



Enhanced North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Program

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How long have we had a wolf harvest incentive program in the Northwest Territories (NWT), and how much have wolf harvesters been paid?

A wolf carcass collection program first began in the winter of 2008/09 and went to 2009/10 (two years total). That program paid \$100 per skinned wolf carcass.

In June 2009, the Bathurst caribou calving ground photo survey results showed a significant decline in the population of the herd, prompting the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) to recommend drastic harvest restrictions. The GNWT heard from North Slave communities that predation was an important factor in the decline of the Bathurst herd, with strong support for wolf harvest incentives to help reduce the number of wolves in the territory. The North Slave Region's wolf carcass collection was expanded NWT-wide.

Although this program did result in an increase in the number of harvested wolves, the amount of increase was not high. Further, very few of the wolves harvested came from the Bathurst herd's winter range—the area intended to help Bathurst caribou recover.

Much of the harvest (25-40%) of the wolves took place near communities and landfills. This helped to remove wolves that came into conflict with people and property around communities.

Bathurst caribou calving ground surveys conducted in 2012 and 2015 showed a continuing decline in the size of the herd. In response, and to further support the traditional economy, the wolf harvest incentive program was increased again in 2015 to include:

- \$200 for a skinned wolf;
- An additional \$400 for a pelt prepared to traditional standards; and
- An additional \$350 for a pelt that met the requirement for a prime fur bonus as part of the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program.

2. What is the Enhanced North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Program?

A new incentive area was created in 2018/19 to focus on wolves on the wintering range of the Bathurst and Bluenose-East herds. This new area is the result of discussions with Elders, leaders and youth from communities in the North Slave Region, who told us the main reason harvesters were not taking full advantage of the program was due to the high cost of fuel and supplies to reach areas where wolves and barren-ground caribou spend the winter.

Under the enhanced program, Indigenous and resident hunters are paid \$1,200 for each wolf harvested in the North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Area. For Nunavut harvesters, this includes \$900 paid by the GNWT and \$300 from the Government of Nunavut). This incentive represents a significant increase in financial incentives for harvesters and is more likely to help support caribou recovery.

NWT Indigenous harvesters and General Hunting Licence holders are eligible for an additional \$400 if the pelt is prepared to traditional standards and an additional \$350 if the pelt meets the requirement of the prime fur bonus as part of the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program.



The existing NWT-wide wolf harvest incentive program will continue everywhere else in the NWT using the previous financial incentives of \$200 for a skinned wolf, plus \$400 for a pelt prepared to traditional standards and an additional \$350 if the pelt meets the requirement for a prime fur bonus.

3. What were the results of the 2018/19 enhanced incentive program?

There were 1,057 wolf tags sold in the North Slave Region for the 2018/19 harvest season. This is almost three times the number of wolf tags sold the year before (372 tags in 2017/18). Much of the increase in wolf tags in 2018/19 was due to hunters taking advantage of the wolf incentive program.

There were 56 wolves taken by 31 hunters as part of the enhanced incentive program. Hunters were paid \$900/wolf, for a total of \$50,400. Four other wolves were harvested or removed from the incentive area in 2018/19, but were not part of the program. Seven wolves were harvested outside the new harvest area.

Analysis showed that 95% of the wolves harvested from the incentive area with food in their stomach had eaten barren-ground caribou. This suggests the incentive program is effective in focusing on wolves associated with wintering barren-ground caribou.





4. What changes are being made for the 2019/20 harvest season?

The following updates are being made to the program for 2019/20:

- **Tag and harvest fees have been waived for all licensed wolf hunters.**
- **Wolf harvest incentives have been increased to \$1,200, effective January 24, 2020.** For Nunavut harvesters hunting within their asserted territory in the NWT, this includes \$900 from the GNWT and \$300 from the Government of Nunavut.
- **New survey of wolf harvesters.** To help ENR evaluate this program, all wolf hunters will be asked to fill out a short survey at the end of their trip. The survey will be available at ENR patrol stations, and hunters who complete the survey will receive a \$25 gift card.
- **Nunavut hunters** will be able to participate in the enhanced incentive program within their asserted territory in the NWT that falls within the Wolf Harvest Incentive Area.
- **The North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Area has been updated** for the 2019/20 harvest season based on the wintering location of Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou. The **new map** can be found above, as well as in the updated field guide for the Enhanced North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Program.

