



Government of  
Northwest Territories

# NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program

**2017/18 ANNUAL REPORT**



# PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

The Northwest Territories Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program (NWT CIMP) is an environmental monitoring and research program within the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Environment and Natural Resources. While many organizations monitor the NWT environment, the mandate of NWT CIMP is to understand cumulative impacts and environmental trends.

NWT CIMP currently focuses on cumulative impacts related to three valued components decision-makers agree are of critical importance to the people of the NWT: caribou, water and fish.

The goal of the program is to provide information to NWT regulators and the public that contributes to wise resource management decisions.

**Cumulative impacts** are changes in the environment caused by human activities and natural processes that add up across space and time. Monitoring cumulative impacts in the NWT is important because, over time, the results of many individual resource management decisions can lead to changes that may not have been expected.

**Cumulative impact monitoring** is a statutory requirement in the NWT, and a key feature of the Gwich'in, Sahtú and Tłıchǫ land claim agreements as well as Part 6 of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA).

# PROGRESS ON OUR ACTION PLAN

NWT CIMP is guided by a five-year (2016-2020) Action Plan that includes three key activity areas:

1. Working with partners to **understand key monitoring and research priorities**.
2. Coordinating, conducting and funding **environmental monitoring, research and analysis**.
3. **Communicating results** to decision-makers and the public.

In 2017/18, the program made progress on all main activities in the Action Plan. Read the following pages to learn more.

