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| TITLE: | Consultation with First Nations on Recovery Strategies under the *Species At Risk Act* |
| SUBJECT: | Environment |
| MOVED BY: | Chief Joseph Gilbert, Walpole Island First Nation, ON |
| SECONDED BY: | Ron Lameman, Proxy, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, AB |
| DECISION: | Carried by Consensus |

WHEREAS:

A. The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife (COSEWIC) in 2002 assessed that the woodland caribou boreal population is threatened and has been added to schedule 1 of the Species At Risk Act;

B. The Species At Risk Act requires that species assessed as threatened require a recovery strategy in order to benefit from full protection of the Act;

C. Environment Canada (EC) has begun consultations across Canada, to gather the best available knowledge, including Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK), and ensure its incorporation into the caribou recovery strategy.

D. The consultations set up by EC for the caribou recovery are new and precedent setting and may be used for subsequent species recovery and action planning required under SARA. The new process included the creation of an Aboriginal Advisory Group to provide guidance on the consultation process that has resulted in regional consultations in conjunction with environmental non government organizations.

E. The habitat of the woodland caribou boreal population is extensive and its range covers an estimated 233 First Nation communities across much of Canada. The caribou is an important food source for many First Nations peoples but SARA exceptions only allow for ceremonial or medicinal purposes and not for subsistence use by an Aboriginal person;

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F. The current process for the collection of ATK in the recovery process under SARA is not inclusive of all First Nations within the woodland caribou boreal population habitat nor does SARA provide protection of ATK.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Urge Environment Canada to consult with each of the estimated 233 First Nation communities within the habitat of the woodland caribou boreal population and any ofher species identified under the Species at Risk Act (SARA) for protection;

2. Direct AFN Environmental Stewardship Unit to work with Environment Canada to develop a bi-lateral process for affected First Nations on recovery, action and management planning required under SARA for species assessed as extinct, endangered, threatened or of special concern in order to protect Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) and provide for subsistence exceptions;

3. Direct the AFN to advocate for amendments to Species at Risk Act to include requirements for a consultation process developed with First Nations for the collection of ATK for assessments, recovery, action planning and management plans for each First Nation community identified within a species habitat.

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