

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

<b>Project Name:</b>	Caribou Sub-Regional Task Forces
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Craig Dockrill, Director, Land and Environmental Planning - North
<b>Project Sponsor:</b>	Brian Makowecki, Executive Director Planning Branch
<b>Version:</b>	15
<b>Date:</b>	8/2/2019

### 1 Introduction / Background

The Government of Alberta is committed to jobs, building local economies, supporting strong communities, and working towards achieving and maintaining naturally self-sustaining populations of caribou over the long term. Sub-regional plans will be built on a foundation of science and socio-economic assessments, which help us to understand how sub-regional plans fit within local and regional economies.

Engagement with industry stakeholders, Indigenous peoples, and the public has highlighted the need for increased involvement from communities, stakeholders, and Indigenous peoples during planning initiatives.

Several multi-stakeholder committees have been established to support caribou-specific planning in the Little Smoky and A La Pêche ranges over the years, yet an approved caribou range plan for those areas remains elusive.

The Government of Alberta is advancing a more holistic approach to caribou recovery planning for our 15 local population units through sub-regional planning initiatives. Aligning the geographic scope and impetus for planning initiatives with local peoples' understanding and use of our landscapes allows for sub-regional plans that advance multi-species conservation and provide lands for economic opportunities, recreational pursuits and other societal interests.

Sub-regional task forces will include participants from First Nations, Métis groups, municipalities, environmental non-government organizations (ENGOS), forest industry, energy industry, trappers and other land users.

### 2 Purpose / Scope

The Government of Alberta is looking for increased levels of collaboration and involvement from Indigenous peoples and stakeholders in the development of sub-regional plans that can advance caribou recovery. Sub-regions will be larger than caribou ranges to ensure a multitude of factors can be considered. This approach will allow land management solutions, as well as caribou recovery solutions, to be recommended directly by those working and living within caribou ranges.

The purpose of the Caribou Sub-Regional Task Forces (task forces) will be:

- To advise government regarding the sub-regional planning process to ensure local input and regarding the substance of the plans.
- To ensure that sub-regional plans, including caribou range plans are subject to a comprehensive social-economic impact assessment
- To review and consider the Draft Provincial Woodland Caribou Range Plan (Dec. 2017) in the context of more holistic sub-regional planning

The task forces will need to develop processes that enable impacted land users to be involved in the design of sub-regional plans.

The task forces will operate in an advisory capacity to government and submit their recommendations to the Government of Alberta (government) via the Minister of Environment and Parks. The government will retain final decision-making on Alberta's sub-regional plans and will be ultimately accountable for implementation.

### 3 Goals and Objectives

**Goal of the Task Forces:** to produce recommended sub-regional plans that are built with fulsome Indigenous and stakeholder involvement and strong local input.

The government will then consult with the public and Indigenous communities on any draft plans.

**Objectives:** The sub-regional plans must:

1. Address caribou recovery priorities, including working towards achieving and maintaining naturally self-sustaining caribou populations over the long term,
2. Consider multi-species conservation,
3. Consider economic opportunities,
4. Consider recreational pursuits and other societal interests, and
5. Consider impact on the exercise of Treaty rights and traditional uses.

**Deliverables:**

Caribou Sub-regional Task Forces will provide to Environment and Parks:

1. Summary reports on all recommendations including documenting where consensus was reached and, if consensus is not reached, documenting non-consensus views.
2. Within sub-regions: maps, and detailed modelling assumptions that show, in time and space, when, and where, lands will be available to enable multi-species conservation, economic, recreational opportunities, and other societal interests throughout the sub-region. This will require approaches that balance the desired social, economic, and environmental outcomes. Additional outcomes may also be identified for the sub-region by the task force.
3. Within caribou ranges: maps and detailed modelling assumptions that show, in time and space, when (in 10 year increments, up to 100 years out), and where (identify polygons within caribou ranges), caribou habitat is planned to be undisturbed when measured using the federal disturbance requirements. This will include an assessment of both undisturbed habitat as well as biophysical habitat. Biophysical habitat will be reported as area available



within the disturbed area, as well as in areas that are not disturbed.

4. Summary of any assumptions requiring changes to regulations or best practices that would be required to achieve the outcomes predicted in the habitat recovery and development disturbance scenarios.
5. Social and economic analysis relevant to the plan. This analysis should include any and all mitigation measures and an approximation of implementation costs for each recommendation.
6. Progress reporting to the Minister every three to four months.

While the deliverables noted above are essential components that will be required as part of all task force recommendations, additional refinement of deliverables will occur once the task forces and related planning activities commence.

