

## Revelstoke Caribou Rearing in the Wild (RCRW)

1761 Big Eddy Road, PO Box 9158, RPO #3,  
Revelstoke, BC, Canada, V0E 3K0  
(w) (250) 837-7611, (fax) 250-837-7626

June 1, 2012

Dear xxxx,

Revelstoke Caribou Rearing in the Wild (RCRW) is a community based partnership, consisting of a group of individuals and organizations committed to the recovery of caribou in the Revelstoke area. The goal and sole focus of RCRW is to fundraise, plan and conduct captive rearing of southern mountain caribou in the wild to increase caribou calf survival in the Columbia Mountains over a five-year period.

Mountain caribou that inhabit the Columbia Mountains surrounding Revelstoke are listed as threatened under the Federal Species at Risk Act<sup>i</sup>, and listed as endangered by the Province of British Columbia. Caribou subpopulations near Revelstoke are declining at a rate that will likely result in extirpation for certain herds in the near future<sup>ii</sup>. Actions are required now to halt and reverse this decline.

Pregnancy rates for mountain caribou are consistently high<sup>iii</sup>, however the number of calves surviving to 10 months of age has declined<sup>iv</sup> and calf numbers are too low to sustain the population<sup>v</sup>.

Captive rearing, in the wild, also known as maternity penning, is a method that has been used in the Yukon and Alberta to increase calf survival. After thorough review and approval from wildlife health specialists, pregnant female caribou are captured in late spring and transported a short distance to a secure enclosure within caribou range. The highest standards of animal welfare and care are employed; females are fed a healthy diet, receive veterinary care, and are monitored 24 hours a day. The cow and calf are released approximately one month after calving, once calves are larger and more capable of escaping predators. Calf survival is monitored to determine if captive rearing is successful in improving calf survival. This monitoring may lead to a better understanding of the factors limiting calf survival.

Founding members of the RCRW are a cross representation of varying stakeholders in the region, including provincial and federal levels of government, industry, tourism/recreation users, environmental organizations, and academia. Members who are working together to alter the present decline of caribou populations in the area include:

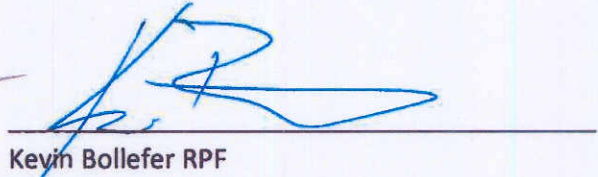
- Revelstoke Community Forestry Corporation
- BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
- North Columbia Environmental Society (NCES)
- Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks
- Revelstoke Snowmobile Society
- Columbia Mountains Caribou Research Project<sup>vi</sup>

For further information please contact project lead Cory S. Legebokow, Habitat Officer with the British Columbia Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations at (250) 837-7711.

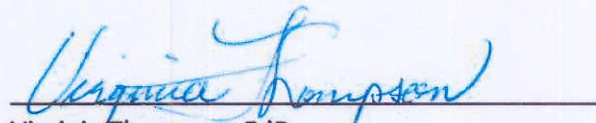
Sincerely,



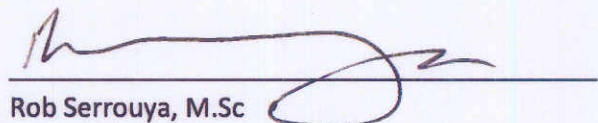
Cory Legebokow  
Habitat Officer - BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and  
Natural Resource Operations



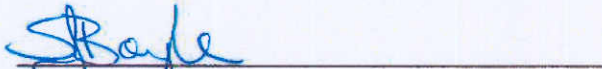
Kevin Bollefer RPF  
Operations Forester- Revelstoke Community  
Forestry Corporation



Virginia Thompson EdD  
Chair Mountain Caribou Committee – NCES  
NCES Representative – Mountain Caribou Project



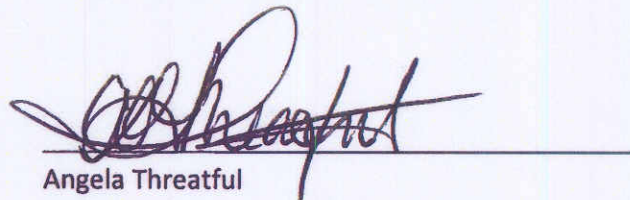
Rob Serrouya, M.Sc  
Researcher- Columbia Mountains Caribou  
Research Project<sup>1</sup>



Sarah Boyle, M. Sc, P.Biol  
A/ Manager Resource Conservation  
Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks



Kelsey Furk  
A/ Wildlife Biologist  
Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks



Angela Threatful  
Executive Director - Revelstoke Snowmobile  
Society

<sup>1</sup>A group of researchers including Bruce McLellan, PhD, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (Research Branch) and Robert Serrouya, PhD candidate, University of Alberta.



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<sup>i</sup> Further reading on mountain caribou ecology and conservation:

- Province of British Columbia - Mountain Caribou Recovery  
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/speciesconservation/mc/index.html>
- The Chisana Recovery Program  
[http://www.yfwcm.ca/YukonWolfPlanReview/going/documents/ChisanarecoveryprogramsummaryFINALApr\\_11x\\_2013.pdf](http://www.yfwcm.ca/YukonWolfPlanReview/going/documents/ChisanarecoveryprogramsummaryFINALApr_11x_2013.pdf)
- Species at Risk Public Registry  
[http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/species/speciesDetails\\_e.cfm?sid=638#docs](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/species/speciesDetails_e.cfm?sid=638#docs)
- Parks Canada Conservation Strategy <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/mtn/caribou/index.aspx>
- Mountain caribou in British Columbia, Canada  
[http://www.eoearth.org/article/Mountain\\_caribou\\_in\\_British\\_Columbia,\\_Canada](http://www.eoearth.org/article/Mountain_caribou_in_British_Columbia,_Canada)

## References

<sup>ii</sup> Wittmer H.U., Ahrens R.N.M., McLellan B.N.. 2010. Viability of mountain caribou in British Columbia, Canada: Effects of habitat change and population density. *Biological Conservation* 143: 86-93.

<sup>iii</sup> Wittmer, H.U., McLellan, B.N., Seip, D.R., Young, J.A., Kinley, T.A., Watts, G.S. & Hamilton, D. 2005. Population dynamics of the endangered mountain ecotype of woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*) in British Columbia, Canada. *Canadian Journal of Zoology*, 83, 407–418.

<sup>iv</sup> K. Simpson and G.P. Woods. 1987. Movements and habitats of caribou in the mountains of southern British Columbia. BC Ministry of Environment and Parks. Wildlife Bulletin No. B-57.

<sup>v</sup> Furk, K., Serrouya, R., and Legebokow, C. 2011. Population Census of Mountain Caribou in the North Columbia Mountains; March 2011 – Columbia North, Columbia South, Frisby-Queest and Monashee South subpopulation. Ministry of Natural Resource Operations: Nelson, B.C.