5. How can harvesters participate in the Enhanced North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Program?

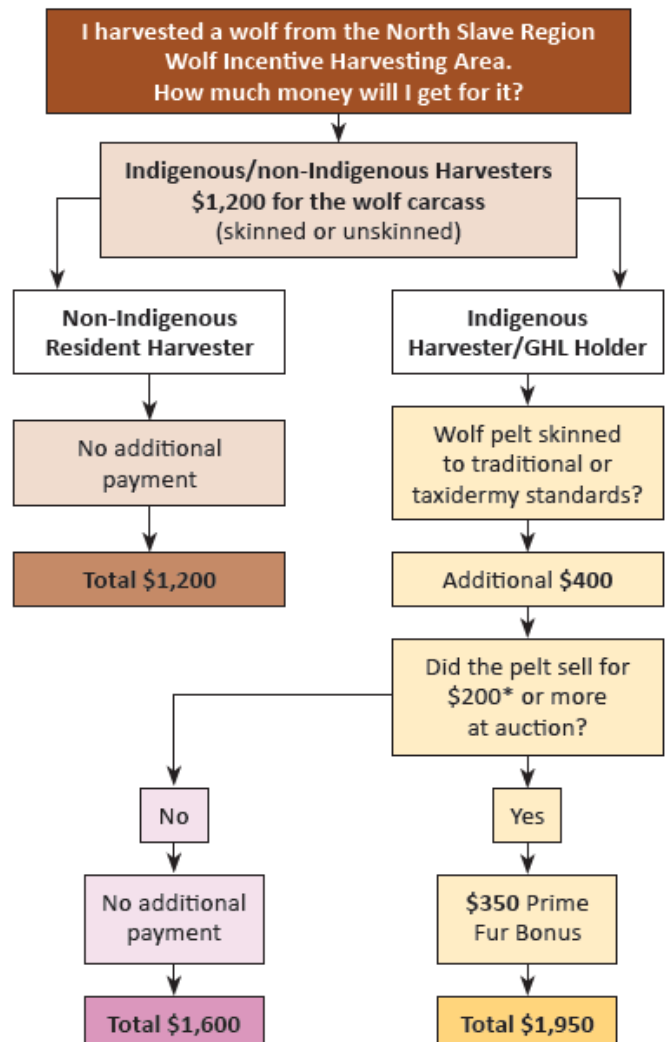
Wolf harvesters going into the North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Area need to register at the patrol station at Gordon Lake or Wekweèti prior to hunting.

Hunters who successfully harvest a wolf in the Wolf Harvest Incentive Area need to bring the carcass back to a patrol station where the harvester will receive a receipt that can be cashed later at a North Slave ENR office in Yellowknife or Behchokò.

The harvester will then have the option of either taking the wolf carcass (skinned or unskinned) home for pelt preparation or leaving it with patrol station staff, who will arrange for skilled skinners to prepare the pelt and for scientific testing of the wolves.

Resident hunters are eligible for increased incentives for the wolf carcass only (\$1,200).

Updated January 2020



* If the pelt sells for more than \$400 at auction, you will get the difference above the \$400 advance.



6. What happens to the wolf carcasses collected through the program?

Skinned wolf carcasses are necropsied by ENR to determine the nutritional condition, age distribution and diet of harvested migratory wolves.

ENR also reaches out to high schools and Aurora College to provide educational opportunities to students, where possible, throughout the scientific sampling and analysis process.

7. What will happen to the pelts?

Pelts from harvested wolves will either be prepared to traditional or taxidermy standards, and sold at fur auctions, where possible. Harvesters that opt to keep their pelts and prepare them to traditional or taxidermy standards will be able to submit them for auction by bringing them to their local ENR office, or may choose to sell them privately.

8. How will the GNWT manage potential illegal caribou hunting and harassment during the harvesting of wolves?

The North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Area overlaps with the Mobile Core Bathurst Caribou Management Zone (Mobile Zone). It is illegal to hunt caribou inside the Mobile Zone.

It is also illegal to unnecessarily chase, fatigue, disturb, torment or otherwise harass wildlife, including caribou, under the NWT *Wildlife Act*.

Hunters are required to understand and respect the law regarding caribou harvest and harassment, and ensure they are not hunting caribou in the Mobile Zone. The location of the Mobile Zone is updated weekly. To view the current Mobile Zone, visit www.enr.gov.nt.ca.

The GNWT is committed to preventing the illegal harvest or harassment of caribou. ENR officers are increasing educational efforts with harvesters at patrol stations and will also be increasing the frequency of aerial and ground enforcement patrols to minimize the risk of illegal caribou hunting or harassment in the Mobile Zone.

Documented cases of illegally harvesting or harassing caribou will be prosecuted, as per the NWT *Wildlife Act*.

9. Where can I get more information?

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