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# Press Release

## **“Caribou Cowboys” Return for Another Season of Patrols**

The Aseniwuche Winewak Nation (AWN) and Foothills Landscape Management Forum (FLMF) team up to help protect Woodland Caribou.

**Grande Cache, Fox Creek, Hinton, Whitecourt, Grande Prairie, Edson, AB – November 5, 2013:**

Caribou patrols will return to the northeastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains. On November 15, 2013, crews, each comprised of two Aseniwuche Winewak Nation (AWN) members, will begin patrolling the area within approximately a 100-km radius of the town of Grande Cache. Modeled after a “Caribou Cowboy” project which successfully ran for several years along Highway 40 south of Grande Cache and building on last year’s pilot project, the purpose of these patrols is to encourage caribou to move off of the roads in efforts to reduce the risk of vehicle collisions. Woodland caribou are classified as threatened in Alberta. The outcome of the patrol project will contribute to the overall recovery plan by reducing mortality of caribou and collecting human use data to assist in successful implementation of broader landscape recovery strategies.

The patrol persons will collect information on wildlife sightings and on effectiveness of existing barriers to vehicle traffic. They will educate users of the roads (both public and industrial), and will reduce collisions with wildlife by using actions to persuade caribou to leave the roadways. Patrols will continue until March 16, 2014. Patrol persons are observers and do not have any regulatory enforcement authority, although they can collect information that could be passed on to the Regulator. Given the success of last year’s pilot project, the Partners agreed to extend patrols for a second season.

The patrol crews are employed by the Aseniwuche Environmental Corporation (AEC) under contract to Aseniwuche Winewak Nation of Canada. Funding is provided by the Foothills Landscape Management Forum (FLMF) operating under the Foothills Research Institute (FRI), Government of Alberta, and Government of Canada under the Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk.

**For Immediate Release**

**Quotes:**

“The AWN has a strong desire to actively participate in recovery actions and has become frustrated with past processes and discussions with no substantive actions. This project as a whole would get the AWN directly involved in support for caribou recovery strategies.” – Rachelle McDonald, Executive Director, AWN

“This project will provide a meaningful way for the AWN to directly participate as an active partner with industry and government in recovery efforts for caribou.” – Wayne Thorp, Managing Director, FLMF

“On behalf of the FLMF members, it was gratifying to work with the AWN staff and community to get some caribou recovery action on the ground with very short notice. I am hopeful that AWN and FLMF are successful in continuing and improving on this initial project in the future.” ~ Wayne Thorp, Managing Director, FLMF

**Attachments:**

1. Map showing area that crews will patrol: CaribouPatrol\_PressReleaseMap.pdf
2. Caribou Patrol sign posted on main roads leading into the Caribou Range: CaribouPatrolRoadSign.jpg