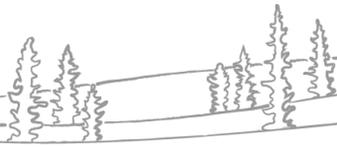




Boreal Caribou Sustainable Harvest Assessment

What does it mean? What's next?



Overview

Boreal caribou are a distinct population of woodland caribou that live in forested areas in the NWT's boreal forest all year-round.

Boreal caribou are listed as a threatened species in Canada and the NWT.

Because of this, the Government of the Northwest Territories, Indigenous governments and organizations, and other co-management partners like renewable resource boards work together to keep track of how they're doing.

Overall, the population of boreal caribou in the NWT is considered stable, but there are declines in some areas of the Dehcho region.

This year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources looked at more than 10 years of information on boreal caribou in the southern NWT and created a report that looked at:

- Caribou survival rates
- The number of calves compared to cows
- The number of bulls compared to cows
- How many calves were born

With this information, a computer model was used to see how many caribou could be harvested in different areas of the southern NWT without contributing to boreal caribou declines.



The big takeaway:
Hunting in the southern NWT needs to be managed carefully.

The report found two important things:

- In the Dehcho Region, boreal caribou south of the Mackenzie River are currently decreasing.
- In the South Slave, boreal caribou population south of Great Slave Lake were stable, in the absence of hunting. Since the report was released, caribou numbers in this area are increasing, even in the presence of some harvesting.

By-the-numbers: current status of boreal caribou; harvesting numbers

- Current population: estimated at 6000-7000 animals in the NWT (4166 in the southern NWT).
- Average annual harvest resident hunters: 19 across NWT
- Average annual harvest – Aboriginal harvesters: between 65 and 195 across NWT

How are boreal caribou managed today?

- Limit of one bull per year – Resident Hunting Licence holders
- Limited July 15 to December 15 season for Resident Hunting Licence and General Hunting Licence holders
- No season or other limits for Aboriginal harvesters in their traditional use area.

Why did we do the study?

- Community concerns about level of boreal caribou harvesting in the southern NWT.
- To evaluate what level of harvest of boreal caribou is sustainable.
- To support research, monitoring and management commitments found in the NWT and national recovery strategies for boreal caribou.

What do we need to do next?

This study highlights the need for wildlife co-management partners to consider whether new harvest management actions are needed for boreal caribou in the southern NWT.

Caribou will always be important socially, economically, and culturally in the NWT.

That means we need to continue to work together to support boreal caribou management and conservation.

To make sure we strike the right balance, we will:

- Work with all co-management partners including Indigenous governments and organizations and renewable resource board to evaluate this new information and identify options for managing the harvest.
- Provide opportunities for public comment on any proposed harvest management approaches.

In this way, we will develop management options reflecting the perspectives and values of our territory.

Opportunities to comment will be advertised.

What's next?

- **Today – January 2022:** Consider harvest management approaches with Indigenous governments and organizations and other co-management partners.
- **Early 2022:** Provide opportunities for engagement and public input on any proposed management approaches.
- **Spring/Summer 2022:** Develop, approve and implement proposed management approaches.