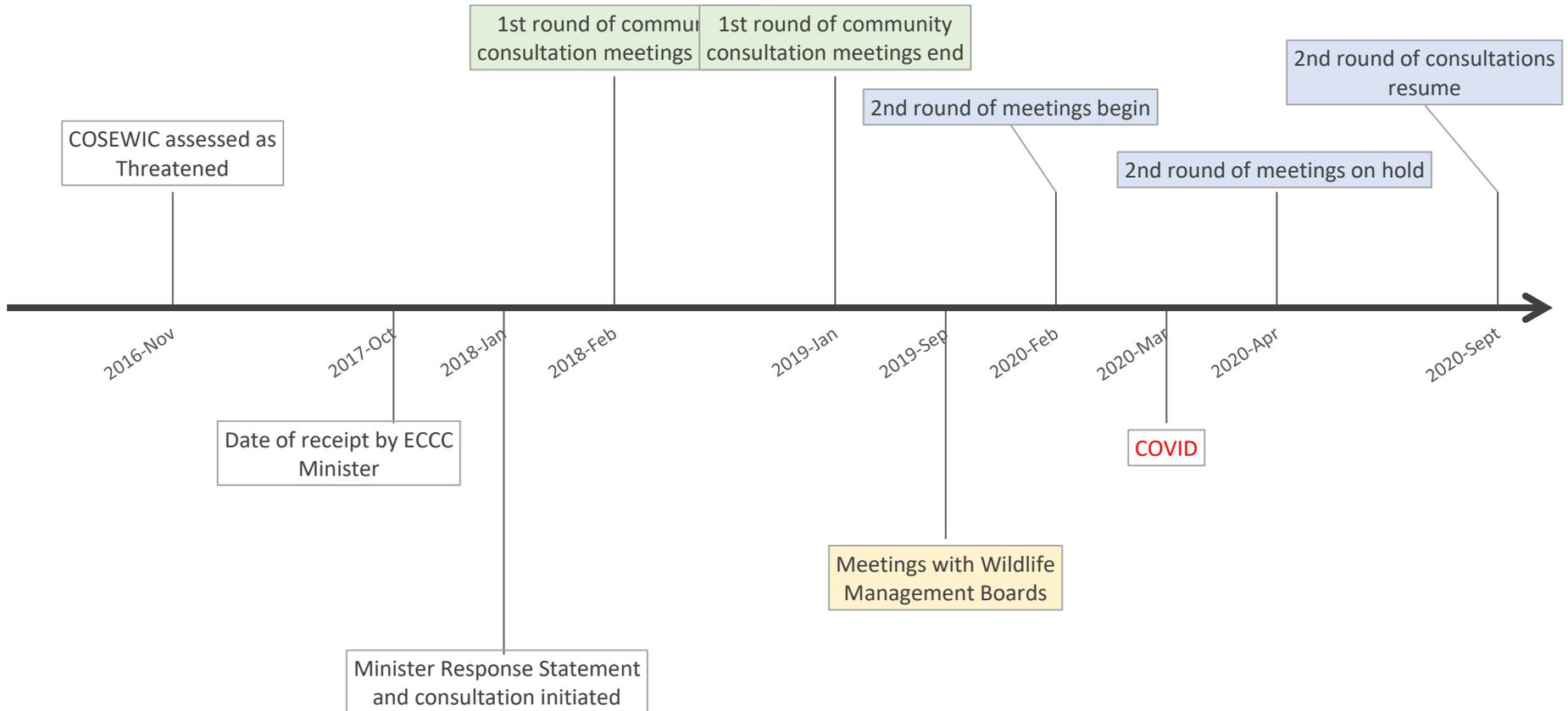




Should Barren-ground Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?



Timeline of Events



QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Outline

1. SARA
 2. Herd health
 3. Threats to recovery
 4. What will listing caribou on SARA do
 5. Next steps
 6. Discussion
-



What is SARA?

Federal legislation that aims to prevent wildlife from disappearing from Canada



SPECIAL CONCERN	THREATENED	ENDANGERED	EXTIRPATED	EXTINCT
Likely to become Endangered or Threatened unless threats are mitigated.	Likely to become Endangered unless threats are addressed.	Facing imminent disappearance from Canada.	No longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere.	No longer exists anywhere in the world.

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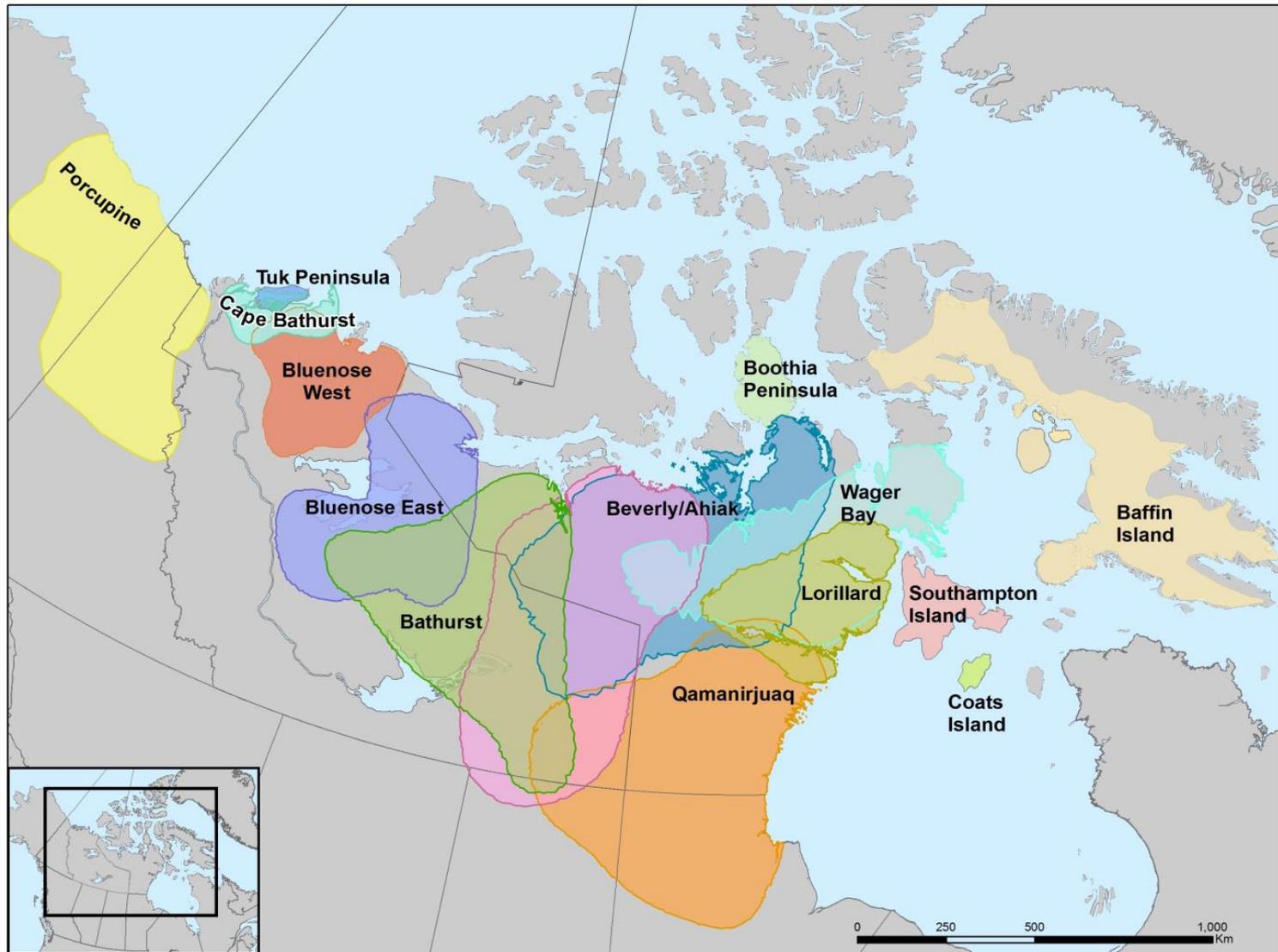
Barren-ground Caribou

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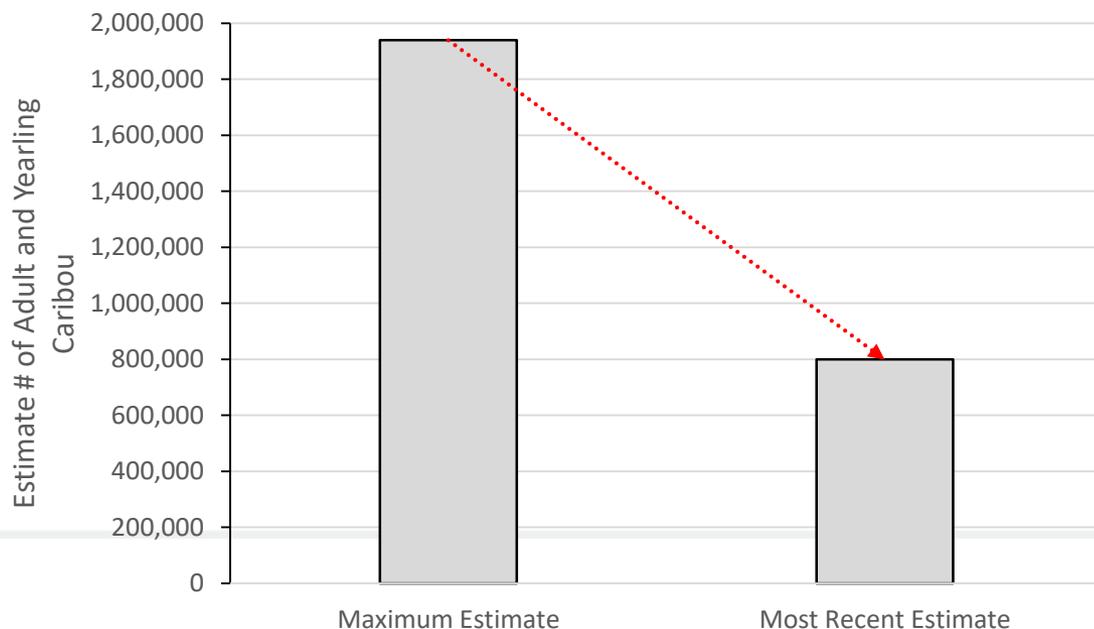
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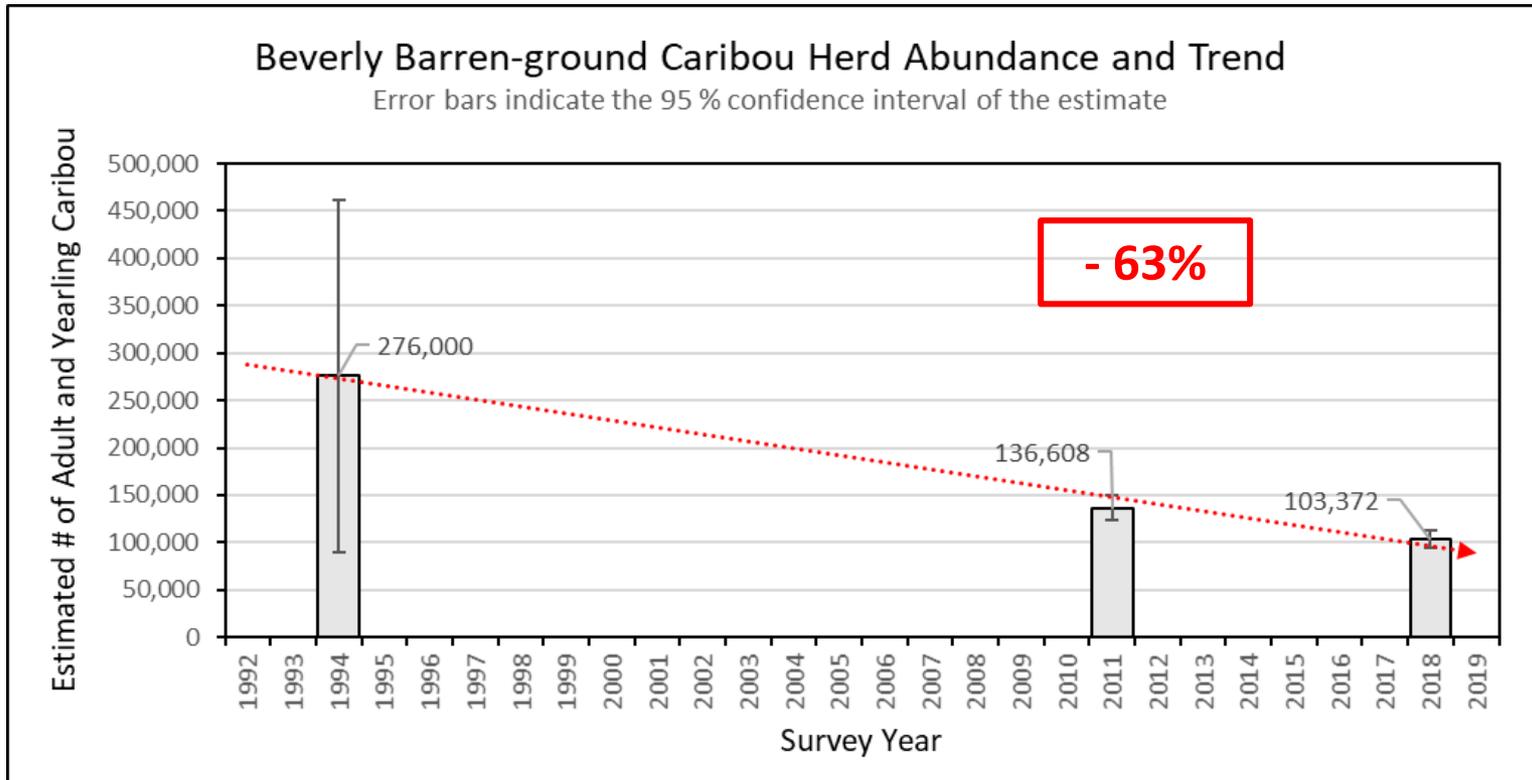
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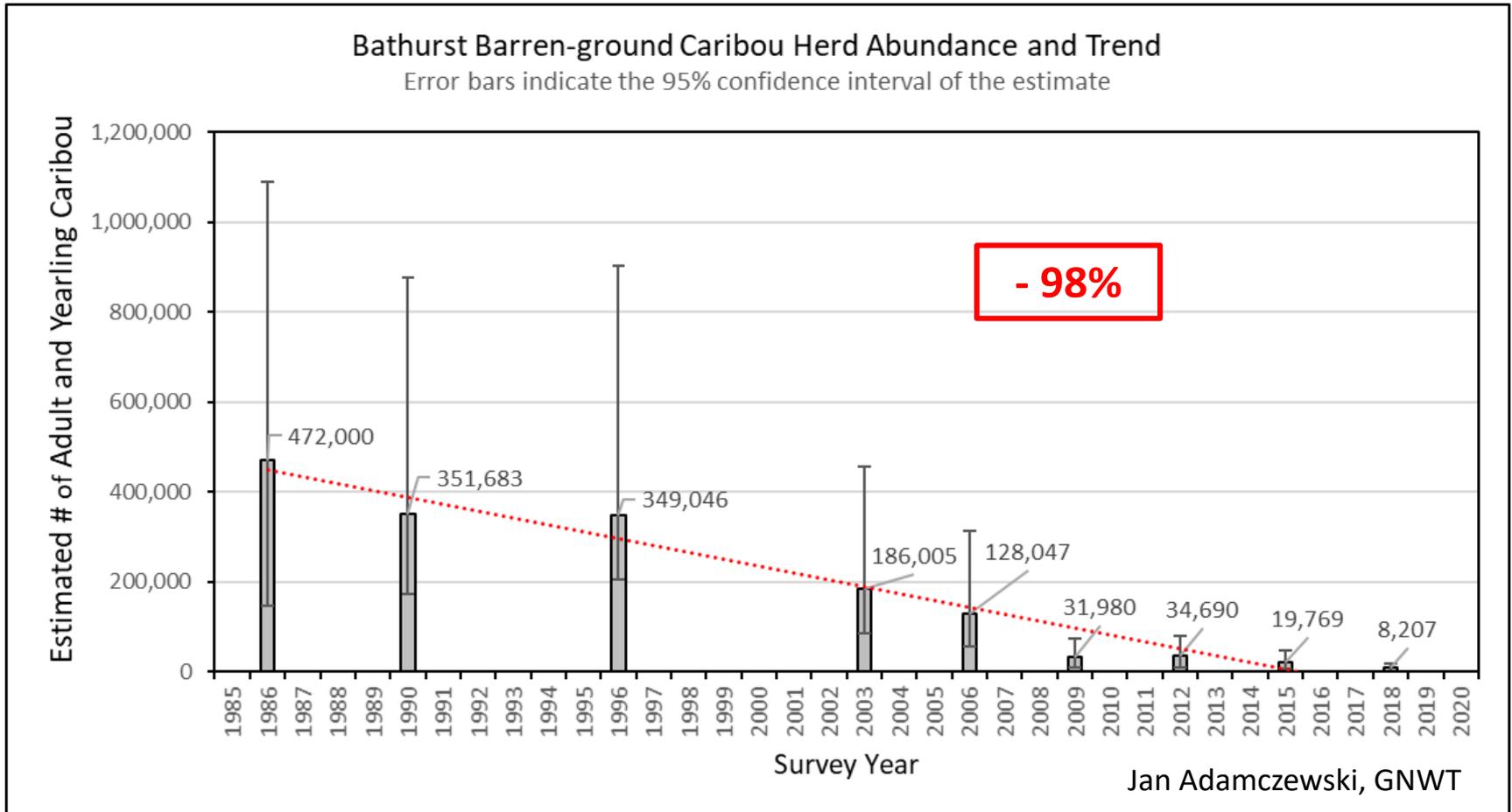


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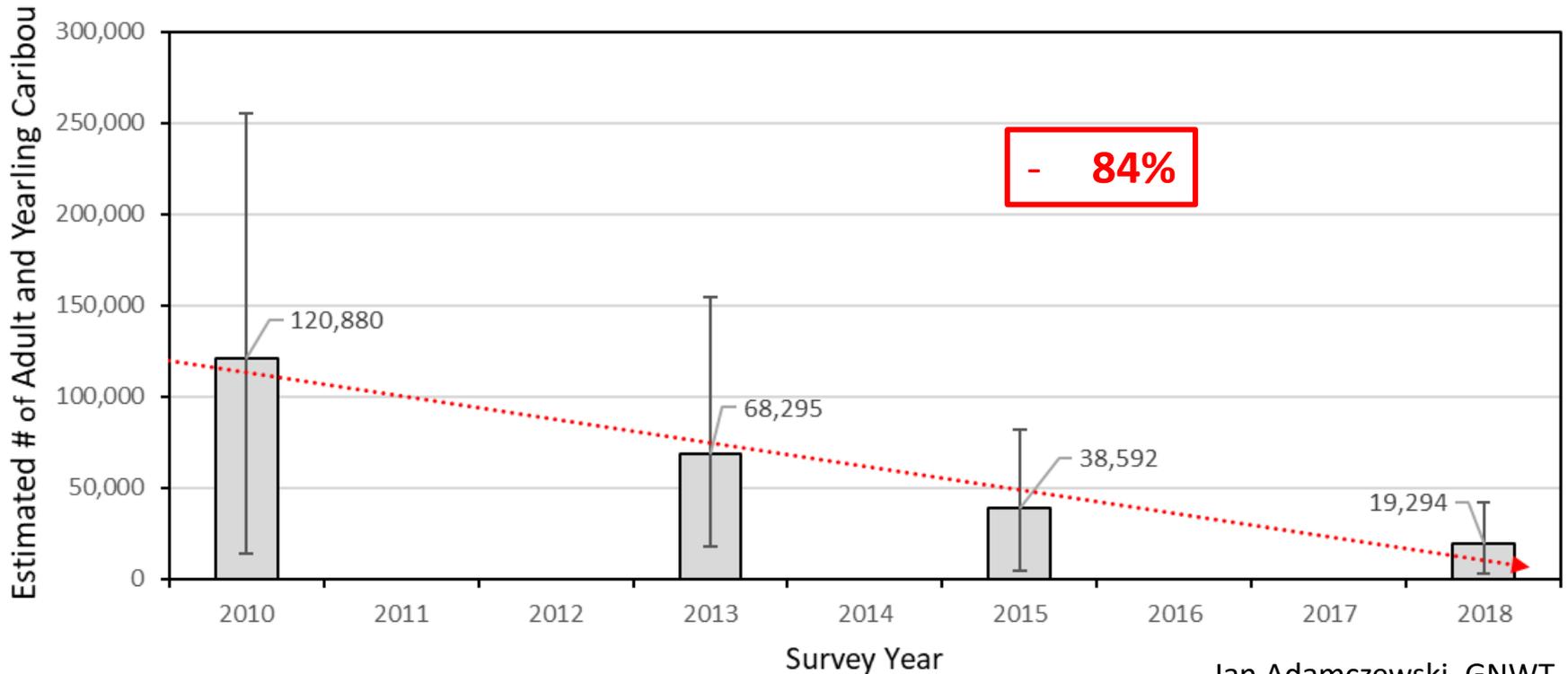
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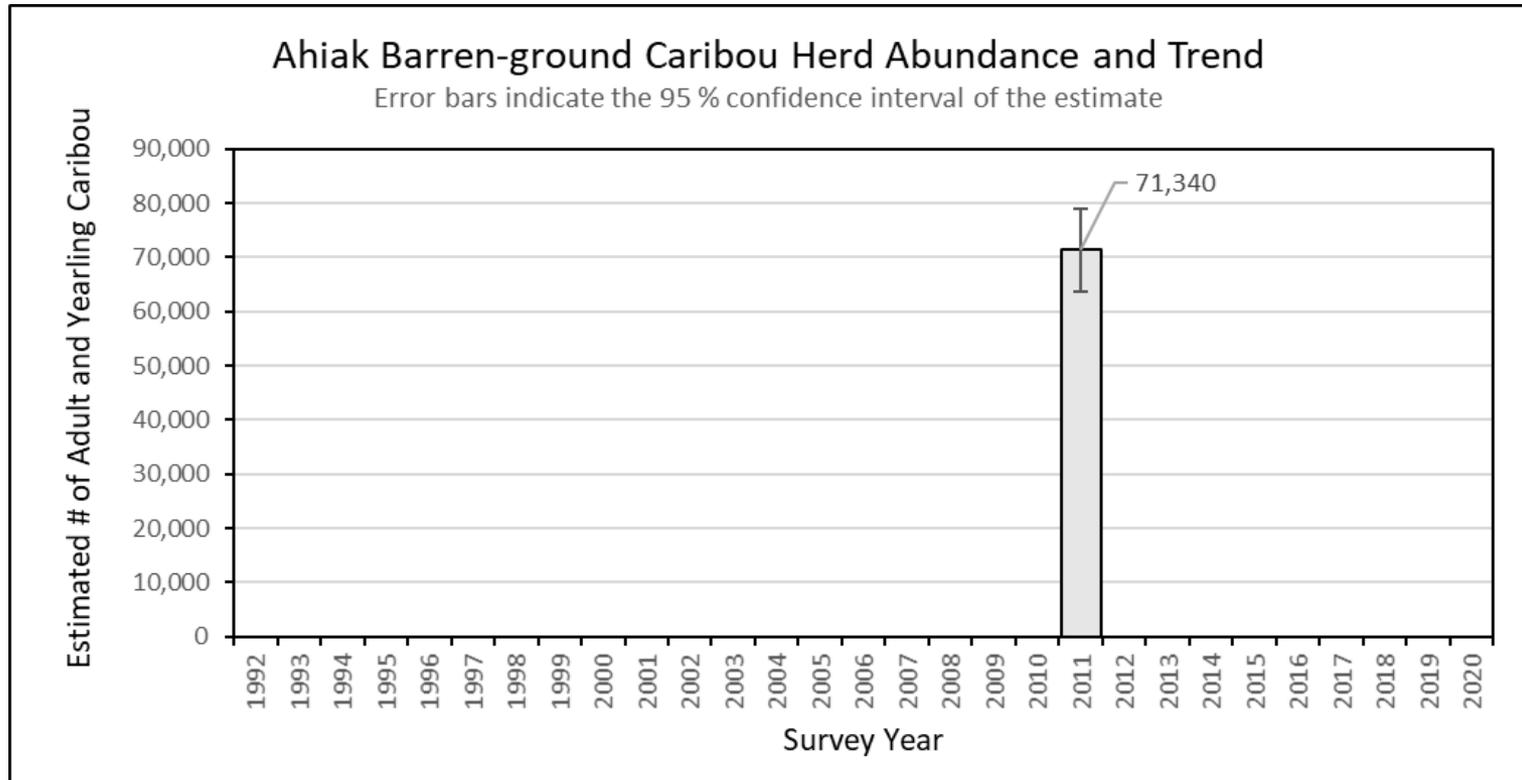
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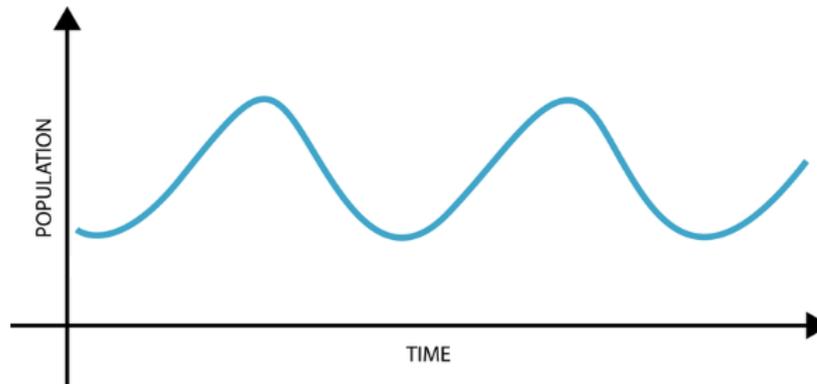
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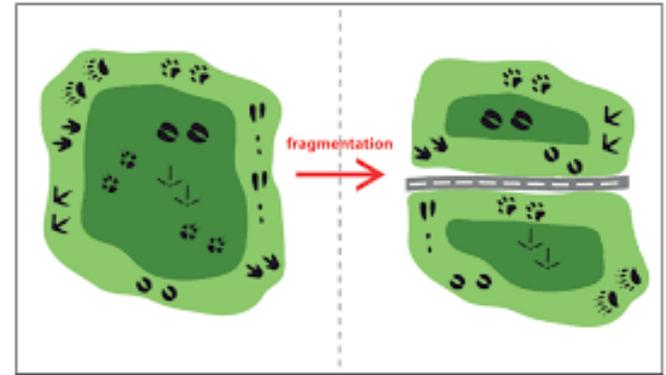
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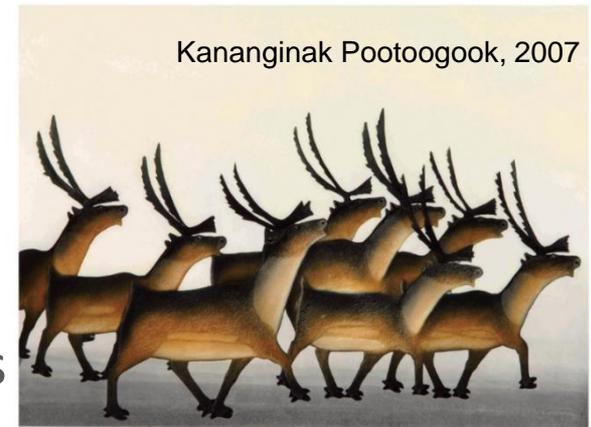
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Iqaluit, NU

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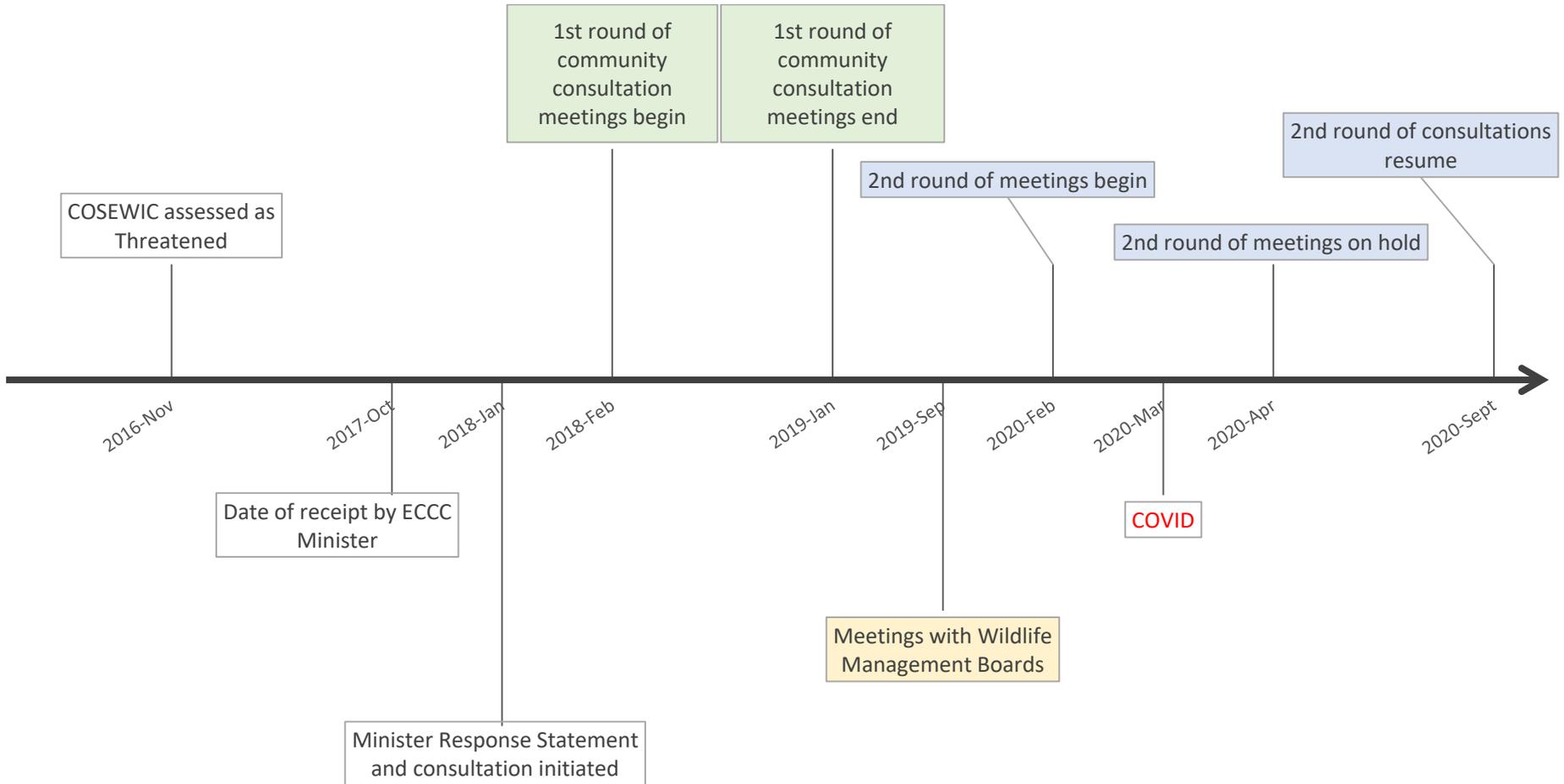
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Should Barren-ground Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?



Timeline of Events



Last Meeting – March 1 2018

We heard:

1. HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground Caribou and the decision-making process.
 2. You are worried about the caribou declining, the species is critical for their way of life and food security. They are interested in collaborating to help the species recover.
 3. You would like to improve youth education regarding hunting practices.
 4. You mentioned various reasons why you see less caribou than before:
 - Increased predation (wolves, wolverines and grizzlies)
 - You are seeing a lot more muskox than before
 - Climate Change: caribou are vulnerable to migration on thin ice.
-

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

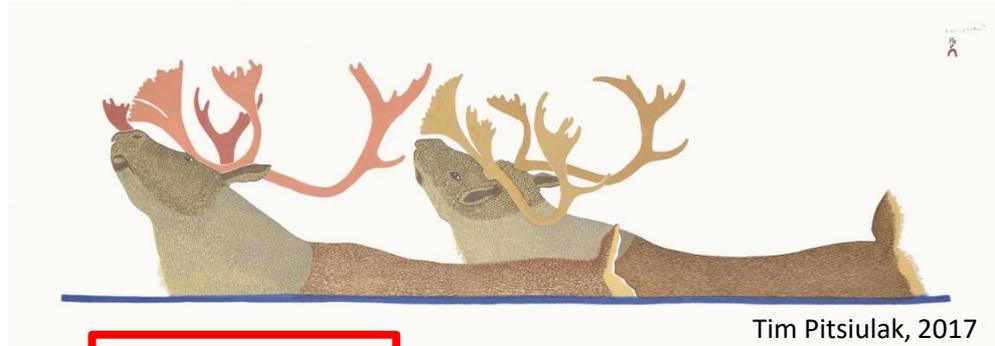
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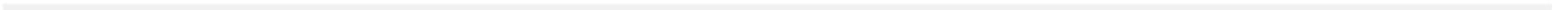
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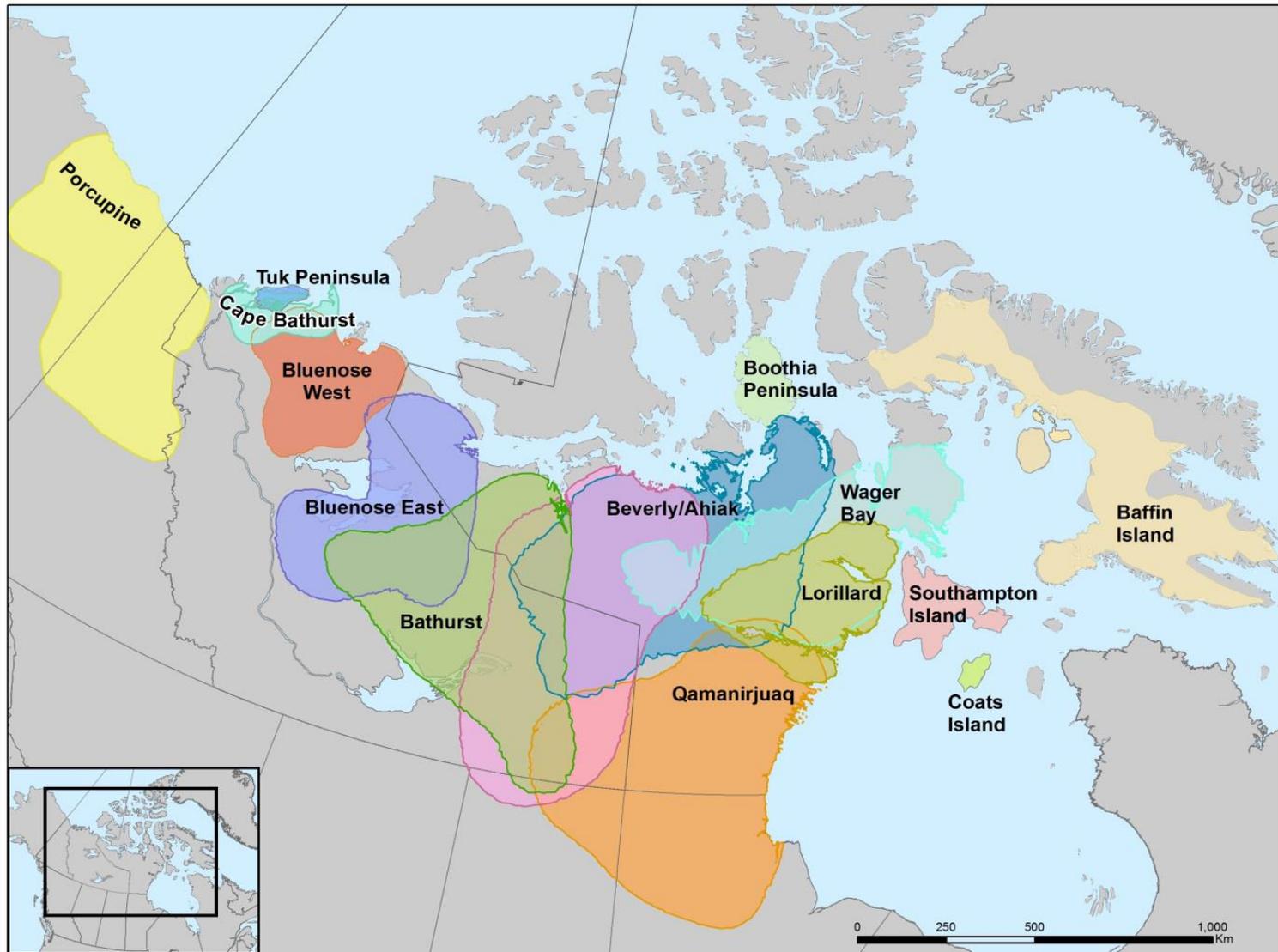
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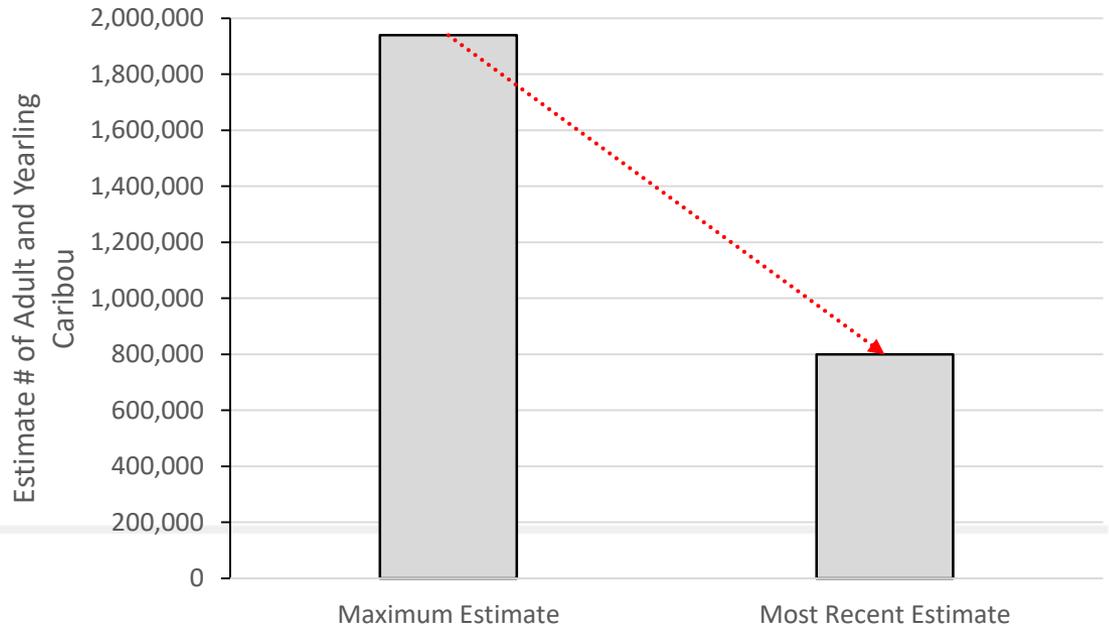
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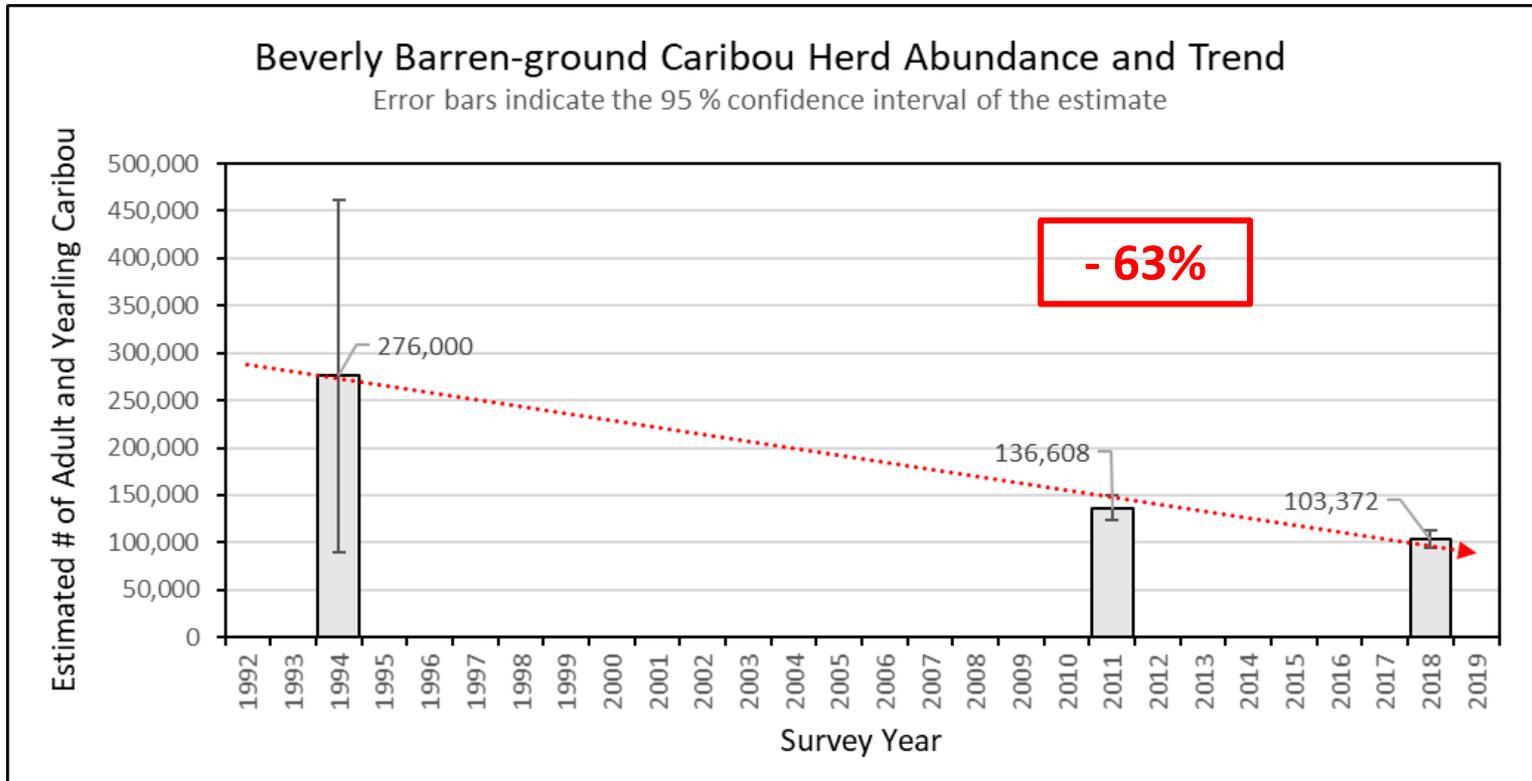
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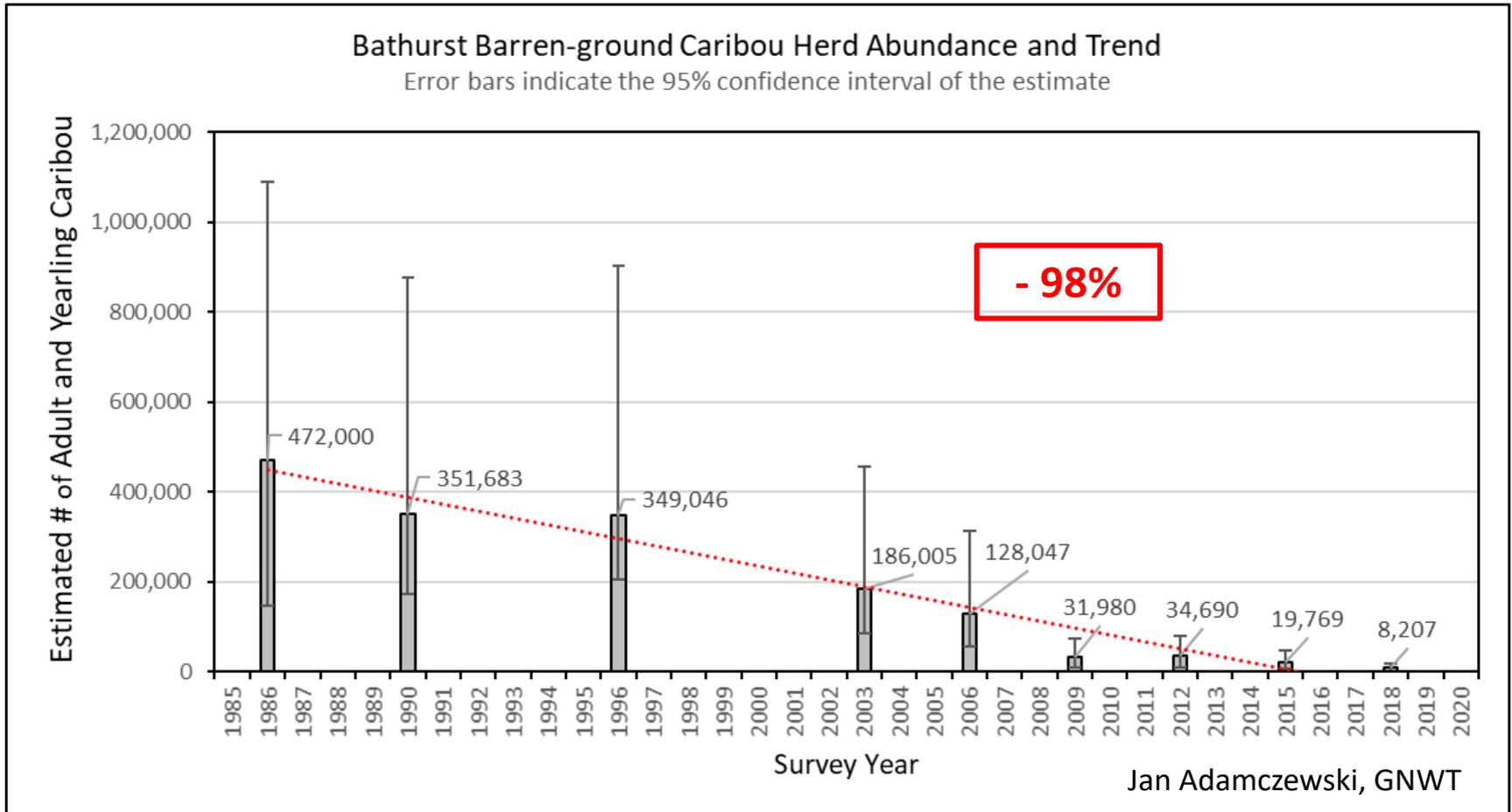


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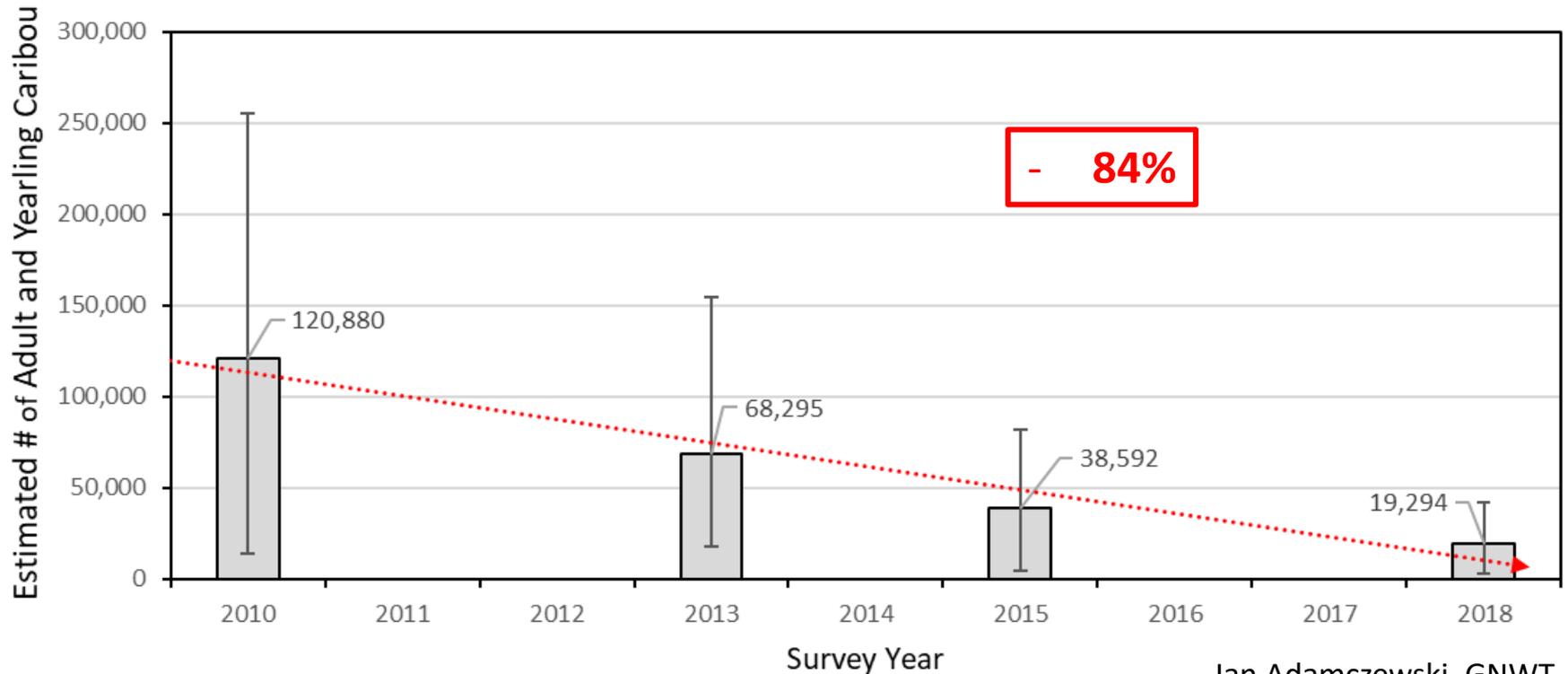
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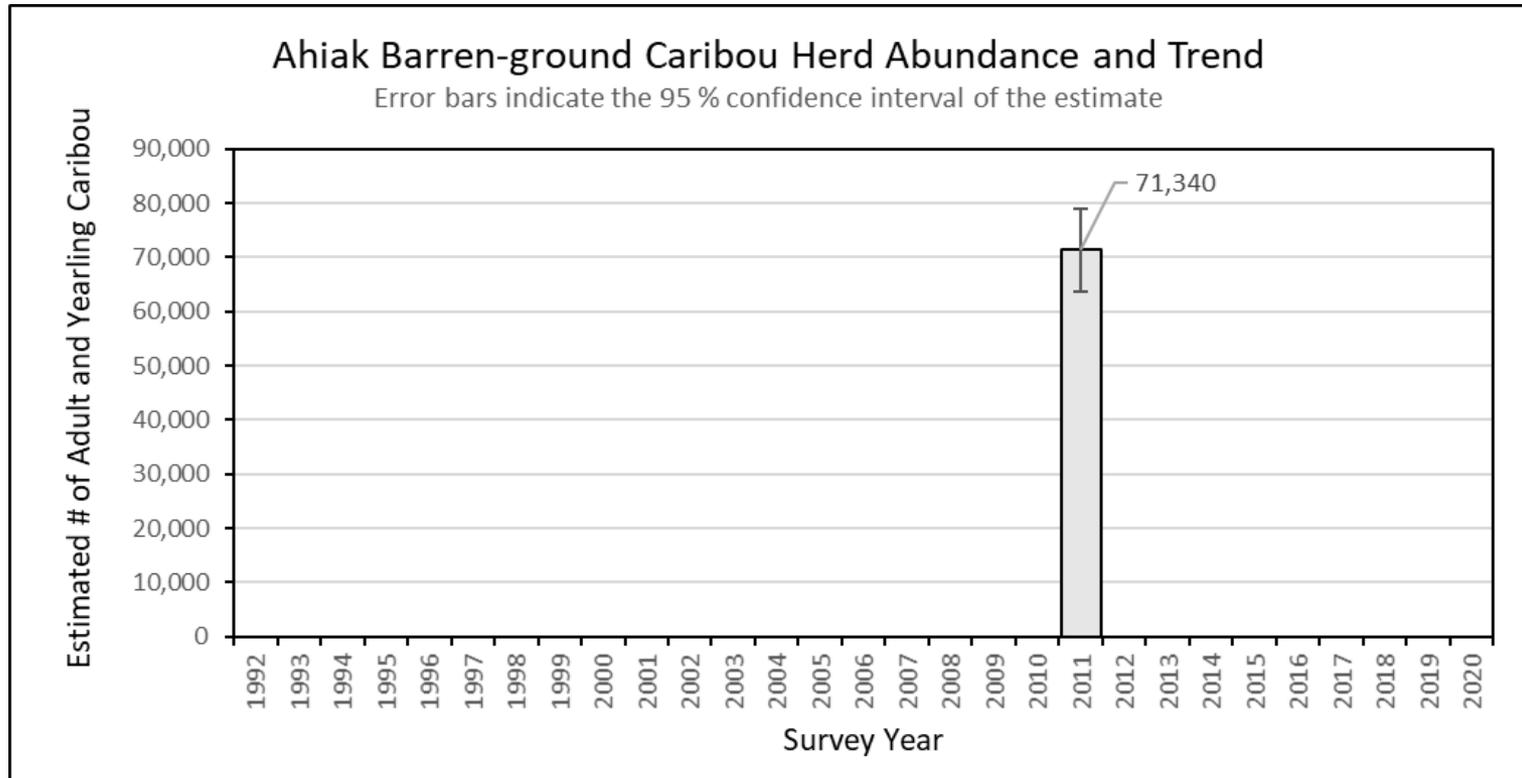
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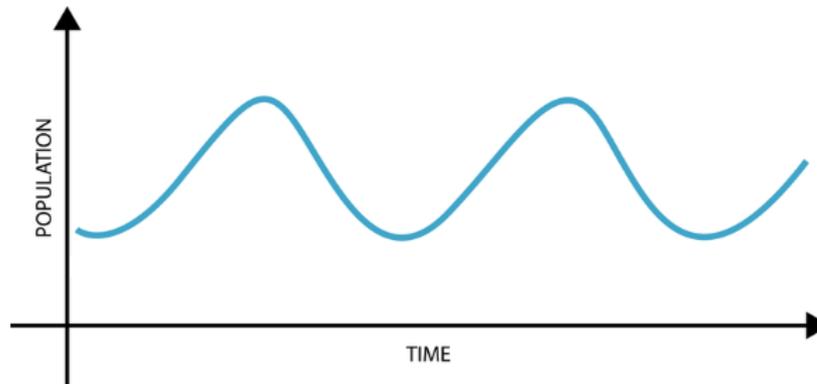
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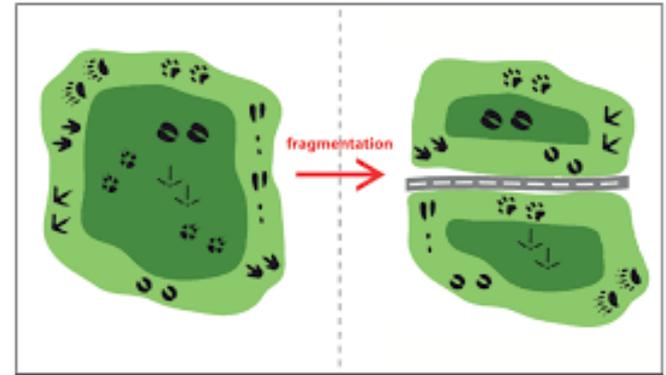
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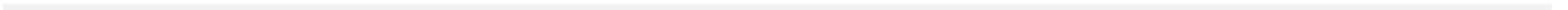
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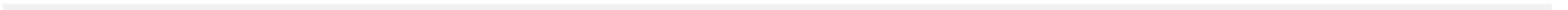
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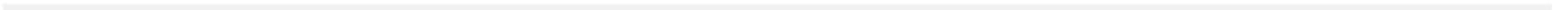
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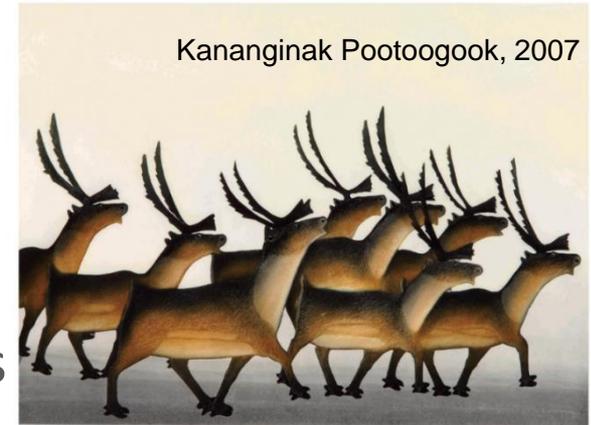


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Decision on Proposed Listing

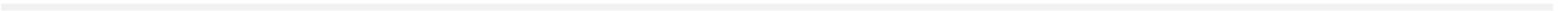
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- Will be included in submission to NWMB and the Federal Minister

We need to know:

- **Yes, the board/organization supports the listing**
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PRE-INTRO

- Need GN and the community



INTRODUCTION

- a) Hello, my name is Hayley Roberts, I'm a Species at Risk Biologist working for Environment and Climate Change Canada based in Iqaluit, NU. First I'd like to start off by saying welcome to everyone and thank you for attending the meeting to discuss the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou under the federal Species at Risk Act.
 - b) Before we begin I will remind everyone to keep themselves on mute if you are not speaking so that we don't have any interruptions. If you have called in, it's *6 to unmute your line. Also if you have a camera and feel comfortable doing so, please turn it on so that we can see your face. It'll help to make this feel a little bit more like an in person meeting. For those on the computer familiarize yourself with the raise hand function, it can be accessed from the bottom of the screen. Please use it if you a question and I will do my best to monitor it or you can put a question in the chat as I'll also be monitoring that as well. For those in the room, I'll ask Amanda (or whoever is manning the computer) to watch for questions and let us know when there is one. A 10 min break in an hour (7PM?).
 - c) ****If it gets to this point**** We'll open the meeting with a prayer, Amanda is there someone who can lead us
 - d) Thank you ?.
 - e) I'll ask now if anyone is opposed to this meeting being recorded? Please speak up if you are. This recording will be used to ensure all feedback and information is captured. And that we have accurate meeting notes. And if you are interested in a copy of the recording we can provide that, so please let us know.
-

INTRODUCTION

f) As mentioned previously this meeting is to discuss the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou under the federal Species at Risk Act and to collect feedback from everyone on the line. We are also interested to know if your organization supports or does not support the proposed listing. A decision on the listing does not have to be made today but it is important that your decision is included in the package that we submit to the Minister for consideration. We have provided questionnaires in the email invitation that was sent around and those can be filled out after the meeting and sent to myself, or Rhiannon, or Lenny or Shannon, after the meeting. The contact information is in this presentation and in the meeting invite.

g) Let's start with introductions so that everyone knows who is in the room and on the line/computer. I will pass it over to those in the room.

h) Next we'll go through those on the phone/computer (non ECCC). I've already mentioned a bit about myself, so I will go down the participant list.

i) Thanks everyone. We'll move on to the presentation next and I do want to mention that there will be lots of time throughout the upcoming presentation to ask questions. We will be pausing throughout the presentation to allow for clarification and discussion. Following the presentation there will be time for further discussion. I'll pause here to ask if there are any general questions before we begin.

