



Southern Lakes Caribou Relationship Planning Newsletter

here, for caribou



SOUTHERN LAKES CARIBOU RELATIONSHIP PLAN, AN UPDATE

Caribou have taken care of us, and we continue to take care of them through an ongoing relationship of sharing, caring and respect.

History

“They used to migrate through Whitehorse and below, between Marsh Lake and Whitehorse. They used to come through there. There are old signs in there... They used to set snares for when the migration was coming. They pile up brush and make a fence, maybe a mile long and then they set moose hide snares there. That’s the way they used to get them. I seen that.” – Bill Good, Carcross/Tagish Elder. (Southern Lakes Caribou Recovery Program progress report 1992-1996).

Historically, caribou herds within the Southern Lakes were much larger than they are today. Due to over harvesting, interference from development, and increased human disturbances, by the early 1990s, approximately 1,000 caribou remained within the Southern Lakes, where tens of thousands had once roamed.

In the early 1990s, six First Nations in the Southern Lakes area voluntarily stopped hunting caribou, and the Yukon Government introduced a hunting closure for licensed hunters in the region..The recovery program has been a remarkable success, and today we find caribou slowly coming back, though we still have work to do.



Today

In 2017, a First Nations Working Group was formed to begin caribou relationship planning (a management plan) in the Southern Lakes. In 2018, the Southern Lakes Steering Caribou Committee





was re-formed to create an Indigenous-led caribou relationship plan for the Southern Lakes herds.

Governments represented on the Southern Lakes Steering Caribou Committee are from Carcross / Tagish First Nation, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Taku River Tlingit First Nation, Teslin Tlingit Council, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Government of British Columbia, Government of Yukon and Parks Canada.

Tomorrow

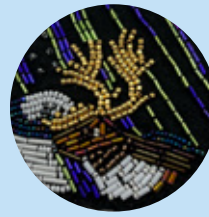
Caribou in the Southern Lakes face several issues on the road to increasing population numbers and maintaining current recovery success. Climate change, growing human populations and harvest pressures continue to be real concerns to maintaining our relationship with caribou.

We hope to address these concerns through a management plan rooted in lived, traditional knowledge to ensure a sustainable, long-lasting and respectful relationship between caribou and people within the Southern Lakes region.

What's Next?

While the plan is indigenous-led by six First Nation Governments, the plan needs more Indigenous Knowledge to guide it. We hope to engage with First Nation Elders, citizens and projects such as the *How We Walk with Land and Water* in order to accomplish this. However, COVID-19 has made this difficult.

We want to hear from you. If you're interested in taking part and want to share your knowledge on



CONNECTING WITH CARIBOU

For Mary Blahitka, connecting to caribou is done through her beautiful beadwork. Her recent Southern Lakes caribou series depicts part of a beaded story passed down from her Grandparents who lived at Brook's Brook near Teslin Yukon. It is also inspired by an old Yanyeidi Clan story about the caribou killer passed down by her grandmother.

Mary's cultural knowledge comes from her Tlingit mother from Teslin and from her father from England. She loves to bead stories of her experience and cultural heritage into her art. You can see more of Mary's work on her Instagram account [@glacierlady](https://www.instagram.com/glacierlady).

creating a lasting relationship with Southern Lakes Caribou, please contact us.

CONTACT

For more information on Southern Lakes Caribou Relationship Planning or to get in touch, please visit our website at southernlakescaribou.com or email us at info@southernlakescaribou.com.



NEXT ISSUE: spring 2022

