

Hi John,

Thanks for replying. I think we'll have to agree to disagree.

You say: " I am unaware of any long term concerted effort to control wolf populations to recover mountain caribou, but would be glad to have any references".

OK - see attached PDF of a paper published in Can J Zool in 2014 entitled "Managing wolves (*Canis lupus*) to recover threatened woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*) in Alberta". I have highlighted some significant parts of the discussion, and pay particular attention to the over-riding importance of stochastic events reducing the potential (NOT demonstrated) population effects of wolf removal in small caribou populations. And note that their "small population sizes" are actually far larger populations than you are dealing with (i.e., they are dealing with 50 or so females). With population sizes 80% smaller the chance of stochastic events determining the outcome is greatly enhanced. When we are dealing with a handful (what - 5??) potential breeding females a single wolf kill could be the trigger that begins the final descent to extirpation. As could a cougar. Or a truck on the highway. Or two females drowning in a high creek in the spring. Or...you get the picture.

As I said in my previous email to you - wolves were not the initial and ongoing critical problem - it was habitat loss. And removing the wolves won't solve that problem. Can you buy a little time with wolf removal? Possibly. But will this make any difference? Very likely not when you have only a handful of caribou left. I had read Barry Wilson's comments before emailing you and have just read them again. I see nothing there that argues for wolf control other than one statement that relies on a non-referenced "authority statement" ("Biologists think the cull is the only way to avoid extirpation in the short term and so maybe this is the best short-term emergency measure"). Well, there are biologists who don't think this. I'm a biologist. Paul is a biologist. Don Harron is a biologist. And we all disagree with the wolf cull in this situation. And Wilson's main point is that the problem is exactly what I said it was - a long term avoidance of the problem of habitat loss. And references to Farley Mowat's fictional novels are hardly worth discussing in this context.

I sincerely hope I'm wrong and that the caribou populations in both the South Selkirks and the South Peace rebound. But I have no reason whatsoever to believe that the wolf cull will play any positive role in that. It is a senseless and inhumane slaughter of wolves.

Regards,

Brad