**For program information:** [nwtcimp.ca](http://nwtcimp.ca)

**For monitoring results:** [nwtdiscoveryportal.enr.gov.nt.ca](http://nwtdiscoveryportal.enr.gov.nt.ca)

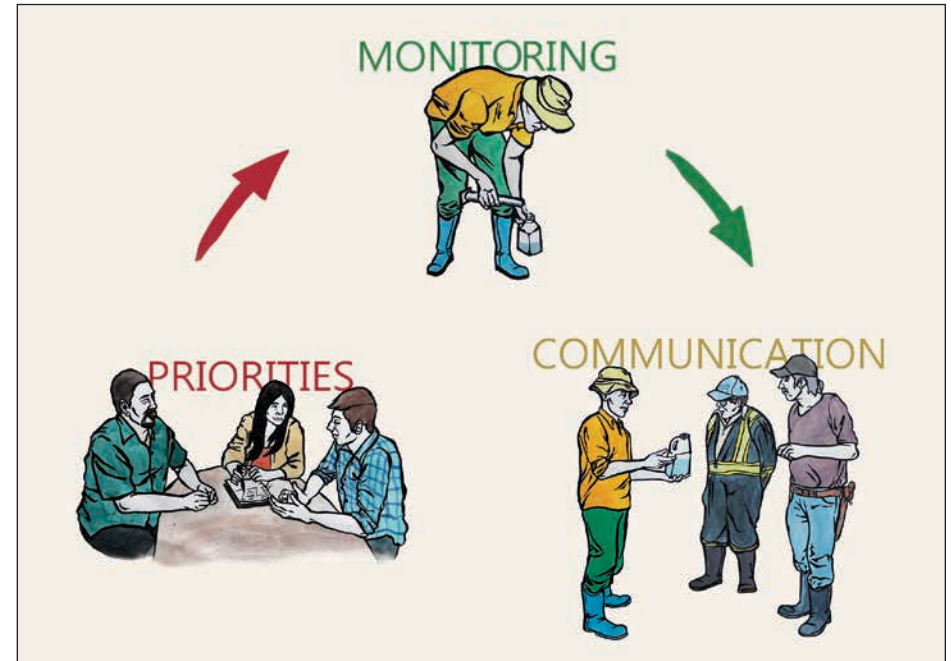


Illustration Credit: Trey Madsen





NWT CIMP Steering Committee, March 2018

# 1. WORKING WITH PARTNERS TO UNDERSTAND KEY MONITORING AND RESEARCH PRIORITIES

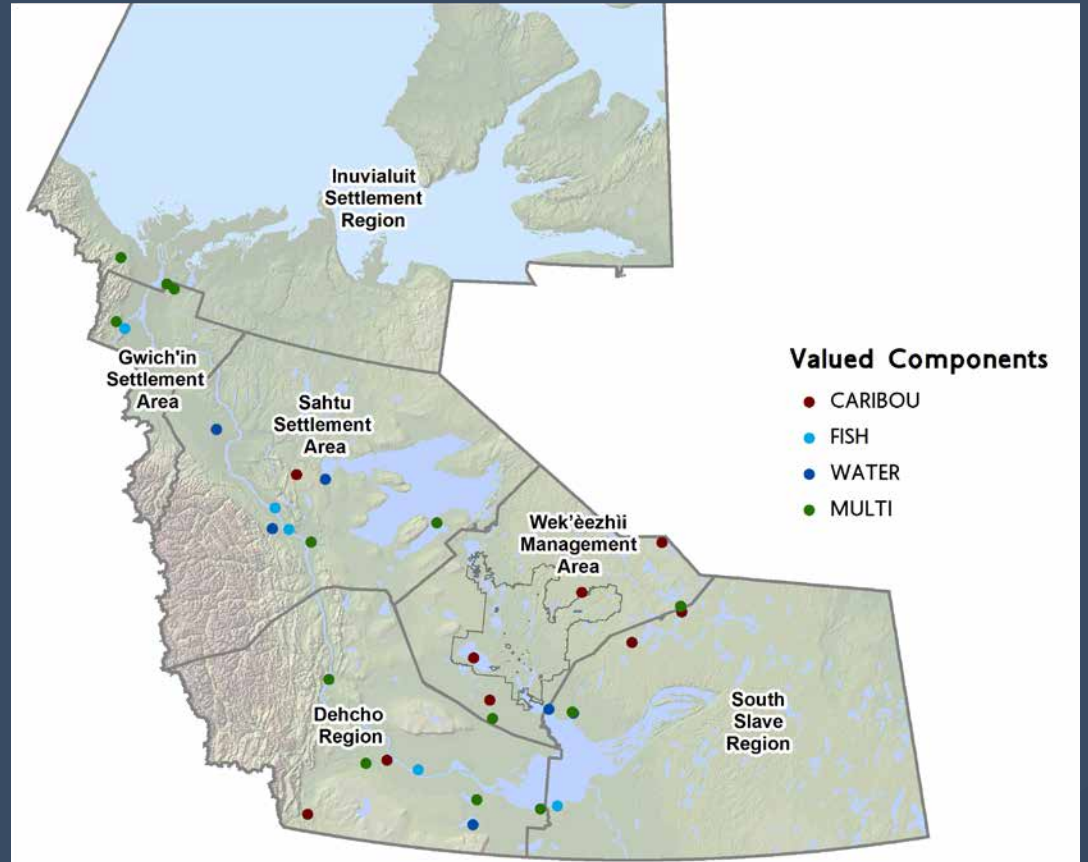
## MONITORING PRIORITIES

In 2017/18, NWT CIMP confirmed its monitoring and research priorities for water, fish and caribou, in addition to continuing its work with partners to refine the needs of northern regulatory decision-makers. In particular, two projects were underway to identify information gaps and challenges related to (1) the use of traditional knowledge in regulatory decisions and (2) the key water monitoring data that regulators require to assess the cumulative impacts of developments. NWT CIMP also provided an update to regulatory boards on progress related to their research and monitoring priorities.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

NWT CIMP continued to engage and support its Steering Committee, which includes representatives of eight regional Indigenous governments, the federal and territorial governments, and several co-management boards. The Steering Committee met three times to provide guidance on the overall program and 12 new project funding proposals.

## Map of 2017/18 NWT CIMP projects



## 2. COORDINATING, CONDUCTING AND FUNDING MONITORING, RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

In 2017/18, the program generated a significant amount of new knowledge about caribou, water and fish. In total, 32 projects were supported throughout all regions of the NWT with \$1.8M of funding, supplemented by \$4.5M in leveraged partner funding. Twenty-six of the projects were led by or partnered with a regional Indigenous community or co-management organization. A complete list of NWT CIMP projects from 1999-2018 is available at [nwtcimp.ca](http://nwtcimp.ca).

### SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

This year, nine projects had a focus on Traditional Knowledge and 25 were developed directly in response to community concerns. Over 50 per cent of the projects included training or work experience for community members.