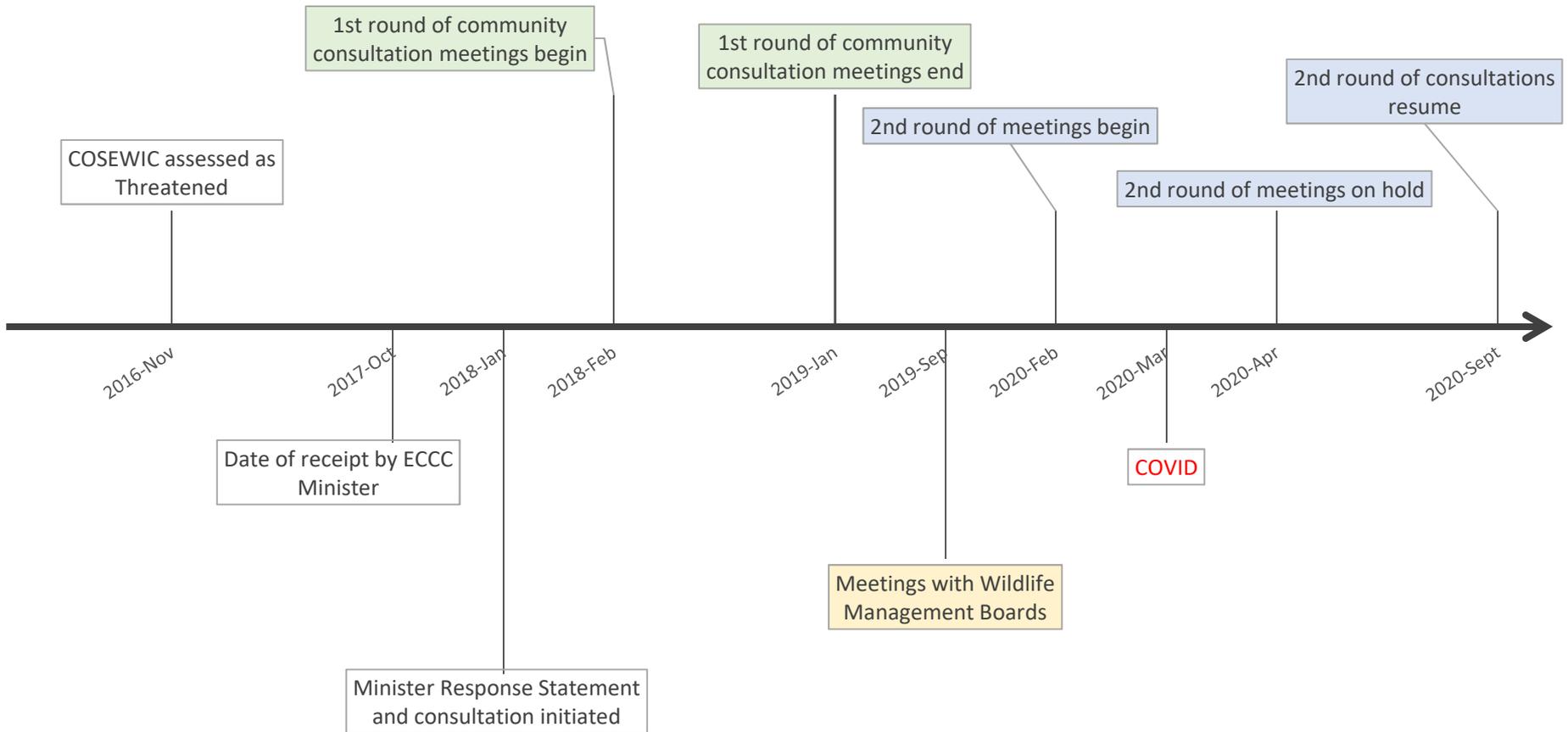
j) Ok, then let's get started.



Should Barren-ground Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?



Timeline of Events



Last Meeting – February 27, 2018

We heard:

1. HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process.
 2. They would appreciate a herd-by-herd assessment, and worry about the flexibility in prohibitions and how it will be applied to local management.
 3. They noticed an increase in wolf and wolverine populations.
-

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

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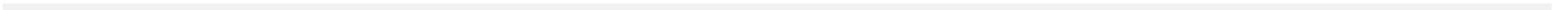
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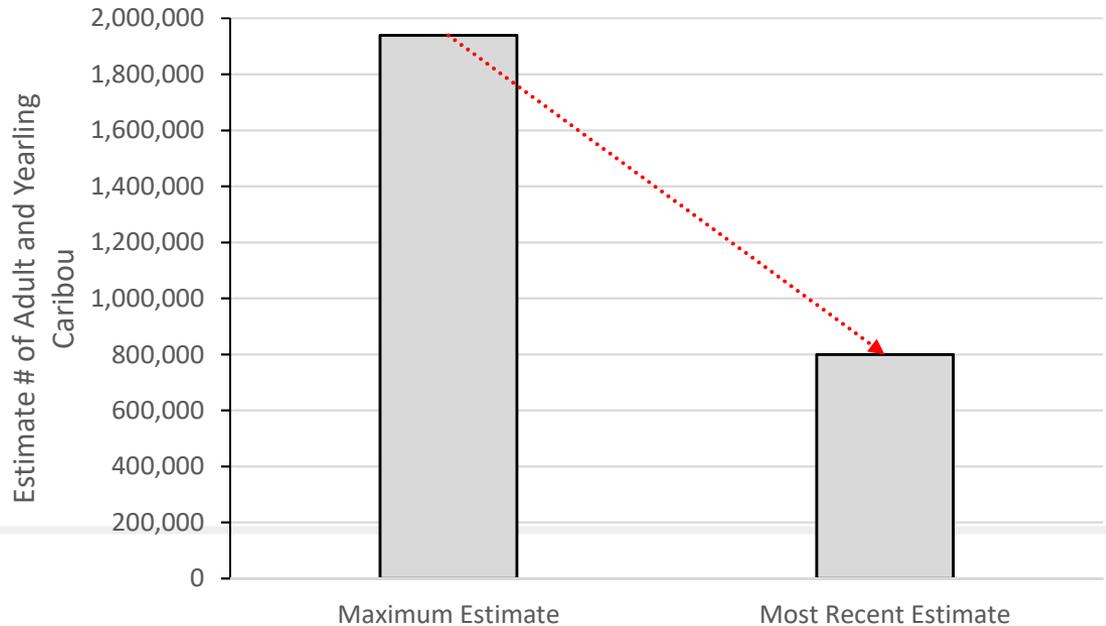
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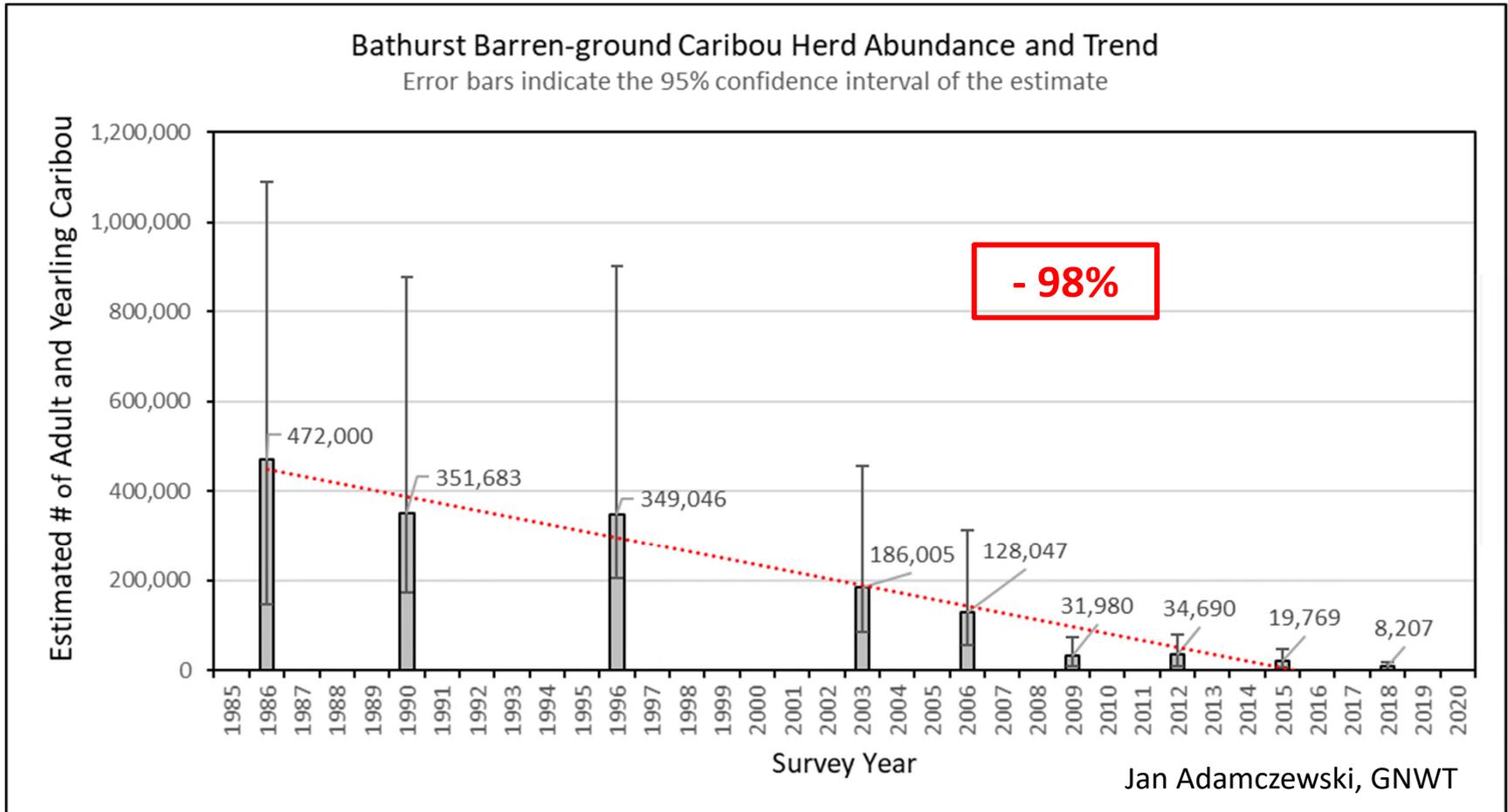
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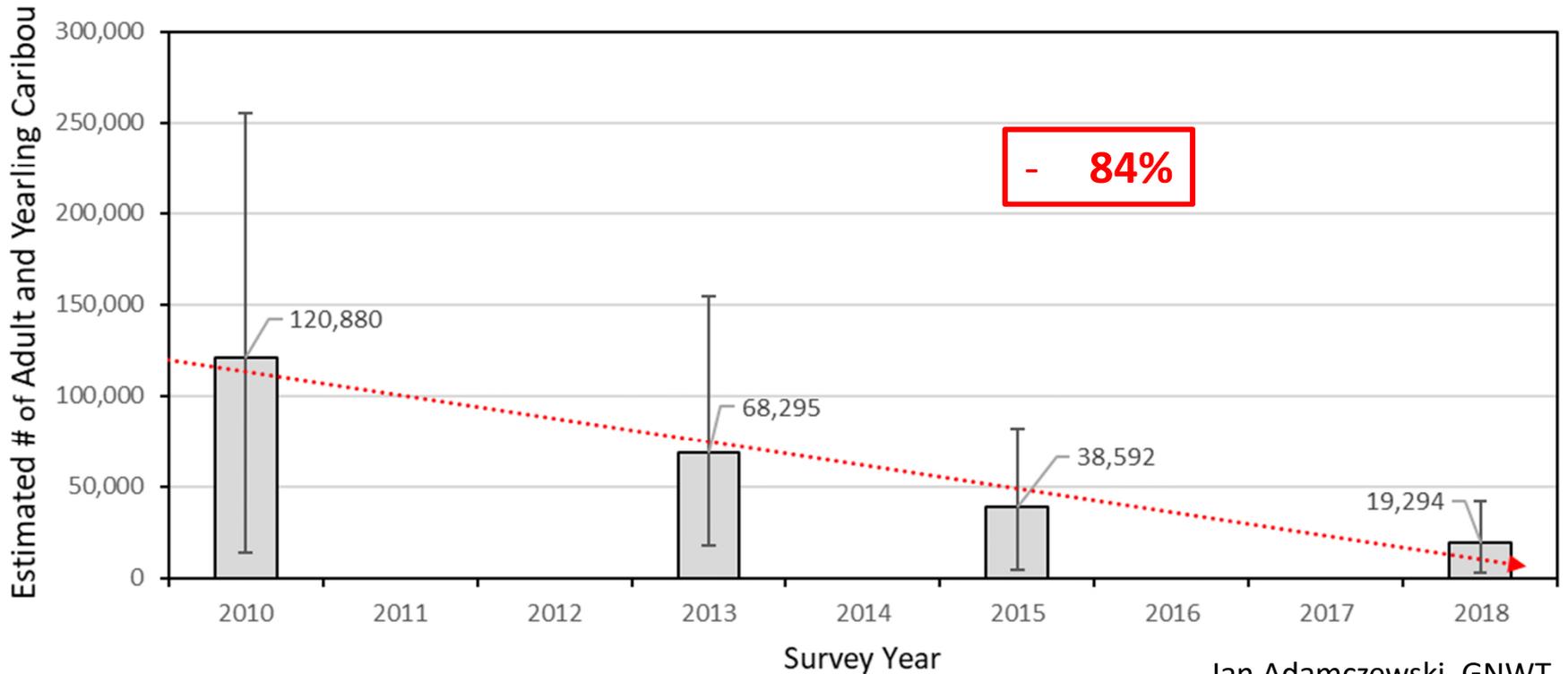
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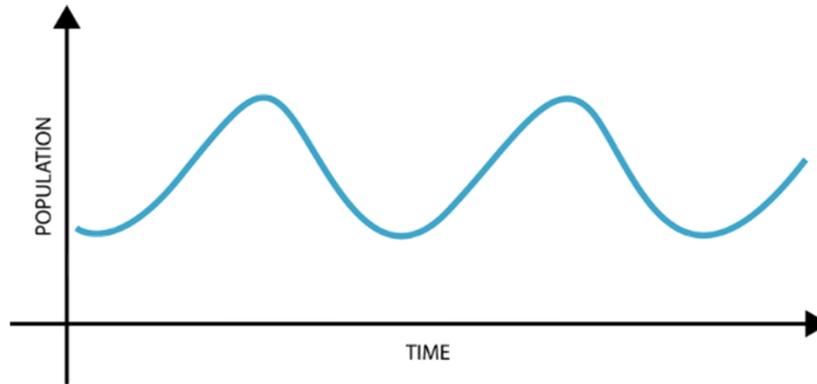
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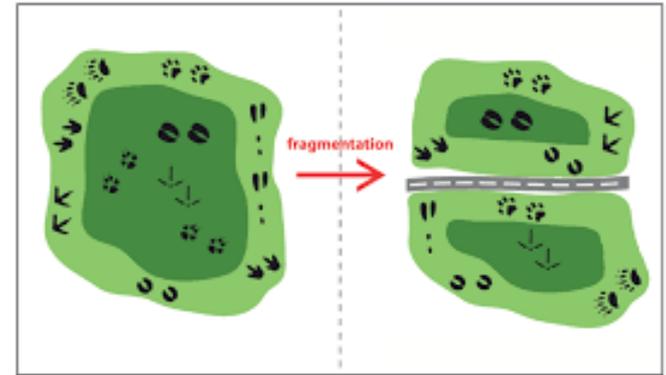
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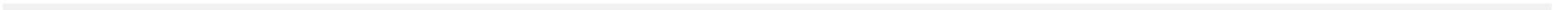
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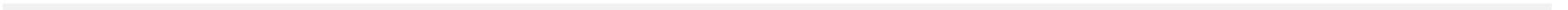
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QUESTIONS/COMMENTS



Important to remember

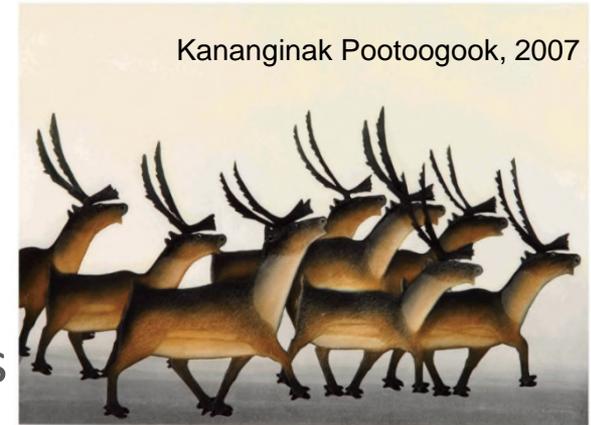


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 - SARA is a tool to help with caribou conservation
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Next steps

Ongoing

- Continue to solicit input from communities including Inuit Qaujimatugangit and socio-economic impacts of listing



Mid-2021 or later

- NWMB decision, Environment Minister recommendation, Federal Cabinet decision

	2021										
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NWMB Decision									█		
GoC Response (60 Days)									█	█	█

Discussion

What is needed to support your caribou herds?

Do you agree/disagree/have concerns with the listing proposal?

Any other questions, concerns, or comments?

How to contact us

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shannon.stotyn@canada.ca

867-333-9891

Whitehorse, YK

Hayley Roberts

hayley.roberts@canada.ca

867-979-7045

Iqaluit, NU

Lenny Emiktaut

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Decision on Proposed Listing

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- Decision does not need to be made today
- Will be included in submission to NWMB and the Federal Minister

We need to know:

- **Yes, the board/organization supports the listing**
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 - **No opinion**
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Should Barren-ground Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?

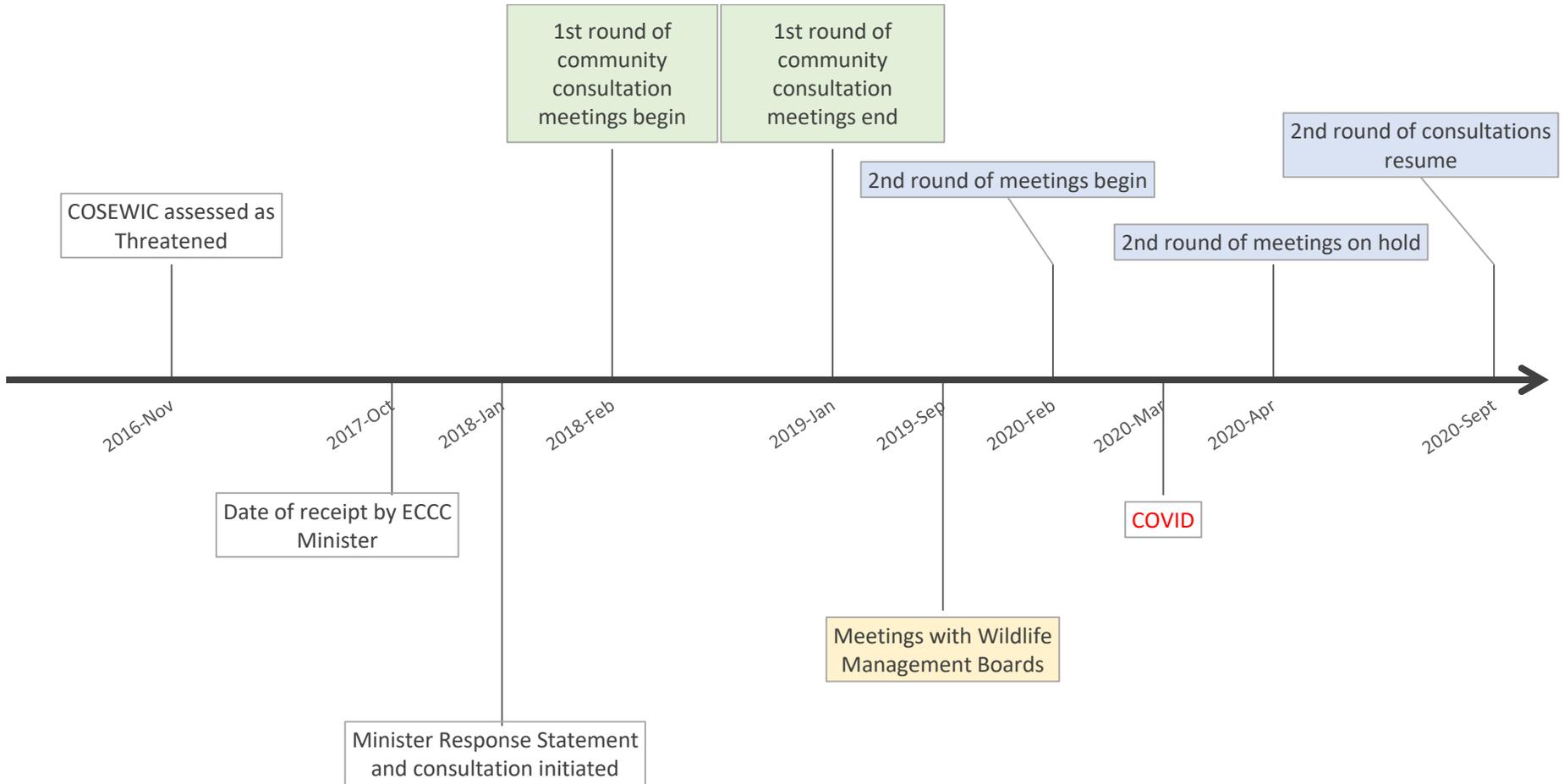


Last Meeting – February 26 2019

We heard:

1. You did not agree with the delineation of the herds because interbreeding has caused the Boothia Peninsula herd to move south and all caribou in the area are one herd.
 2. You identified wolves and muskox as threats to the herd.
 3. You expressed an interest in establishing an incentive for wolf harvest.
 4. You were interested in knowing more about threats and their impact on caribou herds.
 5. You want more concrete survey data on populations in your area prior to making a decision on the listing.
 6. You know that growing populations are putting increased pressure on caribou herds unlike before.
-

Timeline of Events



QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Outline

1. SARA
 2. Herd health
 3. Threats to recovery
 4. What will listing caribou on SARA do
 5. Next steps
 6. Discussion
-



What is SARA?

Federal legislation that aims to prevent wildlife from disappearing from Canada



SPECIAL CONCERN	THREATENED	ENDANGERED	EXTIRPATED	EXTINCT
Likely to become Endangered or Threatened unless threats are mitigated.	Likely to become Endangered unless threats are addressed.	Facing imminent disappearance from Canada.	No longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere.	No longer exists anywhere in the world.

The Species at Risk Act (SARA)

SARA could be used as a tool to help conserve

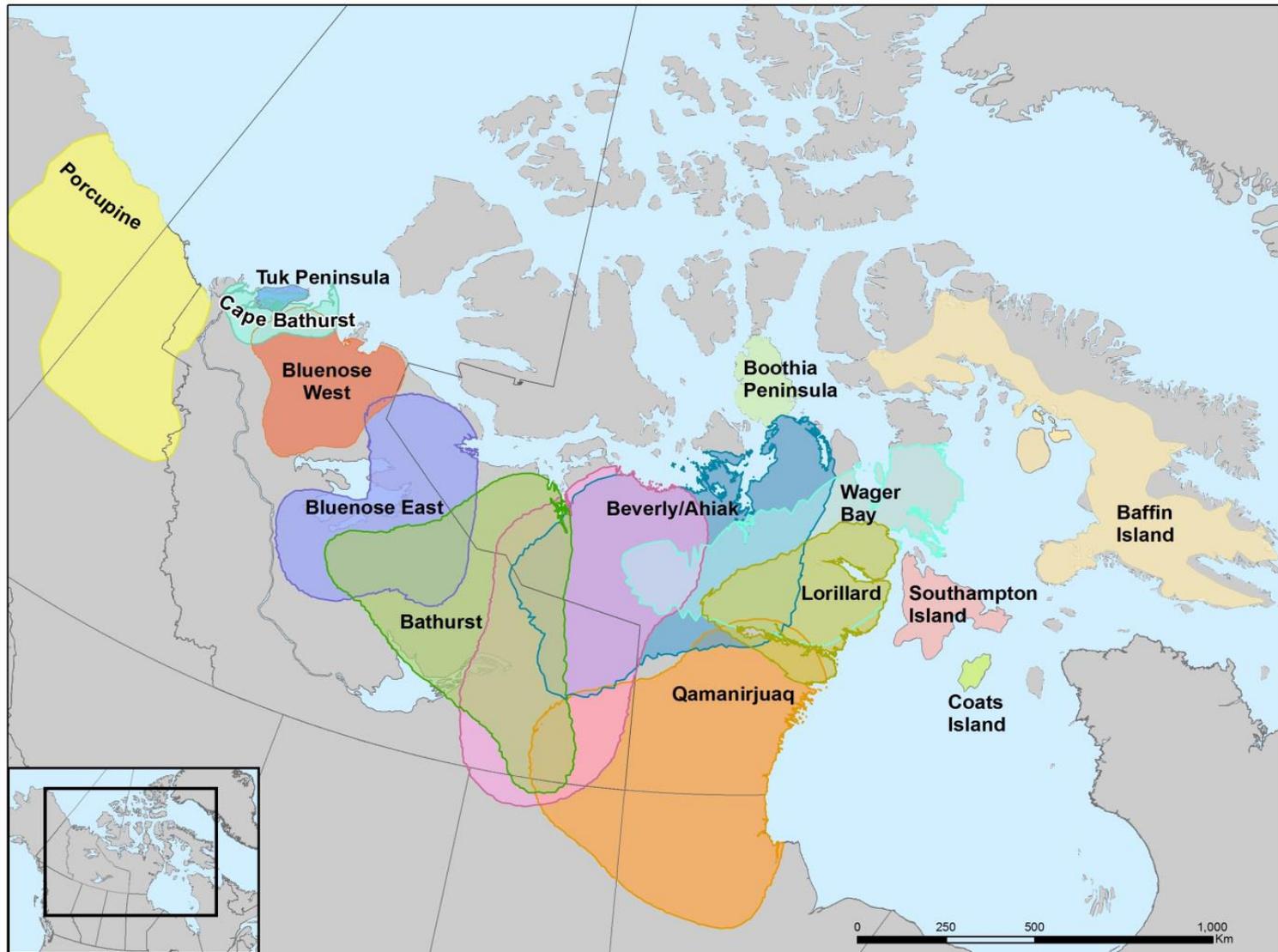
Barren-ground Caribou

-

SARA does not affect Inuit harvesting rights

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

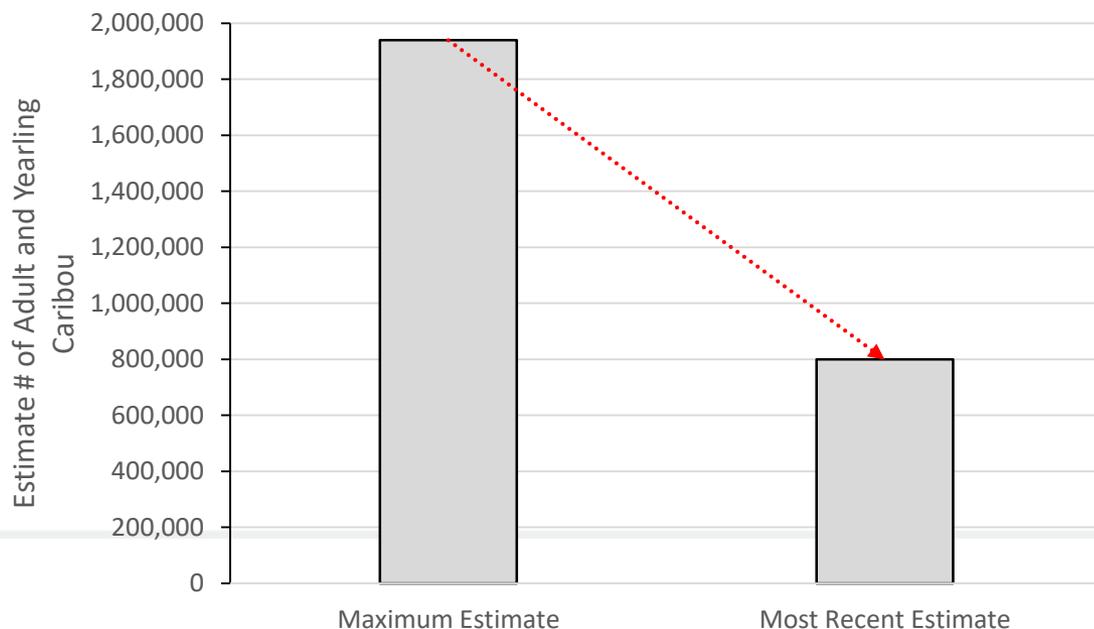
Barren-ground Caribou



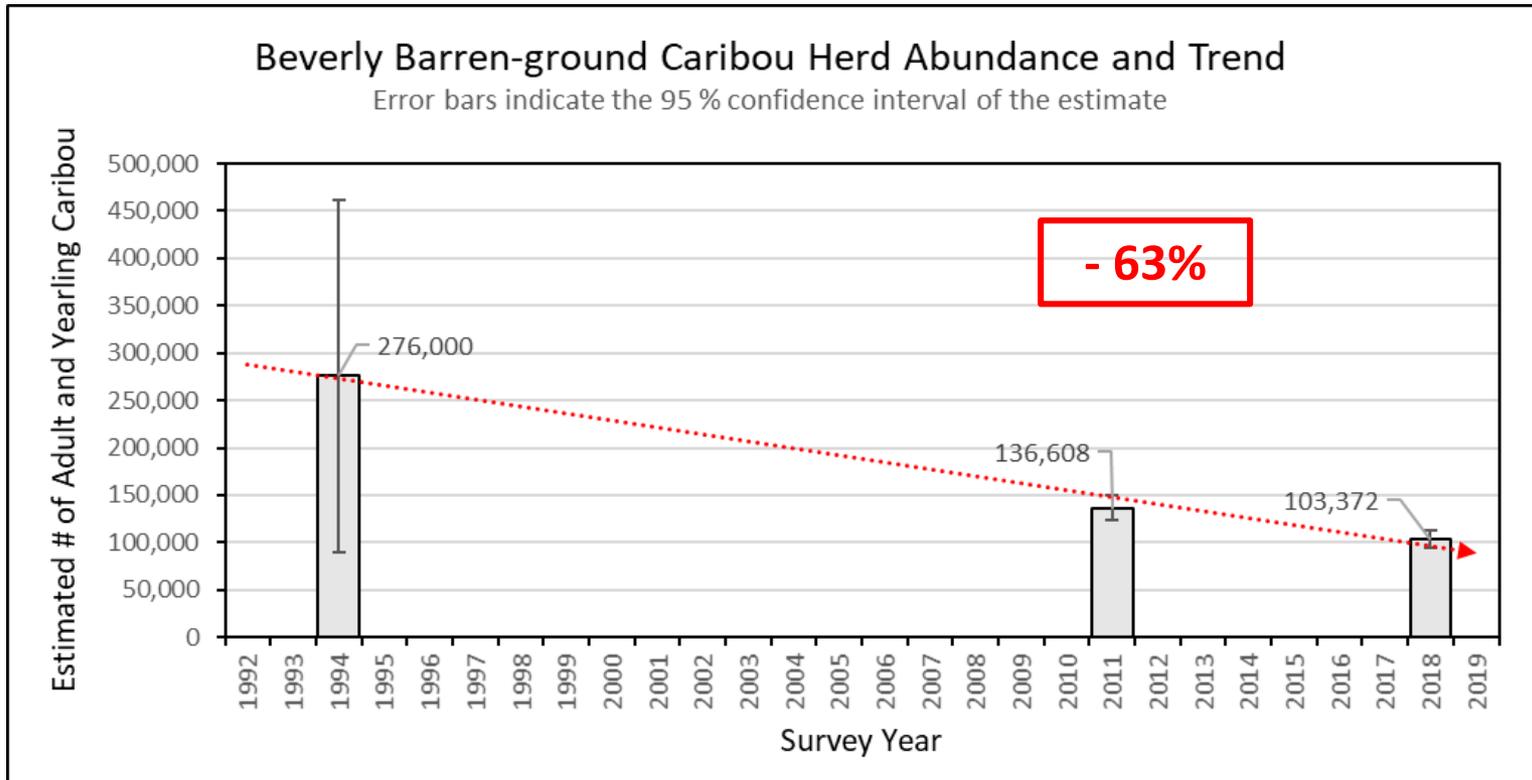
COSEWIC Assessment

- Average decline was 56.8% over the last 24 years
- Should be designated Endangered as >50% decline
- Determined Threatened
 - because of existing co-management
 - not facing imminent extinction

