

**Kennedy Siding
Ungulate Winter Range (UWR)
(U-7-001)
Report**

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1.0 Background

Kennedy Siding site has a long history of early winter use by mountain caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*), up to 100 caribou have been observed over a number years (past 10 years). It appears a significant proportion of the local caribou population may use this site. Most of this area burned in 1945 so it is interesting that it is producing lichens in sufficient quantity to attract and hold caribou for months each year, within at most 45 years (1990) post burning. This is substantially earlier than thought likely. The mountain caribou using this site are “Northern” eco-type and are currently a “blue listed” (sensitive/vulnerable) species. The area has had a number of detailed inventory to count and classify the caribou (bull/cow/calf/adult) using this site. A few caribou have been radio-collared and monitored to scope the distribution and timing of caribou using this site.

1.1 Site Description

This site contains critical early winter habitat for mountain caribou in the vicinity of Kennedy (BCR) railway siding, situated approximately 25 km south-east of Mackenzie. The site is a flat alluvial fan bounded by Colbourne Creek to the south, Parsnip River to the west, Misinchinka River to the north and Misinchinka Mountain Range to the east. It is primarily covered by dry pine forest type with moderate to poor productivity. This area is within Natural Disturbance Type (NDT) 2, a zone with infrequent stand initiating events. Caribou typical use the Kennedy Siding site annually from late October to early January, depending on weather conditions. Caribou leave surrounding higher elevation fall ranges to avoid early winter accumulations of uncompacted snow. The caribou forage on terrestrial lichens, forbs and low shrubs under the pine forest. Relatively low snow accumulation allows the caribou to crater to forage and is not an impediment to caribou travel. Caribou leave this low elevation habitat as snow depth increases and move to high elevation sites which are either wind-swept or have compacted snow conditions.

1.2 General Assessment Methodology

The pattern and use of Kennedy Siding area is based on caribou movements and counts, incidental observations and from monitoring of 4 radio collared animals.

Counts

Dec 4, 1992	count of 97 caribou	
Feb 4, 1993	count of 36 caribou	
Nov 23, 1994	count of 41 caribou	
Oct 23-ish, 1995	count of 50 caribou	(Lucille McCullough)
Nov 2, 2001	count of about 48 caribou	(dch pers obs)
Dec 4, 2001	count of 85 caribou	(Seip and Watts)

Collared animals were monitored from Nov/Dec 1994 to Oct 1997

Collar #	Date Captured	Capture Method	Caribou (classification & sex)
.805	94.11.11	net from truck	Adult - female; green ear tag
.855	94.12.20	HWM	Adult - female
.876	94.12.21	HWM	Calf - male
.826	94.12.20	HWM	Adult – female

HWM = Helicopter Wildlife Management (aerial wildlife capture company)

- Collar – 805, Collared at Kennedy Siding in fall 95 and wintered and summered in the mountains above upper Reynolds Creek in 95. Back at Kennedy Siding Oct & Nov gone Dec 95; back to Kennedy Siding in Oct 96 then back to Reynolds Creek Oct 97.
- Collar – 826, Collared at Kennedy Siding; left by late Jan 95 to Watson Peak returning to Kennedy Siding Oct 95 to late Dec 95 then back to Dathseykaly Mt. and Old Friend Mt., Oct 96 and 97 respectively.
- Collar – 855, Kennedy Siding to Mt. LeMoray area; Dec95, Feb 96 Oct 96 and Oct 97 half way back to Kennedy Siding.
- Collar – 876, Left Kennedy Siding by late Jan 95 to east of Mt. Reynolds; Oct 95 returned to Kennedy Siding; Dec 95 Mt. McFee; Oct 96 most of way back to Kennedy Siding.

1.3 Land Designation

- Proposed Kennedy Siding ungulate winter range is 2893 ha in size and is within the Finlay Provincial Forest and the Mackenzie Timber Supply Area. This area was recognized in the 1996 AAC determination (TSR-1) as the “Kennedy Siding Section 12 Caribou Reserve” (6600 ha).
- This TSR-1 reserve include both moose and caribou wintering areas, the proposed Kennedy Siding UWR only address the low elevation pine/lichen caribou wintering area and would drop the identified moose wintering area long the Misinchinka River. The remaining 3707 ha would be re-assigned to the identification of the high elevation mountain caribou wintering area which is located above the Kennedy Siding UWR.
- B.C. Hydro holds a flooding reserve associated with the Williston reservoir over most of the proposed UWR area. However, most of the winter range is at approximately 2400 feet elevation, 350 feet higher than the present maximum pool for the Williston reservoir (2048’).

