

January/13/2000

Notes from Wed Jan 12, 00 meeting held with the BV Rod and Gun Club

I was asked to give an information session to the local club.

I basically gave the update on the Telkwa Caribou project. With questions and discussions from those present.

Some of the comments and concerns discussed were:

Comment: If legislation was implemented it would never be revoked.

Reply: *the recommendations being made at present and any legislation as a result of that would be on the basis of reducing the liabilities to the Telkwa Caribou recovery project. If at some point there was no need for legislation to protect the caribou (IE the caribou disappeared) the legislation would no longer be supported by this Ministry for that purpose.*

Comment: There needs to be short Term, Mid Term and Long Term goals established in order to be able to properly evaluate whether or not the Project is working.

Reply: *We do have long term goals of establishing and maintaining a viable caribou population in the area where recruitment meets or exceeds mortality, I am not sure when or under what circumstances we would be prepared to throw in the towel.*

Comment: If an area is critical and needs to be closed to access then the entire area should be closed to everyone

Reply: *When the plan was first presented to the public in 1997 the intent was to implement access legislation. The feedback we got was that the public did not want legislation. Instead of legislation the voluntary compliance approach was initiated with the understanding that if, after monitoring, voluntary compliance was not adequately reducing the risk to caribou we would recommend legislation where required. As all uses do not necessarily present the same degree of liability, depending on activity, timing and frequency, unacceptable liabilities can be addressed without blanket legislation.*

Comment: You seem to be picking on motorized users.

Reply: *Again, we try to address the factors that are causing the greatest liability to the Telkwa caribou herd. Because of the amount of area that can be covered, the number of machines involved, the disturbance factor (noise and habitat degradation) motorized users is one of the larger liabilities. Decisions made have nothing to do with favouring one group of users over another.*

Comment: How long are you going to keep bringing in caribou before you realize that it is not going to work?

Reply: *We are no planning on bringing in any more caribou at this time. The intent is to do everything we can to try to ensure that the existing caribou establish a viable population. I certainly will not be recommending transplanting more caribou.*

Comment: Are there enough bulls?

Reply: *There appears to be an adequate number of bulls in the herd .*

Comment: Starr Cr area does not seem to have any evidence of caribou use in the winter so why can you not allow snowmobiles especially when you allow helicopters to bring in skiers.

Reply: *Historically caribou have been known to use the area to the west of Mooseskin Johnny Lk and even though they are not there now does not mean that they will not be requiring the area when the herd expands. I will discuss the possibility of some controlled access with the Telkwa Caribou Recovery team.*

Comment: We do not like the fact that other non-local people can make decisions on CITES which will affect us locally

Reply: *Cites is a designation, which basically ranks the species as to its status (red, blue or yellow). Just because a species is given a red listed designation does not necessarily mean that hunting will automatically be forbidden for all of the populations of that species. For instance there could be five different populations of that species , four of which are not doing well and one is actually stable or increasing on which hunting could safely be sustained without putting that particular population at risk.*

At the end of the meeting there was conditional support for the project. They would like something written down regarding timelines and evaluations. They will support biological decisions they agree with but not decisions that appear to be social.