

MSc Position: Physiological effects of supplemental feeding in caribou

We are seeking an MSc student to lead a project investigating the physiological effects of supplemental feeding in caribou. Supplemental feeding has been applied for the past 7 years in the central interior of BC to increase calf recruitment in caribou from the Kennedy Siding herd. This approach appears to have positive effects on herd size, but the mechanism by which population increases are occurring is unclear. The MSc student will examine physiological bioindicators in hair and pellets to investigate whether supplemental feeding increases the proportion of females that breed in multiple years or whether feeding increases the viability of calves. This project will provide insights into the mechanisms by which supplemental feeding influences caribou pregnancy rates and calf survival and help evaluate whether feeding is most beneficial in spring or fall.

The student will be based at the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George, BC. The student will be supervised by Heather Bryan (Assistant Professor, University of Northern British Columbia) and will work closely with Doug Heard (Adjunct Professor, UNBC) as well as collaborators from the McLeod Lake Band, the BC Provincial Government (FLNRORD), and Wildlife Infometrics. Fieldwork will occur near the community of McLeod Lake in fall of 2021 and 2022 and will involve the collection of pellet and hair samples from caribou that visit the feeding stations. The student will start officially in Sept 2021, however ideally the candidate would be available by July 1st or August 1st to start planning the field season as a paid technician. Funding for research expenses and a graduate student stipend of \$20,000 are secured for the first year of the project through the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program; additional project funding for two more years is contingent on satisfactory progress. The candidate will also be encouraged to apply for competitive awards, such as NSERC.

Required Qualifications and Experience:

- Bachelor's degree related to wildlife health, ecology, and/or conservation
- Course-work in animal reproduction, nutrition, physiology, endocrinology, and behaviour
- Experience with laboratory methods, especially immunoassays
- Experience or interest in field research
- Course-work or experience with data analysis (e.g., R Programming)
- Keen attention to detail and organizational skills
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Science communication skills, especially writing

About the Community

Since its founding in 1990, the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) has emerged as one of Canada's best small research-intensive universities, with a passion for teaching, discovery, people, and the North. Located in the spectacular landscape near the geographic centre of beautiful British Columbia, UNBC's excellence is derived from community-inspired research, hands-on learning, and alumni who are leading change around the world. For the past 10 years, UNBC has placed in the top three in its category in the annual Maclean's university rankings, the only University of its size to achieve that feat. UNBC also recently placed among the top four percent of higher education institutions worldwide by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

With a diverse student population, the University is friendly, inclusive, and supportive. Prince George is a city of ~74,000 people with impressive cultural, educational, and recreational amenities. For more information about living and working in Prince George, please refer to <http://www.unbc.ca/experience> and <https://moveupprincegeorge.ca>. Make your mark with this leading post-secondary institution.

To Apply

Please send your resume, a brief letter describing why you are interested in this opportunity, three references, and a copy of your unofficial academic transcripts in a single PDF file saved as your name and **“Caribou physiology MSc Application”** to: heather.bryan@unbc.ca

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. The University of Northern British Columbia is committed to employment equity and encourages applications from women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.

We thank all applicants for their interest in UNBC however, only those applicants selected for further consideration will be contacted.

Applications will be accepted until **4:30pm on Tuesday, June 15th, 2021** or until the position is filled.