- Kennedy Siding UWR area was part of a larger Area-of-Interest, identified as protected area candidate during the Protected Area Strategy (PAS) with the primary purpose of protection of caribou habitat.
- This UWR is situated within the Kennedy Siding sub-zone #40A (243,470 ha) of the Misinchinka Resource Management Zone, Mackenzie Land and Resource Management Plan and within the Misinchinka Landscape Unit.
- Section 16 Land Act Reserve (file number: FWLD 7406494) for 6720 ha was granted October 13, 1998. This reserve includes the proposed UWR and was established to provide protection for wildlife values from incompatible land uses.
- Kennedy Siding has a no shooting or hunting area (MU 7-23). Hunting and discharge of firearms is prohibited from November 6 to March 31 (see Map G13 – Hunting & Trapping Regulations Synopsis 2001-02).

1.4 Mackenzie LRMP – Resource Management Zone and Caribou Management

Through the Mackenzie Land and Resource Management Planning (MAC- LRMP) process this area was not designated as a “Protected Area”, it was identified as “high” caribou habitat and joint approval of Forest Development Plan was recommend and approved by government. The LRMP identified this area (subzone #40A Kennedy Siding JA) for “Special” management with the intent **“to manage and perpetuate caribou and caribou habitats as a priority to assist in sustaining viable populations as per the Caribou Management Strategy and specific area strategies** Area specific caribou management strategy 1 apply to the land area of the Kennedy Siding caribou winter range.

Area specific Caribou Management Strategy 1

Minimize fragmentation of a Landscape Unit (LU) by adopting a large patch strategy. This strategy may increase the current patch size distribution from that recommended in the Biodiversity Guidebook to achieve larger and more natural patch sizes, which in turn allows larger areas of the LU to remain undisturbed. Consider areas of high fall and winter caribou use for access management within the context of this strategy.

- Maintain caribou winter habitat through retention and recruitment of pine lichen stands through the landscape unit planning process.
- Where possible schedule fall and winter development activities to minimize interactions with caribou.
- Retain/create patches as per the following table:

Natural Disturbance Type	Patch Distribution (%) in each Size Category (ha)		
	< 40 ha.	40 - 250 ha.	250 - 5000 ha
NDT 2 - Ecosystems with infrequent stand-initiating events	30 - 40 %	30 - 40 %	20 - 40%

1.5 Forestry Resource Impacts

TSR 1 Allowance – The Kennedy Siding Section 12 Caribou Reserve (FWLD – Land’s File# 7406494) some 6600 ha in size was identified within the Mackenzie (TSR 1) Timber Supply Sensitivity Analyses of being an area of high quality wildlife habitat. Where an old-age forest requirement (minimum of 25% forest cover older than 150 years (200 year rotation) was applied and was deferred from harvesting for 10 years. The proposed Kennedy Siding UWR is 2893 ha in size, which would provide a reduction of 3707 ha from the current Kennedy Siding Section 12 Caribou Reserve. Greatly reducing any timber impacts this UWR would have on the timber supply along the Mesinchinka River. We proposed to redirect this reduction, towards the identification of a high elevation mountain caribou wintering area, which is located above the Kennedy Siding UWR.

Forest District and Small Business Program have both support the proposed Kennedy Siding UWR. The Forest Licenses (Abitibi Consolidated Inc. - Mackenzie) has yet to respond to this proposal (see appendix 1 Summary of Consultation).

1.6 Other Resource Impacts

The powerline supplying power to the Kemess Mine site is locate within the is area and is designated as part of the mine, under the *Mines Act*. As such the discharge of firearms in the vicinity of the powerline is not allowed. This should not present a problem since Kennedy Siding area has been designated a no shooting or hunting area within game Management Unit (MU) 7-23. Hunting and discharge of firearms is prohibited from November 6 to March 31 (see Map G13 – Hunting & Trapping Regulations Synopsis 2001-02).

1.7 Management Objectives

Warning

The following planning objectives are a unofficial consolidation of the management objectives established within the legal order pertaining to this Ungulate Winter Range. Official ungulate winter range orders may be accessed and downloaded from this Web Site http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wld/uwr/ungulate_app.html .

