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NBCKC

Newsletter

Special Edition: Annual Report

The National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium is a forum for collaborative knowledge generation and sharing to support conservation and recovery of boreal caribou.

Working together to support boreal caribou recovery

At the start of June, the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC) met face-to-face for the first time since the official launch of the initiative in 2018. The purpose of the meeting was to provide updates on boreal caribou projects underway across the country, share lessons learned, update on the work completed by the NBCKC over the past year, and set the direction for the coming year. This meeting reinforced the idea that the NBCKC will play a key role in supporting the conservation and recovery of boreal caribou by identifying and addressing remaining knowledge gaps; bringing together best practices and data; and mobilizing Indigenous knowledge and science to inform decision makers. A recurring theme throughout the meeting was that Indigenous peoples will play a leading role in research, planning and actions to support boreal caribou conservation and recovery. In the coming year, the NBCKC will work to launch an online knowledge sharing portal; develop best

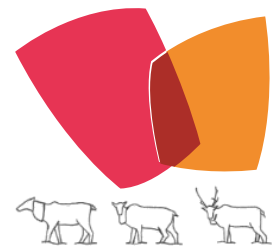
practices for monitoring; refine a habitat restoration framework; and form a new working group to assess and guide stewardship and management actions for boreal caribou.

It is hard to believe that a year has passed since approximately 50 boreal caribou experts and knowledge holders gathered in Ottawa to establish the NBCKC in June 2018. In year one, our membership grew and changed to achieve what is now a balanced representation consisting of federal, provincial, and territorial governments, Indigenous peoples and organizations, wildlife co-management boards, environmental non-governmental organizations, academics and industry. The NBCKC has seen many successes in its first year; these will be detailed in this annual report.

Sincerely, *The NBCKC Secretariat*



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National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium



Indigenous Knowledge Circle

Indigenous peoples play a key role in guiding conservation and recovery actions for boreal caribou. Fulsome and meaningful Indigenous involvement in the NBCKC is facilitated through an Indigenous Knowledge Circle (IKC) comprised of approximately 20 members representing First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and organizations as well as wildlife co-management boards. The IKC works to amplify messaging from Indigenous peoples, apply pressure to decision makers, advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, and advise on how to respectfully learn from and apply Indigenous knowledge as another way of knowing.



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- *The IKC met face-to-face for the first time in Ottawa on June 4th, 2019.*

In June 2019, the members of the IKC met to discuss priorities concerning boreal caribou work from an Indigenous perspective. Members used this time to collaboratively draft a mandate for the group and developed action items for the year to come. Associate Deputy Minister of ECCC, Dr. Martine Dubuc, attended part of this meeting and heard concerns and recommendations from the IKC. In the coming year, the IKC will convene monthly to discuss issues, provide guidance to working groups and raise awareness of the NBCKC within the Indigenous community.

NBCKC: In Action

Monitoring Working Group

The Monitoring Working Group (MWG) was formed in September 2018, and consists of 46 members from across a broad range of organizations who have extensive experience with and knowledge of boreal caribou.

The goals of the MWG are to (i) explore the diversity of monitoring priorities and constraints across the boreal range; (ii) evaluate the variability in methods used to monitor boreal caribou across Canada; and (iii) recommend 'best practices' for boreal caribou monitoring in Canada.

Since forming, the MWG has conducted interviews with over 35 knowledge holders across Canada and synthesized the results into a report which details the current state of monitoring across the country. A draft of this report (Part I: Perspectives on Boreal Caribou Monitoring in Canada) was presented at the June 2019 face-to-face meeting and will be finalized later this summer.



© Sarah Schmid

- *Indigenous-led caribou monitoring using camera traps in SK.*

As a follow-up to Part I, the working group is currently compiling up-to-date information on caribou monitoring methods used across Canada from its expert members, and is working to develop a suite of best practices for monitoring boreal caribou in a variety of potential ecological and economic conditions. This work will be released in a second report (Part II: Monitoring Practices).