## 4 Responsibilities and Accountabilities

**Caribou Sub-regional Task Force:** Members representing local municipal governments, the Northwest Species at Risk Committee, forestry and other industries, Indigenous representatives, and habitat scientists are expected to provide information and perspectives accurately representing their sector or organization as a whole, and not solely their company or community. Members will work together to review and consider the Draft Provincial Woodland Caribou Range Plan (Dec. 2017) in the context of more holistic sub-regional planning and to ensure that sub-regional plans, including caribou range plans are subject to a comprehensive social-economic impact assessment. Members are expected to work through a diversity of perspectives and interests to arrive at mutually agreed upon solutions wherever possible.

**Alberta Environment and Parks:** Senior government officials will be appointed to support the task forces. Department staff will provide additional technical support to task force meetings. Department involvement to include Environment and Parks, Energy, Agriculture and Forestry, Economic Development, Trade and Tourism, Municipal Affairs, Transportation and Indigenous Relations. Responsibility for landscape management and tax expenditures rests with the Government of Alberta.

**Environment and Climate Change Canada:** will be invited to provide support and federal perspective (i.e., understanding of the *Species at Risk Act* and federal recovery strategies) at task force meetings, as needed.

The task forces will have the following support, coordinated through the Alberta Environment and Parks:

**Facilitation:** Consultant that will manage productive, technically complex discussions among diverse stakeholders and perspectives. The consultant will be tasked with organization, facilitation and logistics of hosting meetings, note-taking at meetings, compiling information, and writing reports on behalf of the task force.

**Landscape modelling:** Consultant to provide modelling of spatial and temporal scenarios based on existing work and additional solutions provided by the task forces. As contract manager, Environment and Parks will remain the conduit to the consultant for all analysis.

Environment and Park will commit to testing options, providing technical support and access to consultation support.

**Social and economic assessments:** Consultant to provide support to assess social and economic outcomes of various range planning scenarios.

The task force members agree to the following communication protocols:

- The voice of the government on all sub-regional planning is the Minister; the task forces serve as an internal function not an external facing function;
- The task force members will not communicate with the media on the work of the committee unless requested to by the Minister. They will be provided with materials and key messaging for any agreed upon outside communications.
- During sub-regional planning process with wider stakeholder and Indigenous involvement, task force members are free to participate as individuals and to speak freely from their company or association point of view. However, members may be asked by the Minister or his representative (senior government staff) to perform a leadership role at the beginning or end of these sessions as part of task force work.

## 5 Membership

Different task forces will require different make-ups depending on the diversity of interests within the planning area. Task forces should be diverse and include a broad range of participants from Indigenous groups, industry associations, regional municipalities, ENGOs, and other land users (e.g., trappers).

A nomination process initiated by the Minister of Environment and Parks will be used to establish membership on the task forces that includes local municipal governments, the Northwest Species at Risk Committee, forestry and other industries, Indigenous representatives, and habitat scientists.

As sub-regional plans are completed, membership on the task forces may change to reflect the next priority sub-regional planning area that the team will be asked to provide information and perspectives on. The map of the task teams priority planning areas breaks down which caribou ranges will be the responsibility of each task force.

Task forces will be approximately 12 people and no more than 16 people so that decisions can be made effectively.

### **Involvement beyond the task forces:**

Broader stakeholder participation will be needed beyond the task forces to develop workable sub-regional plans. The task forces will advise government on how to significantly involve Indigenous groups and other affected stakeholders in the planning process.

Due to misalignment between traditional territory and planning regions, additional engagement considerate of Nipisi and Slave Lake sub-regional plans may be needed.



## 6 Operational Guidelines

The task forces will report to the Minister of Environment and Parks and provide recommendations that allow for creation of sub-regional plans that meet the stated objectives.

Costs to implement each recommendation must be considered by the task forces. This includes costs to the department (e.g., funds and staff required), and social and economic costs to both communities and industry.

The task forces will have facilitated discussions to drive towards consensus-based recommendations. The individual task forces must document non-consensus on any recommendations.

A Government of Alberta staff member will chair each task force.

The task forces will draw upon the strategies and actions outlined in appropriate provincial policy and regulation and determine their application at the sub-regional level.

Working groups (sub-committees of the task forces) can be created to support advancement of sub-regional planning strategies.

The task forces will be able to recommend additional strategies and approaches to planning objectives including caribou conservation and recovery.

The Government of Alberta is committed to supporting direction from the task forces and testing work, as needed, with Environment and Climate Change Canada.

All work and recommendations from the task forces will be considered in the development of draft sub-regional plans, ready for public and Indigenous consultation.

### **Timelines:**

**August 2019:** Establish and organize task force membership. Retain facilitation consultant. Retain new or amend current contracts for habitat modelling support and socio-economic support. Detailed process planning with facilitation consultant.

**September 2019 to November 2019:** Cold Lake Task Force meetings.  
Final recommendations presented to Environment and Parks November 2019.


