

Key Gr. 11

Name _____

Date _____

Mountain Caribou

1. What family do mountain caribou belong to? Deer family (cervidae)
2. Name the predators of the mountain caribou. Wolves, cougars, bears, wolverines
3. What are antlers made out of? bone
4. Describe mountain caribou habitat Mountain caribou need old forest, mountains and deep snow.
5. Name two adaptations that help mountain caribou live up high in the mountains during the winter months hollow hairs help them stay warm. Big feet help them walk on snow.
6. What affects caribou populations most?
 - a) their average litter size
 - b) the survival rate of juvenile caribou
 - ☒ c) the survival rate of adult caribou
 - d) the age of first litter
7. What is the main thing that is killing mountain caribou? They are being killed by predators.
8. Describe how forestry is changing the ecosystem mountain caribou inhabit.
 - Cut forests → more light → more shrubs → more moose, deer + elk → more predators.
 - false box and arboreal lichens (caribou food) do not grow well in clearcuts.

9. Use the following boxes to draw a cartoon that shows one way that human actions are affecting the mountain caribou.

<p><u>Some ideas:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • winter recreation activities in caribou habitat • building towns, roads or dams in caribou habitat • forestry → creates more moose/deer/elk habitat which increases predator populations • moose, deer, elk or predator hunting could increase caribou numbers. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carbon emissions → climate change → more variable snow pack → caribou may not be able to reach arboreal lichens (winter food) 	

10. Describe one way that biologist, government and/or industry can help the mountain caribou. Explain the pros and cons of this solution * see next sheet

① Reduce winter recreation. PROS: caribou are less disturbed + have more winter habitat. Less access for predators who use snowmobile/ski tracks into the alpine.

CONS: Less land for heli-skiing/cat-skiing/snowmobile tours industry
Less land for winter recreationalists.

11. What is one thing that you personally can do in your day-to-day life to help the mountain caribou? Stay out of caribou habitat in winter.

Reduce, Re-use, Recycle paper. Reduce emissions.
Write a letter to government

- Number 10 continued:

② Reduce logging in caribou habitat.

PROS

- more habitat for caribou
- fewer clearcuts would eventually lead to fewer moose, deer, elk and their predators
- preserves habitat for many other species dependent on old forests.

CONS

- fewer jobs in the forestry industry
- less money for the industry

• It will take years for present clearcuts to grow back and for moose, deer + elk population to decrease. Caribou will likely go extinct before then.

③ Hunt more moose, elk, deer

PROS

- If we reduce these populations, predator populations will eventually decrease
- more hunting for recreation + food.
- Public is generally accepting of hunting of these animals

CONS

- reducing these populations without reducing predator populations could lead to more caribou being preyed on.
- Increasing the number of hunting "tickets" does not necessarily mean an increase in hunting.

④ Predator control (killing or sterilizing wolves and cougars)

PROS

- Immediate decrease in caribou kills.
- In the short term possibly the only way caribou will survive.

CONS

- public/environmentalists are very opposed to this solution
- Considered un-ethical by many
- If done without setting aside caribou habitat (↓ logging, ↓ winter rec) then predators will need to be continuously controlled

