**Critical Policy Review: How BC old-growth forest policy help conserve caribou**

**population?**

By

Thi Phan

Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics

Thompson Rivers University

Email: [phant191@mytru.ca](mailto:phant191@mytru.ca)

**ABSTRACT**

The main objective of the project is to enhance the policy connection between old growth forest

preservation and caribou conservation strategy. Caribou species rely on old-growth forest to

provide lichen as its main food source. British Columbia has developed policies to protect old-growth forest and indirectly protect caribou habitat. Besides that, there are other methods to

preserve this species, for example, predator control like wolf reduction or nutrition enhancement

like maternal penning. However, these methods are targeting short-term species conservation. A

significant amount of old-growth forest needs to be reserved for caribou restoration as part of longterm forestry planning. However, this will lead to a substantial opportunity cost in terms of lost logging revenue for the British Columbia economy. The critical question then becomes as to how policymakers can balance the logging revenue in forestry lost and contribute the ecosystem

services value of sustaining a healthy caribou habitat in the old growth forest. The goal of this

project is to demonstrate that preserving old-growth forests can significantly enhance British

Columbia's ecosystem services and natural capital through the maintenance of a viable caribou

population. This research conducts a comprehensive review of the current forest preservation

policies and offers a critical analysis on how these policies can be enhanced to serve as effective

strategic tools for caribou conservation.

**Keywords: Caribou Population, Policy Review, Old Growth Forest, British Columbia,**

**Economics of Conservation**