

**Concern**

**Information on the Wolf Lake Caribou Herd is out of date**

There are four woodland caribou herds whose ranges overlap the Teslin Tlingit traditional territory. The Carcross and Atlin herds are dealt with through the Southern Lakes Caribou Recovery Plan. The Pelly herd is mainly outside this traditional territory and is being studied by the Yukon Department of Environment. The Wolf Lake herd is entirely within the Teslin Tlingit traditional territory and is therefore the focus in this plan. A lot of information was gathered on this herd because it was the control population for the Aishihik wolf program — that is, it was used for comparison with the Aishihik herd which was subject to intensive wolf control measures. The Wolf Lake herd numbered 700 in 1983, 1,200 in 1993 and 1,200 in 1998.

**Solution** Annually summarize factors that affect herd status

The argument for conducting another survey is that it would provide another point on the graph for monitoring the population trend. The community considered the management options in terms of costs and risks (i.e. the risk of not having complete information versus the cost of getting it). Considering the remote location of the herd and low harvest pressure, the community concluded that the risk of not knowing the exact population at this time was not great and thus the cost of a \$50,000 survey was too high and so was the \$10,000 cost of an annual recruitment count. (A recruitment survey determines annual calf survival and is used to predict whether the herd is increasing, declining or stable.) The community decided to rely on community knowledge about the herd (chiefly from outfitters), together with harvest figures (see harvest monitoring, page 12) to keep track of the herd on an annual basis.

**Actions**

Responsible parties, Time line

<p><b>YG</b> 2001/02 2002/03 2003/04 2004/05</p>	<p>Focus studies on the herd if trend requires or if there is a major change in habitat. This is a fall-back strategy that would depend on other estimations of the herd's status and its habitat. If, for instance, local knowledge or harvest monitoring indicated a problem with the herd, or if some large-scale development (mine, timber harvesting, road, pipeline) were being considered in the herd's range, then this plan would call for full-scale studies such as a herd census. This approach should not be viewed as crisis management, rather it is a rational plan given resource limitations. [2001-Tes-AI-4]</p>
<p><b>RRC, YG, TTC</b> 2001/02 2002/03 2003/04 2004/05</p>	<p>Summarize the general status of the herd. This action could be accomplished through an annual report to the community about the plan. Part of the report could deal with local knowledge and harvest records for the Wolf Lake herd. Families that trap in the Wolf Lake area should be approached to contribute information. [2001-Tes-AI-5]</p>
<p><b>TTC, YG, RRC</b> 2001/02 2002/03 2003/04 2004/05</p>	<p>Prepare a management plan if development is anticipated. This is a companion action for the first action. In other words, in conjunction with increased studies on the herd, a management plan for the herd must be prepared to address the changes (either natural or planned) in its environment. [2001-Tes-AI-6]</p>

continued...

RRC  
2004/05

**Evaluate the need for population count or major survey**

The last population count of the Wolf Lake herd was done in 1993. Unless some unforeseen event triggers actions in this plan, the herd will not have been counted for 11 years. Thus it will be necessary to revisit the cost/risk assumptions that were made in 2001 to determine if they are still valid or need revision. [2001-Tes-AI-7]

**RECOMMENDATION 1**  
[2001-Tes-Rec-1]

**To:** the Yukon Department of Environment

**Re:** the Pelly Caribou Herd

**That the Yukon Department of Environment continue with its inventory of the Pelly herd and inform the Teslin community about the results**

**Rationale:** Most of the Pelly herd's range is outside the Teslin Tlingit traditional territory although it is hunted by Teslin residents who travel the South Canol Road. Harvest pressure on this neighbouring herd should be kept track of due to possible implications for the Wolf Lake herd (i.e. future management decisions for other herds may increase pressures on the Pelly and Wolf Lake herds).

**RECOMMENDATION 2**  
[2001-Tes-Rec-2]

**To:** the Yukon government and the Teslin Tlingit Council (TTC)

**Re:** the Southern Lakes Caribou Herd

**That the Southern Lakes Caribou Recovery Program continue to receive support from Teslin organizations and hunters**

**Rationale:** Presently, the Yukon range of the Atlin herd is a no-hunting zone for Yukon residents and this should be maintained. The current TTC policy of not hunting the herd (in cooperation with the Dakh Ka Council) should also be monitored.

**Note:** Very little information is available for the transboundary Morley Lake herd which is beyond the scope of this plan.

*Bull caribou*

