

INT-FSC-STD-CAN-01-2018_02

Normative reference	FSC-STD-CAN-01-2018 EN The FSC National Forest Stewardship Standard of Canada
	Indicator 6.4.5c

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While the Indicator 6.4.5c's first Intent Box mentions that approach 6.4.5c "provides a means to implement management other than those identified by Approach 6.4.5b", the text of Indicator 6.4.5c states that the "caribou conservation approach" be "consistent with the Range Plan Guidance for Woodland Caribou", for Boreal population published in 2016 by the Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC 2016).

Can the "caribou conservation approach" "consistent with the Range Plan Guidance for Woodland Caribou" be different from the Range Plan Guidance if it avoids the destruction of woodland caribou critical habitat?

Yes, but a "caribou conservation approach" should include the following elements to be "consistent with" the Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC 2016)¹ Range Plan Guidance:

1. The overall outcome of the ECCC Guidance and the FSC Canada indicator on woodland caribou is to maintain and, as necessary, improve the current status of the woodland caribou population. Any caribou conservation approach should demonstrate actions that aim to meet that ultimate outcome.
2. The Species At-Risk Act (SC 2002) and the Recovery Strategy focus on critical habitat protection to achieve the outcome. The ECCC Guidance does not prescribe how to protect critical habitat, but it describes range-specific activities likely to result in the destruction of critical habitat.¹ These activities include:
 - Any activity resulting in the direct loss of boreal caribou critical habitat.
 - Any activity resulting in the degradation of critical habitat leading to a reduced but not

total loss of both habitat quality and availability for boreal caribou.

- Any activity resulting in the fragmentation of habitat by human-made linear features.

The likelihood that critical habitat will be destroyed increases if one or a combination of the above activities occur and if even after mitigation techniques, any one of the following occurs:

- the ability of a range to be maintained at 65% undisturbed habitat (or the threshold determined at item #5 of Option C) is compromised;
- the ability of a range to be restored to 65% undisturbed habitat (or the threshold determined at item #5 of Option C) is compromised;
- connectivity within a range is reduced;
- predator and/or alternate prey access to undisturbed areas is increased; or
- biophysical attributes necessary for boreal caribou are removed or altered.

3. Indicator 6.4.5 Option C requirements 1 to 9 are required elements to be included in the "*caribou conservation approach*".

Note: The Range Plan Guidance for Woodland Caribou (ECCC 2016) provides general (non-prescriptive) guidance on the development of range plans, as well as Environment and Climate Change Canada's perspective regarding the desired content of a range plan.

¹ Environment and Climate Change Canada (2016) *Range Plan Guidance for Woodland Caribou, Boreal Population*. Section 6, p.11-12.