Habitat Restoration Working Group

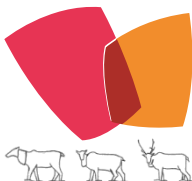
The Habitat Restoration Working Group (HRWG) was established in March 2019 and consists of 37 members from across the boreal caribou range, representing FTP governments, Indigenous organizations and communities, industry, ENGOs and academia.



© Katalin MacAfee

- *Restoration project underway in AB.*

Since its formation, the HRWG has held three meetings and is currently working towards developing a Habitat Restoration Framework. While still under discussion, the key objectives of the framework will be to facilitate communication of lessons learned through ongoing restoration work across Canada using a conceptual ecological model and to provide a decision support tool for habitat stewards looking to undertake restoration projects. Following feedback received during the NBCKC face-to-face meeting in June, the HRWG will continue to refine the framework and outline how this will complement existing restoration tools. The working group has also compiled a review table, documenting restoration projects undertaken by working group members in their respective jurisdictions. These projects will be added to the NBCKC interactive map that is currently in development.





Online Knowledge Portal

The NBCKC Secretariat has partnered with Ducks Unlimited Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Innotech Alberta and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology to form the Canadian Conservation and Land Management (CCLM) Knowledge Network. The purpose of this network is to leverage the resources of its members to create an online forum for sharing information and lessons learned about boreal caribou conservation, wetland best practices, and land restoration and reclamation. Completion of the knowledge portal and map will fulfill a number of desired outcomes raised at the NBCKC June meeting, such as providing partnership opportunities, building trust by sharing data and information, and allowing future research to build off of past work and lessons learned.

The CCLM team has entered into the next phase of the project and has hired a web developer to build the joint online knowledge portal. A subset of the NBCKC will be engaged on a regular basis to provide additional feedback during the development phase.

NBCKC Bi-Monthly Newsletter

The NBCKC bi-monthly newsletter is a tool that we, the NBCKC Secretariat, use to communicate updates, news and important information to the NBCKC, its working groups and others interested in this initiative. Each edition features updates on our key areas of focus which include the working groups, the knowledge sharing portal and the Indigenous Knowledge Circle. Following feedback heard during the NBCKC June meeting we will be making some modifications to the newsletter going forward to convey additional information of interest. If you have suggestions on updates you would like to receive let us know!

NBCKC: Communications

NBCKC Webinar Series

Launched in October 2018, the NBCKC Webinar Series is a forum for those working on caribou conservation and recovery to share their work. To date, the NBCKC and a wider audience of some 150 people across Canada have learned about topics relating to non-invasive monitoring using genomics data, ongoing restoration work, the Caribou Patrol Program and caribou health/nutrition. These seminars will help convey knowledge gained and lessons learned from work taking place across the boreal caribou range. Interested in showcasing your work as part of this seminar series? Contact the NBCKC Secretariat to book a time slot!

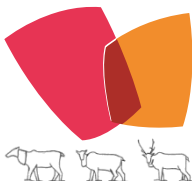


NBCKC On The Land

The IKC has advised the Secretariat that a multi-pronged communications strategy will be needed to reach the broadest number of people possible. Interactive maps, knowledge portals, newsletters and seminars, although useful, may not reach those in remote communities. In our first year, the NBCKC Secretariat was welcomed by many Indigenous communities, primarily in NWT, AB, SK and QC, to speak about the work of the NBCKC. In year two, the Secretariat will work with the IKC to identify places to visit next.



➤ *The NBCKC Secretariat met with several NBCKC members across Canada in year 1.*



National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium

© Dennis Brannen



Indigenous Knowledge Circle

Going forward, the IKC will convene monthly to work towards their objectives. This year, the IKC plans to focus their efforts on sharing successful cases where science and Indigenous Knowledge (IK) have been considered equally, identify where Traditional Knowledge reviews are needed, and consolidate funding opportunities to support Indigenous-led work. The IKC will also support the Secretariat in devising a strategy for communicating information to Indigenous communities. If you would like to find out how your community can become involved in the NBCKC, please contact the Secretariat by email.



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➤ *The IKC in Ottawa on June 4th, 2019.*



© Gerry Racey

➤ *We are stewards of this land.*

NBCKC: Next Steps

Future Directions

Playing a stewardship role on behalf of wildlife can be complex. In the case of boreal caribou stewardship, various management actions may often be necessary in the short term to ensure population survival while longer term strategies can be prepared and implemented. These measures might include, for example, maternal penning, predator control and/or constructing large inclosures. However, there is often disagreement concerning which management actions to take and when. Given the diverse perspectives on this topic, the NBCKC has discussed the need to better understand the issue. In the coming year, the NBCKC will guide the creation of a working group to look more closely at stewardship and management of boreal caribou.

Other topics of interest that have been raised in the past year include caribou health and chronic wasting disease, climate change, communications (and social factors) to inform action, socioeconomics, habitat mapping and modelling, genetics based monitoring methods, prioritization of conservation actions, and multi-species planning. These topics and the knowledge gaps associated with them will continue to inform the NBCKC's direction as we move forward in this next year. As the reach of the NBCKC and its partnerships grow, we look to you to be the roots for collaborative knowledge generation and sharing to support boreal caribou conservation and recovery.

NBCKC – Year 1 and beyond

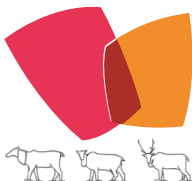
The National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC) was created as a result of a commitment made by the federal government under the 2018 Action Plan for Woodland Caribou, boreal population. The NBCKC is a forum for sharing knowledge and lessons learned, as well as pooling capacity to collaboratively address key knowledge gaps to inform the conservation and recovery of boreal caribou across Canada. Although coordinated by a secretariat housed by the Science & Technology Branch of Environment and Climate Change Canada, the direction of the NBCKC is driven by its members, who come from academia, Indigenous organizations, wildlife co-management boards, industry, NGOs, as well as federal, provincial and territorial governments. The NBCKC has made considerable progress in its first year and the Secretariat wishes to thank all of our members for their hard work and dedication, to-date. In year two, we will continue to build on the momentum we have achieved to support of boreal caribou conservation and recovery.

We look forward to our next steps and wish to thank all those involved in the NBCKC this year for your work, commitment and contributions!

~ The NBCKC Secretariat



© Gerry Racey



National Boreal Caribou Knowledge
Consortium

NBCKC Milestones At-A-Glance

A forum for collaborative knowledge generation and sharing to support boreal caribou conservation and recovery.

FEB '18

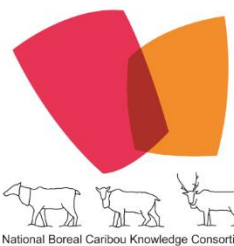
NBCKC Secretariat Formed

Action Plan

Calls for the creation of a National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium

JUNE '18

NBCKC Launch



NBCKC Webinar Series Launch

SEPT '18

Monitoring Working Group Established

Building the Indigenous Knowledge Circle

NBCKC Secretariat meets with Indigenous communities and organizations in the western and northern boreal regions.

Exploring an Online Knowledge Sharing Portal

Knowledge Portal Co-operative Meets in Ottawa



Monitoring Working Group Interviews

Webinar:

Long-term non-invasive monitoring of caribou: Transitioning from genetics to genomics.

DEC '18

NBCKC Annual December Teleconference

Building the Indigenous Knowledge Circle

NBCKC Secretariat meets with Indigenous communities and organizations in the eastern boreal region.

Webinar:

Assessment and results of restoration activities in the boreal.

MARCH '19

Habitat Restoration Working Group Established



Webinar:

Caribou Patrol Program.

CCLM Established

NBCKC Secretariat joined with Ducks Unlimited, Natural Resources Canada, Innotech Alberta, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and Fuse Consulting to develop a joint knowledge portal.

April '19

Webinar:

Body condition, summer nutrition, and survival of adult female woodland caribou: Causal linkages or spurious association in western Canada?



JUNE '19

Indigenous Knowledge Circle Meeting



NBCKC Annual June Meeting



National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium