

**BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRST NATIONS
CARIBOU RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION
FUND (FNCRIF)
APPLICATION GUIDE**

2024



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Fraser Basin Council

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1.0 FUND OVERVIEW

Caribou have roamed over present day British Columbia for thousands of years contributing to the province's rich biodiversity and ecosystems. Caribou has been vital to the survival of Indigenous peoples, and they have been linked in the archaeological record as far back as 25,000 years ago. This connection has been maintained by Indigenous peoples, with cultural hunting and practice continuing to this day. Caribou populations have declined steeply over the last half-century, primarily due to habitat loss or alteration, and conservation efforts are required to prevent further declines and local extinction. The reasons for population declines are due in large part to the industrial revolution, including resource extraction and human encroachment, but the solutions to stabilizing and recovering populations are complex, as much has been lost already. Recovery often requires both long-term habitat solutions and immediate population management measures.

Following a recognition that the way things have been done in the past half-century are not sustainable, organizations and government are turning to traditional ecological knowledge by Indigenous peoples. The *First Nations Caribou Recovery Implementation Fund* (FNCRIF or the 'Fund') was developed to provide additional capacity to First Nations communities and organizations to advance recovery efforts for threatened caribou herds in British Columbia (B.C.). Following the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Indigenous peoples must once again become stewards of their land and waters, including animal welfare and relations. The Fund is envisioned to generate new, collaborative, First Nations-led caribou recovery efforts rooted in First Nations knowledge and scientific understanding.



1.0 FUND OVERVIEW

Objectives of the FNCRIF are to:

1. Promote and support community-based and First Nations-led recovery implementation projects for threatened caribou populations within B.C.;
2. Further build and develop support for First Nations-driven actions toward caribou herd recovery in B.C.; and
3. Enable First Nations to leverage funding from other sources.

The FNCRIF is administered by the Fraser Basin Council (FBC) and made possible by contributions from the Province of British Columbia's Caribou Recovery Program.

Note: FBC will continually draw lessons from the process and revise the Fund, as necessary, to ensure equitable and effective delivery in future years. Thus, changes to the fund may occur in future fiscal years.



2.0 FUNDING PROGRAM SCOPE

Project duration may be from one year to a maximum of two years. Multi-year projects are encouraged on the premise they consider longer-term recovery outcomes, and once approved, offer assurance of extended funding provided the applicant meets all terms, conditions, and other obligations. Multi-year projects will provide a status report at the end of each year (see Reporting section). For some organizations, First Nations or groups, some support may be needed in order to plan for and develop a full project proposal. In such cases, seed funding is available for one year.

2.1 FUNDING STREAMS

There are two funding streams available:

1. Seed Funding: available to applicants to explore options, acquire or refine expertise in preparation for activity implementation, or secure expertise to refine a proposal.

a.) Up to \$10,000 and one-year duration

2. Implementation Funding: available for applicants who are ready to initiate a project or activity.

a.) Up to a maximum of \$75,000 per year in order to ensure funding is available for more projects. Consideration may be given to projects with higher value in special circumstances. Please discuss the special circumstances with program staff.

b.) No requirement for leveraging from other funding sources but can be used to support projects that have partner funding (see section 3.5).

Note: Receipt of Seed Funding does not automatically qualify an applicant for Implementation Funding. All Seed Funding recipients must provide a subsequent application to be considered for Implementation Funding.



3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

3.1 WHO CAN APPLY

All First Nations communities (with traditional territory within British Columbia) and organizations are eligible for funding, including:

- First Nations not-for-profit and for-profit organizations that focus on animal stewardship
- Territorially based First Nations groups
- Chief's councils, District councils, and Tribal councils
- First Nations corporations, partnerships, cooperatives and groups
- First Nations-led research, academic, and educational institutions
- First Nations-led cultural education centres
- First Nations-led land/resource management authorities
- First Nations-led societies, boards, and commissions
- Other organizations (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) if mandated by one of the above eligible recipients. Applicant must provide letter or other documentation