While every attempt has been made to ensure accuracy and completeness, these management objectives cannot be guaranteed. Users should always refer to the official order, which may be amended from time to time.

1. Avoid or prevent increased wolf predation on caribou while in the Kennedy Siding UWR area.
 - a. Use appropriate silviculture practices to reduce moose browse.
2. Maintain habitat conditions (forage, cover, and snow pack) to support wintering caribou population.
 - a. As per Caribou Management Strategy 1, log approximately half the entire area at a time on a 100 year rotation, so 45-55% is 0-50 years old and 45-55% is 50-100 years old.
 - b. Harvest in large patches (250 to 1400 ha).
 - c. Maintain a visual screen of vegetation between any road and any cut block in a state so that caribou in the cut block are not visible from the road.
 - d. Do not conduct site preparation and stand tending activities which improve site productivity for trees (i.e., no fertilization, no chipping, no piling and leaving debris).
3. Schedule winter forest operations during the period of least disturbance to both caribou and terrestrial lichens.
 - a. Avoid winter forestry development (including harvesting) between October 1st and February 28th. Development may occur prior to February 28th if Caribou have moved from the site.
 - b. To avoid terrestrial lichen disturbance, ensure adequate snow cover when harvesting.
4. Manage road access to limit human disturbance to caribou
 - a. Do not increase the current road density.
 - b. Construct roads to the lowest class practicable while maintaining safety and environmental standards.
5. Reduce or prevent conflicts between caribou and livestock.
 - a. Do not increase AUM allotments or issue new tenures.

Appendix 1 - Summary of Consultation

Contact Name	Response / Comments
Jim Ladds, RPF Zone 1 Officer, Mackenzie Forest District, MOF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On behalf of the District Manager (Dave G. Francis), the Mackenzie Forest District support the Ungulate Winter Range proposal for wintering caribou in the Kennedy Siding Area. The area proposed is significantly smaller than that proposed via the LRMP, and is composed of dry pine lichen types. Be advised that there are within the area 3 opening harvested by Abitibi Consolidated (namely CP 123 CBs #1, #2, #3) that were harvested in 1990, and planned to be declared free growing in 2002.
Ed Beswick, Regional Manager, Northeast Regional Office, MEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kemess powerline run through this area and a no shooting zone should be established along the line, under the Mines Act discharge of firearm in the vicinity of the powerline is not allowed. Kemess could gate roads or further upgrade deactivation, if it would help the caribou herd. Long term potential to twin or upgrade the Kemess powerline relative to Mt.Milligan or other potential mines. Suggest MSRM do a tenure search for O&G and mineral tenure.
Ross Knudson, Small Business Officer, Mackenzie Forest District, MOF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No problems with any existing or proposed Small Business blocks within or overlapping the UWR. One previous small SBFEP block borders on the east side and is clearly excluded from the draft UWR boundary Small Business Program has no concerns with the proposal.
Wayne Lewis, RPF, Planning Superintendent, Abitibi Consolidated Inc., Mackenzie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone contact on June 17, 2002 with a follow-up e-mail the same day, providing the draft UWR proposal and maps. E-mail sent July 3, 2002 as a follow-up. No response to date.
Romona Blackwell, Mineral Planner, Omineca- Peace Region MSRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mail request (June 17, 2002) for a tenure search for O&G and mineral tenure within the UWR. Follow-up e-mail July 5, 2002 No response to date.
Doug Heard, Wildlife Specialist, Omineca Region, WLAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the develop the caribou management objectives for this UWR, with Dale Seip, Wildlife Habitat Ecologist, Prince George Forest Region,

Contact Name	Response / Comments
	MOF. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wildlife management is in agreement with the removal of moose habitat (3707 ha) from the Kennedy Siding Section 12 Caribou Reserve and this UWR, to reduce conflicts arising from co-existing caribou and moose populations