**September 2019 to April 2020:** Bistcho Lake Task Force meetings.  
Final recommendations presented to Environment and Parks April 2020.

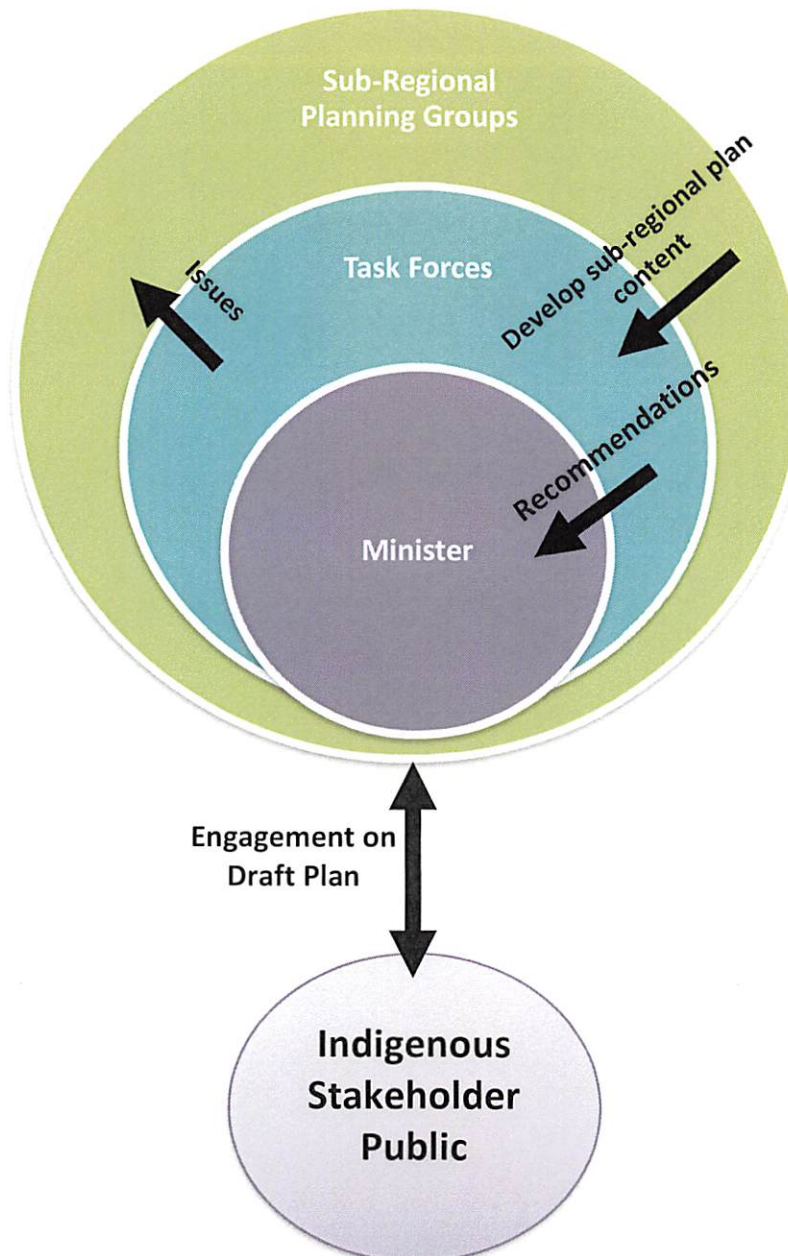
**September 2019 to September 2020:** Upper Smoky Task Force meetings.  
Final recommendations presented to Environment and Parks September 2020.

## 7 Acceptance and Sign-Off

The following signatures represent acceptance of these Terms of Reference:










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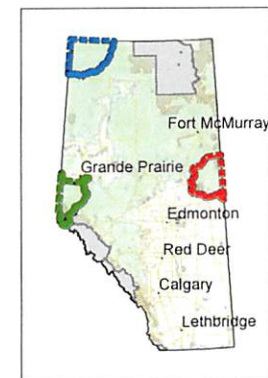
Organization:	Signature: Print Name: Date:	
Minister Signature:	<div style="text-align: center;">               Date <u>Aug 14/19</u>              Honourable Jason Nixon              Minister         </div>	





## Caribou Sub-regional Task Forces Priority Planning Areas

-  Sub-regional Boundaries
-  Caribou Ranges
-  Provincial Park or Protected Area
-  National Park
-  First Nations Reserve
-  Metis Settlement
-  Air Weapons Range (Cold Lake)
-  Population Centre
-  Primary Highway



0 25 50 100 Kilometers

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Coordinate System: NAD83 10TM AEP Forest  
Prepared By: Air, Biodiversity and Policy Integration Branch,  
Policy and Planning Division CAR 19-007  
Prepared For: Planning Branch  
Date of Completion: July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Alberta Environment and Parks

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