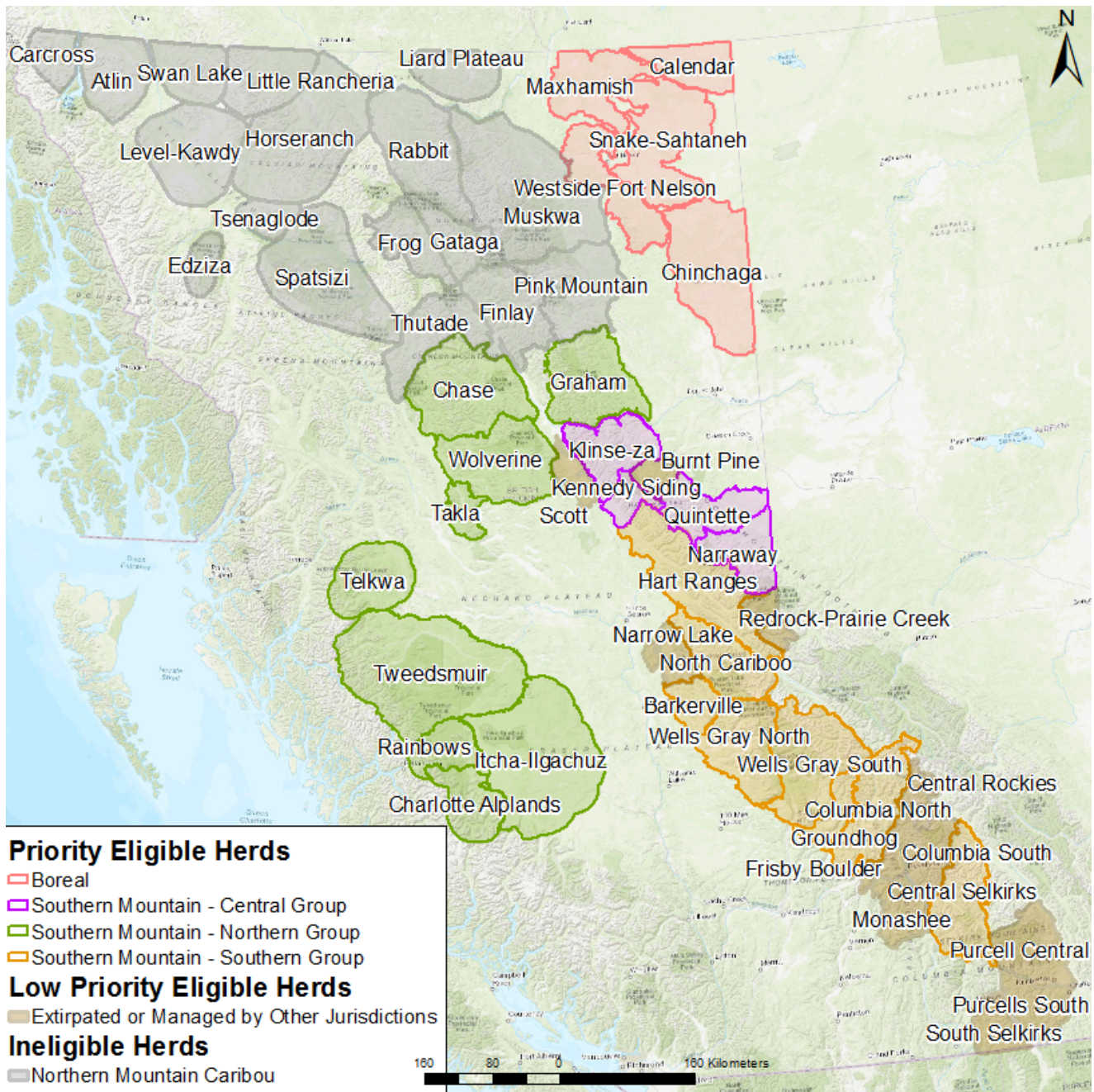
The FBC will accept one application per community or organization per year. There may be multiple small projects that can be combined into one application. If so, the applicant should make clear the objectives and predicted outcomes of each project and identify all the project partners.

3.2 ELIGIBLE CARIBOU HERDS

While B.C. is home to many herds of caribou, for this initial intake the FNCRIF is limited in scope to projects that support and promote the recovery of caribou listed as “threatened” under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA), including Boreal and Southern Mountain Caribou. Priority will be given to the herds listed below over those with functionally extirpated populations (<10 breeding females) or those that are extirpated. See the below map and list of priority herd areas.



