ontario.
- Two projects were led or supported by Indigenous communities to collaborate with key partners and the public in the preparation of conservation plans to support protection in the North French River Watershed, Ontario, and the Peel Watershed, Yukon.
- One project conducted GIS and site analyses of the Saskatchewan Upper and Lower Delta. This project contributed to the interim protection of some sections of Lobstick Lake and development of information that can help inform further protection initiatives within the Lobstick Lake area.

Additionally, Challenge Fund projects for protected and conserved areas will make a significant contribution to conserving 17% of Canada's land and freshwater, including for some areas important for boreal caribou. Proposals for projects starting in 2019-20 are currently being evaluated.

3.4. Knowledge to Support Recovery

The federal Action Plan for boreal caribou committed the Government of Canada to making key investments in the generation and sharing of knowledge to support the recovery of boreal caribou. The Government of Canada is committed to taking actions guided by sound science and Indigenous Knowledge, and working with all partners in this endeavor. Collectively, this knowledge is important for informing conservation measures such as range planning, critical habitat protection, on-the-ground recovery actions, and for designing effective regulation.

In June 2018, the Government of Canada launched the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC), a forum for collaborative knowledge generation and sharing to support boreal caribou recovery. This initiative brings together the expertise and experiences of federal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments, Indigenous and non-governmental organizations, academics, and industry stakeholders, to support information sharing and address knowledge gaps, pool capacity, identify and promote best-practices, and inform decision-making. Since the launch, the NBCKC secretariat, administered by ECCC's Science and Technology Branch, continues to share information via recurring newsletters and webinars. In collaboration with NRCan's Canadian Forest Service, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Innotech Alberta, the North American Institute of Technology and FUSE Consulting, the NBCKC Secretariat is making progress towards developing a joint knowledge-sharing portal to support boreal caribou conservation and recovery.

Working groups formed under the NBCKC are developing reports related to caribou monitoring and habitat restoration. The NBCKC secretariat has conducted over 35 interviews with knowledge holders and other experts across Canada to determine what type of monitoring is taking place across the country, what they have planned and what aspects they feel are important to have in a monitoring program. This information was shared in the form of a draft report at the June 2019 NBCKC meeting. Next, the NBCKC will develop a suite of best practices for boreal caribou population monitoring, as well as a framework for habitat restoration.

As committed to in the federal Action Plan, ECCC, in partnership with NRCan and a diverse group of partners and stakeholders, led the delivery of the 17th North American Caribou Workshop (NACW) from October 29 to November 2, 2018, under the theme of "Working Together." The workshop brought together approximately 550 people from a diverse array of organizations involved in caribou conservation. Participants shared knowledge about caribou ecology, conservation, and recovery, as well as ideas and concrete examples of successful collaborations leading to on-the-ground results.

Using satellite imagery and data (Landsat-5 data from 2008-2010, and Landsat-8 data from 2015), ECCC's Science and Technology branch previously updated and mapped human disturbance information. Coarser-resolution (30 m) information is available for 2010 and 2015 mapping on open.canada.ca, and ECCC published finer-resolution (15 m) information for the 2015 period in May 2019.

As mentioned in the December 2018 Report, the 2012 *Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou, Boreal population (Rangifer tarandus caribou) in Canada* identified critical habitat for all boreal caribou ranges in Canada with the exception of Saskatchewan's Boreal Shield range (SK1). Since 2012, ECCC has undertaken considerable science work to inform critical habitat identification for SK1, and has engaged with the Government of Saskatchewan, and directly affected Indigenous communities and stakeholders. A [proposed Amended Recovery Strategy, including the identification of critical habitat in SK1](#), was published on the Species at Risk Public Registry on June 28, 2019 for a 60-day public comment period.

Under its Canadian Forest Service Cumulative Effects Program, NRCan is conducting science-based research ranging from the development of tools and techniques to restore caribou habitat, to modelling the anticipated impacts of cumulative effects and climate change, to using socioeconomic analyses to better understand the diversity and full scope of impacts of any proposed caribou recovery actions on communities.