**Barren-ground Caribou
declined from
approx. 2 million individuals
to
approx. 800,000 individuals**

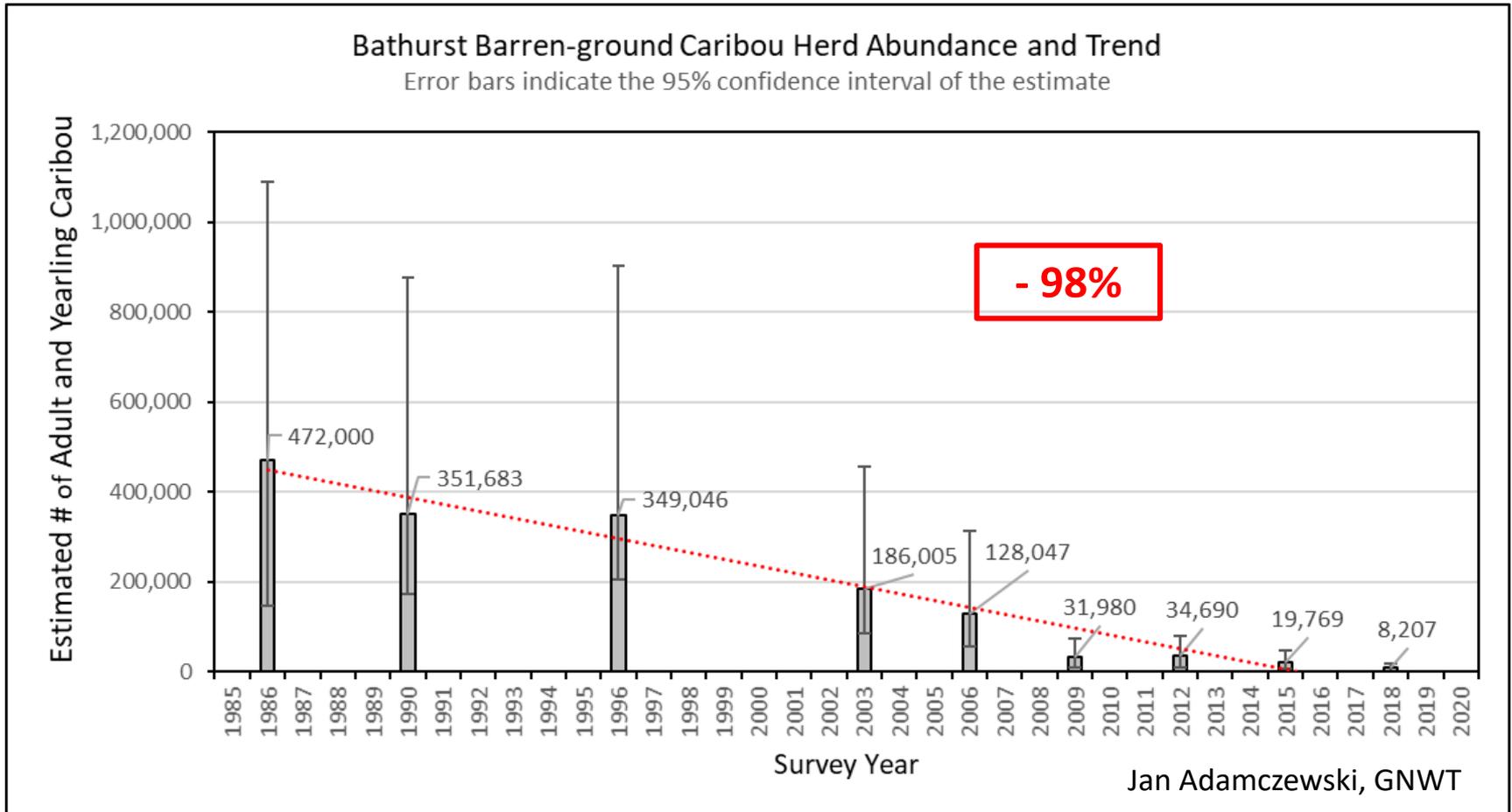


Herd health - Beverly



Mitch Campbell, GN

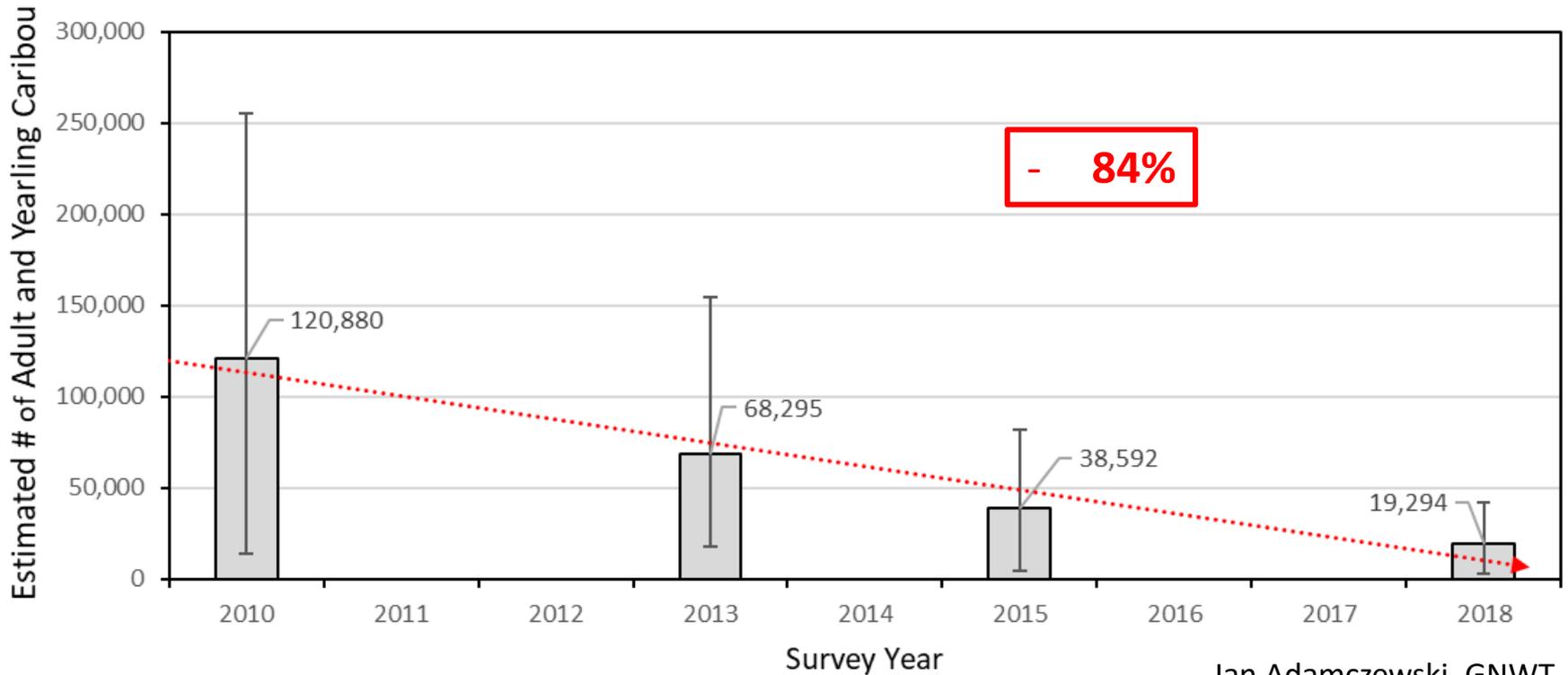
Herd health -Bathurst



Herd health – Bluenose East

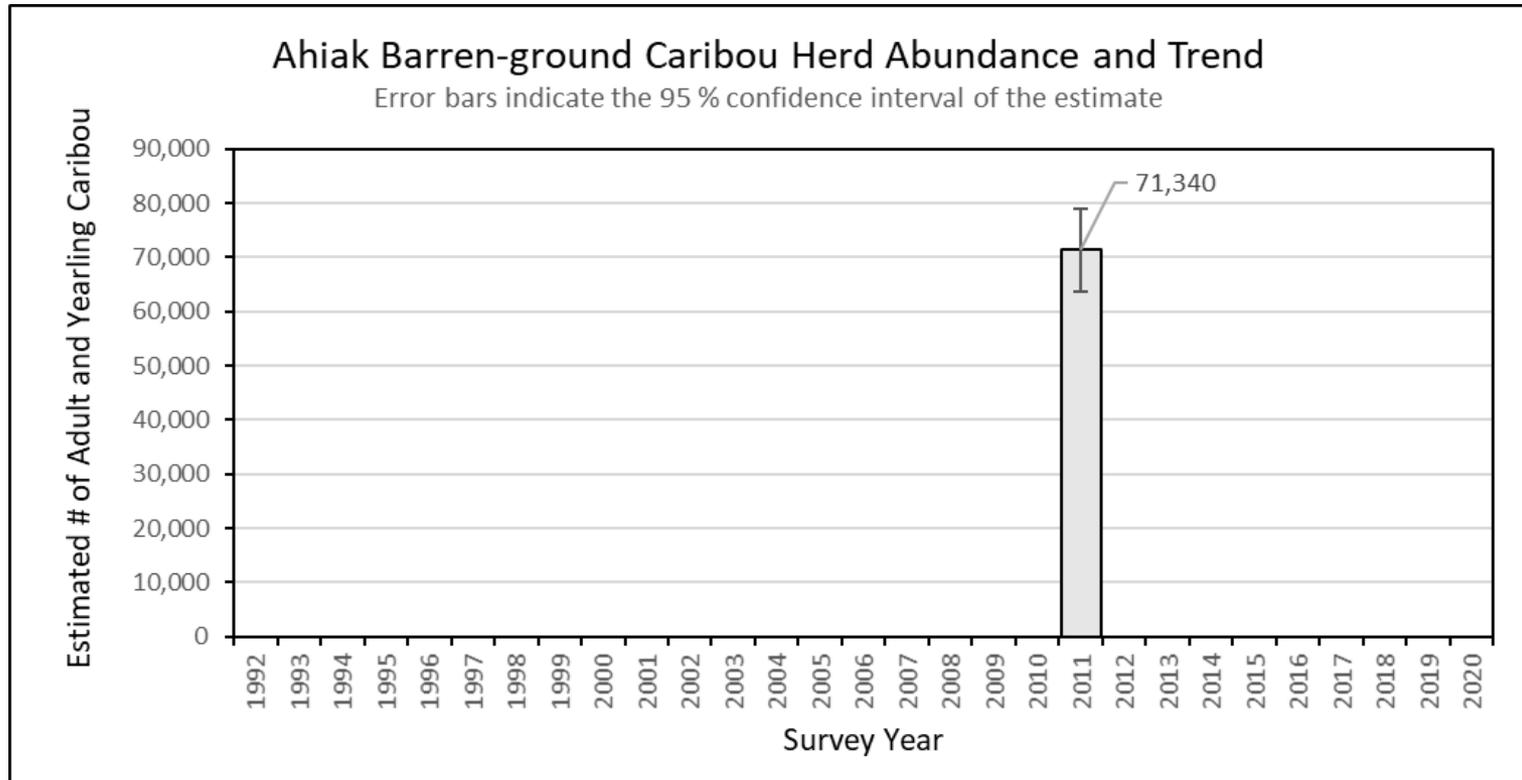
Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou Herd Abundance and Trend

Error bars indicate the 95% confidence interval of the estimate



Jan Adamczewski, GNWT

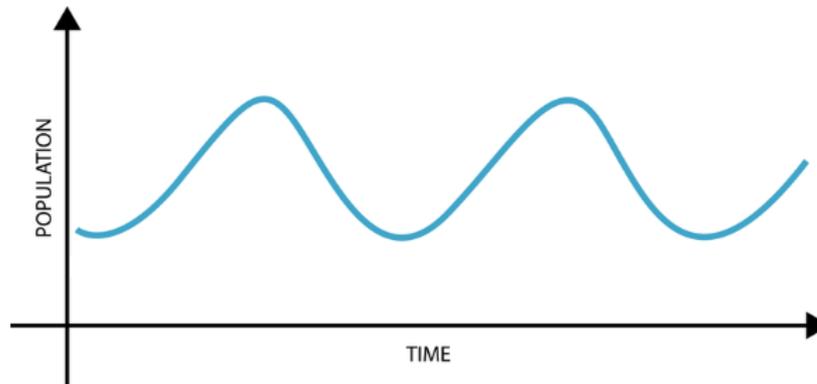
Herd health - Ahiak



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Herd health

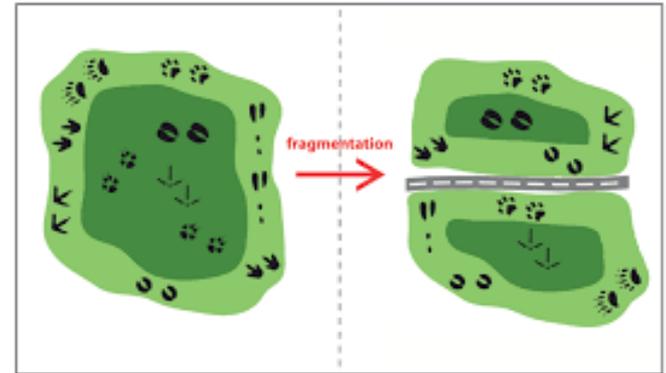
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- Herd vulnerability is highest at low points
 - more sensitive to disturbance, predation, climate change, etc.
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Threats to recovery

Development

- Habitat loss, fragmentation
- Herds can't recover if there is no space for them to do so



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- Increased demand for caribou

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- e.g. Increase in rain on snow events



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Comes with head tongue heart and back legs
Prefer to sell whole and ship on pallet if not
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-BUYER PAYS SHIPPING-- Message if
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QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

What will listing caribou on SARA do?

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Harvest decisions still follow Nunavut Agreement's decision-making process (Article 5).

Listing on SARA does not affect Inuit harvesting rights.



What will listing caribou on SARA do?

2. Your voice becomes louder.

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SARA will ensure important caribou habitat (e.g. calving grounds) is identified and protected in some form (e.g. protected from disturbance such as development).



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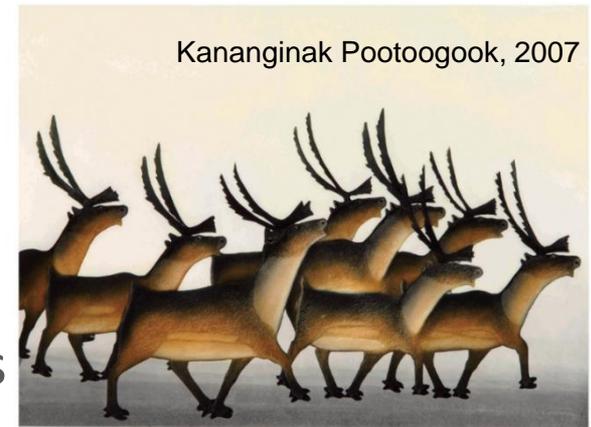


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Photo by A. Gunn

WELCOME



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

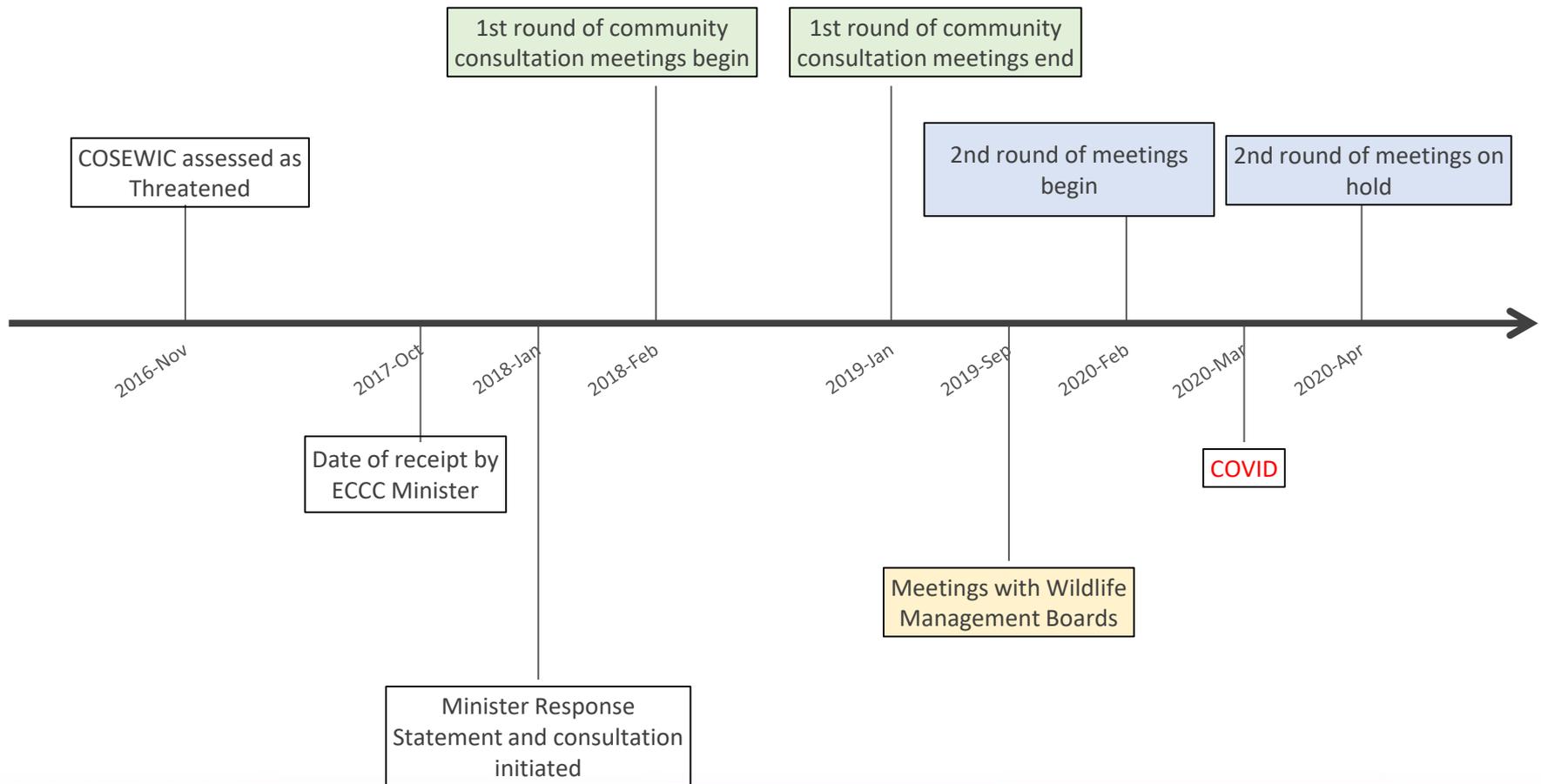
Environnement et
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Should Barren-ground Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?



Canada 

Timeline of Events



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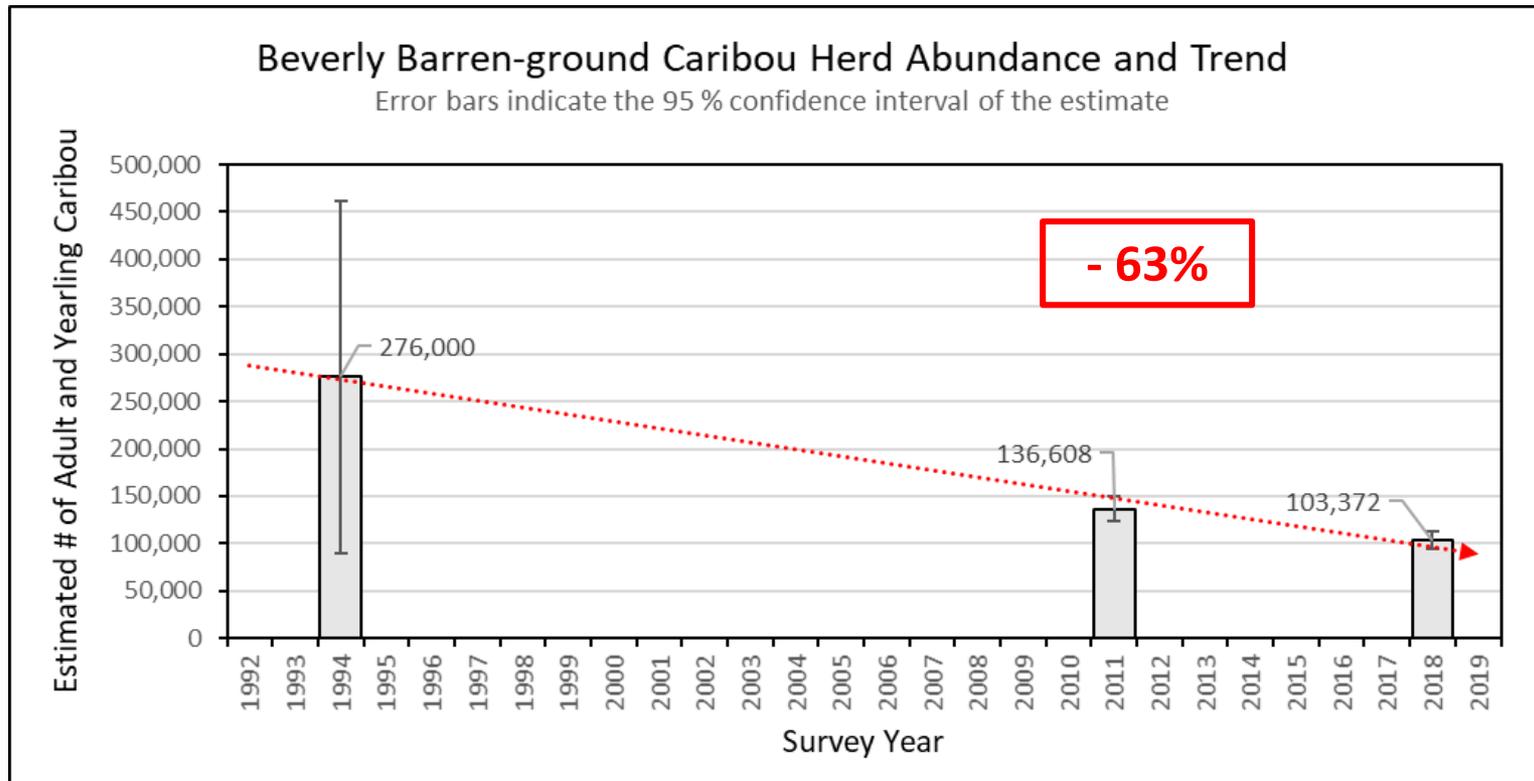
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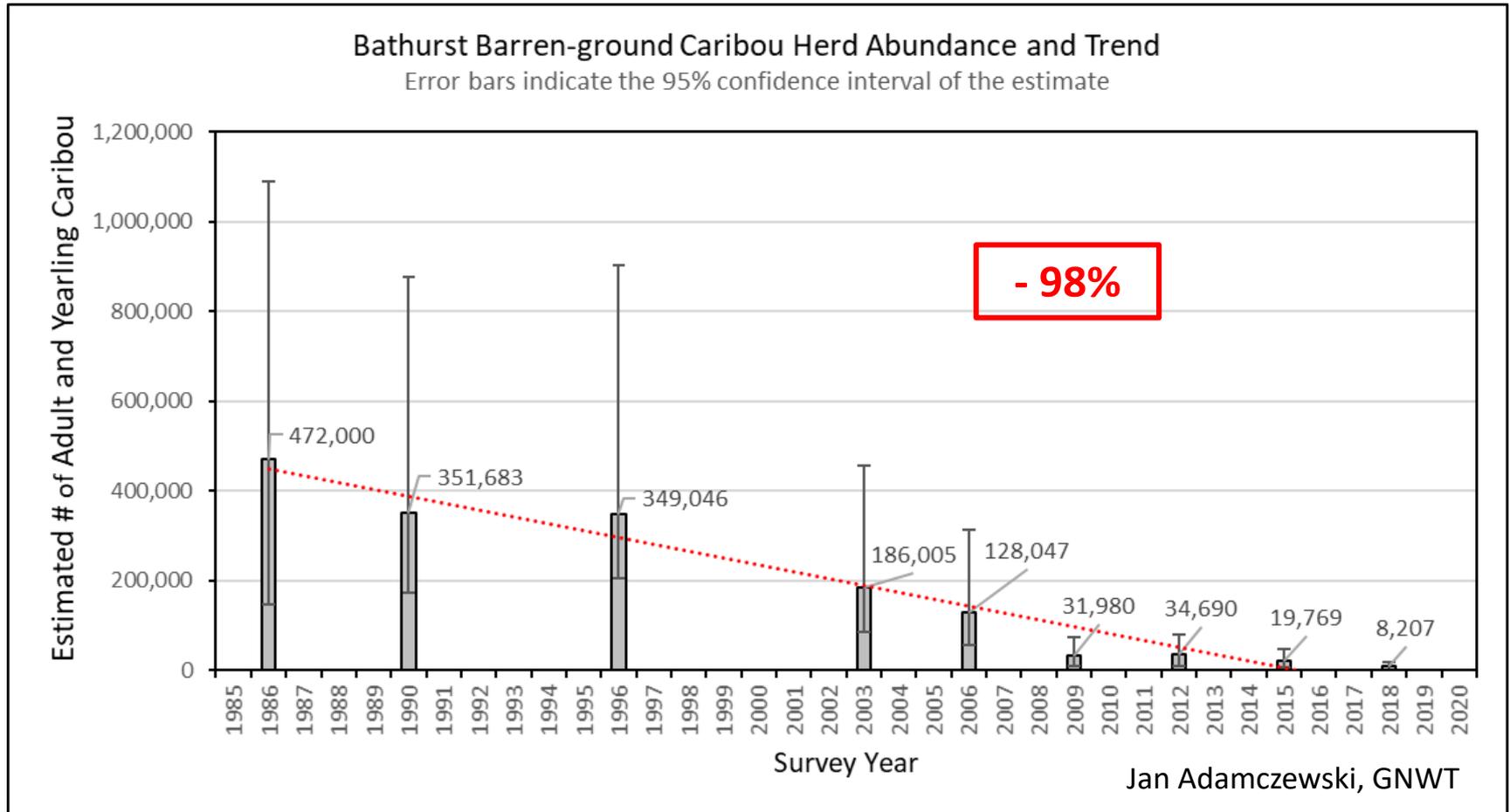
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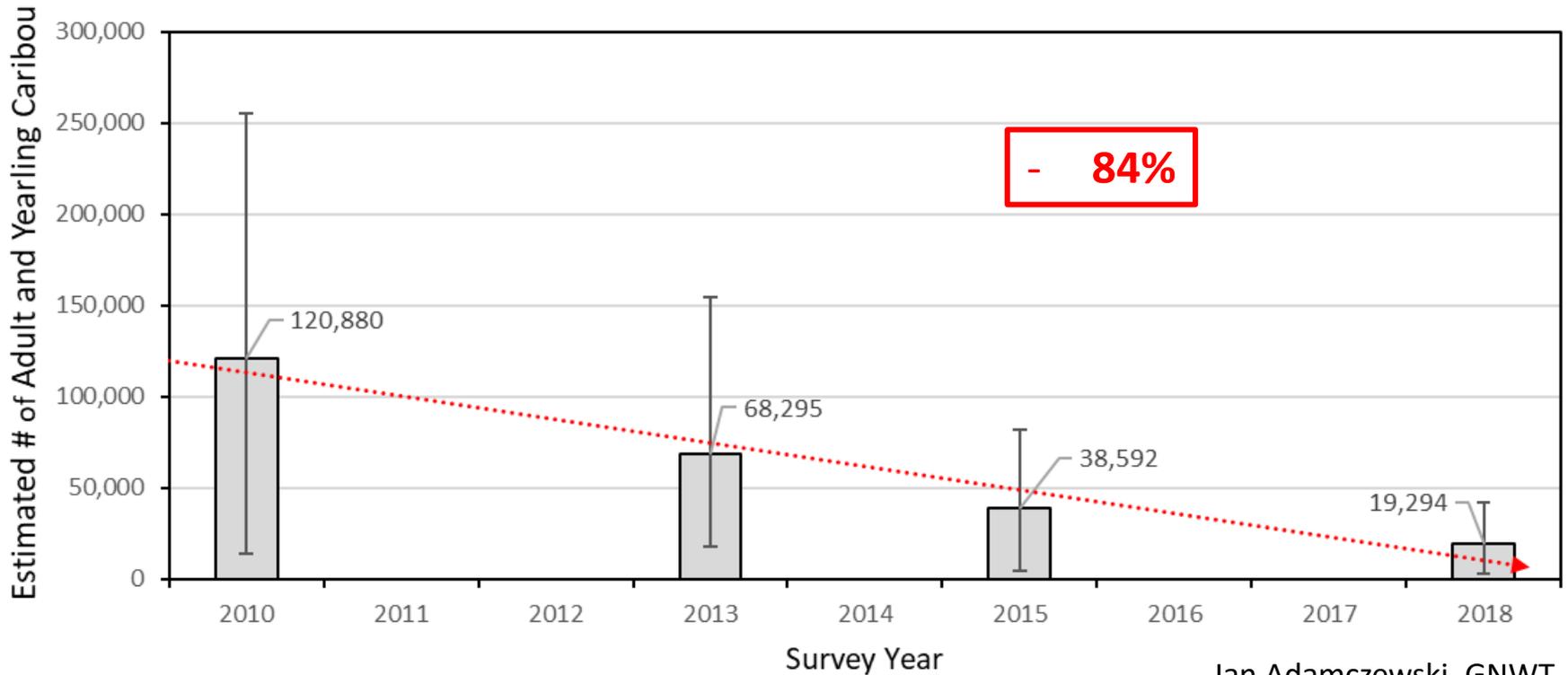
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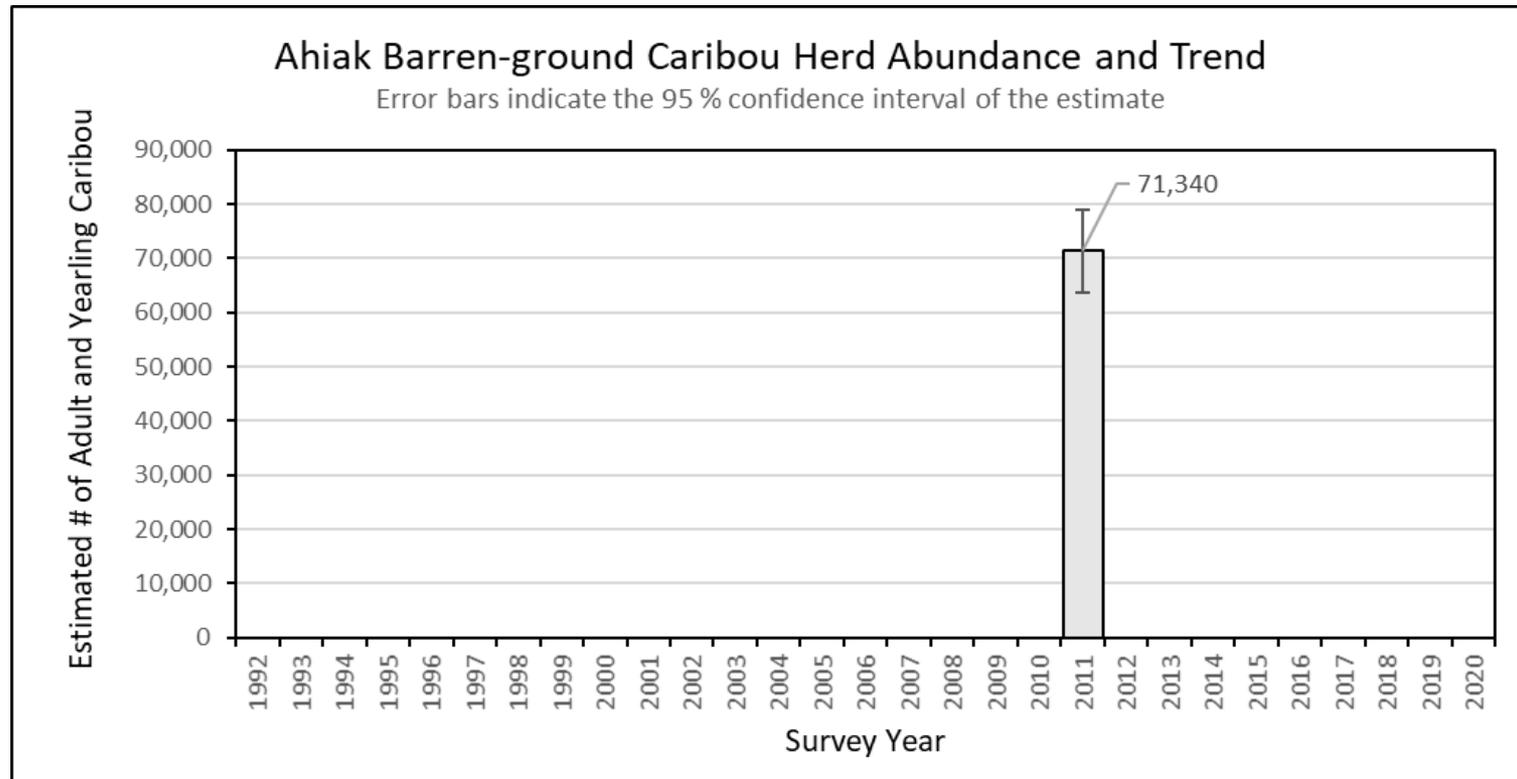
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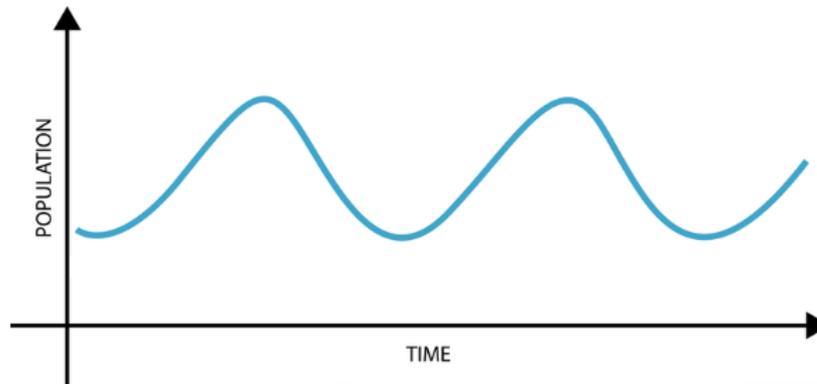


