



**Western Copper
Corporation**

**Project Proposal
Carmacks Copper Project
Yukon Territory**

Appendix H5

**Wildlife Update
(August 2006)**

Carmacks Copper Project

Wildlife Update / Response to YESAB's April 28, 2006 Adequacy Review Report (Project No. 2006-0050)

Response to the adequacy review report- Request for supplementary information.
Western Silver Corp, Carmacks Copper project proposal Project No. 2006-0050.

Adequacy Review Report Item 4 – Wildlife Seasonal Use in Project Area and Vicinity.

Ungulates:

Moose

- Last surveyed in 2003, Block 17 (Carmacks West) estimated a low moose density of 40 moose/1,000 km² with a total population estimate of 215 animals (R. Ward, pers comm.)
- An aerial survey conducted in early December 2005 in all habitat types (Cornett & Lortie, 2005) located 6 adult moose in the subalpine zone and willow dominated shrub community in Upper Merrice Creek. Similarly, the tracks of small number of moose were found in Upper Nancy Lee and Hoochekoo Creeks. Movement likely followed these drainages upstream as moose tracks at lower elevations were older and discontinuous.
- A one day 4 x 4 assisted walkabout in mid July 2006 on the project footprint confirmed the winter presence of moose in deciduous and coniferous dominant uplands (4 pellet groups) and willow dominant wetland in middle Nancy Lee Creek (8 pellet groups). Further, summer occupancy is confirmed by the observation of fresh tracks of a cow and calf moose by a pond in a mixed forest upland and a fresh track in willow wetland near Nancy Lee Creek (Lortie and Withers, 2006).
- In Summary, the project lies within a low density moose survey block and moose occupy the area all year in very low numbers.

Bison (Adequacy Review Report Item 5)

The project lies outside the known range of Wood Bison with no known record of permanent occupancy in the area. The occasional observation of a few Bison in the area while a possibility is a low probability occurrence (T. Jung, pers comm.). Key Wildlife Area (KWA) 1925 was identified prior to 1994 with the anecdotal reporting of groups of 3-14 bison in the area. While the KWA database has not been recently updated (M. Waterreus, pers comm.), more recent observations are not on record. In the absence of bison in the project vicinity, management considerations are not required.

Mule Deer

Occasionally Mule Deer observations along the Freegold Road in the Murray Creek area (T. Jung, pers comm.) extend sporadically as far west as Upper Big Creek (P. Percival, pers comm.). These occurrences do not imply a continuous distribution but suggest small numbers of animals exploring into suitable pockets of habitat. Suitable Mule Deer habitat characterized by open south exposures (steep grassy slopes) are a minor component in the habitat mosaic in the project area. Mule Deer, where they do occur, are likely year round residents. Local snow conditions and predation at low density are the likely determinants to their being in the area at all.

Caribou

Caribou are not known to occupy the project area in recent decades. The entire region lies within the historic range of the Forty Mile Caribou Herd, a barren ground population under intensive joint Canada - US recovery management. More locally, telemetry data indicates that Woodland Caribou, the Klaza Herd, range during winter to within 30 miles of the project to the south west.

Habitat potential for wintering caribou in the project area is good. Potential increases with decreasing elevation on northern exposures dominated by white and black spruce. Lichen stands at lower elevations are continuous and well developed, particularly in Nancy Lee and North Williams Creeks.

(Adequacy Review Report Item 3)

With the passing of the Forty Mile Caribou Herd and the absence of bison in the area, migration corridors in the project vicinity are virtually nonexistent. Moose, the most abundant ungulate in the area, can be expected to move along drainages and shrub (primarily willow) dominated habitats.

Large Carnivores:

Wolf

The winter presence of wolf is confirmed by three scats; two containing large bone fragments and moose hair, and one containing small bones and probable snowshoe hare hair. Recent spring and summer evidence was not found. All scats were located in black spruce dominant upland.

Black Bear

Jesse Halle (Geologist, pers comm.) saw a large black phase black bear on the Freegold Road on July 11, 2006. Black bear are common in the area. Four bear scats were found incidental to vegetation mapping. One was a graminoid-equisetum fresh scat in black spruce dominant wetland near Nancy Lee Creek. The other three found in mixed conifer upland were 100% soapberry scats from last summer.

Grizzly Bear

Much less abundant, the track of a small grizzly was noted in a wetland near Nancy Lee Creek. It is possible that some of the scat noted above could be grizzly scat. A grizzly bear was observed along the Yukon Quest Trail approximately 15 kilometers southeast of the camp area on August 16 (2006).

Fur Bearers:

Beaver

Small dam and older aspen cutting on Merrice Creek just above access road; recent activity not evident.

Marten

Indirect evidence of marten was the finding of an old marten trap set by camp personnel.

Lynx and Coyote

- Rely heavily on Snowshoe Hare, currently at low numbers.
- Can be expected to occupy area year round.

Grouse

- Several pellet groups found from previous winter snow roosting – species not determined.
- Grouse populations are cyclic and can be expected on the area year round.

Personal Communications:

Ward, R. Moose Biologist, Government of Yukon

Jung, T Species at Risk Biologist, Government of Yukon

Waterreus, M. Remote Sensing Tech, Government of Yukon

Percival, P. Engineer (Ret), Government of Yukon

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Literature Reviewed:

P.A. Harder and Associates Ltd. 1993. Biophysical Assessment of the Williams Creek Minesite. IEE Vol I.

Access Consulting Group. 2005. Project Description and Environmental Assessment Report for the Carmacks Copper Project.

Literature cited:

D. Cornett and G.M. Lortie. December 2005.