



# WOODLAND CARIBOU

## MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARKS



### A CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN CARIBOU IN CANADA'S NATIONAL PARKS

Caribou found in the mountain national parks of Banff, Glacier, Jasper and Mount Revelstoke belong to the Southern Mountain population of woodland caribou, listed as Threatened under Canada's Species at Risk Act (SARA). Parks Canada is responsible for the protection and conservation of species at risk that occur in national parks.

In 2009, Parks Canada announced \$4.5 million in funding over five years to develop and implement key management actions to improve the status of Southern Mountain woodland caribou found on national park lands.

The Conservation Strategy for Southern Mountain Caribou in Canada's National Parks will guide Parks Canada's caribou conservation actions. Parks Canada is actively seeking feedback on this strategy to ensure that the best possible management decisions are being made in support of Southern Mountain caribou conservation.

Banff, Glacier, Jasper and Mount Revelstoke national parks each face a particular set of challenges in caribou conservation. The strategy identifies five key threats to caribou in the mountain national parks:



Photo: Mark Bradley

#### FIVE KEY THREATS:

- **Altered predator-prey dynamics:** Changes to populations of deer, elk and moose are affecting the number and distribution of predators.
- **Predator access:** Packed winter trails and other disturbances facilitate predator access to caribou habitat.
- **Direct disturbance:** Roads through caribou habitat have led to mortality. Caribou can also be displaced from prime feeding grounds or into areas of higher predator numbers.
- **Habitat loss:** Caribou need large tracts of intact old-growth forest that supports the growth of lichen, their primary food source in winter.
- **Small population effects:** small herds are likely to continue declining, and are at higher risk of extirpation.

While the influence of each of these threats varies between the parks, they are all seen to contribute to some extent to declining caribou populations.

Current research and on-going monitoring contributed to the identification of important caribou habitat on national park lands and the recommendation of potential caribou conservation actions for the Conservation Strategy for Southern Mountain Caribou in Canada's National Parks.

The conservation strategy will help inform the development of the Environment Canada-led recovery plan for the Southern Mountain population of woodland caribou, expected early in 2012.

**To review the Conservation Strategy for Southern Mountain Caribou in Canada's National Parks and provide feedback, visit [www.parkscanada.gc.ca/caribou](http://www.parkscanada.gc.ca/caribou).**

