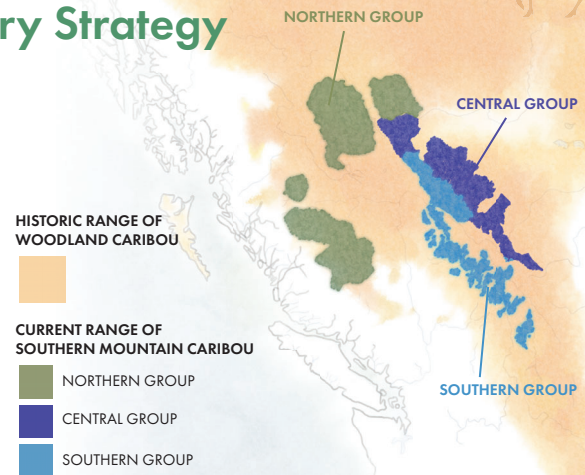


Environment and Climate Change Canada 2021 Caribou Workshops: Working Together to Include Indigenous Knowledge in the Southern Mountain Caribou Recovery Strategy

An opportunity to amend the 2014 Recovery Strategy

Caribou occupy a central place in the identities and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and are an important part of boreal forest and mountain ecosystems. Many caribou populations are in decline, which is a significant conservation concern.

Southern Mountain Caribou were listed as Threatened under the federal Species at Risk Act in 2003, and in 2014 the Government of Canada produced a Recovery Strategy for Southern Mountain Caribou. A Recovery Strategy is a planning document that identifies what needs to be done to reverse the decline of a species. The Species at Risk Act allows for amendments to be made to Recovery Strategies.



The federal Southern Mountain Caribou Recovery Strategy is now being updated, with one of the key goals being to improve the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous languages where appropriate and supported by communities.



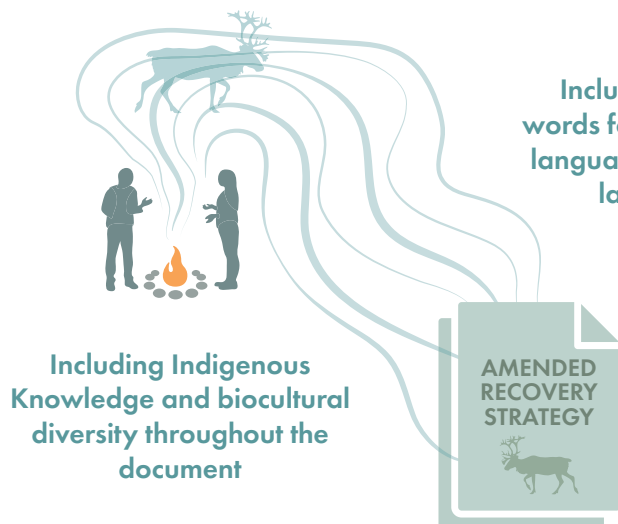
First step: winter 2021 workshops

As a first step, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) hosted nine virtual workshops in collaboration with the Center for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER). The purpose of the workshops was to:

- Provide information on the Recovery Strategy amendment.
- Begin to co-develop the process for cooperation with Indigenous communities.
- Begin discussing how content related to Indigenous Knowledge and language can be respectfully included in the Recovery Strategy.

Note: these workshops were held for informational purposes and were not considered Consultation on their own.

Some ideas ECCC is currently exploring:



Including Indigenous words for caribou, through language tables and/or a language map

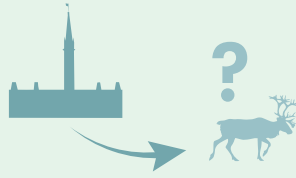


What we heard

89 participants from 52 Indigenous communities or organizations participated in the workshops. Some things we heard were:



Educating youth on Indigenous language and ecological knowledge is a priority



Concern about the federal government's ability to take concrete action



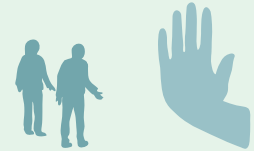
Capacity and funding are the biggest barriers to participation



There should be a focus on community-driven action to combat caribou decline



Communities want to connect and learn from each other on efforts to protect caribou



Systemic racism and discrimination pose a threat to Indigenous Peoples' ability to take action to recover caribou

Indigenous Peoples want to meaningfully engage in the recovery process.

Proposed next steps

These workshops are only the first of many steps towards meaningful and respectful inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in the Recovery Strategy for Southern Mountain Caribou. ECCC understands that not all Indigenous Knowledge is meant to be shared outside of communities, and only knowledge that is approved will appear in the Recovery Strategy.

2021
WINTER

- 3 overview workshops and 6 half day workshops focused on caribou (COMPLETE).
- Co-develop the process for collaboration.
- Begin discussions on content.

2021
SUMMER/FALL

- Cooperate with Indigenous communities on inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge and language (likely through direct communication and additional workshops).
- Anticipated completion of draft Critical Habitat model for central group, to be brought to Indigenous communities for feedback.

2022

- Completion of Critical Habitat models, additional feedback from Indigenous communities.
- Potential posting of Amended Recovery Strategy.

Connect with us

If you have questions, concerns, or ideas to share, we want to hear from you. Please reach out to Jean Polfus (jean.polfus@canada.ca) or Robin Steenweg (robin.steenweg@canada.ca), Canadian Wildlife Service, ECCC.

