

Activists sue to force Canada to protect caribou

April 20 2017



The population of the boreal woodland caribou—a North American reindeer—has steadily declined due to encroaching industry

A wildlife group filed a lawsuit against Canada's environment ministry on Thursday over its alleged failure to protect critical caribou habitats.

In it, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) says Environment Minister Catherine McKenna has not met her [legal obligation](#) to regularly report on steps taken to protect the endangered animal's range across nine provinces and territories.

It asks the [federal court](#) to compel her to do so.

The population of the boreal woodland [caribou](#)—a North American reindeer—has steadily declined due to encroaching industry, to the point that Canada listed it as an endangered species in 2002.

A decade later, the areas needing [protection](#) were identified. Many of them were on non-federal lands, but since then "there have been no reports describing what is being done to address any protection gaps," said Alain Branchaud, director of CPAWS's Quebec office.

CPAWS lawyer Eric Paquin said protecting caribou habitats would go well beyond helping caribou—they would also maintain boreal forests for other animals, "including the billions of birds that use the boreal as a nursery."

McKenn's office declined to comment on the lawsuit. But a spokeswoman said the environment ministry was "working closely" with Canada's provinces and territories on protection and recovery efforts of species at risk, including the caribou.

© 2017 AFP

Citation: Activists sue to force Canada to protect caribou (2017, April 20) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-04-activists-sue-canada-caribou.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is

provided for information purposes only.