Momentum is growing to support greater collaboration on active restoration of forested land in Canada through efforts led by industry and government. In northeast Alberta, NRCan is collaborating with oil and gas industry organizations, such as Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance (COSIA) and the Regional Industry Caribou Collaboration (RICC), to co-develop knowledge products with the ultimate goal of accelerating caribou habitat restoration. Recently developed products include a Silviculture Toolkit, as well as Virtual Field Tours that demonstrate the effectiveness of successful restoration practices at disturbed sites. Knowledge sharing and adoption of new practices by resource managers will be critical for the long-term recovery of caribou.

A multi-disciplinary team of NRCan scientists is working with ECCC to study the factors that influence and predict where boreal caribou are found across Canada. The model they have developed shows that climate is an important driver of both caribou habitat and the location of caribou populations. Research results were shared with a diverse group of individuals involved in caribou management, conservation, and recovery efforts at the NACW in October 2018. Future work will focus on suitable habitat conditions for boreal caribou in a changing climate, to inform range planning and sustainable resource development activities being conducted by provinces, territories, Indigenous organizations, industry and others.

Other areas of work on knowledge to support boreal caribou recovery and critical habitat protection, undertaken or supported by ECCC in partnership with various other groups including NRCan, include research on caribou and its habitat to inform range and action planning. For example:

- Enhanced analysis of the relationship between different types of disturbance and boreal caribou population response.
- Development of methods and tools to help decision-makers allocate resources for conservation in a way that maximizes the probability of achieving recovery outcomes under resource constraints, at both national and more local spatial scales.
- Publication of an [assessment](#) of the value of boreal caribou as a ‘focal’ or ‘umbrella’ species for conservation of mammalian and avian richness in the boreal region and exploration of reserve networks through optimization modelling to achieve conservation goals.

3.5. Codes of Practice, National Standards, and Guidelines

SARA provides for the development and establishment of codes of practice, national standards, or guidelines, which may also support the stewardship and protection of species at risk. Under the Government of Canada’s current work for priority species, sectors and places, Canada is working to develop guidance, which will support the use of codes of practice, national standards, and guidelines. In doing this work, Canada will explore how external certification systems could be used to provide the government with important information about the conservation of species at risk habitat.

In the forest sector, forest management certification involves third-party verification of conformance with voluntary standards that may cover topics ranging from compliance with the law, public participation, conservation of biodiversity and respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples. In Canada, roughly 170 million ha of forest are certified to requirements set by one of three certification systems. Canada is already seeing that the two biggest certification systems are proactively adapting their own standards in an effort to provide relevant information:

- In June 2019, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Canada launched a new national forest stewardship standard, which includes generally applicable species at risk requirements as well as a specific indicator (requirement) for boreal caribou. The standard provides three alternative pathways to demonstrate conformance with the caribou indicator: (1) implementation of a SARA-compliant range plan; (2) implementation of management actions that become more stringent with increasing levels of cumulative disturbance; or (3) a collaboratively developed caribou conservation plan that takes account of new science and incorporates knowledge from Indigenous Peoples. Elements of ECCC’s 2012 Recovery Strategy and 2016 [Range Plan Guidance for Woodland Caribou, Boreal Population](#) are incorporated in FSC’s caribou indicator. According to the new forest stewardship standard, FSC-certified forest management, including caribou conservation measures, must uphold the right of Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples.
- The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) has developed a draft voluntary additional module for species at risk. The module is a tool for SFI Program

Participants that wish to increase the level of transparency related to their species at risk programs and/or demonstrate how they incorporate the expectations of recovery strategies developed by provincial and/or federal agencies within their species at risk programs. This draft module is currently under review.

Canada will consider these two examples, and others, in forming its policy related to codes of practice, national standards and guidelines.

4. Conclusion

This report demonstrates tangible progress by partners and stakeholders towards protection for boreal caribou critical habitat. The implementation of on-the-ground actions, and the completion of range plans or other landscape-level planning, will sustain momentum over the coming months.

The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change will continue to publish reports on steps taken to protect portions of critical habitat for boreal caribou for every 180-day period, as required under SARA.