

**From:** "ENVMail ENV:EX" <[env.mail@gov.bc.ca](mailto:env.mail@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject: Update: Southern Mountain Caribou**  
**Date:** 30 March, 2017 9:39:34 AM PDT  
**To:** "'[aburger@uvic.ca](mailto:aburger@uvic.ca)'" <[aburger@uvic.ca](mailto:aburger@uvic.ca)>

Reference: 308913

*March 30, 2017*

Email: [aburger@uvic.ca](mailto:aburger@uvic.ca)

Dear BC Nature Federation of BC Naturalists:

We would like to provide an update on the recent and upcoming protection and recovery activity underway for Southern Mountain Caribou (SMC) in British Columbia (BC). Thank you to those who have provided feedback on the recently released *Canada-BC Southern Mountain Caribou Protection Study (Central Group)*; we look forward to future engagement as we progress through the next stages of this work.

With the upcoming provincial election, taking place May 9, 2017, BC is approaching an interregnum period, during which normal government communication activities are suspended. The interregnum begins with the launch of the official election campaign period and ends when the next Government comes into force in mid-June. Following provincial guidelines, all Government of BC communications will be limited to public health and safety as of March 31, 2017. Following the interregnum period, we will schedule further calls to provide updates on progress and activity.

Please see below highlights from the work completed to date as well as work underway related to the protection and recovery of SMC in BC:

- **The *Canada-BC Southern Mountain Caribou Protection Study (Central Group) (the Study)*:** The Study was published on February 24, 2017, for a 30-day public comment period, closing on March 26, 2017. The Study is available on Environment and Climate Change Canada's (ECCC's) website [here](#). The Study covers a biological review of the status of the Central Group herds, a legislative review of protections in BC, a review of the non-habitat measures in BC, and mapping of land-management designations in the Province for the Central Group herds. The Study will be used to inform provincial action to protect and recover caribou as well as federal decisions under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). The Southern Group and Northern Group herds of SMC will be the focus of phase two of the Study, expected later in 2017.
- **Critical Habitat Protection Assessment on Non-federal Lands (CHPA) for Southern Mountain Caribou:** The CHPA is a draft federal policy under the SARA that will, when finalized, guide ECCC's assessment of whether existing laws and measures effectively protect critical habitat identified in federal recovery documents across Canada. Further information on the draft CHPA policy can be found [here](#); the federal comment period

closes on March 31, 2017. The posted recovery strategy for SMC can be found on the SARA website [here](#). ECCC has started to assess critical habitat protection for SMC in BC against the 2014 SMC Recovery Strategy using information sources such as the Study. The results of the CHPA will be used to inform federal decision-making under the SARA with respect to the ongoing protection and recovery of SMC.

- **Quintette Strategic Action Plan (QSAP):** The QSAP is a BC initiative, endorsed by the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations on March 1, 2017. The QSAP focuses on nine key activities for the protection and recovery of the Quintette herd. As the Province moves toward more detailed planning and implementation of the QSAP, stakeholders, First Nations and the public will be provided information updates and further opportunities for engagement. The QSAP will inform a revision of the Province's recovery planning for the Central Group of SMC through the Peace Northern Caribou Plan. This work is financially supported by the commitment of \$27 million over three years for province-wide caribou work, which was [announced by the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier](#), on February 1, 2017.

If you have further questions on the SMC CHPA, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Barry Smith of the Canadian Wildlife Service at [Barry.Smith@canada.ca](mailto:Barry.Smith@canada.ca).

If you have additional questions about BC's actions to protect and recover caribou across the Province, please contact Mr. Chris Hamilton at [Chris.Hamilton@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chris.Hamilton@gov.bc.ca). If you have questions regarding the QSAP, please contact Ms. Morgan Kennah at [Morgan.Kennah@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Morgan.Kennah@gov.bc.ca).

Sincerely,

Kaaren Lewis,  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Environmental Sustainability and  
Strategic Policy Division  
Ministry of Environment

Tom Ethier  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
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Ministry of Forests, Lands and  
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cc: Scott Bailey, Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Assessment Office  
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Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
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Peter Robb, Assistant Deputy Minister, Mines and Mineral Resources Division, Ministry  
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