Local youth from the Sahtú Region participating in aquatic monitoring.



# SUPPORTING DECISIONS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

NWT CIMP is focused on providing information to regulators and the public that supports effective environmental decision-making. Project leads are required to contact local decision-makers as part of the funding application process to ensure projects meet their needs.

The following are examples of how the results of five NWT CIMP-funded projects were used this year to help make effective decisions about the environment.



Participants at an environmental management workshop.



## FIVE NWT CIMP PROJECTS THAT SUPPORTED ENVIRONMENTAL DECISIONS IN 2017/18

Lead – Organization	Project Title	Environmental Decision
Xinhua Zhu – Fisheries and Oceans Canada (CIMP132)	Comprehensive Assessment of Biological Adaptability of Great Slave Lake Fisheries Ecosystem to Anthropogenic and Natural Disturbances	Fisheries and Oceans Canada harvest quota decisions for Great Slave Lake.
Steve Kokelj – GNWT NWT Geological Survey (CIMP164)	Tracking Landscape Change and Cumulative Environmental Impacts using Remote Sensing	GNWT Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment public lake drainage advisories in the Gwich'in Settlement Area.
Jody Pellissey – Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (CIMP169)	When do Caribou Return? Impacts of Wildfires on Ṯòdzì	Traditional knowledge information submitted to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board for the Ṯẖcẖq All-season Road environmental assessment.
Johanne Black – Yellowknives Dene First Nation (CIMP171)	Yellowknives Dene Barren-Ground Caribou TK Mapping and Analysis	Yellowknives Dene First Nation input to the GNWT Bathurst Caribou Range Planning process.
Brian Sieben – GNWT Environment and Natural Resources (CIMP182)	Long-term NWT Climate Change Predictions to Support Mine Closure Design	GNWT Department of Environment and Natural Resources comments on: 1. Diavik Waste Rock Storage Area Final Closure and Reclamation Plan 2. Ekati – Waste Rock Ore Management Plan



Participants listen to Angus Charlo, Dehchita Naawo Coordinator, presenting the Yellowknives Dene First Nation's project, "Barren-ground caribou: traditional knowledge mapping and analysis" at NWT CIMP's Environmental Research and Monitoring Results Workshop: North and South Slave Regions (Mission Island, Fort Resolution).

# 3. COMMUNICATING RESULTS TO DECISION-MAKERS AND THE PUBLIC

## COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITIES

One of NWT CIMP's key activities is to communicate results to communities. All NWT CIMP project leads are required to report their results to local communities. In 2017/18, NWT CIMP funded researchers made 16 community presentations throughout the NWT.

In addition, NWT CIMP hosts an annual region-specific, results-based workshop. In October 2017, NWT CIMP, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, North Slave Métis Alliance and Akaitcho Territory Government co-hosted a two-day workshop at Mission Island, near Fort Resolution, NWT. The workshop focused on projects conducted in both the North and South Slave Regions. In addition to results presentations, participants discussed best practices for information sharing and traditional knowledge research. A workshop summary report is available at [nwtcimp.ca](http://nwtcimp.ca).

## ONLINE INFORMATION

NWT CIMP results are available online at the NWT Discovery Portal ([nwtdiscoveryportal.enr.gov.nt.ca](http://nwtdiscoveryportal.enr.gov.nt.ca)), with approximately 3,000 records posted. Comprehensive human and natural disturbance information for the entire territory is available online at the Inventory of Landscape Change Web Viewer ([nwtcimp.ca](http://nwtcimp.ca)).

## INNOVATIVE COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS

NWT CIMP encourages the publication of project results in both peer-reviewed journals and plain language summaries. In 2017/18, the program generated 19 peer-reviewed publications and 48 reports. Program staff worked with project leads to develop and publish five plain language summaries of current projects. An archive of over 15 of these Northern Environmental Research Bulletins is now available at [nwtcimp.ca](http://nwtcimp.ca).

Two short informational videos were developed to highlight NWT CIMP projects. One focuses on studying the impact of wildfire in the North Slave region. The other explores the use of Tłıchǫ knowledge to monitor barren-ground caribou and was translated into Tłıchǫ. The videos are aimed at engaging community audiences and are available at [nwtcimp.ca](http://nwtcimp.ca).

