



Media Release

For Immediate Release

The PRRD Continues to Advocate for Caribou Recovery Plan Community Consultations

2/15/2019- The Peace River Regional District continues to advocate for an open conversation between the public and the Province regarding the status of the discussions about caribou recovery.

In a letter to Chair Brad Sperling, Minister George Heyman confirmed that the government is committed to advancing caribou recovery, while seeking to provide for the best interests of British Columbians. He noted that to help this iconic species recover, there needs to be a collaborative approach that works for everyone, and that as the Provincial Government moves forward with caribou recovery, BC will be looking at the impacts of all land uses.

The letter went on to say that focused engagement on the draft Partnership Agreement will take place with communities, Indigenous nations and stakeholders in February. As part of the engagement, the Province has committed to sharing data and analyses on potential impacts of the Partnership Agreement, and to working with the Peace River Regional District on evaluating the impacts of this agreement on Peace communities.

Minister Heyman further stated, in his letter, that there will be opportunities to review and update the proposed measures for the area that touches communities. The Partnership Agreement will not be finalized until engagement is complete and potential impacts on communities and workers are understood. The provincial government understands that outdoor recreation is an important part of the lives of many British Columbians and full closures of all snowmobile trails and access to the backcountry is not being considered.

The PRRD is adamant that consultation with local governments, industry, First Nations, and recreational groups is required to fully inform any decisions made to protect caribou populations, with the least impact to local economies and resident lifestyles.

Since the meeting in Prince George with the Province, Chair Sperling has continued to be in contact with the province as they work with the Federal government to roll out the consultation to the region. Chair Sperling has requested that a minimum of three public consultations be held in the region. He would like to see meetings held in Chetwynd, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John.

See the Letter from Minister George Heyman here <http://prrd.bc.ca/board/agendas/2019/2019-04-842091832/AGENDA.html>

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