FIGURE 1: PRIORITY ELIGIBLE HEARD RANGES



3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIRMENTS

The following caribou herds are eligible and prioritized:

Boreal: Calendar, Maxhamish, Snake-Sahtahneh, Westside Fort Nelson, Chinchaga

Southern Mountain-Northern Group: Graham, Chase, Wolverine, Takla, Telkwa, Tweedsmuir, Itcha-Ilgachuz, Rainbows, Charlotte Alplands

Southern Mountain – Central Group: Klinse-za, Kennedy Siding, Quintette, Narraway, Burnt Pine*

Southern Mountain – Southern Group: Hart Ranges, North Cariboo, Barkerville, Wells Gray North, Wells Gray South, Groundhog, Columbia North, Central Selkirks

Projects within Northern Mountain caribou herd areas are not eligible for funding. At this time, priority is not given to extirpated herds.

**This extirpated herd is included in Section 11 Partnership Agreement.*

3.3 ELIGIBLE PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Applicants must select from the following activity categories within their application. However, proposed activities that do not fall under these categories may be considered. These will be subject to review by the Provincial Caribou Recovery Program and the FNCRIF Advisory Committee for approval. Please consult with fund administrators to discuss project activities other than those identified below.

Traditional Knowledge:

- Contribution to the application of Traditional Knowledge [1] and practice in conservation planning
- Documenting Traditional Knowledge through surveys and interviews about caribou and their habitats
- Traditional Knowledge compilation and storage (e.g., set-up/maintenance of community knowledge systems)

[1] Activities aiming to enhance knowledge recognized as uniquely Indigenous. Traditional Knowledge or Indigenous Knowledge is recognized as time-tested, and based in observation and interaction with nature and wildlife, and are embedded in Indigenous culture and tradition.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Surveys, Inventories and Monitoring:

Activities such as identifying and assessing potential sites for stewardship projects, or assessing the presence of a target species to design and carry out a stewardship project:

- Assessing the presence of target species through surveying and/or monitoring
- Creation and/or maintenance of inventories or databases for habitat and species data
- Documentation of Traditional Knowledge related to surveys, inventories and monitoring

Species and Habitat Threat Abatement:

- Prevention of damage to caribou habitat (e.g., signage, stewardship outreach programs)
- Acceleration of population growth through management actions (e.g., supplemental feeding, maternity penning, fencing enclosure)
- Habitat restoration activities are not funded through FNCRIF. These activities may be eligible in other funding arrangements, listed below.

Project Evaluation:

- Assess and adaptively manage the social and biological results and effectiveness of stewardship activities. This may include evaluating the effectiveness of restoration projects. Please discuss the project scope with Fraser Basin Council or Caribou Recovery Program staff prior to submitting an application.

Training, Outreach and Education:

- Development of targeted outreach materials emphasizing the importance of caribou and/or the benefits of the action to be undertaken
- Training individuals in stewardship practices related to caribou recovery to expand Nation capacity
- Informing and engaging communities/target audiences about their contributions towards caribou recovery

Note: FNCRIF funding is not intended to support habitat restoration activities. Proponents interested in advancing habitat restoration measures are referred to the Caribou Habitat Restoration Fund (CHRF), managed by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation: <https://hctf.ca/grants/caribou-habitat-restoration-grants/>.

Activities covered under existing agreements for caribou recovery are not eligible (for example, Caribou Partnership Agreement).

3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIRMENTS

3.4 EXPENSE ELIGIBILITY

All applications will be assessed for reasonable rates of expenditures. Eligible expenses may include reasonable and properly itemized costs for:

Salaries and wages: Salaries, wages and benefits (directly associated with the project activities) that the employee will receive from the organization.

Management and professional service expenditures: Costs associated with services required to support a project, such as accounting, Elders/knowledge holders' fees, insurance (related to the project), land surveys, legal (other than litigation) costs, official languages translation and other professional fees (other than travel).