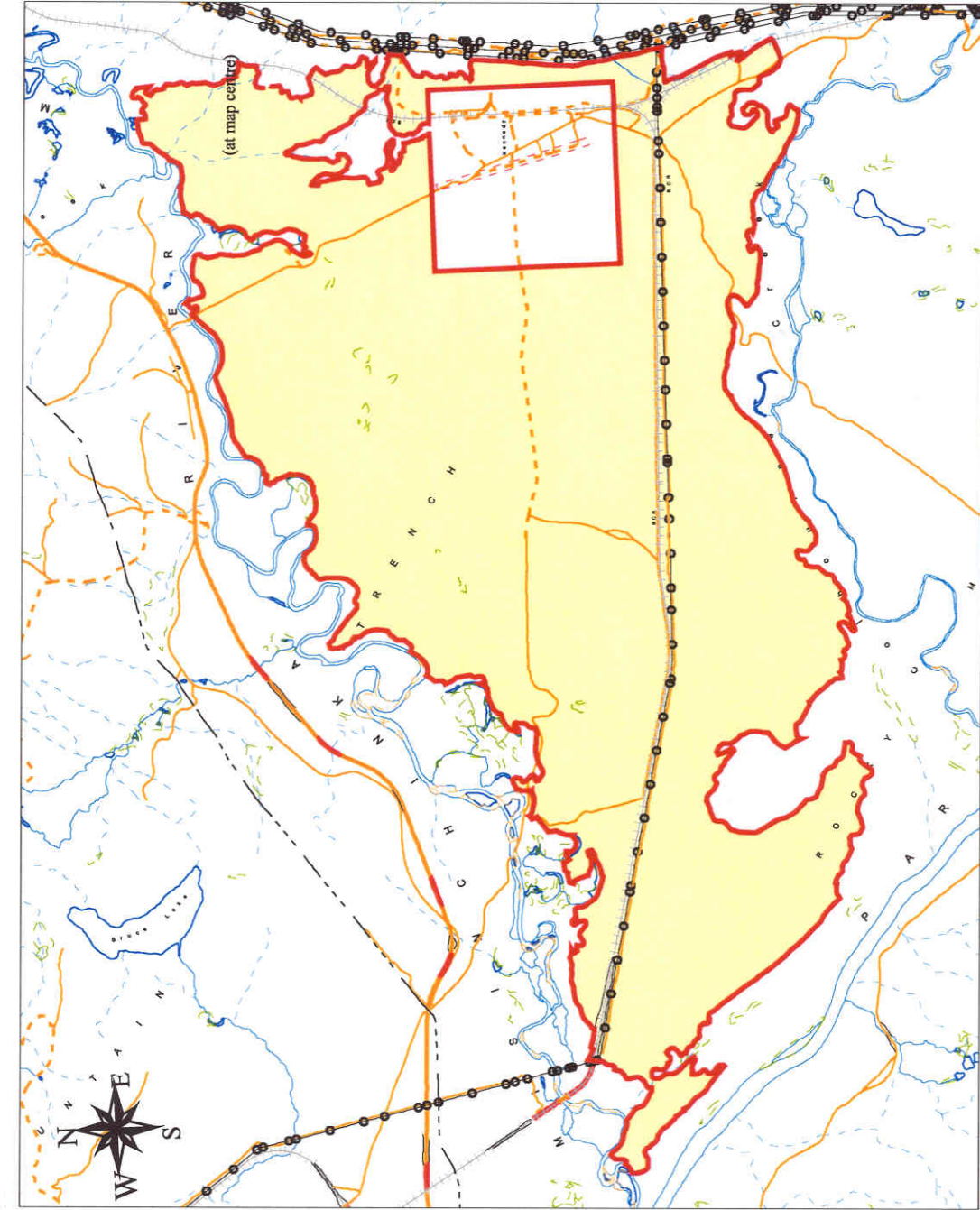
Appendix 2 – Kennedy Siding UWR Area Maps

Map 1 – Water and Transportation (scale 1:60,000)

Map 2 – Ortho Photo Map (scale 1:60,000)

Map 3 – Overlap – Kennedy URW and FWLD 7406494 (1:160,000)

Kennedy Siding UWR



TRIM, Water - Lines, 1:20K

- Dam - Beaver
- Ditch
- Rapids
- River/Stream - Definite
- River/Stream - Indefinite
- River/Stream - Intermittent
- River/Stream - Left Bank
- River/Stream - Right Bank
- Lake - Definite
- Lake - Indefinite
- Lake - Intermittent
- Reservoir - Definite
- Marsh
- Swamp
- Island - Definite
- Sand Bar
- Kennedy Siding - UWR
- Kennedy Siding - UWR