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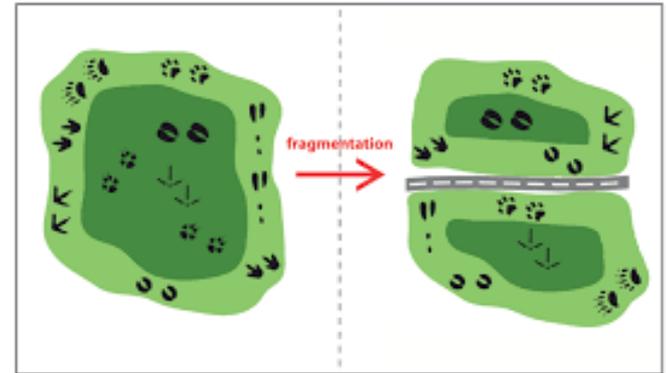
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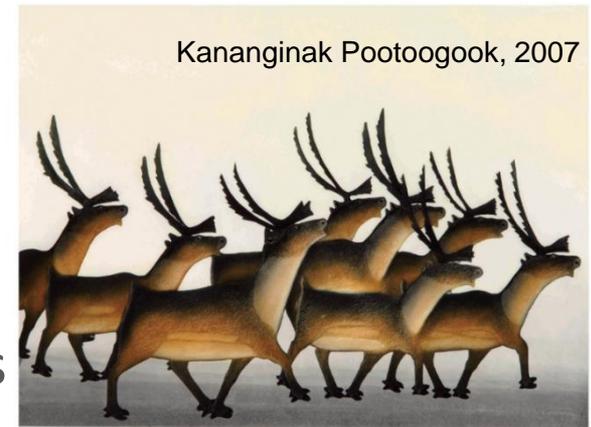
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Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada

Canada

FAQs about the Species at Risk Act in Nunavut

How does SARA affect Inuit harvesting rights in Nunavut?

The Nunavut Agreement's (NA) principles on wildlife recognize that “the exercise of Inuit harvesting rights are governed by and subject to the principles of conservation” while “Government retains the ultimate responsibility for wildlife management” (NA 5.1.2).

While the mission of the Species at Risk Act (SARA) is to protect wildlife species at risk in Canada, it reaffirms that existing Indigenous rights, as recognized and affirmed in the Canadian Constitution, are also protected (SARA s.3).

Decisions by the Government of Canada in relation to SARA must follow a decision-making process set out in the Nunavut Agreement and abide by the Government of Canada's duty to consult. This includes the “plans for management and protection of particular wildlife habitats” and the “designation of rare, threatened and endangered species” (NA 5.2.34).

Under the terms of the Nunavut Agreement, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) has “the sole authority to establish, modify or remove... levels of total allowable harvest...” (NA 5.6.16).

Furthermore, NA 5.7.16 states that “Inuit shall have free and unrestricted right of access for the purpose of harvesting ... to all Crown lands, including, for greater certainty, Parks and Conservation Areas...” although that right of access is subject to “any restrictions established by the NWMB for the purpose of conservation” (NA 5.7.18).

Put simply, listing a species under SARA does not directly affect Inuit harvesting rights anywhere in Nunavut. Only NWMB can restrict harvesting rights.

Extreme circumstances

The NWMB has the authority to “restrict or limit Inuit harvesting only to the extent necessary... to effect a valid conservation purpose” (NA 5.3.3). If there is a significant conservation concern, the competent federal Minister may ask the NWMB to make a decision to restrict Inuit harvesting. In “urgent and unusual circumstances” a Minister may implement an interim decision for an “immediate modification” in harvesting activities (NA 5.3.24). This interim decision would require thorough and extensive consultation with affected communities and is subject to a full review by the NWMB, at which point the decision-making processes defined in the Nunavut Agreement (NA 5.3) are followed.

How does SARA affect non-Inuit in Nunavut?

When a species is listed under SARA, general prohibitions are automatically applied to non-Inuit on federal lands in Nunavut under the authority of Environment and Climate Change Canada or the Parks Canada Agency. In these areas, non-Inuit are not allowed to:

- Kill, harm, harass, capture or take an individual
- Possess, collect, buy, sell or trade an individual or its parts or derivatives
- Damage or destroy its residence (SARA s.32-33)

These prohibitions only apply when a listed species or its residence occurs on federal lands such as National Parks, National Wildlife Areas, and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries. The Government of Nunavut is responsible for protecting listed species on lands outside of federal areas. If the GN fails to sufficiently protect a listed species on non-federal land, the Governor in Council can issue an order enforcing the prohibitions (SARA s.35), however this would be an extreme circumstance.

What is critical habitat?

Critical habitat is the land, or water (for aquatic species), identified in a recovery strategy or action plan as being needed for survival or recovery of an Endangered, Threatened or Extirpated species. This could include areas such as calving or spawning areas or migration routes. Critical habitat is legally protected on **federal** lands within 180 days of being identified. Protection on **non-federal** lands can be achieved through either “a conservation agreement with any government in Canada, organization or person to benefit a species at risk or enhance its survival in the wild” (SARA s.11) or an order that provides protection if “the laws of the ... territory do not effectively protect the critical habitat” (SARA s.61).

Who decides what is critical habitat and how?

The development of the Recovery Strategy and the identification of critical habitat happens through consultation and cooperation with affected communities and relies on community and Inuit Qaujimatuqangit. Once drafted, the Recovery Strategy and the identification of critical habitat have to be approved by the NWMB.

Where can I learn more?

SARA Public Registry: www.sararegistry.gc.ca
Includes COSEWIC assessments, recovery strategies, action plans, regulations and orders.

Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service:
Saleem Dar Saleem.dar@canada.ca (867-939-7676) Whitehorse, YK
Teresa Tufts Teresa.tufts@canada.ca (867-979-7058) Iqaluit, NU



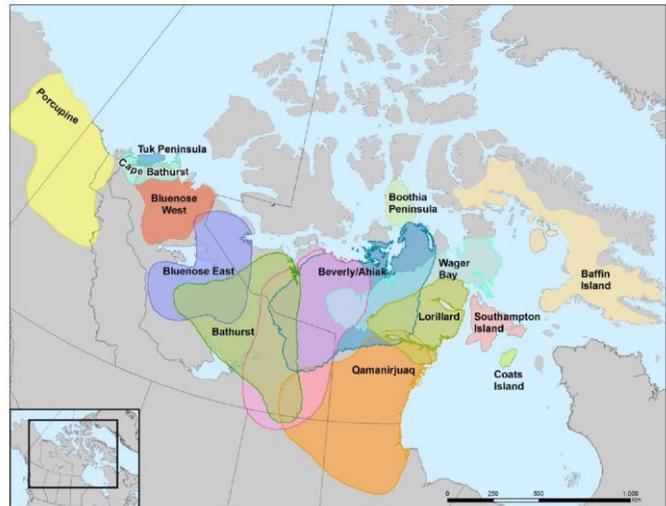
Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

For

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Update on the consultations in Nunavut on the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA)



Background:

Distribution

- The range of Barren-ground caribou in Canada extends from the Yukon to Baffin Island, and south into Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- In Nunavut, the range includes the Bluenose-East, Bathurst, Beverly, Ahiak, Qamanirjuaq, Lorillard, Boothia Peninsula, Wager Bay, Southampton Island, Coats Island, and Baffin Island herds.

Assessment and Threats

- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened in November 2016. A threatened species is likely to become endangered unless threats are addressed.
- Most Barren-ground Caribou herds have shown large declines since 1990. Across Canada, Barren-ground Caribou have declined from around 2 million individuals in the early 1990s to about 800,000 in 2016. The decline is estimated at 56% over three generations (between 1989 and 2016). Abundance surveys that have occurred since the

COSEWIC assessment have shown further declines in some populations, including the Bluenose-East, Bathurst, and Beverly herds.

- Herds are more vulnerable and sensitive to threats when their populations are low.
- Inuit knowledge says that caribou cycle through population highs and lows. New threats, such as development and climate change, may make it more difficult for populations to cycle back to peak levels and there are no indications that populations are making rapid recoveries at this time.
- Potential threats include:
 - Climate and weather changes affecting forage availability, predation, parasites and diseases.
 - Industrial exploration and development.
 - Fragmentation of habitat in their winter range from forest fires and increasing human presence.
 - Increased human population and an increased demand for caribou meat.

Implications of the proposed listing

- If Barren-ground Caribou is listed on SARA, a national recovery strategy will be written. This will include a plan detailing how to keep the herds healthy and available for future generations.
- Important caribou habitat will be identified and CWS will work with partners in Nunavut to identify the best ways of protecting it from activities that would harm it. For example, important habitat such as calving grounds and migrations routes could be protected.
- Upon listing, general prohibitions would apply to non-Inuit; they would be prohibited from harvesting caribou in National Parks, National Wildlife Areas, and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries.
- Harvest decisions for Inuit-harvest will continue to follow the Nunavut Agreement decision-making process, thus, a SARA listing does not directly affect Inuit-harvest.
- The profile of caribou would be raised and communities would have more resources available to them to support caribou conservation (e.g. funding for monitoring and the development of herd-specific management plans).

Consultations on the proposed listing

- In December 2017, CWS presented a consultation plan to the NWMB, outlining our intentions for consultations in Nunavut. Although the initial plan was lacking details, we ultimately did conduct face-to-face meetings in each of the communities within the Barren-ground Caribou range.
- Consultation packages were sent by email and mail to 22 Nunavut communities within the range of the species in January 2018. The packages included a letter, a factsheet, a PowerPoint presentation, and a questionnaire in English and Inuktitut. Follow-up phone calls were made to Hunter & Trapper Organizations between January and April 2018.
- In-person consultations were conducted between February 2018 and February 2019 in all 22 communities within the Barren-ground Caribou range.

- Throughout the consultations, it became clear that many communities had similar concerns about the proposed listing (see Appendix A for a summary of the feedback received).
- To accommodate the concerns shared by several communities and to ensure their questions were addressed, we decided to conduct further consultations in Nunavut.
- CWS worked closely with the GN and NTI to develop a plan to consult with the regional wildlife boards at their fall 2019 annual general meetings (AGM). The overlap of the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board (KRWB) AGM with the 2019 federal election meant our plans were put on hold and we were not able to meet with the KRWB.
- Since then, CWS has been working with GN biologists in each region to determine the best strategy for additional consultations.
- In October and November 2019, respectively, we presented at the Kivalliq Wildlife Board (KWB) and Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) AGMs with new material aimed at addressing outstanding concerns and clarifying common misconceptions about the proposed listing. Following each presentation, we had open discussions during which board members and attendees asked questions, voiced opinions, and shared knowledge about caribou in their area. A summary of the feedback received at these meetings is included in Appendix A.
- Upon advice from the GN's Kivalliq biologist, and the fact that the Kivalliq represents a substantial portion of the Barren-ground Caribou range (7 of the total 11 herds in Nunavut), we decided that further in-person consultations in this region might be warranted. The GN gave us the opportunity to coordinate with their annual regional tour which would streamline and support our efforts and reduce the consultation burden to HTOs and communities. We presented this idea at the KWB AGM and received no objections from board members or attendees.
- As the Baffin herd is shared by 10 communities, the most efficient and effective way to address concerns for this region was to consult at the regional level at the QWB AGM. Following the presentation and subsequent discussion, we asked members if they required any follow-up consultations in their communities. We did not receive any such requests or indications of interest. As a result, we consider consultations with the Baffin region to be complete at this time.
- As we were not able to attend the KRWB AGM in the fall, we will be looking for other ways to engage with the Kitikmeot community HTOs.
- We have made multiple efforts to consult with the Regional Inuit Associations, starting in January 2018 when they were sent the initial consultation package. In December 2019, we received confirmation that the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) had received and reviewed the information. They noted that they had limited capacity to address the proposed listing and did not request any further engagement from us.
- Discussions have occurred with the Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA) and an in-person meeting will take place in February 2020.
- We are still waiting to hear back from Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KitIA) on whether they require further engagement.

Upcoming consultations

- In February 2020, in conjunction with the GN regional biologist's community tour, we plan to travel to each of the seven Kivalliq communities to conduct further in-person consultations on the proposed listing. Representatives from the GN and NTI will be in attendance of each of these meetings.
- We will have an in-person meeting with the KIA in Rankin Inlet in February 2020.
- In April 2020, we will meet with the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board (a board made up of members from the Kivalliq, NWT, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, as well as NWMB) for further consultations.
- Spring 2020 (TBD) consultations in the Kitikmeot region, as required.

Next Steps:

- Complete further consultations in the Kivalliq (February 2020) and Kitikmeot (spring 2020, TBD), as required.
- Request decision from the NWMB on the proposed listing (TBD, possibly June 2020).

Should Barren-ground Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?



Outline

1. SARA
2. Herd health
3. Threats to recovery
4. What will listing caribou on SARA do
5. Next steps
6. Discussion



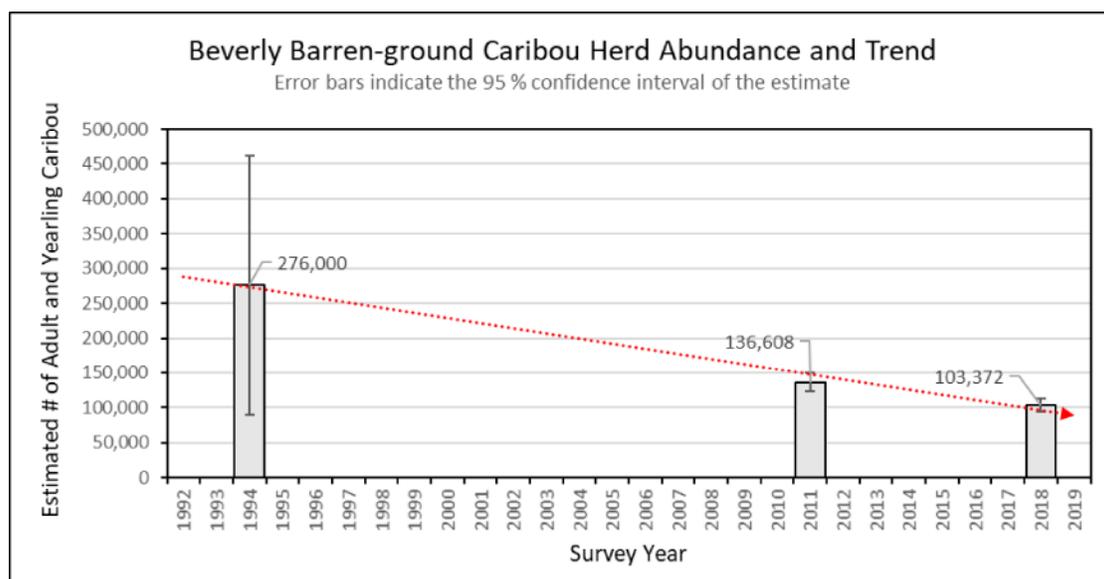
Photo by A. Gunn

The Species at Risk Act (SARA)

SARA could be used as a tool to help conserve
Barren-ground Caribou

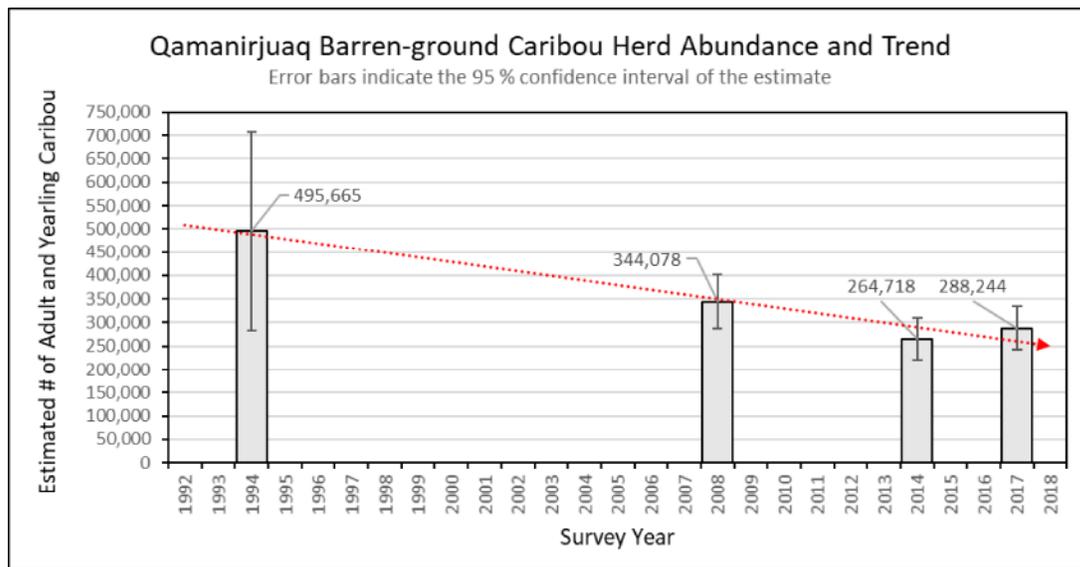
SARA does not affect Inuit harvesting rights

Herd health - Beverly



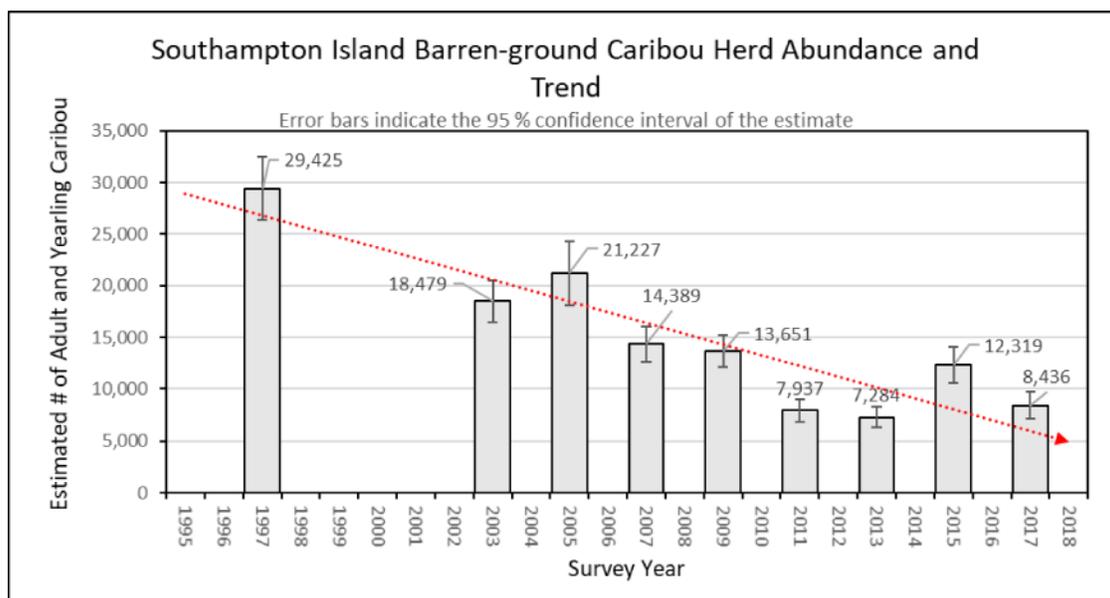
Mitch Campbell, GN

Herd health - Qamanirjuaq



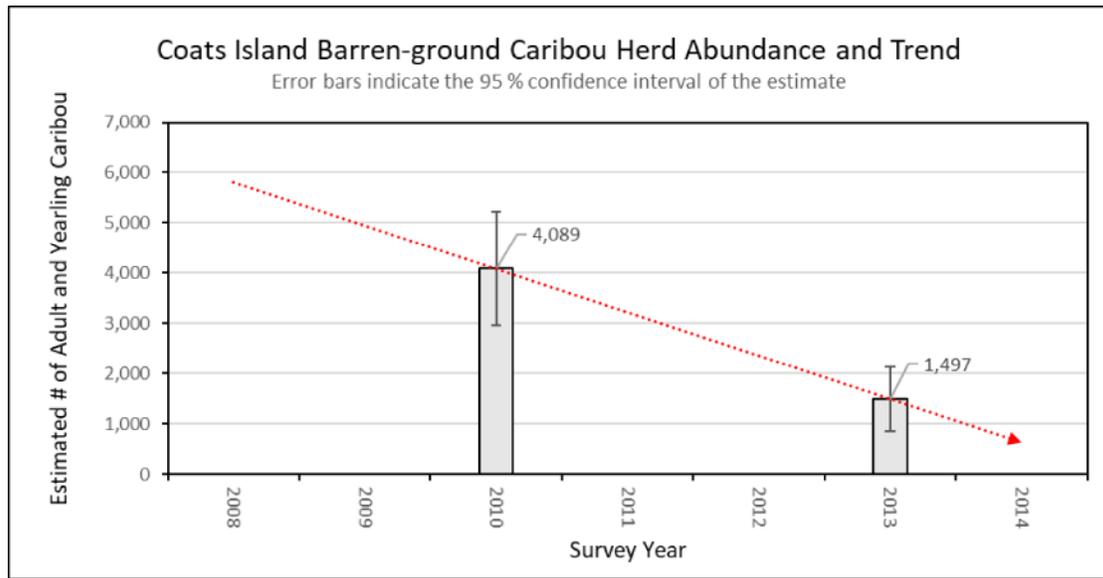
Mitch Campbell, GN

Herd health – Southampton Island



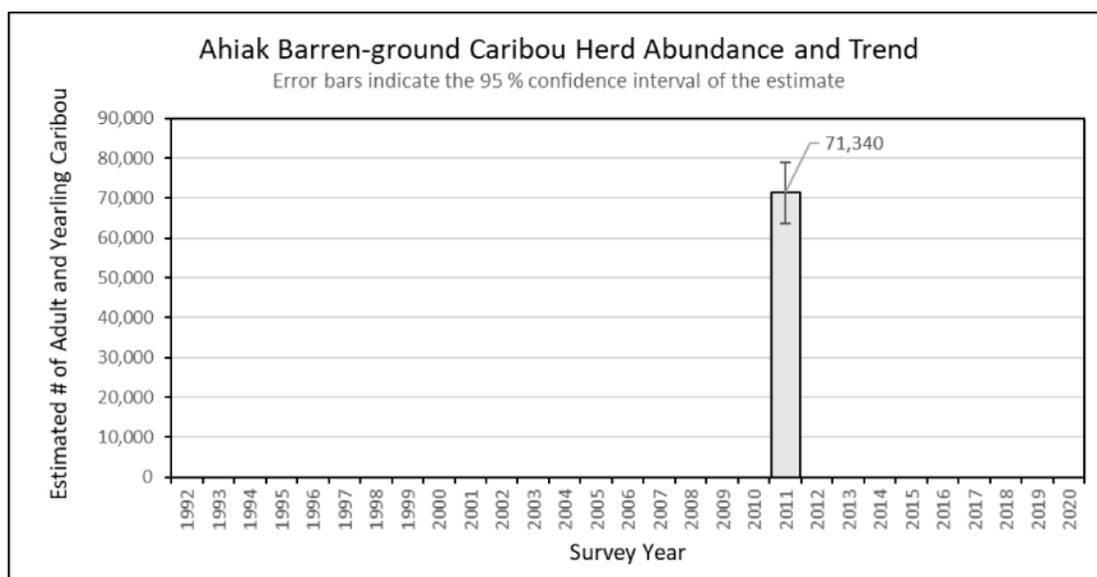
Mitch Campbell, GN

Herd health – Coats Island



Mitch Campbell, GN

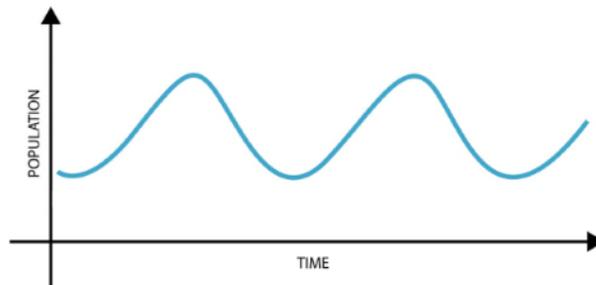
Herd health - Ahiak



Mitch Campbell, GN

Herd health

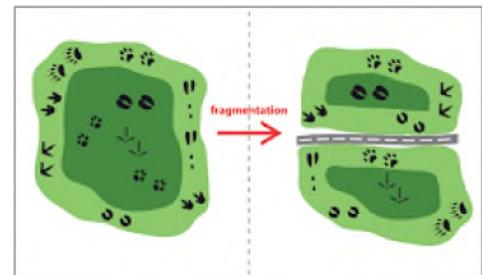
- Many herds are at a low point in their natural population cycles
- Herd vulnerability is highest at low points
 - more sensitive to disturbance, predation, climate change, etc.
- Due to new factors (e.g. development, climate change) caribou populations may not cycle back to regular levels



Threats to recovery

Development

- Habitat loss, fragmentation
- Herds can't recover if there is no space for them to do so



Increased human population

- Increased demand for caribou



8 tuktu available- located in rankin
Comes with head tongue heart and back legs
Prefer to sell whole and ship on pallet if not
can box up.
-BUYER PAYS SHIPPING-, Message if
interested



What is SARA?