Contractors: Costs associated with consultants and contractors engaged to undertake project activities (subject to regional or national limits). Hourly rates for contractors, consultants, human resource costs and other services, including those used as match, will be evaluated and may be adjusted to be consistent with standard rates for these services within BC.

Travel: Travel expenses and related expenses for contracted professional service providers or other non-employees (to a maximum of current Treasury Board Secretariat rates), including mileage and accommodation.

Materials and supplies expenditures: Office supplies and materials, field equipment and field supplies, includes equipment purchase under \$5,000.

Equipment rentals: Lease, rental, repair, operating expenses, upgrades and/or maintenance costs including associated gear in support of project.

Communications and printing, production and distribution expenditures: Printing costs, websites, supplies, etc.

Vehicle rental and operation expenditures: May include on or off road vehicle rentals. Helicopter time is supported to a maximum of \$20,000 per year.

Other expenditures: Meeting and training fees (e.g., materials and space rental), and registration fees for courses, conferences, workshops or seminars, etc.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIRMENTS

The following expenses are ineligible for FNCRIF funding. Proposals must indicate which project expenses are proposed for FNCRIF funding, and which are covered by another funding mechanism (e.g., provincial/federal funding program, private or other matching).

Project Evaluation:

- Capital expenses (items greater than \$5,000)
- Guardian Programs
- Land Acquisition, leases, easements, covenants, servitudes
- Helicopter/Aviation Fees greater than \$20,000
- Training greater than \$10,000
- Capacity funding for participation in working groups

Note:

- GST/ PST is an eligible project expenditure; therefore, FBC may reimburse recipients for the taxes they paid while undertaking the activities of the agreement that are not reimbursable by the Canada Revenue Agency or by the Province. The amount of FNCRIF funding includes the reimbursement for GST/PST. For example, if the total funding is \$25,000, this \$25,000 includes FBCs reimbursement for all eligible expenditures including GST/PST. FBC will not reimburse the recipient \$25,000 plus GST/PST; the \$25,000 is all-inclusive.
- The use of universal day rates is not accepted. Costs must be broken down by expense category for the Contribution Agreement to be considered legally binding after signing. When costs are broken down into their respective categories, various clauses are triggered in the Contribution Agreement.
- Costs, other than those identified herein, are ineligible unless specifically approved in writing by the Fraser Basin Council at the time of project approval and are necessary for the successful completion of the project.

3.5 MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

There are no formal matching requirements to access FNCRIF, however, projects that obtain resource support from collaborators, including in-kind contributions, have a greater chance for success and are weighted favourably because of the additional backing and support. Examples of in-kind contributions include equipment loans, donations or volunteer labour. Projects that require expenses deemed ineligible for FNCRIF must identify the source of funding for those expenses within the budget section of their application and in final reporting.

4.FUND GOVERNANCE

FNCRIF is administered by a third party, the Fraser Basin Council on behalf of the Province of British Columbia. Each proposal will be considered independently of others, and in a manner that supports the consistent application of the following guidelines.

4.1 APPLICATION GUIDANCE

The application form prompts proponents to provide all required information within their proposal. Each application must contain a detailed description of the project. Included within the description should be:

- **Type of project:** this will include whether it is a single year or multi-year project
- **Project goals and objectives:** Provide a one or two paragraph description of the project, along with detailed goals and objectives
- **Location of the project:** Location will include coordinates as well as herds both directly and indirectly affected.
- **Main activities:** Provide a full description of all the activities to address caribou recovery that will be funded by this program. Explain how the activities will meet the goals and objectives
- **Recovery outcomes:** Describe the expected positive impact on caribou populations
- **Benefit to community:** How will your nations' capacity be influenced by participating in this project?
- **Broader engagement:** Applicants are required to pre-engage on their project proposal with Nations who may have treaty or established rights or assert Aboriginal rights or title within the identified caribou herd range(s) noted in the proposal. See below for more details.
- **Project timeline:** this will show in what order and timing activities will need to be completed to achieve the project goals.
- **Other anticipated benefits:** describe any associated benefits that the proposed project may yield (e.g., the project benefits old growth ecosystems or watershed security)
- **Program evaluation:** outline how each project activity will be measured regarding its impact on caribou populations

Each proposal must be accompanied by a completed **budget template** and an **engagement template** (templates provided).

