

Caribou Resource Committee

Annual Report 2012-2013



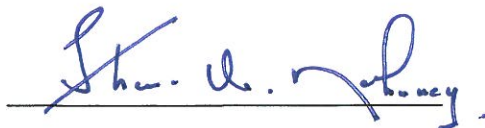
Environment and Conservation

Message from the Chair

As Chair of the Caribou Resource Committee, I hereby submit the Annual Report which outlines the activities of the committee during the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

The Caribou Resource Committee was formed at the outset of the Caribou Strategy to establish a formal channel for information exchange between the Department and key stakeholders, thus supporting considered decision-making with respect to Caribou Strategy activities and providing an avenue for interdepartmental and public reporting on the progress and outcomes of Caribou Strategy projects. As such, it is a body comprised of government members and public organizations, which provides comment to executive of the Department of Environment and Conservation on matters that encompass biological, social, economic and operational considerations related to the Caribou Strategy.

This engagement has allowed for the participation of relevant government departments and various stakeholder groups by representing the interests of those organizations. As such, it is a valuable mechanism for the integration of many viewpoints. I would like to acknowledge and show appreciation to members of the committee for their interest and commitment to this process, and to the protection of the island's caribou population. As chair of the CRC, I attest on behalf of the entire committee that we are accountable for the accomplishments and achievements of the identified activities, the preparation of this report, and the results reported herein.



Shane P. Mahoney

Chair, Caribou Resource Committee

Committee Overview

The Caribou Resource Committee functions as a mechanism for stakeholder input on the social, economic, and ecological aspects of the Caribou Strategy. Members assist and support the Senior Project Team¹ by providing comment on biological, social, economic and operational considerations, and through forwarding inquiries, views and concerns from stakeholder groups through their committee representative. This may include advice on proposed activities, and/or comment on the progress and success of the Strategy's ongoing efforts. The committee also serves to assist and support in the dissemination of relevant information from the Senior Project Team to stakeholder groups.

The following core values represent the disposition that embodies the Caribou Resource Committee in all its deliberations, and the fundamental principles that guide behaviour and decision-making.

Core Values

Value Statements

Accountability

The Committee is dedicated to providing accurate and timely information to stakeholders, and follows through on requests and commitments.

Participation

The Committee members participate in a proactive and productive manner.

Integrity

The Committee uses due diligence with the information given, and evaluates it to ensure accurate assessments of the data.

Responsibility

The Committee will work to ensure that the interests of the public are taken into account, and accurately spoken for.

¹ The Senior Project Team is composed of departmental Executive, Department of Environment and Conservation.

Collaboration

The Committee is open to sharing ideas and knowledge with others and actively seeks the opinions and ideas of others.

Members of the committee include internal representation from:

- Department of Environment and Conservation – Sustainable Development & Strategic Science Branch
- Department of Environment and Conservation - Wildlife Division
- Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
- Department of Natural Resources
- Executive Council- Office of Public Engagement - Rural Secretariat

and external representation from:

- Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Trapper's Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation
- general hunting public
- academic community.

2012-2013 Membership

Name	Represented Group	Role
Mr. Shane Mahoney	Department of Environment and Conservation – Sustainable Development & Strategic Science	Chair
Mr. Ross Firth	Department of Environment and Conservation - Wildlife	Member
Ms. Mary Taylor-Ash	Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation	Member
Mr. James Evans	Department of Natural Resources - Forestry	Member
Mr. Bruce Gilbert	Executive Council – Office of Public Engagement – Rural Secretariat	Member
Mr. Wayne Holloway	Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association	Member
Mr. Ken White	Newfoundland and Labrador Trappers Association	Member
Mr. Brad Leyte	Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation	Member
Mr. Bruce Porter	General Hunting Public	Member
Dr. Ted Miller	Academic Community	Member

The Terms of Reference for the committee has established a meeting frequency of twice annually. The secretariat for the committee operates out of the Sustainable Development and Strategic Science (SDSS) offices in St. John's, and functions as an administrative body, and a conduit for two-way exchange between committee members and the Senior Project Team responsible for the Caribou Strategy.

