

BC wolf killing program starts again with collaring of Judas wolves

Government plans to kill all wolves in 3 caribou ranges where habitat destruction continues

November 13, 2017 (GOLDEN, BC) - A new government report revealed by the BC Government indicates that the minimum death toll has increased by 108 wolves to a total of 402 killed in the province's experiment under the guise of caribou conservation. The report also states that radio-collaring efforts begin in the fall to later allow tracking of wolves back to their families in an attempt to kill as many wolves as possible during winter. The program has entered its 4th year.

"The fact that the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development continues to collar "Judas" wolves is representative of the inhumane and unethical way in which the province continues to manage wildlife. Knowing that collaring occurs in fall for this intent identifies that the killing process has begun again." Tommy Knowles, Executive Director of Wildlife Defence League states.

BC began its misguided experimental wolf reduction program in late 2014. Last year, the killing expanded beyond the existing South Peace and South Selkirk locations, to include a 3rd area around the Revelstoke caribou maternity pen.

The government report, titled Wolf Management Plan for Caribou Summary Year Three (2016-17) FINAL, makes the following claim: "Based on the success observed at the Klinse Za maternity pen arising from wolf removal in that herd area, aerial wolf removal was started for the Revelstoke maternity pen." Yet the results from these experiments are questionable, and part of the public support behind the Revelstoke maternity pens included a move away from predator kill programs.

Hannah Barron, conservation director of Wolf Awareness remarks, "Millions of tax dollars are funding this unethical experiment to kill wolves under the guise of conserving caribou all the while pretending that enough caribou habitat has been protected from resource extraction and recreation."

Recommendations made by scientists in 2007 to preserve 34,000 ha of high suitability habitat for caribou recovery in the Revelstoke Planning Unit were whittled down to only 10,000 ha. Subsequently, using a loop hole in the Revelstoke Land Use Plan, almost 10,000 ha of Old Growth Management Areas (OGMAs) were permitted to be logged to compensate timber licensees for the protected caribou habitat.

"Virtually zero habitat in the Revelstoke Planning Unit was protected for caribou in the last Recovery Plan," states Virginia Thompson, Revelstoke resident and member of the Mountain Caribou Project from 2006 to 2014.

Recently, a representative of BC's Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development explained that "ideally all wolves will be taken."

"We need to re-examine an old sentiment still being perpetuated by government wildlife managers and even some scientists that killing wolves is of no conservation concern because they are abundant and resilient. The natural ability of wolves to repopulate when exploited does not excuse our butchery of them, and it does not release our responsibility to protect and preserve ecological functions, which are down-ratcheted with the removal of apex predators," Wolf Awareness executive director, Sadie Parr, remarks.

"We are amid a renaissance period as societies and nations determine how best to deal with a biodiversity collapse as well as climate change. Canadians need to re-evaluate what is underway. Squandering large carnivores and biodiverse old-growth forests where caribou live are not effective ways to preserve caribou herds that are already dangerously low," Parr adds.

Many independent scientists vehemently oppose wolf kill programs, not only because methods are often inhumane, but because predator culling is an unreliable method of increasing prey populations and can result in a decrease in the overall diversity of plant and animal species.

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About Wolf Awareness Inc

Wolf Awareness is a team of conservationists and scientists whose primary goal is to foster awareness and appreciation of wolves, wolf ecology, conservation and co-existence.

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Photos of wolves, caribou and habitat available upon request.