4.FUND GOVERNANCE

4.2 APPLICATION REVIEW

There are two processes to apply for funding. Proponents who submit an application for seed funding can then submit a full proposal for implementation funding during a subsequent application window:

a)Seed Funding

b)Implementation Funding

Seed funding: Ensure you choose the seed funding application, which is a condensed application form and shorter review period. Applications will be reviewed by FBC for completeness, with Provincial Caribou Recovery Program review for any anticipated conflicts, constraints or linkages. If approved FBC staff will notify the applicant directly.

Accessing FNCRIF funds for implementation funding requires a five-step review process:

Step 1: Fraser Basin Council Screening

Applications sent to Fraser Basin Council (FBC) will be screened for completeness and clarity. FBC may be able to provide some support to applicants in the development of proposals outside of the application period, including reading drafts, but will not provide proposal-writing services. Proposals that do not meet the administrative requirements will be returned to the proponent for potential resubmission.

Applicants must also list permits required for the project in the application and submit details on how permit requirements will be met (See Step 4).

If the application is for activities that are part of another project or if funding will be used for a project that is already in progress, the applications will need to clearly show how FNCRIF supports the other funding objectives, deliverables, and what the deliverables will be for the FNCRIF portion of the funding.

Step 2: Feedback

There are three records of feedback required before the application can proceed to the Decision Phase:

Pre-engagement with other First Nations

Applicants are required to pre-engage on their project proposal with Nations who may have treaty or established rights or assert Aboriginal rights or title within the identified caribou herd range(s) noted in the proposal. Engagement methods may be as simple as an email notification or as deep as a collaborative strategy. The method of engagement, and response from these Nations must be documented in the engagement template included in the application form and submitted with the project applications. Feedback received from overlapping Nations will be considered in the Decision Phase.

4.FUND GOVERNANCE

Provincial Review

FBC will share application details with the Provincial Caribou Recovery Program on behalf of the applicant. The Program, in cooperation with regional staff, reviews applications while considering any relationship with existing or planned caribou recovery measures; current or proposed activities on the land base; and if applicable, published provincial procedures. The Program returns review results to FBC. Please note: the provincial review does not constitute a recommendation from the B.C. Government nor serve as a permit application. **All necessary permits that may be required to implement the proposal must be applied for separately by the proponent.**

Advisory Committee Review

FBC submits application details, including overlapping Nation and provincial feedback, to the FNCRIF Advisory Committee (FNCRIF AC) comprised of one (1) third-party caribou expert as well as three (3) First Nations representatives. The FNCRIF AC is responsible for two aspects of application review: 1) assessment of technical merits of the application and the proposed project's benefit to caribou recovery and 2) Indigenous members affirm Indigenous participation in wildlife stewardship and caribou recovery efforts.

Step 3: Decision

The FNCRIF Advisory Committee is responsible for recommending funding for approved project applications. Following the Advisory Committee review, FBC will reach out to successful applicants to outline funding agreement terms and conditions.

Step 4: Permit Approvals (if required)

Details on how necessary permit requirements will be met must be included with the application package. The proponent is solely responsible to apply for necessary permits based on provincial government requirements. Funding disbursement is dependent on the applicant receiving the applicable permits. Please see the "Permitting Cheat Sheet" on our website, fraserbasin.bc.ca/caribou.html.

Step 5: Reporting

The contribution agreement between FBC and the applicant will specify project timelines and include required forms. Acceptance of this funding obliges applicants to provide project status reports, annual reports for each year the project is active, and a final report at project and/or funding completion.

4.FUND GOVERNANCE

4.3 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed 60% selection criteria and 40% technical criteria. Some questions asked in the evaluation of each project application may be:

- Does this project support First Nations leadership in caribou recovery?
- Does this project develop First Nations' capacity to participate in caribou recovery?
- If there is training as part of the project, is it targeted to a few key individuals to ensure the most impact?
- Are the monitoring success metrics included and relevant?
- Is there a plan included that supports sharing the information gained from the project with the community?
- Can the proposed activities be reasonably expected to support and promote an increase in abundance of caribou numbers or distribution in the target herd?
- Does the project description provide adequate details of what will be undertaken and why?
- Does the budget reflect the realistic costs of carrying out the planned work?
- Is the project collaborative with other First Nations communities?
- Are there in-kind contributions for the project?