Committee members serve on a volunteer basis, with travel, accommodations and related costs covered under the Caribou Strategy budget within the Sustainable Development and Strategic Science Branch.

Vision

The vision of the Caribou Resource Committee is a healthy and sustainable population of woodland caribou on the island of Newfoundland that meets the social, cultural, ecological and economic needs of its residents at present, and in the future.

Mission

The mission of the Caribou Resource Committee reflects the intent of the Department, which is the reduction of adverse impacts of human activities on the environment and the improvement of the health of our ecosystems. By supporting the deliberations of the Caribou Strategy, the committee will enhance the Senior Project Team's ability to effectively and sustainably manage an integral species in our ecosystem, which in turn will promote a more robust environment.

Activities

The Caribou Resource Committee met once during the 2012-2013 fiscal year. The committee was unable to find a second date where schedules allowed a majority of members (or alternates) to attend. The meeting took place 18-19 December 2012 in St. John's.

The agenda for this meeting included an update of the Caribou Strategy activities and progress, the habitat mapping project, caribou diet and nutrition, spatial behaviour of caribou and predators, results to date for the predator reduction experiments, and results of a calving ground survey in the Middle Ridge herd range. A Memorial University graduate student joined the committee as a guest on the second day to present her work on caribou anti-predator behaviour. The committee spent some time discussing the review of caribou populations across Canada currently being conducted by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) under authority of the federal Species At Risk Act.

Despite only having one meeting, committee members were in regular contact with SDSS to seek information or provide comment on the Caribou Strategy on behalf of their represented group.

Objective and Accomplishments

The Caribou Resource Committee has supported the Caribou Strategy by providing meaningful input and comment to the Senior Project Team. Additionally, members continue to report to their respective stakeholder groups on deliberations and outcomes of

committee meetings and informal communication, which serves to propagate information to a broader audience.

Specifically, members have provided input and participated in discussions regarding the predator reduction experiments, Caribou Strategy progress, and opinion on management, research and communication directions and efforts for the future.

Objective 1: The Caribou Resource Committee (CRC) will continue to provide meaningful input to the Senior Project Team on a wide array of factors, encompassing biological, social, cultural and operational considerations.

Measure: Provided input to Senior Project Team.

Indicator	Accomplishment
<p>The CRC will advise on ways to increase public awareness and efficiently disseminate information on the activities and progress of the Caribou Strategy to a wider group of stakeholders.</p>	<p>Various presentations were made to the CRC members during the December meeting. Topics included progress and status of the Caribou Strategy and aspects of caribou and predator biology and ecology. These presentations provide information for representatives to disseminate to their stakeholder-group. Discussions at the meeting included topics of current events relevant to caribou generally and Newfoundland caribou in particular (such as the COSEWIC review in progress).</p> <p>Members reported information was shared with their represented groups throughout year. Consistent with the variation in stakeholder groups, information was shared in multiple ways, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of member’s thoughts and impressions of CRC meetings via email, presentation at stakeholder group gatherings/meetings, personal interaction with individuals expressing interest; • Electronic distribution of materials provided to the CRC members for the purpose of distribution to all or part of stakeholder group; • Seeking clarification from SDSS of shared information on behalf of individuals within stakeholder groups.

Indicator	Accomplishment
<p>Members' points of view, and hence stakeholder interests, are considered in the development of recommendations for the management of caribou on the island</p>	<p>The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador received significant information, feedback on Caribou Strategy activities and progress, points of view and advice from member groups during the CRC meeting and through informal contact with individual members throughout the year. The Senior Project Team continued to take these views and opinions into consideration when developing caribou management recommendations.</p> <p>For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRC members representing relevant stakeholder groups provided advice on options and best practices for lethal removal of coyote. This advice was used to aid the design of experimental predator manipulation. • CRC member feedback regarding interim results of various components of the Caribou Strategy were used to improve analytic approaches and aided in the interpretation of results.

2013-14 Activities

In accordance with the 2011-2014 Activity Plan, the Caribou Resource Committee will continue toward the objective of providing meaningful input to the Caribou Strategy Senior Project Team on a wide array of factors, encompassing biological, social, cultural and operational considerations. These priorities will be further assessed during the 2013-14 fiscal year.