Federal legislation that aims to prevent wildlife from disappearing from Canada



Tim Pitsiulak, 2017

SPECIAL CONCERN	THREATENED	ENDANGERED	EXTIRPATED	EXTINCT
Likely to become Endangered or Threatened unless threats are mitigated.	Likely to become Endangered unless threats are addressed.	Facing imminent disappearance from Canada.	No longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere.	No longer exists anywhere in the world.

What will listing caribou on SARA do?

1. The existing wildlife management system does not change.

Harvest decisions still follow Nunavut Agreement's decision-making process (Article 5).

Listing on SARA does not affect Inuit harvesting rights.

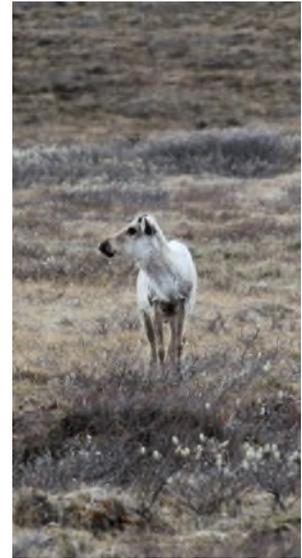


What will listing caribou on SARA do?

2. Your voice becomes louder.

There will be more attention on community concerns about caribou

You will have a say in how to keep the herds healthy and make sure they're available for future generations.



What will listing caribou on SARA do?

3. More resources will be available to support caribou conservation.

SARA-listing would raise the importance of caribou, making it easier for HTOs to access resources (e.g. funding for monitoring or the development of herd-specific management plans).



What will listing caribou on SARA do?

4. Protect space for caribou.

SARA will ensure important caribou habitat (e.g. calving grounds) is identified and protected in some form (e.g. protected from disturbance such as development).



If caribou is listed:

1. Make a plan

- Goal: keep the herds healthy and available for future generations
- Management partners, including HTOs, will work together to identify what needs to be done to keep the herds healthy

2. Identify and protect important caribou habitat

3. General prohibitions

- Inuit harvest: **not affected**
- Non-Inuit harvest: prohibited from harvesting caribou on Environment Canada or Parks Canada lands (e.g. National Parks, National Wildlife Areas, Migratory Bird Sanctuaries)

Important to remember



- No decision has been made yet
- Nunavummiut input is required at all stages in SARA; before any decision is made we need your input
- Existing wildlife management bodies & processes do not change
- SARA is a tool to help with caribou conservation
- SARA does not affect Inuit harvesting rights

Next steps

Ongoing

- Continue to solicit input from communities
including Inuit Qaujimatuaqangit and socio-economic impacts of listing

Mid-2020 or later, TBD

- NWMB decision, Environment Minister recommendation, Federal Cabinet decision



Discussion

What is needed to support your caribou herds?

Do you agree/disagree/have concerns with the listing proposal?

Do you want to share any Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit about your herds?

How to contact us

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Climate Change Canada

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Should Barren-ground Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?



Canada 

Outline

1. SARA
2. Herd health
3. Threats to recovery
4. What will listing caribou on SARA do
5. Next steps
6. Discussion



Photo by A. Gunn



The Species at Risk Act (SARA)

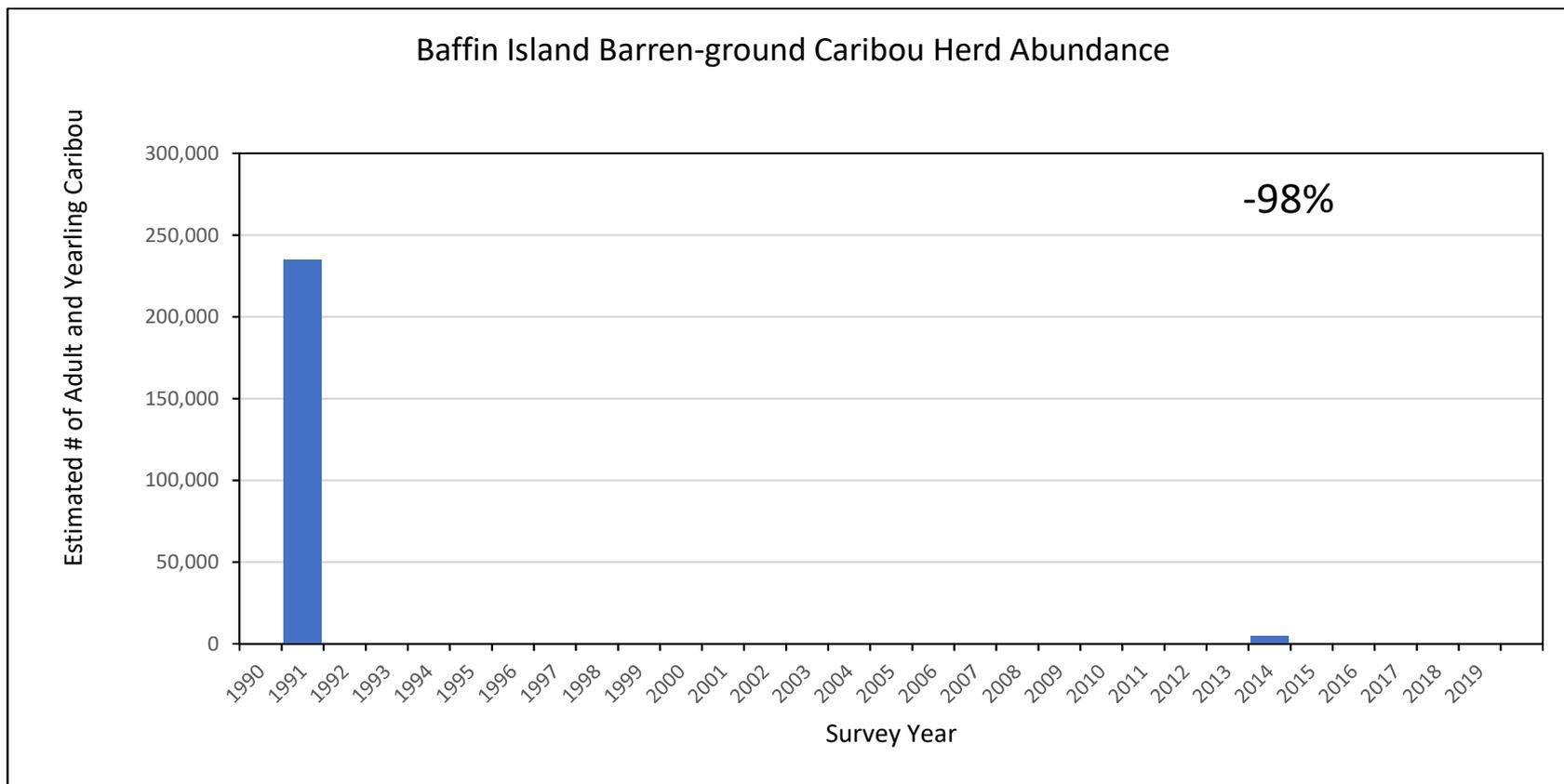
SARA could be used as a tool to help conserve
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SARA does not affect Inuit harvesting rights

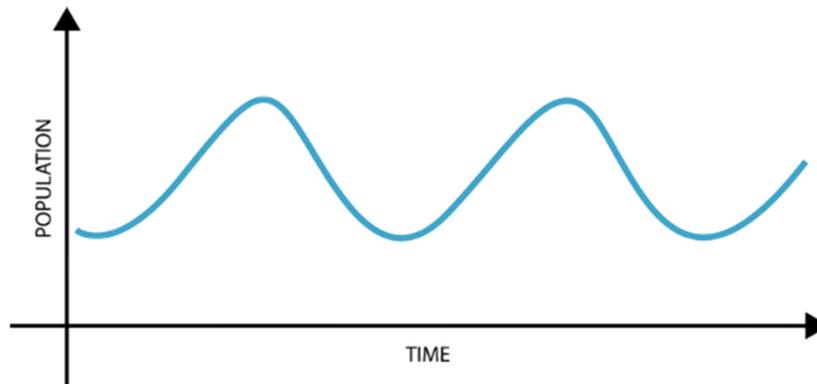


Herd health



Herd health

- The Baffin herd is at a low point in its natural population cycle
- Herd vulnerability is highest at low points
 - more sensitive to disturbance, predation, climate change, etc.
- Due to new factors (e.g. development, climate change) caribou populations may not cycle back to regular levels



Threats to recovery

Development

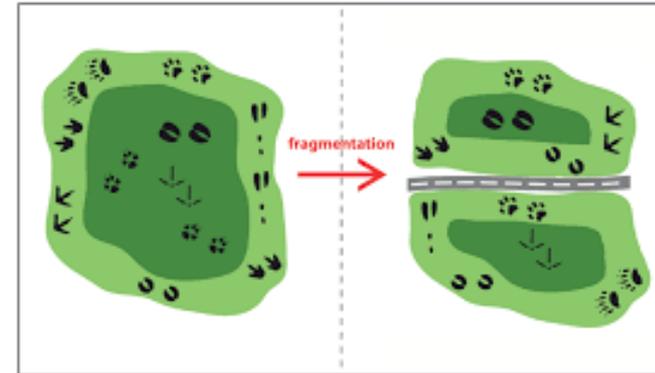
- Habitat loss, fragmentation
- Herds can't recover if there is no space for them to do so

Increased human population

- Increased demand for caribou

Climate change

- e.g. Increase in rain on snow events



What is SARA?

Federal legislation that aims to prevent wildlife from disappearing from Canada



SPECIAL CONCERN	THREATENED	ENDANGERED	EXTIRPATED	EXTINCT
Likely to become Endangered or Threatened unless threats are mitigated.	Likely to become Endangered unless threats are addressed.	Facing imminent disappearance from Canada.	No longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere.	No longer exists anywhere in the world.



What will listing caribou on SARA do?

- 1. The existing wildlife management system does not change.**

Harvest decisions still follow Nunavut Agreement's decision-making process (Article 5).

Listing on SARA does not affect Inuit harvesting rights.



What will listing caribou on SARA do?

2. Your voice becomes louder.

There will be more attention on community concerns about caribou

You will have a say in how to keep the herds healthy and make sure they're available for future generations.



What will listing caribou on SARA do?

3. More resources will be available to support caribou conservation.

SARA-listing would raise the importance of caribou, making it easier for HTOs to access resources to conduct monitoring and develop management plans.



What will listing caribou on SARA do?

4. Protect space for caribou.

SARA can legally protect important caribou habitat (e.g. calving grounds) from disturbance such as development.



If caribou are listed:

1. Make a plan

- Goal: keep the herds healthy and available for future generations
- Management partners, including HTOs, will decide what needs to be done to keep the herds healthy



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3. General prohibitions

- Inuit harvest: **not affected**
- Non-Inuit harvest: Not allowed to harvest caribou on Environment Canada or Parks Canada lands (e.g. National Parks, National Wildlife Areas, Migratory Bird Sanctuaries)



Important to remember



- No decision has been made yet
- Nunavummiut input is required at all stages in SARA; before any decision is made we need your input
- Existing wildlife management bodies & processes do not change
- SARA is a tool to help with caribou conservation
- SARA does not affect Inuit harvesting rights



Next steps

Ongoing

- Continue to solicit input from communities
 - including Inuit Qaujimatuaqangit and socio-economic impacts of listing

March 2021 or later, TBD

- NWMB decision, Environment Minister recommendation, Federal Cabinet decision



Discussion

We want to hear from you:

What is needed to support the Baffin herd?

Do you agree/disagree/have concerns with the listing proposal?



How to contact us

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Climate Change Canada

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Changement climatique Canada

Canada



SUBMISSION TO THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
FOR

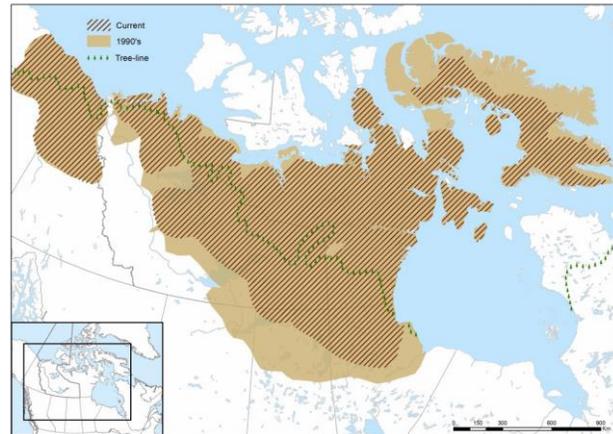
Information:

Decision: X

Issue: Request for decision on the proposed listing of **Barren-Ground Caribou** as a threatened species under the federal *Species at Risk Act*



Barren-Ground Caribou



Current and historical range of Barren-Ground Caribou

Background

Designatable Unit

- COSEWIC divides caribou in Canada into 12 types or “Designatable Units” based on distribution, genetics, appearance, movements, and behavior and life history strategies.
- The range of Barren-ground caribou in Canada extends from the Yukon to Baffin Island, and south into Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- Barren-ground caribou includes 14-15 populations or herds including the following herds found in Nunavut: Bluenose-East, Bathurst, Beverly, Qamanirjuaq, Lorillard, Ahiak, Boothia Peninsula, Wager Bay, Southampton Island, and Baffin Island herds.

Assessment & Threats:

- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed Barren-Ground Caribou as a threatened species in November 2016.

- A threatened species is likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.
- Most Barren-Ground Caribou herds have shown large declines since 1990, only 2 herds are increasing. Across Canada, Barren-ground caribou have declined from around 2 million individuals in the early 1990s to about 800,000 in 2016. The decline is estimated at 56% over three generations (between 1989 and 2016).
- Evidence from both local Indigenous people and scientific studies suggests that most herds have undergone natural fluctuations in numbers in the past; however, available data does not indicate any sign of rapid recovery at this time.
- Barren-ground caribou meets criteria for *Endangered* status because of a reduction in numbers of $\geq 50\%$, but the lower risk category of *Threatened* was recommended because, overall, this population does not appear to be facing imminent extinction at this time.
- Potential threats include:
 - Climate and weather changes affecting forage availability, predation, parasites and diseases.
 - Industrial exploration and development.
 - Fragmentation of habitat in winter range from forest fires and increasing human presence.
 - Contaminants
 - Subsistence and sport harvest can be significant causes of mortality.

Herds of the Nunavut Territory:

Herds	Bluenose -East	Bathurst	Beverly/ Ahiak ¹	Qamanirjuaq	Lorillard /Wager Bay	Boothia Penins.	Southa mpton Island ²	Baffin Island ³
Increase/ Decrease rate:	- 89%	-96%	Decline	-4%	NA	NA	+113%	-98%
Last Survey reported in COSEWIC report	38,592 (2015)	19,769 (2015)	195,529 (2011)	264,661 (2014)	41,000 (2002)	6,658 (1995)	12,297 (2015)	4,856 (2014)
Maximum observed in surveys	114,472 (2010)	472,000 (1986)	Bev (1995): 276,000 Ahiak (1996): 200,000	495,000 (1994)	41,000 (2002)	6,658 (1995)	30,381 (1997)	235,000 (1991)

1. Beverly and Ahiak herds were merged into one in 2011.
2. One of the only two herds that are increasing across Canada.
3. There is considerable uncertainty in the population estimates and resulting trend.

Implications of proposed listing:

- If Barren-Ground Caribou are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* a national recovery strategy will be written. The needs of each herd could be considered separately within the national recovery strategy.
- Critical habitat will be identified to the extent possible and CWS will work with partners to find the best method to protect it from activities that would destroy it. Critical habitat could be used to protect calving areas, migration routes or other important habitat for caribou.
- Prohibitions against killing or harming Barren-Ground caribou will automatically come into force in National Parks, Wildlife Bird Sanctuaries and Wildlife Management Areas. These prohibitions do not apply to Inuit harvest under the Nunavut agreement.
- Federal funding programs such as the Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk (AFSAR) are available to provide support for projects that can help species that are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

Consultations on the proposed listing:

- Consultation packages were sent by email and mail to 22 Nunavut communities within the range of the species in January 2018. The packages included: a letter, a factsheet, a PowerPoint presentation, and a questionnaire in English and Inuktitut.
- Follow-up phone calls were made to Hunter & Trapper Organizations between January and April 2018.
- In person consultations on the proposed listing were conducted starting in February 2018.

Meeting Location	Public Meeting	Separate HTO Board Meeting	Meeting Group	Staff from other organizations in attendance			Meeting Date
				NWMB	GN	Others	
Cambridge Bay	Y	Y	Ekaluktutiak HTO, Omingmaktok HTO, Burnside HTO	N	N	KRWB	February 26, 2018
Kugluktuk	N	Y	Kugluktuk HTO	N	Y	KRWB	Feb 27, 2018
Gjoa Haven	N	Y	Gjoa Haven HTO	N	N		March 1, 2018
Kugaaruk	N	Y	Kurairojuark HTO	N	N		March 2, 2018
Rankin Inlet	N	Y	Kangiqliniq HTO	N	N	NTI	March 5, 2018
Arviat	N	Y	Arviat HTO	N	Y		March 7, 2018
Whale Cove	N	Y	Issatik HTO	N	N		March 6, 2018
Taloyoak			Spence Bay HTO				TBC
Baker Lake	N	Y	Baker Lake HTO	N	Y		March 8, 2018
Chesterfield Inlet	N	Y	Aqigiq HTO	N	Y		March 9, 2018
Qikiqtarjuaq	Y	Y	Nattivak HTO	Y	N		Oct. 23-24, 2018
Pangnirtung	Y	Y	Pangirtung HTO	N	N		Dec 3, 2018
Iqaluit	N	Y	Amaruq HTO	Y	N		Oct 22, 2018
Igloolik	Y	N	Igloolik HTO	N	Y		Sept 25, 2018
Hall Beach	Y	Y	Hall Beach HTO	N	N		Sept 26, 2018
Repulse Bay	Y	N	Arviq HTO	N	Y		Sept 27, 2018
Coral Harbour	Y	Y	Aiviit HTO	Y	N		Jan 22, 2019
Cape Dorset	Y	Y	Aiviq HTO	Y	N		Jan 23, 2019
Kimmirut	Y	Y	Mayukalik HTO	Y	N		Jan 24, 2019
Arctic Bay	Y	N	Arctic Bay HTO	Y	N		Oct 16, 2018
Pond Inlet	Y	N	Mattimatalik HTO	Y	Y		Oct 17, 2018
Clyde River	Y	Y	Nangmautaq HTO	Y	N		Oct 18, 2018

Highlights from meetings:

Many communities and HTOs expressed concerns about the lack of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit in the status assessment, and they want more involvement in the COSEWIC assessment stage of the process. CWS has asked COSEWIC to include HTOs in reviews of draft status assessments, so that IQ and local knowledge can be included in the assessment instead of waiting for the listing stage of the process.

People are extremely worried about the possible impact that listing could have on harvest and food security. If Barren-ground caribou are listed it would not require any change to how harvest is regulated

for Inuit hunters in Nunavut. Harvest would continue to be regulated through the co-management process which already takes conservation into account. The only automatic prohibitions would be for non-indigenous people in National Parks, National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries. It is possible that in the future a protection order could be put in place that could impact Inuit harvest, this is known as the “federal safety net”. Any such order would require a separate consultation process.

People would have preferred that the Barren-ground caribou herds were not combined together in one assessment. Nevertheless, they would like to see locally developed assessments and plans for each herd. The Barren-ground caribou were grouped together in COSEWIC’s assessment because all these herds are similar in terms of their appearance, behaviour, and genetics. ECCC presents the original COSEWIC assessment during the consultations, however the different herds can be treated separately in the recovery strategy later on in the recovery planning process.

Some questioned whether the decline was a real cause for concern, suggesting that the caribou population will naturally cycle back up or that the caribou have moved to another area and will come back in the future. The COSEWIC assessment recognized the cyclical nature of the caribou populations, and it is possible that the caribou populations will recover naturally. However, caribou are facing many new threats so COSEWIC was uncertain that what happened in the past will happen again.

Most communities also mentioned the wolf population increasing as one of the important causes of the Caribou decline. Information on threats such as wolf predation can be used in the recovery strategy.

Detailed notes from community meetings can be found in the appendix. The following is a brief summary of the feedback received in each community.

Cambridge Bay [Bathurst and Beverly herds]:

- HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process. They also want to be involved in the drafting of the recovery strategy.
- They would appreciate a herd-by-herd assessment as they are in the opinion that their herd is doing fine.
- Increased predation: would like to see an incentive for hunters to harvest wolves.
- They are worried about their income (subsistence and income hunting).

Kugluktuk [Bluenose-East and Bathurst herds]:

- HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process.

- They would appreciate a herd-by-herd assessment, and worry about the flexibility in prohibitions and how it will be applied to local management.
- They noticed an increase in wolf and wolverine populations.

Gjoa Haven [Ahiak, Beverly and Boothia Peninsula Herd]:

- HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process.
- They are worried about the Caribou declining, the species is critical for their way of life and food security. They are interested in collaborating to help the species recover.
- They mentioned various reasons why they see less Caribou than before :
 - Increased predation (wolves, wolverines and grizzlies)
 - They are seeing a lot more Muskox than before
 - Climate Change: Caribou are vulnerable to migration on thin ice.
- They would like to improve youth education regarding hunting practices.

Kugaaruk [Ahiak, Boothia Peninsula, and Wager Bay herds]:

- HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process.
- They would appreciate a herd-by-herd assessment, they never heard of any studies done in their region.
- They are worried about harvest restrictions and food security.
- They mentioned various reasons why they see less Caribou than before :
 - Increased predation (wolves)
 - They are seeing a lot more Muskox than before
 - Mining (chemicals, plane/helicopters flying low)
 - Climate Change : They noticed a lot of rain on snow event making the foraging harder for the species.
 - Natural cycle of caribou population
 - Diseases

Rankin Inlet [Qamanirjuaq and Lorillard herds]:

- HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process. They would like to see an Inuit representative on COSEWIC committee.
- They would appreciate a herd-by-herd assessment, they never heard of any studies done in their region.
- Increased predation: They are seeing more wolves and grizzlies than before.
- They want to be involved in drafting the recovery strategy. Management plans already in place in some regions should be recognized.

- Some agreed to the listing of the barren-ground caribou.

Whale Cove [Qamanirjuaq and Lorillard herds]:

- HTO members expressed some worries about their harvest rights.
- They mentioned various reasons why they see less Caribou than before :
 - Increased predation (eagles, wolverines)
 - They are seeing a lot more Muskox than before
 - Natural cycle of caribou population
 - Diseases: They noticed swollen hooves (brucellosis)
 - Mining

Arviat [Qamanirjuaq herd]:

- HTO members would like to see a herd-by-herd assessment as they think their herd is stable.
- They mentioned various reasons why they see less Caribou than before :
 - Sport hunting happening south of Arviat
 - Migration routes have changed
 - Increased predation (wolves, grizzlies, wolverines)
 - Moose habitat range has recently extended to their region
 - Hunting ways have changed (bullet type, transportation)

Baker Lake [Ahiak, Lorillard, and Qamanirjuaq herds]:

- HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process. They would like to see an Inuit representative on COSEWIC committee.
- They are worried about their harvest rights and food security.
- They haven't seen the Qamanirjuaq herd for a long time, and mentioned potential causes of the caribou decline, i.e. changing migration routes, natural cycle of the caribou population, forest fires, and increased predation.
- They want to see the recovery strategy being elaborated cooperatively with all territories and provinces sharing the herds. Attention to the migration routes and its protection should be emphasized.

Chesterfield Inlet [Qamanirjuaq and Lorillard herds]:

- HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process.
- The caribou have other predators, like wolves, grizzlies and wolverines that are also responsible for their decrease.
- They are worried about their harvest rights.
- Some noticed the caribou have recently started to increase in the area.

Igloodik [Wager Bay and Baffin Island herds]:

- Community and HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process.
- They are worried about their harvest rights and food security; they see this proposed listing as an additional hardship done to their community and traditional way of life.
- Most of them believed the caribou population is going through a natural cycle and will eventually come back on its own. Some people mentioned the population numbers were not trustworthy.
- They want more responsibility in regards to managing their own herd, instead of having outsiders getting involved. They also didn't appreciate all the herds being merged together for the listing assessment.

Hall Beach [Wager Bay and Baffin Island herds]:

- Community and HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process.
- Most of them believed the caribou population is going through a natural cycle and will eventually come back on its own.
- The caribou have other predators, like wolves that are also responsible for their decrease.
- They are worried about their harvest rights and food security. Some of them thought animals should not be surveyed and didn't like outsiders coming to interfere with their wildlife management.

Naujaat [Wager Bay and Lorillard herds]:

- Community members wanted to see local management of the herd. They didn't like having their caribou lumped in with other herds across Canada as part of the assessment of Barren-ground caribou or in future recovery plans. Some of them mentioned the survey methodology was not trustworthy.
- Most of them believed the caribou population is going through a natural cycle and will eventually come back on its own.
- They are worried about their harvest rights being affected after the listing.

Arctic Bay [Baffin Island herd]:

- There were strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation in the assessment of the caribou and decision-making regarding the wildlife management. They would like to see more traditional knowledge involved throughout the process.

- Community members mentioned the cause of decline is most likely due to wolf predation and natural cycle of the caribou population. They strongly believe the caribou will come back on their own.
- Community members were also worried about their harvest right and food security.

Pond Inlet [Baffin Island herd]:

- Community and HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and decision-making. They would like to see more local management and are concerned about their harvest rights.
- There were some doubts regarding the numbers of caribou and the survey methodology.
- Most of them believed the caribou population is going through a natural cycle and will eventually come back on its own.
- One person asked for a further investigation on the actual causes of decline of the Baffin herd.

Clyde River [Baffin Island herd]:

- Community and HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and decision-making. They would like to see more local management and are concerned about their harvest rights.
- One member mentioned there was a generational conflict where the younger hunters want to try new wildlife management methods, but the elders disagree. The Inuit's profound respect for elders makes the younger generation hesitant to talk about it.
- Community members also mentioned potential causes of the caribou decline, i.e. the natural cycle of the caribou population, the predation by wolves, female-male ratio allowed for hunting, and the new technology (snowmobiles scare caribou away).

Iqaluit [Baffin Island herd]:

- Community and HTO members expressed strong concerns about the lack of Inuit participation and traditional knowledge in the assessment of Barren-ground caribou and the decision-making process.
- They would also like to be involved in the scientific research. The survey methodology is not clear to them, and they believe a herd-by-herd assessment would be much more relevant.
- They believe the caribou populations are going through natural cycle and will eventually come back up on their own.
- Many were worried about their harvest rights and would like to see investigation on other threats like predation, industry and impact of research.

Qikiqtarjuaq [Baffin Island herd]:

- HTO board members expressed their concerns about the harvest restrictions and mentioned they want to collaborate to see the caribou population increase again.
- HTO and community members mentioned the helicopters from mining companies were an important threat to the caribou (scaring them away).
- The wolf population is also an important threat to consider.
- Some of them strongly believed the caribou will come back on their own. They migrate long distance and undergo natural cycles of population density.