4.4 DATA-SHARING

Intellectual property rights remain those of the recipients and are expected to maintain and document proper data storage and security. Applicants are encouraged to share species occurrence or habitat data collected in the context of the project to the Provincial Caribou Recovery Program.



5.0 FUNDING NOTIFICATIONS & OBLIGATIONS

In accordance with FBC Service Standards, FBC will send applicants acknowledgement of receipt within five (5) working days of receiving an application. Please contact caribou@fraserbasin.ca if you submitted an application but did not receive an acknowledgment.

- 1.If project funding is approved, the Fraser Basin Council will contact the recipient regarding the details of the decision and associated terms and conditions.
- 2.Permit applications are to be submitted to the Province separately and the project may not begin until all permits are received.
- 3.All awarded funds may only be used for the approved project.

5.1 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Applications for both Implementation Funding and Seed funding will be accepted from approximately June 1 – 30 and October 1-31 (11:59pm) each year, adjusting for calendar differences. The application form is available through the Fraser Basin Council fraserbasin.bc.ca/caribou.html. No late applications will be accepted.

5.2 APPLICATION EXTENTIONS

To provide equal treatment to all applicants, the FNCRIF program will not accept late applications. To avoid unanticipated problems, applicants are encouraged to submit their applications early to avoid delays in processing. Extensions will not be granted, despite extenuating circumstances.

5.3 CHANGES TO PROJECTS

We understand that not everything is within the project lead's control, so some delays or changes can happen. However, significant changes to program activities must be discussed with the Fraser Basin Council. To discuss project delays, please contact caribou@fraserbasin.ca. A rationale for project delays must be communicated to ensure funding continuity and plan reporting opportunities.

6.0 REPORTING

Each successful proposal requires a separate report. The reports must contain project revenue from all sources, expenses across all categories, accomplishments, and detailed descriptions of project outputs and outcomes. There are several reporting format options depending on the grant type.

Seed funding:

Seed funding projects may result in a proposal for implementation funding. A report is not required for seed funding, but it is hoped that a full proposal will be submitted. If a full proposal is not developed, the FBC may request feedback.

Implementation Funding:

Each applicant is required to budget (approximately \$5,000) for reporting purposes depending on the type of report. For multi-year projects, an interim report is required at the end of year 1, if applicable, and a final report is required at the end of the project. Reports provide learning opportunities, and the format chosen for final reports should reflect information being shared (for example, some formats are more suitable for story-telling).

Reporting requirements are as follows:

Interim Reports: An interim report must be submitted within 30 days of the end of the first (and second, if applicable) project year and must include:

- Budget, including revenue secured from all sources; expenses to date, and expenses projected to year 2. A template is provided.
- Project update including timelines and progress of planned activities relative to planned outcomes.
- A brief description of other funding sources applied to the project and how this funding supported leveraging other contributions to the project.

Final Reports: The final project report may be submitted in a variety of formats, including in document format (written report), as a presentation, as a story (in-person), or as a video. These must be received by FBC within 45 days of the end of the project. Reports must include:

- A general description, including the location, the caribou herd, and a clear statement of the objectives of the project;
- Identification of the project partners and participants, along with their role in the project;
- Quantitative and qualitative project highlights, accomplishments, challenges, successes, results compared to expected outcomes and performance metrics;
- Recommended next steps;
- Regardless of the report format, a budget report must be submitted in document format, using the template provided within 45 days of the end of the project.

6.0 REPORTING

Workshop: A workshop to highlight project successes will take place each year. Project leads are encouraged to present, or delegate someone to present on their behalf, the project report to the FNCRIF Advisory Committee and interested guests, either in person or virtually. This forum will provide successful applicants an opportunity to network and share project outcomes. Funding for travel, food and accommodation must be built into the project budget and will not be covered by FBC.

GLOSSARY - *A Glossary of Caribou Terms has been developed by the B.C. Caribou Recovery Program and can be [found here](#).*