Ministry of Land,
Water and Air Protection
Omineca Region
July 8, 2002

1 0 1 Kilometers

1:60,000



Kennedy Siding UWR



TRIM, Water - Lines, 1:20K

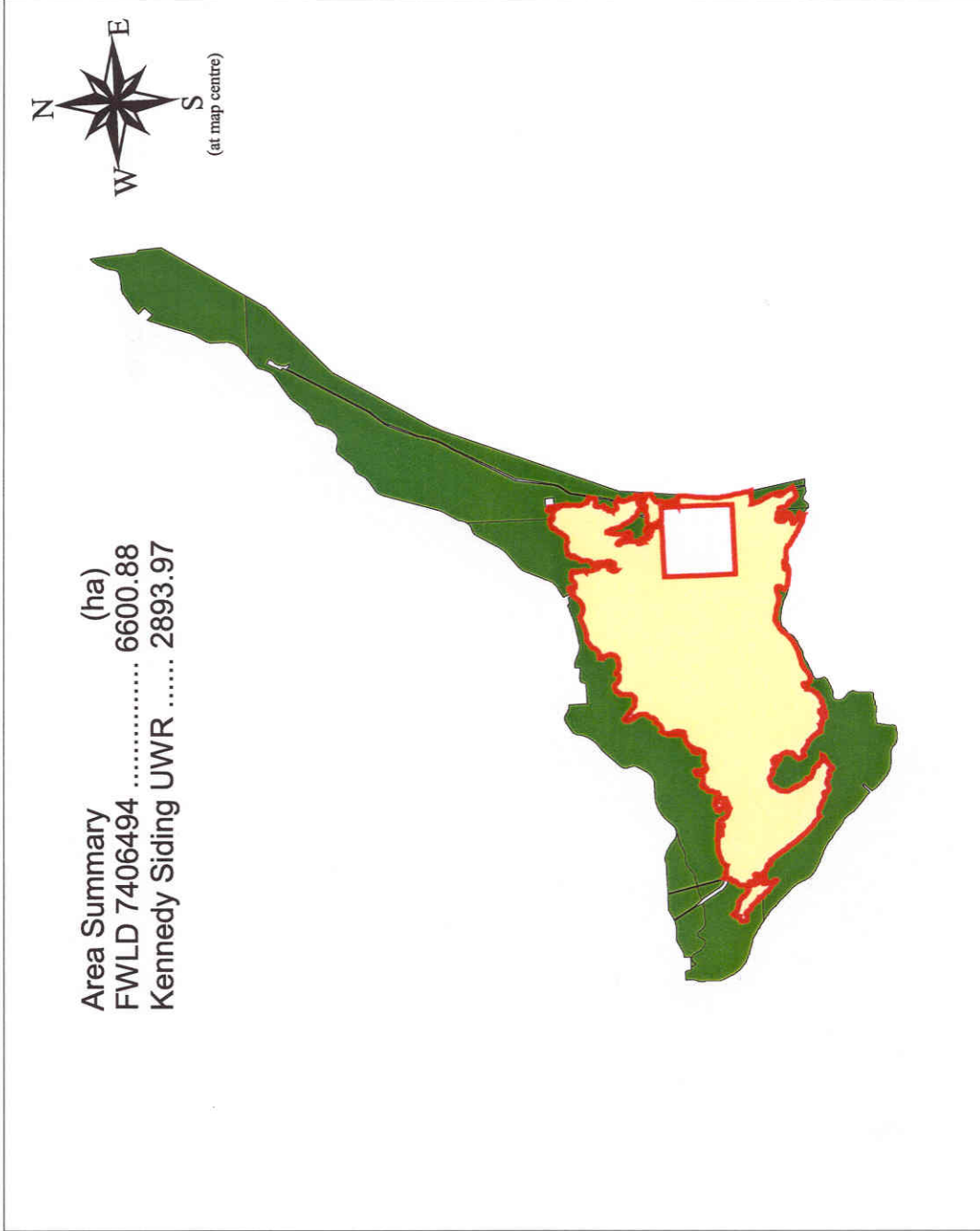
- Dam - Beaver
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- River/Stream - Indefinite
- River/Stream - Intermittent
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- Lake - Definite
- Lake - Indefinite
- Lake - Intermittent
- Reservoir - Definite
- Marsh
- Swamp
- Island - Definite
- Sand Bar
- Kennedy Siding - UWR
- Kennedy Siding - UWR

1:60,000

1 0 1 Kilometers

Overlap - Kennedy Siding UWR and FWLD 7406494

Area Summary (ha)
FWLD 7406494 6600.88
Kennedy Siding UWR 2893.97



Kennedy Siding - UWR
Kennedy Siding - UWR
Fwid 406494.shp
Fwid 406494.shp