Coral Harbour:

- Community members were concerned about the mining activity and identified industry as one of the main threats to caribou.
- Community members identified climate change as an on-going threat to caribou.
- Several community members believe caribou undergo natural cycles of population density. When populations are too abundant the numbers drop, but increase again when vegetation grows back.
- Community members expressed interest in knowing current local caribou numbers, particularly on Coats Island.
- The lag time between caribou surveys and results is too long. The community members would like to be informed of the health of the herds more quickly, so they can better manage their harvest.
- Community members expressed interest in knowing how caribou herds across Canada were doing, and how they were being managed.

Cape Dorset:

- Community members questioned the accuracy of the range of Barren-ground caribou herds shown on the maps
- Community members weren't sure that caribou populations will cycle up and down as they have in the past because of all the things that have changes
- Community members were concerned about the affect of the mines on caribou and want to find ways to protect the caribou from mining. Critical habitat is one way to protect habitat for caribou.
- Community members were concerned about predation from wolves, and suggested wolf control
- Community members were concerned about harassment of caribou by helicopters and airplanes
- Some community members though that caribou are not threatened, and have just moved to another area
- Community members were concerned that caribou are not surveyed often enough
- Community members spoke about the importance of using Inuit Qaujimagungit
- Community members were concerned about the possible impact that listing caribou might have on harvesting

Kimmirut:

- HTO members expressed strong concern regarding the listing of all Barren-ground caribou herds as one. They believe South Baffin and North Baffin populations should be considered separately.
- Several HTO and community members do not believe the South Baffin population is in decline.
- Several HTO and community members believe caribou undergo natural cycles of population density. When populations are too abundant the numbers drop, but increase again when vegetation grows back.
- Some community members do believe caribou populations on South Baffin Island are in decline, support the listing, and believe more survey efforts are required.
- Community members expressed concern related to methods used to survey caribou (e.g. helicopter use), and suggest using less intrusive methods.
- Community members identified parasites and wolves as threats, and expressed an interest in better understanding how parasites (e.g. ticks) have arrived and how they impact the caribou.
- HTO and community members expressed concern about their harvest rights and the lack of Inuit participation in the listing process.

Request of the NWMB:

- That NWMB considers whether or not they support the listing of Barren-Ground Caribou as *Threatened* under the federal Species at Risk Act.
- That NWMB provides comments on the potential impacts and benefits of listing Barren-ground caribou under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.



This map shows the different herds that make up the Barren-ground caribou.


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Barren-ground Caribou: Should it be added to the Species at Risk Act?




Photo by A. Gunn

SARA's Purpose:

- Prevent plants & animals from disappearing from Canada
- Help species that aren't doing well

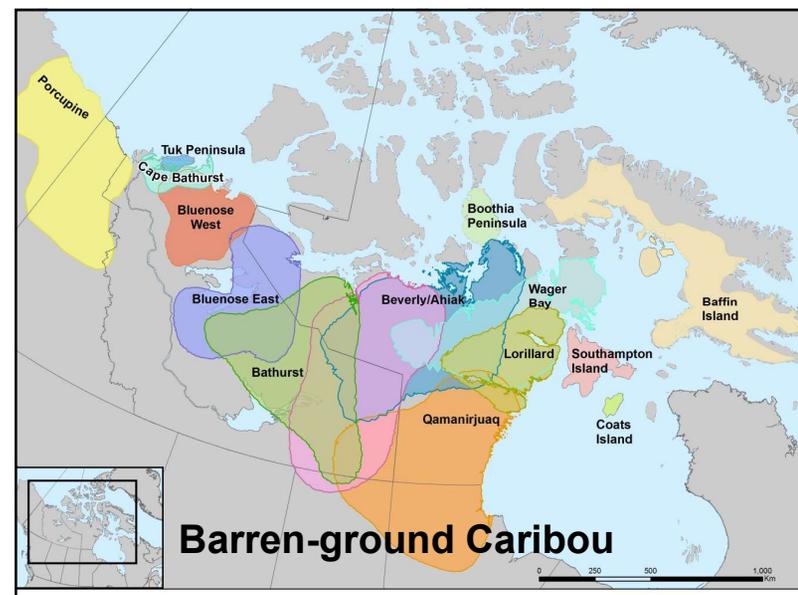
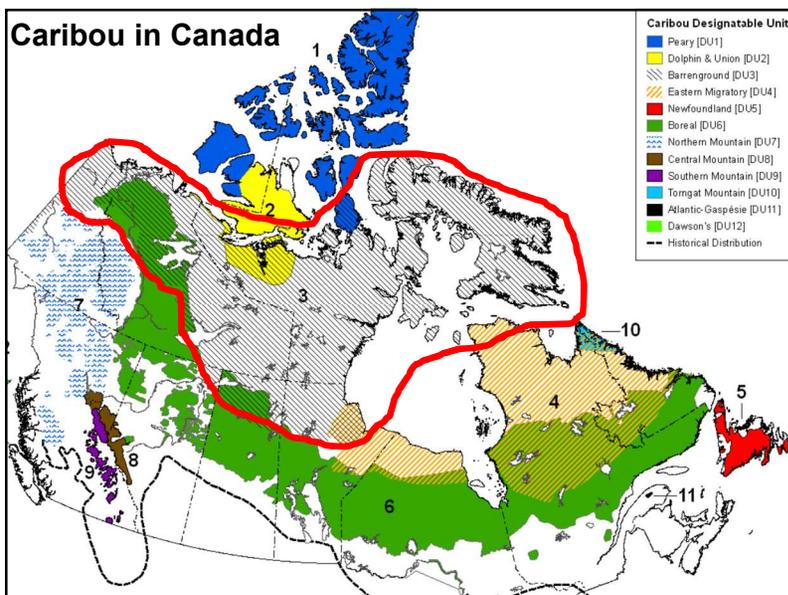
Canadian Wildlife Service, 2018

> Nunavut Agreement takes priority over SARA
 > Inuit subsistence harvest rights are not affected

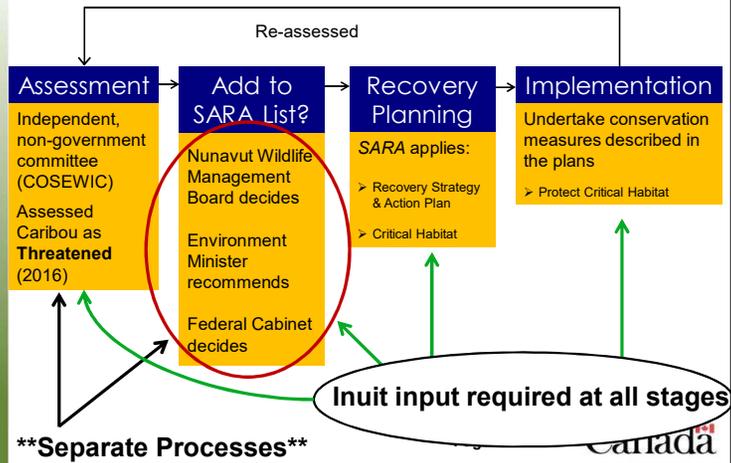



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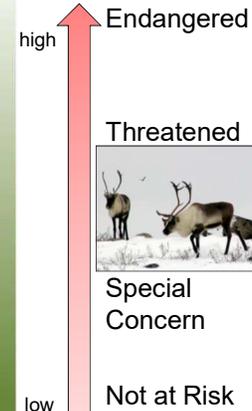
Page 2 



Should Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?



Where do Caribou fit on the SARA scale?



Why did COSEWIC say "Threatened"?

Dramatic declines

- 56% decline over last 3 generations
 - Baffin Island herd suffered worse decline than average
 - Two herds are increasing (Porcupine & Southampton Island)
- Current population ~800,000 (compared to over 2 million in 1990s)
- Despite natural population cycles (highs & lows), COSEWIC could not see signs of recovery for most herds. Caribou facing new threats

Threats include (*not applicable to all herds):

- Climate change → forage availability, predation, parasites & diseases
- Industrial development & Habitat fragmentation (forest fires; humans)
- Pollution
- Over-harvest

What would change if Caribou were added to SARA?



New prohibitions on killing, harming & harassing

- These only apply to non-Inuit people
- Apply only in National Parks, National Wildlife Areas & Migratory Bird Sanctuaries
- Do not apply anywhere else unless Cabinet makes an "order"

What would change if Caribou were added to SARA?



Threatened



Nunavut Agreement takes priority over SARA

- Inuit subsistence harvest rights are not affected
- Any harvest limits would need to follow Nunavut Agreement's decision-making process (Article 5)
- Existing wildlife management bodies & processes remain in place (SARA does not change this)
 - NWMB, HTOs, Regional Wildlife Organizations, Nunavut government

What would change if Caribou were added to SARA?



Threatened



National Recovery Strategy will be required

- Coordinated approach across Canada
 - Needs of each herd can be treated separately
- Developed cooperatively with all key partners
 - Inuit communities, organizations and governments
 - HTOs, WMBs, etc.
 - Territorial governments
- **Critical Habitat** will need to be identified & protected
- Federal funding for species at risk

Consultation on adding Barren-ground Caribou to SARA

- Who?** WMBs, HTOs, Inuit & Indigenous communities, organizations and governments, territorial governments, general public
- When?** Until March 2019
- What?** Should it be listed in SARA?
What are the impacts?
What are the benefits?
Any other information / concerns / comments?
- Why?** Provide input to the Environment Minister, Cabinet & NWMB
- Next steps?** HTO comments provided to NWMB
Environment Minister's recommendation to Cabinet
Cabinet can Accept, Reject or refer back to COSEWIC (2020?)

Summary

Should Barren-ground Caribou be added to the Species at Risk Act?

- ✓ Currently assessed as **Threatened**
- ✓ A recovery strategy and action plan(s) will be developed
- ✓ Nunavut Agreement takes priority over SARA
- ✓ Inuit subsistence harvest rights are **not affected**



Endangered

Threatened

Special Concern

Not at Risk



Questions? Comments?

Please send feedback to:

Dawn Andrews
Canadian Wildlife Service
5019 52nd Street
PO Box 2310
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7
(867) 669-4767
ec.sarnt-lepnt.ec@canada.ca





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Pangnirtung Public Meeting:



Barren-ground Caribou

**Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
*Species at Risk Act***

Monday, December 3rd, 2018

Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Public Meeting



Barren-ground Caribou

Proposed Listing as Threatened under the *Species at Risk Act*

Monday February 26th 2018

Luke Novoligak Community Hall, begins at 7 pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened in January 2018. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a public meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed



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Cape Dorset Meeting for public and HTO



Barren-ground Caribou

Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
Species at Risk Act

Thursday November 8th, 2018

Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Coral Harbour Meeting for Public and HTO



Barren-ground Caribou

**Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
*Species at Risk Act***

Wednesday November 7th, 2018

Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Arctic Bay HTO and Public Meeting:



Barren-ground Caribou

Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
Species at Risk Act

Tuesday October 16th, 2018

Westside Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Clyde River HTO and Public Meeting:



Barren-ground Caribou

Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
Species at Risk Act

Thursday October 18th, 2018

Tuqqajaaq Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Iqaluit Public Meeting:



Barren-ground Caribou

**Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
*Species at Risk Act***

Monday October 22th, 2018

HTO Board room

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

**Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns,
and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.**



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Pond Inlet HTO and Public Meeting: Barren-ground Caribou



Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
Species at Risk Act

Wednesday October 17th, 2018

Atakaalik Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Qikiqtarjuaq Public Meeting:



Barren-ground Caribou

Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
Species at Risk Act

Tuesday October 23rd, 2018

Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Changement climatique Canada

Canada

Hall Beach Public Meeting:



Barren-ground Caribou

**Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
*Species at Risk Act***

Wednesday September 26th, 2018

Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Igloolik Public Meeting:



Barren-ground Caribou

**Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
*Species at Risk Act***

Tuesday September 25th, 2018

Community Hall

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



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Naujaat Public Meeting:



Barren-ground Caribou

**Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
*Species at Risk Act***

Thursday September 27th, 2018

Community Hall

5:30pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened in January 2018. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

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Canada

Public Meeting



Barren-ground Caribou

**Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
*Species at Risk Act***

Tuesday February 26th, 2019

E.W. Lyall Complex Community Hall

7:00 pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened in January 2018. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

**Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns,
and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.**



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Kimmirut Meeting for public and HTO



Barren-ground Caribou

Proposed Listing as Threatened under the
Species at Risk Act

Thursday, January 24rd 2019

Community Hall – Akavak Center

6:00pm

Barren-ground Caribou are proposed to be listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding a meeting to talk about the possible listing of Barren-ground Caribou.

Come and learn about the process, share your ideas and concerns, and find out what it would mean to have the species listed.



Barren-ground Caribou Proposed listing as Threatened

The following questions are intended to assist you in providing comments. They are not limiting and any other comments you may have are welcome. We also encourage you to share descriptions and estimates of costs and benefits where possible.

Questionnaire filled out by:

(Print name / title)

Organization:

Date questionnaire completed:

Have you seen Barren-ground Caribou in your area? Yes No

Do you have enough information to make a decision on your position/opinion on the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act*?

Yes No

If you need more information, someone will contact you to see how best to provide this information

What is your organization's position/opinion on the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened?

- Support the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened
- Do not support the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened
- Indifferent to the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened

What are your reasons for this position?





Do you have any additional comments?

Some points to consider:

- How do Barren-ground Caribou benefit you or the environment? (this can include economic, cultural, spiritual, and environmental benefits)
- Do any of your current or planned activities have the potential to kill, harm or harass Barren-ground Caribou?
- What are you currently doing or what could you do to avoid killing, harming or harassing Barren-ground Caribou?
- What impact do you think that listing Barren-ground Caribou as a wildlife species at risk would have on your activities?
- What impact do you think that listing Barren-ground Caribou as a wildlife species at risk would have on the species?
- Do you have any other information or concerns that the federal Minister of the Environment should consider before making a recommendation on the listing of the species?





Caribou (Barren-ground population)

Photo: © Anne Gunn



Scientific name
Rangifer tarandus

Taxon
Mammals

COSEWIC Status
Threatened

Canadian range
Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Alberta,
Saskatchewan, Manitoba

Reason for Designation

Members of this population give birth on the open arctic tundra, and most subpopulations (herds) winter in vast subarctic forests. Well-known for its large aggregations, lengthy migrations, and significant cultural and social value to northern Aboriginal Peoples and other Canadians, its 14-15 subpopulations range from northeastern Alaska to western Hudson Bay and Baffin Island. Numbering more than 2 million individuals in the early 1990s, the current population is estimated at about 800,000. Most subpopulations have declined dramatically, but two are increasing, including the Porcupine Caribou Herd. For 70% of the population with sufficient data to quantify trends, the decline is estimated at 56% over the past three generations (since 1989), with several of the largest herds having declined by >80% from peak numbers. Available survey data for an additional 25% of the total population also indicate

declines. Evidence from both local Aboriginal people and scientific studies suggests that most herds have undergone natural fluctuations in numbers in the past; however, available demographic data indicate no sign of rapid recovery at this time and cumulative threats are without historical precedent. Status meets criteria for Endangered because of a reduction in numbers of $\geq 50\%$, but Threatened is recommended because, overall, this population does not appear to be facing imminent extinction at this time. Despite worrisome declines across most of the range, the current numerical abundance of the Porcupine Caribou Herd and the initiation of numerous management actions by governments, wildlife management boards, and communities support Threatened as a more appropriate conservation status. The status of these subpopulations will have to be carefully monitored and may warrant re-assessment within five years.

Wildlife Species Description and Significance

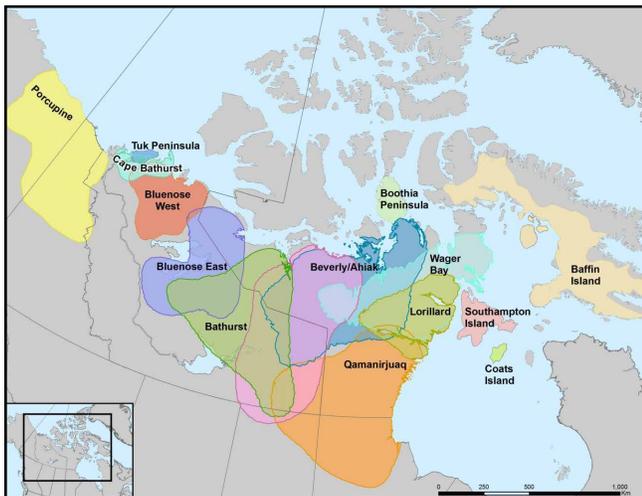
All the world's caribou and reindeer belong to a single cervid species, *Rangifer tarandus*, and are found in arctic and subarctic regions as well as in northern forests. Barren-ground Caribou are characterized by long migrations and highly gregarious behaviour, often travelling in groups of hundreds or thousands. As a relatively large herbivore with an extensive distribution and high numbers, Barren-ground Caribou is a keystone species, playing a key ecological and cultural role in northern ecosystems.

The significance of Barren-ground Caribou to the peopling of northern Canada is evident from archaeological findings tracking the distribution of people and Barren-ground Caribou relative to the retreating glaciers some 8,000 years ago in the central barrens and as long as 12-15,000 years ago in the central range of the Porcupine subpopulation. Barren-ground Caribou have been and continue to be a key resource for people in northern Canada; in some cases these animals have such importance that families would follow their migration. They have significant direct economic value from harvest, primarily for subsistence use. They also contribute to the northern economy through wildlife tourism and recreational hunting; beyond this, they have incalculable cultural value for people throughout the subpopulation ranges.

Distribution

The global range of Barren-ground Caribou extends from Alaska to western Greenland, and is continuous across northern continental mainland Canada, from northwestern Yukon to Baffin Island. The northern extent is the Arctic mainland coast; the southern extent is northern Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. Sampling efforts and methods have varied among subpopulations, leading to differences in interpreting subpopulation structure; 14-15 are recognized in this report. Some are combined for the purposes of generating population abundance and trend estimates, for a total of 13 units. Ten subpopulations have been consistently identified for the past several decades, mainly through fidelity to calving areas.

Fluctuating abundance of individual subpopulations affects distribution; as Barren-ground Caribou decline in abundance their distribution (especially during winter) changes, reducing the length of fall and pre-calving migration. Mainland subpopulations of Barren-ground Caribou generally migrate toward the Arctic coast to calve, and occur during summer and fall on the tundra of the Southern Arctic ecozone. Western and central mainland subpopulations usually winter in the boreal forests of the Taiga Cordillera, Taiga Plains or Taiga Shield ecozones.



Distribution of Caribou subpopulations in the Barren-ground Caribou designatable unit. Map by Bonnie Fournier, GNWT.

Habitat

Habitat requirements are partly driven by the need for forage, which depends on the timing of the caribou's annual breeding cycle and its nutritional costs relative to the brief plant growing season and long winters of the sub-arctic and arctic regions. Caribou are generalist foragers, especially in summer, and select among grasses, sedges, shrubs and forbs for nutrient content according to the stage of plant growth rather than plant species. Barren-ground Caribou require large annual ranges (several hundred thousand square kilometres in size) to enable selection of alternative habitats in response to annual variations in the environment, such as snow cover, plant growth, and/or predation or parasite risk. Habitat attributes that are important for calving include those that reduce predation risk and maximize nutrition intake; these vary among calving grounds. Forage requirements depend on the timing of the annual breeding cycle relative to the brief plant growing season and long winter that is characteristic of the sub-arctic and arctic regions. On summer ranges, caribou seek habitats that reduce exposure to insect harassment, while obtaining high-quality forage. While most subpopulations winter in the boreal forest, several remain in tundra habitats at that time.

Within the previous three generations, there has been some reduction in habitat as a consequence of the natural fragmentation of the winter ranges caused by forest fires and increasing human presence (i.e., infrastructure) on the caribou ranges. However, habitat outside the forested winter range is still largely intact at the landscape scale. The generally increasing trends in human population will increase economic development (industrial development, roads and traffic) within Barren-ground Caribou ranges in the future.

Biology

Caribou usually first calve at three years of age, although they can calve at two years when conditions are favourable. Females give birth to a single calf and may breed every year, although if nutritionally stressed they do not conceive every year. Calving is highly synchronized, generally occurring over a 2-week period in June. The breeding system is polygynous. Annual migrations and gregarious behaviour are the most conspicuous characteristics of most Barren-ground Caribou subpopulations. They are adapted to a long winter season when

cold temperatures, wind chill and snow impose high energetic costs. Those costs are met through reducing their maintenance energy requirements and mobilizing fat and protein reserves.

Predation is an important factor affecting many facets of caribou ecology, as caribou movements and habitat choices are often made to minimize exposure to predators. An array of predators and scavengers depend on Barren-ground Caribou: Grizzly Bears (*Ursus arctos*) are effective predators on newborn calves, while Gray Wolves (*Canis lupus*, hereafter referred as Wolves) are predators of all sex and age classes throughout the year. Pathogens (including viruses, bacteria, helminths and protozoa) together with insects, play an important role in caribou ecology with effects ranging from subtle effects on reproduction through to clinical disease and death.

Population Sizes and Trends

The current population of Barren-ground Caribou is estimated at about 800,000 individuals. Between 1986 and mid-1990s, the overall trend was an increase to > two million, followed by a decline, which has persisted through today. Of 13 subpopulation units used to derive abundance estimates, eight are declining, two are increasing, and three are unknown. The median three-generation percentage decline in the total number of Barren-ground Caribou was 56.8% (range = -50.8 – -59.0%), based on the summed population change for seven subpopulations with sufficient survey data, which comprise almost 70% of the total current population. Four of these seven subpopulations declined by >80% during this period, one had a median decline of -39%, characterized by marked variability, whereas the remaining two increased. Available survey data for three additional subpopulations, representing about 25% of the total population, also suggest declines; the current trajectories of another three subpopulations are unknown, due to lack of recent surveys.

Evidence from ATK and scientific study suggests that Barren-ground Caribou subpopulations undergo periods of high and low numbers (fluctuations) that might resemble population cycles. The evidence is, however, insufficient to consistently infer a naturally occurring cyclic increase across the full range of subpopulations. Available demographic data, cumulative changes to the environment, habitats, and harvest regimes for many of these subpopulations are without historical precedent, such that it would

be risky to assume there will be a naturally occurring recovery, at least to numbers recorded in the 1990s, for many of the subpopulations.

Threats and Limiting Factors

Climate and weather influence other limiting factors important for Barren-ground Caribou, including forage availability, predation, parasites and diseases – in complex non-linear and cascading ways. So many aspects of caribou ecology are affected by weather that a warmer climate could have a significant but complicated suite of positive and negative effects.

Industrial exploration and development in Barren-ground Caribou ranges has increased over the past several decades, such that there are several new mines and hundreds of prospecting permits, mineral claims and mineral leases on several subpopulation ranges. Subsistence and sport harvest can be significant causes of mortality that can increase the rate of decline and lead to a lower population size after populations have been reduced for other reasons. Chemical contaminant levels in tissues are generally low at present. The changing conditions on the caribou ranges also include the administrative and political complexity of a mix of settled and unsettled land claims, with changes in jurisdictional boundaries and mandates. The implementation of management actions is challenged by the inter-jurisdictional complexity between political, land management and wildlife management agencies, combined with the migratory nature of caribou and their use of extensive seasonal ranges.

Protection, Status, and Ranks

Protection of Barren-ground Caribou subpopulations by territorial and provincial jurisdictions is through harvest regulation and habitat protection. The co-management regime is a shared management responsibility among governments and bodies established through land claim legislation and through renewable multi-jurisdictional agreements among public governments (for the Porcupine, Beverly and Qamanirjuaq subpopulations). The Porcupine Caribou subpopulation is the only subpopulation of Barren-ground Caribou covered by an international agreement signed between Canada and the United States in 1987. The Barren-ground Caribou designatable unit (DU) was assessed for the first time by COSEWIC as Threatened in November 2016. It is currently not scheduled under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). The 2015 national general

status for Caribou in Canada will not be available until the 2015 General Status Report is published August 2017. This Canada-wide rank will apply to all DUs of Caribou combined, with nothing specific to Barren-ground Caribou. The 2015 territorial rank for Yukon for Barren-ground Caribou is Vulnerable to Apparently Secure, and for Northwest Territories is Sensitive. At present, there is no specific rank for Barren-ground Caribou for Nunavut; however, for all DUs combined, the territory-specific general status rank for Caribou in Nunavut is Apparently Secure. Federal protected areas that exclude industrial land uses but allow continued subsistence hunting cover about 6% of Barren-ground Caribou ranges, including eight national parks.

Source: COSEWIC. 2016. COSEWIC assessment and status report on the Caribou *Rangifer tarandus*, Barren-ground population, in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. xiii + 123 pp.

For more information, please visit
www.sararegistry.gc.ca.

Cat. No.: **CW69-14/727-2016-1E-PDF**
ISBN: **978-0-660-07300-2**

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BARREN-GROUND CARIBOU IN CANADA

Proposed Listing as Threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act*

Should Barren-ground caribou be added to the Federal List of Species at Risk as a Threatened species?

Scientific Name: *Rangifer tarandus*

Description:

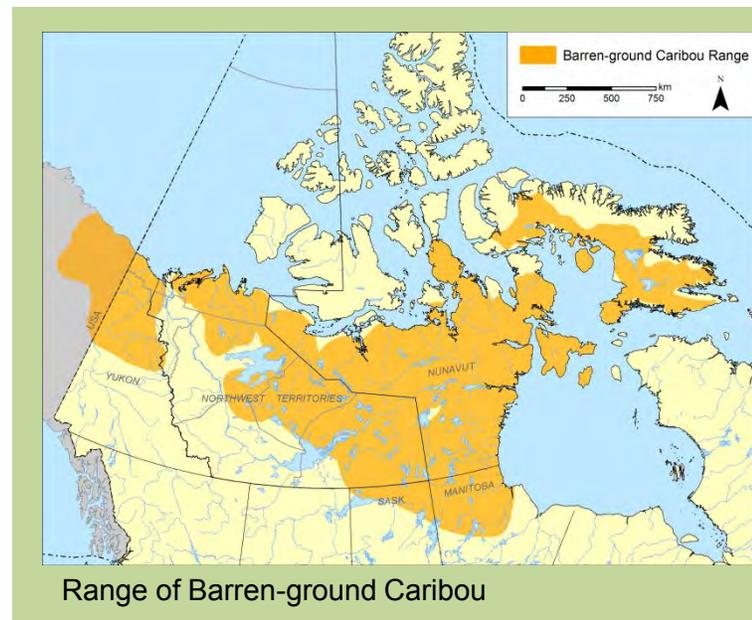
Barren-ground caribou are a medium sized caribou with dark brown legs and backs. They have a distinctive brown and white coat pattern in the fall. They are shorter than Boreal caribou and have longer legs than Peary caribou or Dolphin and Union caribou.



Photo © A. Gunn

Barren-ground caribou travel in huge groups and require large annual ranges to accommodate their long seasonal migrations.

Barren-ground caribou are widespread across northern Canada and into Alaska.



Assessment:

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed Barren-ground caribou as Threatened in November 2016. A Threatened species is a wildlife species that is likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.

Most of the Barren-ground caribou herds have declined dramatically. Overall, the decline is estimated at 56% over the past three generations. The Porcupine and Southampton caribou herds are some of few exceptions to this trend and are increasing. There are currently around 800,000 Barren-ground caribou, down from over 2 million in the early 1990s.

Four of the seven subpopulations (Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-East, Bluenose-West and Bathurst) have declined by > 80% in the past 3 generations. Available information for the Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula, Baffin and Beverly-Ahiak herds also indicate declines. The overall decline of the species is so drastic that it could have been assessed as Endangered. However, COSEWIC has recommended the Threatened status.

Threats:

A number of threats are thought to be causing the decline of Barren-ground caribou:

- Climate and weather changes affecting forage availability, predation, parasites and diseases
- Industrial exploration and development
- Fragmentation of habitat in winter range from forest fires and increasing human presence
- Subsistence and sport harvest can be significant causes of mortality

What Happens if Barren-ground Caribou are Listed as Threatened?

If Barren-ground caribou are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* a national recovery strategy will be written that identifies the threats to the species and its habitat, and sets population and distribution objectives for the survival and recovery of the species. The national recovery strategy will identify critical habitat to the extent possible. After critical habitat is identified, CWS will work with partners to find the best method to protect the habitat from activities that would destroy it. Prohibitions against killing or harming Barren-ground caribou will automatically come into force if the species is listed. In the territories, these automatic prohibitions only apply on federal lands that are under the authority of

the Minister of the Environment or the Parks Canada Agency, such as National Parks and National Wildlife Areas. As well, these automatic prohibitions do not apply to people engaging in activities in accordance with conservation measures under a land claims agreement.

We want to hear from you!

- Should Barren-ground caribou be added to the federal list of Species at Risk as a Threatened species? Why or why not?
- How do Barren-ground caribou benefit you or the environment? (this can include economic, cultural, spiritual, and environmental benefits)
- Do any of your current or planned activities have the potential to kill, harm or harass Barren-ground caribou?
- What are you currently doing or what could you do to avoid killing, harming or harassing Barren-ground caribou?
- What impact do you think that listing Barren-ground caribou as a wildlife species at risk would have on your activities?
- What impact do you think that listing Barren-ground caribou as a wildlife species at risk would have on the species?
- Do you have any other information or concerns that the federal Minister of the Environment should consider before making a decision on the listing of the species?

