February 4, 2020

The Honourable John Horgan  
Premier’s Office  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Horgan:

I am writing to thank you and your team for your efforts in bringing together the Leadership Table in November 2019. The Leadership Table provided a welcome opportunity for representatives from British Columbia, Canada, Saulteau, West Moberly, local governments, and the forestry, mining and oil and gas sectors, to meet together and engage in healthy and respectful dialogue on the Partnership Agreement for the Recovery of the Central Group of the Southern Mountain Caribou.

In addition, I am advised that over the past week your team conducted three technical sessions for stakeholders interested in back-country recreation, socio-economic impacts and supports, and caribou recovery land use objectives. I understand that those sessions have also been helpful in providing accurate information to companies, communities and stakeholders. This is an important process and I support your work on this.

I am aware of the letters that you have received from the Peace River Regional District. I am also aware that some communities in the Northeast have welcomed participation and engagement in the technical sessions, and a few others have refused to participate unless you change the Partnership Agreement. I want you to know that I believe that you have listened and that you have been respectful and honest both to your partners in caribou recovery and to the stakeholders in the Peace region (and elsewhere in BC).

It is very sad and concerning that some people have insisted on spreading misinformation about caribou and caribou recovery. Those people should be ashamed of themselves. They seem to be intent on misleading the public for their own selfish purposes. In addition, because of this misinformation, my people and other Indigenous people have been subjected to the worst kinds of racist abuse and hate speech. We are strongly opposed to the use of misinformation and hate as tools for political or economic purposes. I believe that you share our concerns about this issue.

The truth is that together we have worked very hard to find ways to balance and support caribou protection, economic sustainability, and the northern way of life. For example the habitat protection measures in the Partnership Agreement are in fact small incremental changes to already established protections, and many other compromises were made in order to ensure continued opportunities for economic and recreational activities. The Partnership Agreement provides for ongoing work on these important issues and we intend to stand with you and our other partners to find solutions.

Proudly determined

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As we indicated in our December 2018 open letter to local governments (enclosed), we have much in common with our neighbours and we all have an interest in economic and social development in the Peace region. There is nothing to be gained by using misinformation to stoke fear and hatred. It also needs to be emphasized that in fact there are many individuals, companies and organizations in the Peace and across the province that support our shared work on caribou recovery. Many people are encouraging all of us to work harder, to work quickly, and to do more, to help this beautiful and important species recover to sustainable levels.

During the November meeting of the Leadership Table, we acknowledged that there are roles and opportunities for local governments and resource companies to participate and contribute to the objectives of the Partnership Agreement. It is regrettable that a few representatives from local governments have since chosen to mischaracterize those discussions. Instead of taking up the opportunity to be involved and engaged in positive ways, they refused to correct the misinformation circulating in their communities, and have instead chosen to fan the flames of fear and division. We will not let negative attitudes deter us from the important work ahead.

Nevertheless, in response to your request, and in honour of those local governments and stakeholders who have chosen to participate, we wish to propose some small but important revisions to the Partnership Agreement (enclosed). These revisions are intended to reflect the commitment to caribou recovery shared by our governments, communities, companies, and other organizations and people of good will. We invite you to consider them and confirm your agreement as soon as practical so that we can move forward with the work and engagement that will be required to recover caribou in the Peace.

In addition, at the Leadership Table, I emphasized the need for local governments to address the misinformation, and its links to racism and hate in our communities. I believe that you share our concerns and our determination to address those issues. Our proposed revisions include a new clause that would also commit the Province and Canada to implement a program to meaningfully address the problems of racism and hate. We hope and trust that you will consider and agree with our proposal on that issue as well.

In closing, I want to reaffirm our commitment to working constructively with you, Canada, companies, and local governments, as we implement the Partnership Agreement, protect the caribou, and find sustainable solutions for the economy and for the people of our Region. Our intention is to work collaboratively and sincerely with all who seek a positive and effective path forward.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Chief Ken Cameron

Enclosures

December 2018 Open Letter
February 2020 Proposed Revisions