



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

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Environmental Protection Operations Directorate
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MVEIRB File: EA1617-01

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Via email: rcarthew@reviewboard.ca

RE: EA1617-01 – Government of the Northwest Territories: Department of Transportation – Tlicho All-Season Road – Scoping Session Response

Attention: Ruari Carthew

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) provides the following document to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board in response to a question raised during the Tlicho All-Season Road (TASR) scoping session in Yellowknife. The question was raised in the context of discussions on the temporal scope of the cumulative effects assessment for the TASR.

Section 2.4.3.1 b) of the attached Scientific Assessment describes the rationale for selection of a 40 year threshold for areas disturbed by fire in the identification of critical habitat for Woodland Caribou (Boreal Population). Forty years was the maximum number of years for which fire data was available across all jurisdictions overlapping the Woodland Caribou (Boreal Population) range.

“Estimates of fire used in the 2008 Scientific Review were calculated from the Canadian National Fire Database (CNFDB, maintained by the Canadian Forest Service (CFS)), augmented by additional coverage for Northwest Territories, that contained wildfires greater than 200 ha (CFS 2010, NWTCG 2010). A 50 year limit was used to identify areas disturbed by fire, and hence unsuitable for caribou, consistent with methodology applied by Sorenson et al. (2008).

For the present assessment, jurisdictional agencies were contacted to obtain the most complete and up-to-date information on fires. Information on fire within National Parks was provided from either Parks Canada, if available, or the CNFDB. The availability of fire data varied, in particular with respect to the first year of data collection, and the maximum number of years for which fire data was available across jurisdictions was 40 years. As a result, the fire data were standardized by using a 40 year limit to identify areas disturbed by fire (i.e., less than 40 yrs). Due to the small amount of land in the 40-50 year age class for fires (for areas where the information was available), the change from 50 years to 40 years post-fire resulted in only minor discrepancies in measures of area disturbed by fire between the 2008 Scientific Review and the present assessment.”

The attached document is also available on the *Species at Risk Act* Registry here: http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/document/default_e.cfm?documentID=2248

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (867) 669-4733 or Melissa.Pinto@canada.ca.

Sincerely,



Melissa Pinto
Environmental Assessment Coordinator

Attachment(s): Scientific Assessment to Inform the Identification of Critical Habitat for Woodland Caribou, Boreal Population, in Canada

cc: Georgina Williston, Head, Environmental Assessment North (NT and NU)
Jean-Francois Dufour, Environmental Assessment Officer, CWS