



July 13, 2011

Dear Premier Clark:

We are writing to you on behalf of the Canadian Boreal Initiative and the Pew Environment Group, regarding woodland caribou. Woodland caribou herds are in decline across Canada's boreal region. History and experience teach us that if nothing is done about this situation it can ripen into a resource management crisis. We have enclosed a briefing paper entitled "Keeping Woodland Caribou in the Boreal Forest: Big Challenge, Immense Opportunity." This analysis was prepared by a panel of internationally recognized scientists and it shows that significantly improved stewardship of woodland caribou is necessary to maintain healthy populations of this magnificent animal, which is so important ecologically, culturally, and economically.

Specifically, these scientists advise that very large protected areas need to be established across Canada's boreal region in order to maintain the levels of intact boreal habitat necessary for this species to persist. They emphasize that the time is now — government-supported actions are needed through land use planning for conservation and sustainable development to ensure that this iconic boreal species remains a part of our future, rather than a memory of our past.

Protecting British Columbia's northern mountain and boreal caribou will require state-of-the-art scientific analysis determining how these herds are being impacted by the rapid expansion of oil and gas development in British Columbia's boreal region. It will be critical for your government to continue to engage in land use planning with First Nations on a government to government basis. The proposed Taku First Nations land use plan is a stellar example of how such partnerships can work. The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement also offers an outstanding opportunity to identify additional protection measures through collaboration between industry and environmental groups. We are confident that your government will take the opportunity to demonstrate world-class leadership on these issues—indeed, we can see no other viable option for long-term prosperity in northern British Columbia.

We would be pleased to provide a detailed briefing on the analysis, and look forward to the opportunity to discuss this priority matter with your government.

Sincerely,

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Cc: The Honourable Terry Lake, Minister of Environment  
The Honourable Mary Polak, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation  
The Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources