

Project Profile

Project Name:	Pilot Research on Reducing the Threat of Predation Utilizing First Nation Expertise and Resources
Project Number:	BCIP-2016-20
Proponent:	Wildlife Infometrics Inc. / Prophet River First Nation
Funding Envelope:	Boreal Caribou
Timeframe:	January 20, 2016 to July 31, 2016

Project objectives

This project aims to research the use of First Nation expertise and resources to reduce the threat of predation by wolves for the Prophet boreal caribou herd as well as increase safety for pets and children around the community of Prophet River.

Project description

Many populations of woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*) in British Columbia (BC) are in decline and in some cases, are at risk of extirpation. There are currently 6 designated boreal caribou ranges in BC, an ecotype of woodland caribou, and because of population declines and range retraction they are red-listed provincially and federally designated as *Threatened* under the *Species At Risk Act*. The proximate cause of the decline has been related to excessive predation. In northeastern BC, wolves are generally thought to be responsible for at least half of the annual mortality to adults and some of the mortality to newborn calves. In 2010, the Prophet boreal caribou herd was estimated at 54 caribou. One of the goals of the BC's Boreal Caribou Implementation plan is to reduce the risk of extirpation of this herd. Under the current practices, without mitigation efforts it is estimated that there is a 99% probability that this herd will be extirpated in less than 50 years¹. The overall goal of this project is to reduce the threat of predation by wolves on the Prophet caribou herd by utilizing expertise and resources from the Prophet River First Nation. The research will provide information on:

- Best practices with respect to utilizing First Nation expertise and resources in predator management.
- Cost effectiveness of predator management by First Nation expertise and resources.

¹ B.C. Ministry of Environment. 2011. Implementation plan for the ongoing management of Boreal Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*) in British Columbia. Victoria, BC. 17 pp.

Project approach

The project will be carried out in 3 Phases:

1. Phase 1 – Orientation Workshop

A one day workshop in Prophet River to go over goals of the project and data collection requirements.

2. Phase 2 – Wolf Reduction

Prophet River First Nation hunters and trappers will be conducting wolf reduction activities and providing data back to the PRFN Lands Coordinator.

3. Phase 3 – Report Writing

Data will be summarized and reported in the form of progress reports and a final report. The final report will describe:

- Activities undertaken in the research and the corresponding results.
- Best practices and cost effectiveness for using First Nation resources in predator management.

Project deliverables

The deliverable from this project include the following:

1. Progress reports
2. Final report on pilot research findings.
3. Presentation on pilot research findings.