To tell us your views or for more information, please contact:

Species at Risk
Canadian Wildlife Service, Northern Region
Environment and Climate Change Canada
PO Box 2310
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7
Tel: 867-669-4710 Fax: 867-873-6776
Email: ec.sarnt-lepnt.ec@canada.ca

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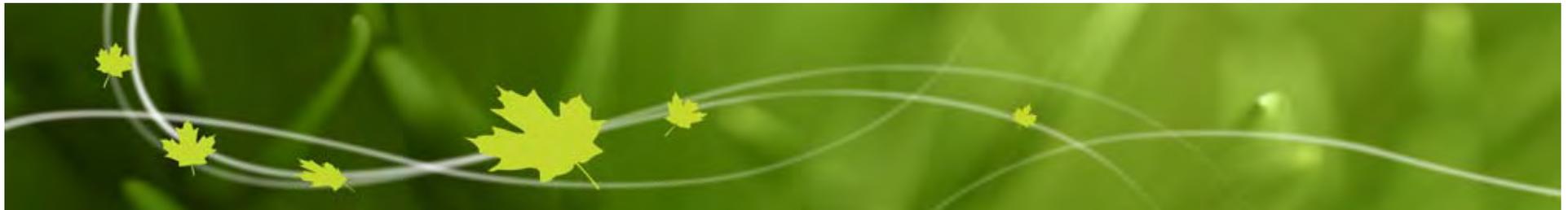
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Barren-ground Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*)



Photo by A. Gunn



Proposed Listing as Threatened
under the federal *Species at Risk Act*

Species at Risk Program
Canadian Wildlife Service
2017

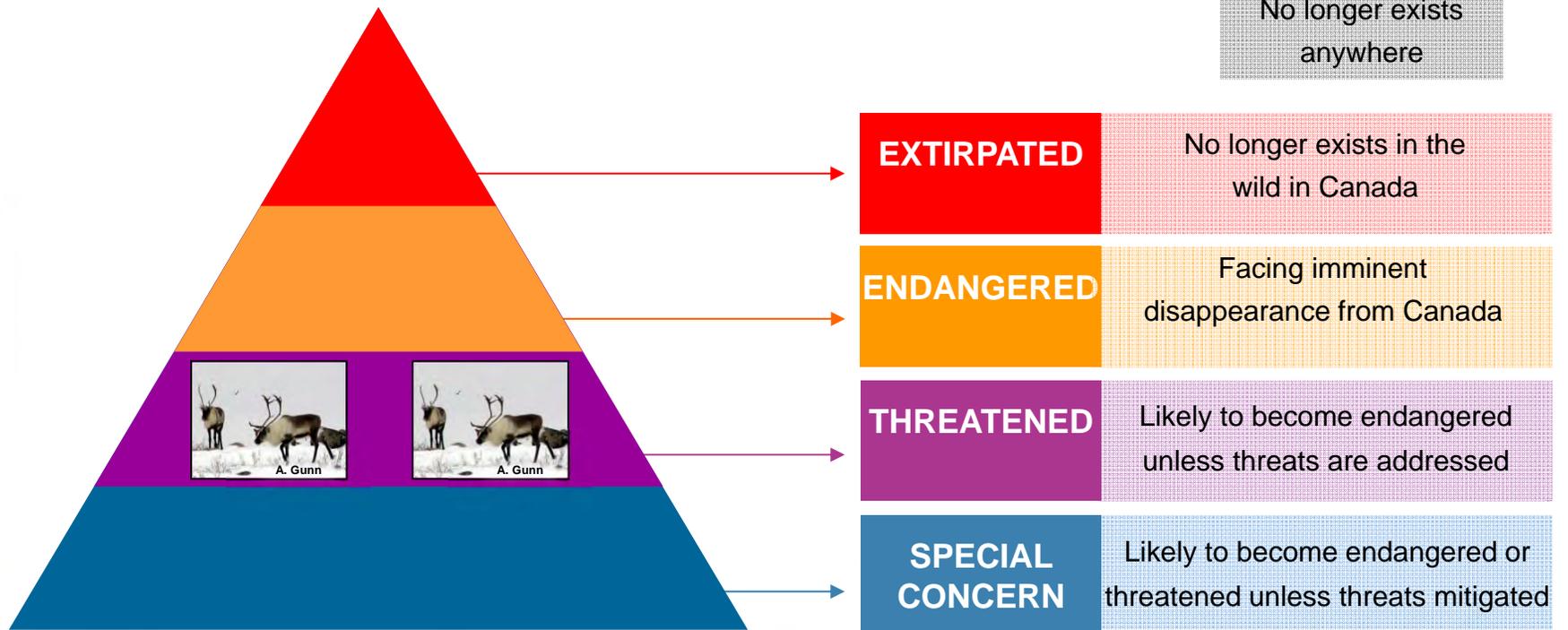


Species at Risk Act (SARA)

What is a “species at risk”?

- Plants and animals that are in danger of disappearing from the wild in Canada

Different levels of “at risk”





Species at Risk Act (SARA)

A national approach is needed for conservation of species that may be at risk of extinction in Canada

Purpose of SARA

- Prevent wildlife from becoming extirpated or extinct in Canada
- Provide for the recovery of extirpated, endangered or threatened species
- Manage special concern species to prevent them from becoming further at risk





COSEWIC Assessment Process



- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) is an independent advisory panel

Species Selected

- Knowledge, information and available data gathered
- Draft report written

Draft Report Reviewed

- Drafts are sent to partners (eg. WMBs) for review and comment
- 3 comment/review periods
- Last period includes a proposed risk status

COSEWIC Decision

- Meetings twice per year
- Discussion and debate proposed risk status
- Vote on risk status

Final report and assessment

- Given to Minister of Environment
- Released to public

**ECCC
Process
Begins**

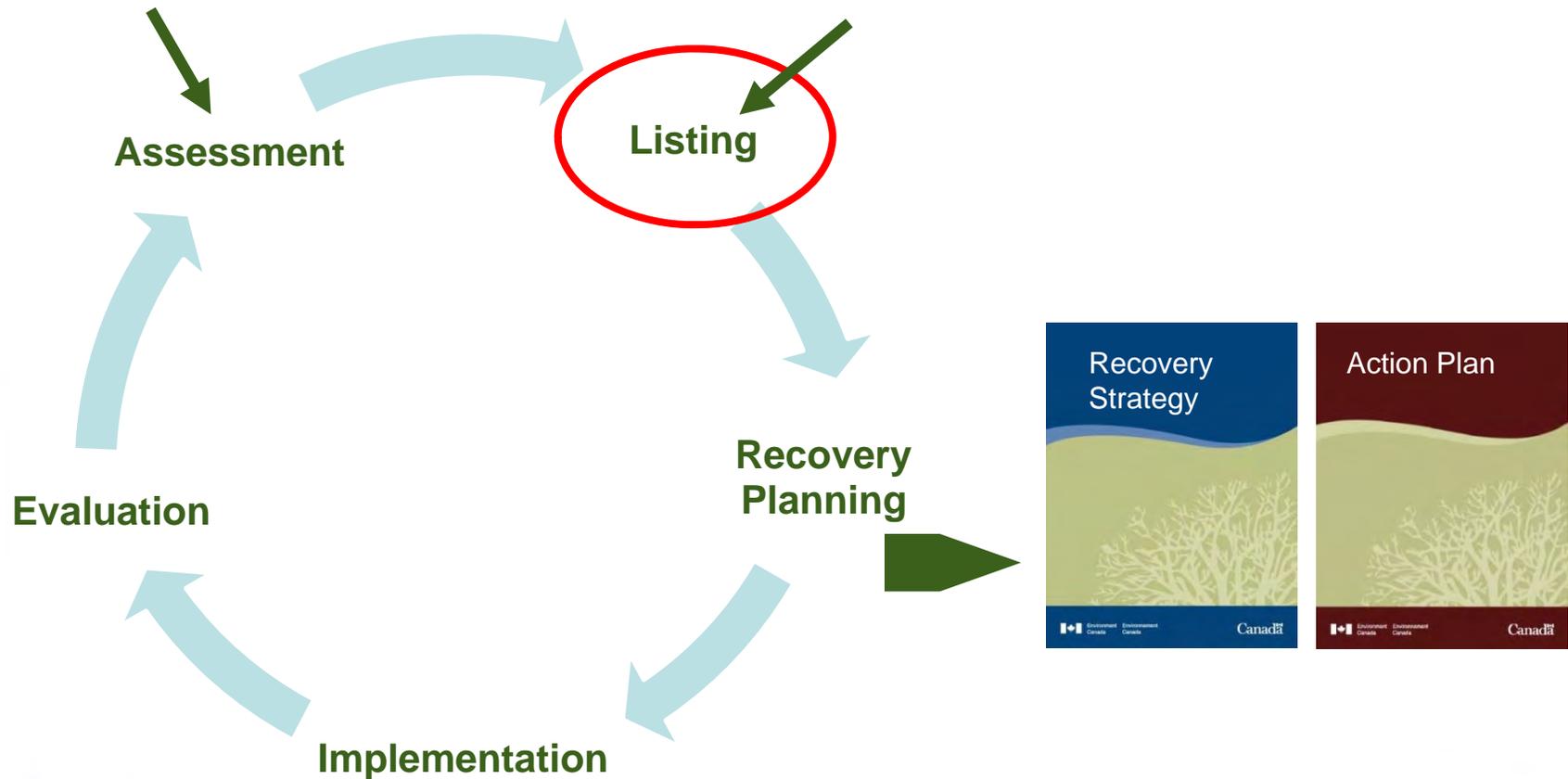




Federal *Species at Risk Act (SARA)* Process – Barren-ground Caribou

*COSEWIC assessed as
Threatened (2016)*

*ECCC consultations on the
proposed listing under SARA*





Essential Role of Indigenous Peoples

- The *Species at Risk Act* recognizes that the roles of Indigenous peoples and Wildlife Management Boards established under land claims agreements in the conservation of wildlife in Canada are essential
- Caribou ATK Source Report and the Caribou ATK Assessment Report
- The *Act* requires:
 - **Consideration of traditional knowledge** in assessment, planning and implementation
 - **Cooperation** with directly affected Indigenous organizations and Wildlife Management Boards when preparing recovery documents
 - **Consultation** with directly affected persons before making decisions that may impact them





Barren-ground Caribou – Description

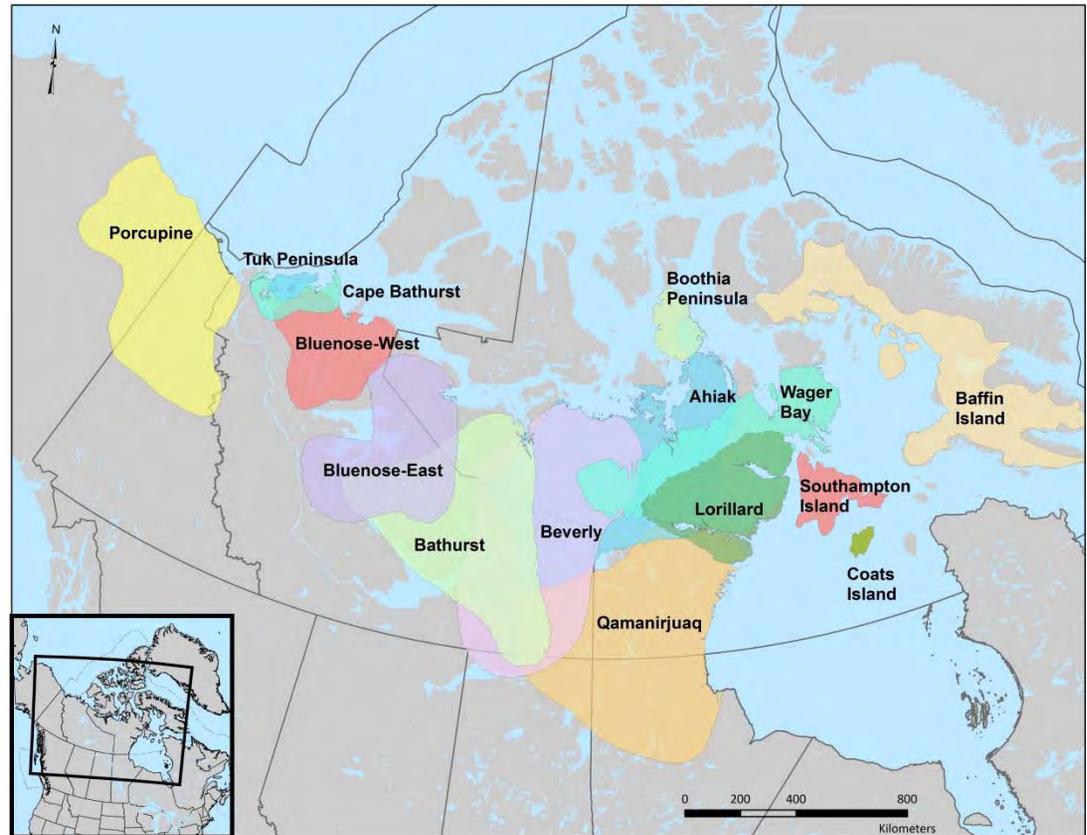
- Medium size
- Longer legs than Peary and Dolphin & Union Caribou; shorter than Boreal Caribou
- Dark brown legs and backs
- Distinctive brown and white coat pattern in the fall





Barren-ground Caribou – Range

- Long migrations
- Travel in huge groups
- Require large annual ranges
- 14-15 herds (or subpopulations) across Canada
- Incalculable cultural value for people throughout the distribution
- Current population estimated at about 800,000 (down from more than 2 million in the early 1990s)



Barren-ground caribou annual ranges by subpopulation. Map by Angus Smith, Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT. 2017.





COSEWIC Assessment



- Assessed nationally by COSEWIC as Threatened in November 2016. This national assessment considers the status of Barren-ground Caribou across their entire Canadian distribution.
 - A Threatened species is a wildlife species that is likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.

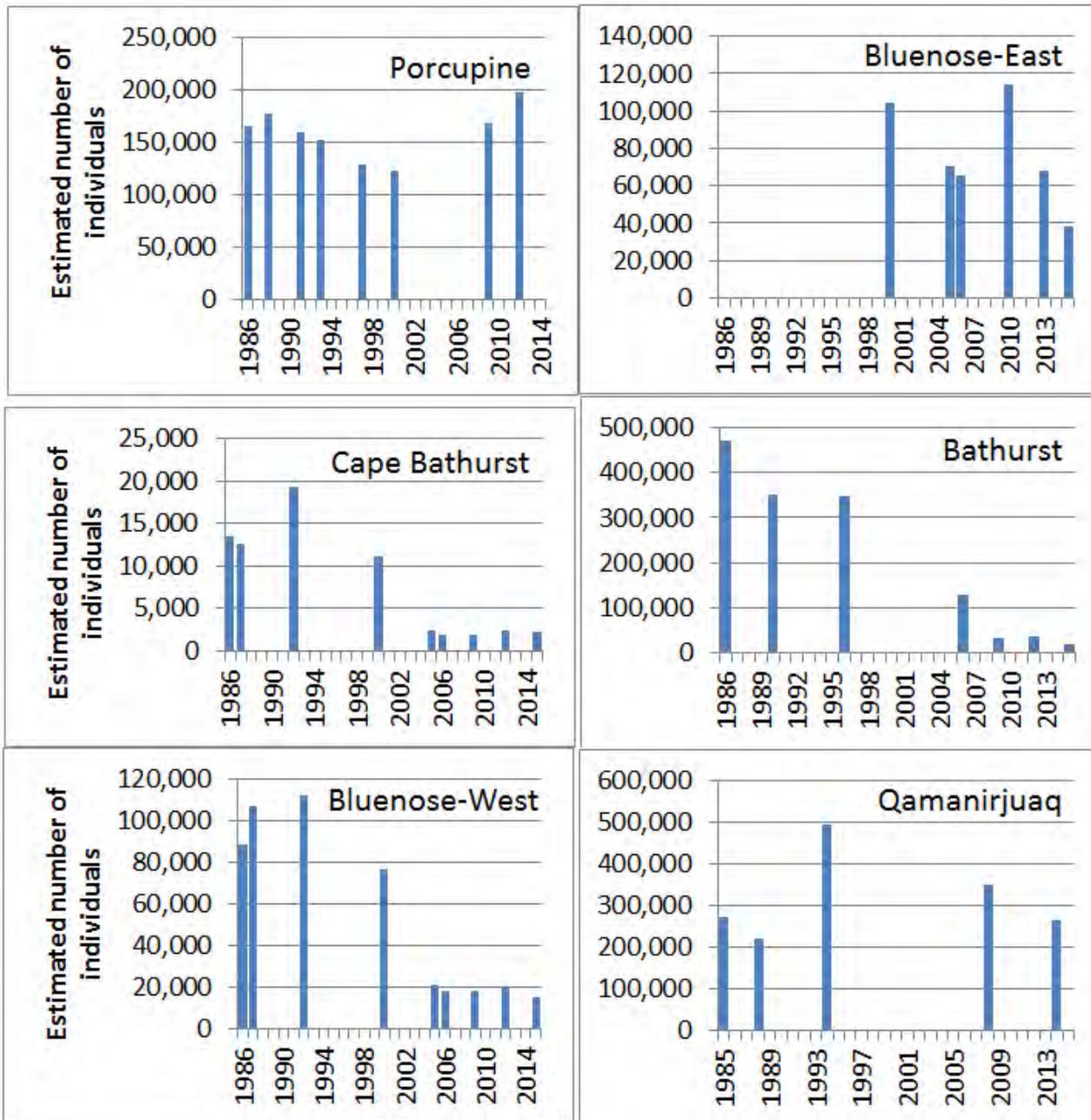




Reason for Designation as Threatened

- **Most herds have declined dramatically**
 - Overall the decline is estimated at 56% over the past three generations of caribou (~27 years)
 - Currently around 800,000 Barren-ground Caribou, down from over 2 million in the early 1990s
 - Two herds are increasing: the Porcupine and Southampton Caribou Herds
 - Recognize that population levels naturally fluctuate, however there is no sign of recovery at this time
- **Meets criteria to be assessed as endangered (>50% decline) but COSEWIC is recommending Threatened status**
 - Recognize the initiation of numerous management actions by governments, wildlife management boards and communities
 - Barren-ground Caribou do not appear to be facing imminent extinction at this time





Available population survey numbers over three generations for six large and well-surveyed Barren-ground Caribou subpopulations, representing approximately 67% of the total population.





Reason for Designation as Threatened

- **Threats:**

- Climate and Weather changes affecting: forage availability, predation, parasites and diseases
- Industrial exploration and development
- Fragmentation of habitat in winter range from forest fires and increasing human presence
- Subsistence and sport harvest can be significant causes of mortality



Lisa Pirie-Dominix





What does it mean if Barren-ground Caribou are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act*?

- Prohibitions against killing or harming Barren-ground Caribou will automatically come into force if the species is listed. However:
 - In the Territories, these automatic prohibitions only apply on federal lands that are under the authority of the Minister of the Environment or the Parks Canada Agency (eg. National Parks and National Wildlife Areas)
 - These automatic prohibitions do not apply to people engaging in activities in accordance with conservation measures under a land claims agreement
 - If any restrictions on harvest are needed under SARA, the Minister of the Environment will consult with impacted WMBs and Indigenous organizations
- Day-to-day management of Barren-ground Caribou will remain the responsibility of governments and co-management boards.





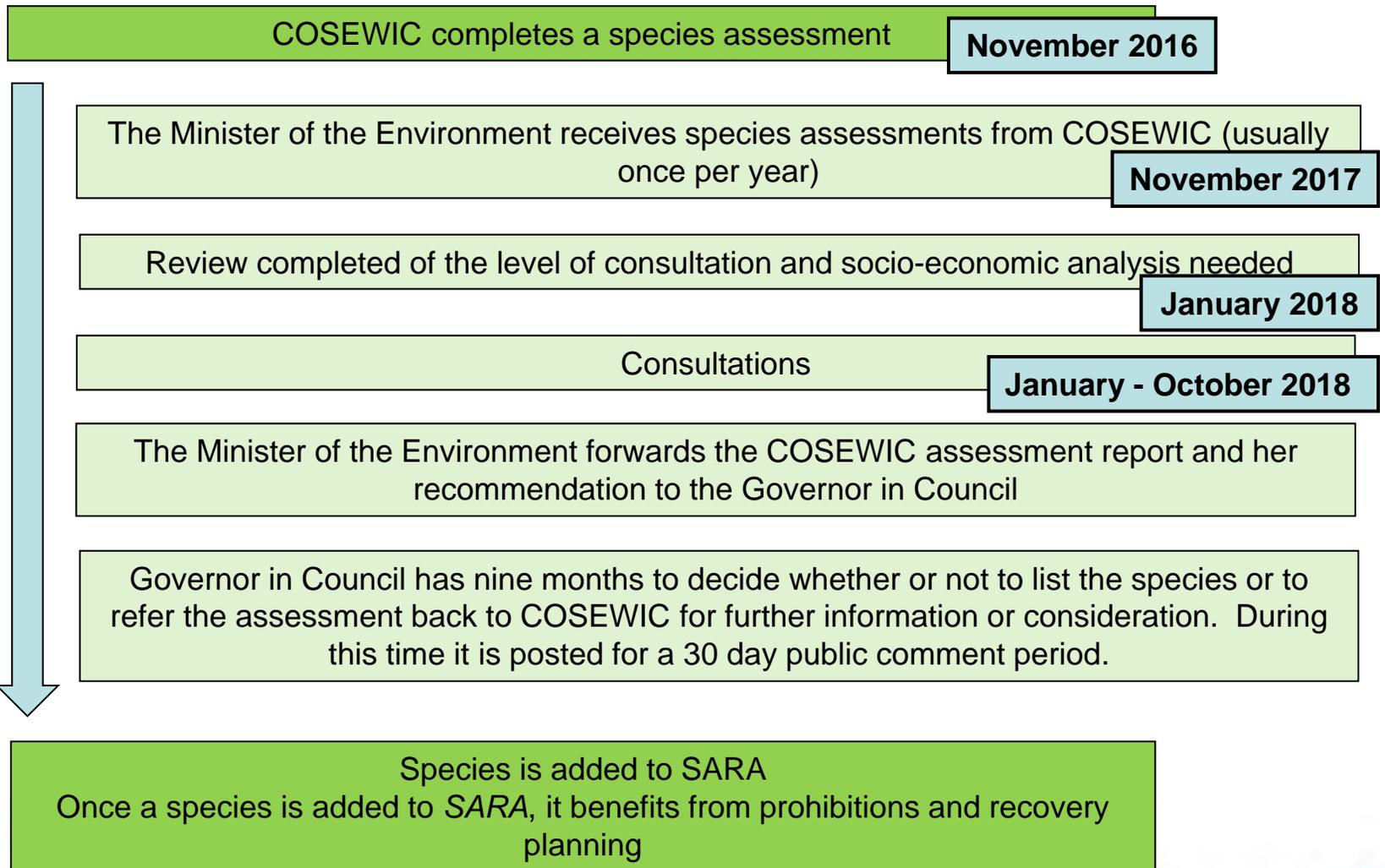
What does it mean if Barren-ground Caribou are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act*?

- A recovery strategy and action plan(s) will be developed for Barren-ground Caribou
 - A recovery strategy is a planning document that:
 - Describes the species and its needs
 - Identifies the threats to the species and its habitat
 - Sets population and distribution objectives for the survival and recovery of the species
 - Provides a nationally consistent standard for conservation of species
 - Prepared in cooperation with Wildlife Management Boards and affected Indigenous organizations
 - Other existing plans can be adopted as part of the recovery strategy
- Critical habitat must be identified to the extent possible
 - Once identified, CWS will work with partners to find the best method to protect critical habitat from activities that would destroy it.





The species listing process under the federal *Species at Risk Act*





Questions to Guide your Comments

- How do Barren-ground Caribou benefit you or the environment? (this can include economic, cultural, spiritual, and environmental benefits)
- Do any of your current or planned activities have the potential to kill, harm or harass Barren-ground Caribou?
- What are you currently doing or what could you do to avoid killing, harming or harassing Barren-ground Caribou?
- What impact do you think that listing Barren-ground Caribou as a wildlife species at risk would have on your activities?
- What impact do you think that listing Barren-ground Caribou as a wildlife species at risk would have on the species?
- Do you have any other information or concerns that the federal Minister of the Environment should consider before making a decision on the listing of the species?

Comments can be added to the questionnaire included in the information package





We want to hear from YOU!

- Consultation with partners on the proposed listing will be held between January and October 2018.
- Your comments and input are very valuable.
- If you would like a telephone call or face-to-face presentation of this material at a board meeting during the consultation period, please let us know by **April 13th, 2018**.
- Please complete the attached questionnaire and return to the Canadian Wildlife Service by **October 22nd 2018**.
 - Email: ec.sarnt-lepnt.ec@canada.ca
 - Fax: 867-873-6776





Caribou (Barren-ground population)

Photo: © Anne Gunn



Scientific name
Rangifer tarandus

Taxon
Mammals

COSEWIC Status
Threatened

Canadian range
Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Alberta,
Saskatchewan, Manitoba

Reason for Designation

Members of this population give birth on the open arctic tundra, and most subpopulations (herds) winter in vast subarctic forests. Well-known for its large aggregations, lengthy migrations, and significant cultural and social value to northern Aboriginal Peoples and other Canadians, its 14-15 subpopulations range from northeastern Alaska to western Hudson Bay and Baffin Island. Numbering more than 2 million individuals in the early 1990s, the current population is estimated at about 800,000. Most subpopulations have declined dramatically, but two are increasing, including the Porcupine Caribou Herd. For 70% of the population with sufficient data to quantify trends, the decline is estimated at 56% over the past three generations (since 1989), with several of the largest herds having declined by >80% from peak numbers. Available survey data for an additional 25% of the total population also indicate

declines. Evidence from both local Aboriginal people and scientific studies suggests that most herds have undergone natural fluctuations in numbers in the past; however, available demographic data indicate no sign of rapid recovery at this time and cumulative threats are without historical precedent. Status meets criteria for Endangered because of a reduction in numbers of $\geq 50\%$, but Threatened is recommended because, overall, this population does not appear to be facing imminent extinction at this time. Despite worrisome declines across most of the range, the current numerical abundance of the Porcupine Caribou Herd and the initiation of numerous management actions by governments, wildlife management boards, and communities support Threatened as a more appropriate conservation status. The status of these subpopulations will have to be carefully monitored and may warrant re-assessment within five years.

Wildlife Species Description and Significance

All the world's caribou and reindeer belong to a single cervid species, *Rangifer tarandus*, and are found in arctic and subarctic regions as well as in northern forests. Barren-ground Caribou are characterized by long migrations and highly gregarious behaviour, often travelling in groups of hundreds or thousands. As a relatively large herbivore with an extensive distribution and high numbers, Barren-ground Caribou is a keystone species, playing a key ecological and cultural role in northern ecosystems.

The significance of Barren-ground Caribou to the peopling of northern Canada is evident from archaeological findings tracking the distribution of people and Barren-ground Caribou relative to the retreating glaciers some 8,000 years ago in the central barrens and as long as 12-15,000 years ago in the central range of the Porcupine subpopulation. Barren-ground Caribou have been and continue to be a key resource for people in northern Canada; in some cases these animals have such importance that families would follow their migration. They have significant direct economic value from harvest, primarily for subsistence use. They also contribute to the northern economy through wildlife tourism and recreational hunting; beyond this, they have incalculable cultural value for people throughout the subpopulation ranges.

Distribution

The global range of Barren-ground Caribou extends from Alaska to western Greenland, and is continuous across northern continental mainland Canada, from northwestern Yukon to Baffin Island. The northern extent is the Arctic mainland coast; the southern extent is northern Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. Sampling efforts and methods have varied among subpopulations, leading to differences in interpreting subpopulation structure; 14-15 are recognized in this report. Some are combined for the purposes of generating population abundance and trend estimates, for a total of 13 units. Ten subpopulations have been consistently identified for the past several decades, mainly through fidelity to calving areas.

Fluctuating abundance of individual subpopulations affects distribution; as Barren-ground Caribou decline in abundance their distribution (especially during winter) changes, reducing the length of fall and pre-calving migration. Mainland subpopulations of Barren-ground Caribou generally migrate toward the Arctic coast to calve, and occur during summer and fall on the tundra of the Southern Arctic ecozone. Western and central mainland subpopulations usually winter in the boreal forests of the Taiga Cordillera, Taiga Plains or Taiga Shield ecozones.



Distribution of Caribou subpopulations in the Barren-Ground Caribou designatable unit. Map by Bonnie Fournier, GNWT.

Habitat

Habitat requirements are partly driven by the need for forage, which depends on the timing of the caribou's annual breeding cycle and its nutritional costs relative to the brief plant growing season and long winters of the sub-arctic and arctic regions. Caribou are generalist foragers, especially in summer, and select among grasses, sedges, shrubs and forbs for nutrient content according to the stage of plant growth rather than plant species. Barren-ground Caribou require large annual ranges (several hundred thousand square kilometres in size) to enable selection of alternative habitats in response to annual variations in the environment, such as snow cover, plant growth, and/or predation or parasite risk. Habitat attributes that are important for calving include those that reduce predation risk and maximize nutrition intake; these vary among calving grounds. Forage requirements depend on the timing of the annual breeding cycle relative to the brief plant growing season and long winter that is characteristic of the sub-arctic and arctic regions. On summer ranges, caribou seek habitats that reduce exposure to insect harassment, while obtaining high-quality forage. While most subpopulations winter in the boreal forest, several remain in tundra habitats at that time.

Within the previous three generations, there has been some reduction in habitat as a consequence of the natural fragmentation of the winter ranges caused by forest fires and increasing human presence (i.e., infrastructure) on the caribou ranges. However, habitat outside the forested winter range is still largely intact at the landscape scale. The generally increasing trends in human population will increase economic development (industrial development, roads and traffic) within Barren-ground Caribou ranges in the future.

Biology

Caribou usually first calve at three years of age, although they can calve at two years when conditions are favourable. Females give birth to a single calf and may breed every year, although if nutritionally stressed they do not conceive every year. Calving is highly synchronized, generally occurring over a 2-week period in June. The breeding system is polygynous. Annual migrations and gregarious behaviour are the most conspicuous characteristics of most Barren-ground Caribou subpopulations. They are adapted to a long winter season when

cold temperatures, wind chill and snow impose high energetic costs. Those costs are met through reducing their maintenance energy requirements and mobilizing fat and protein reserves.

Predation is an important factor affecting many facets of caribou ecology, as caribou movements and habitat choices are often made to minimize exposure to predators. An array of predators and scavengers depend on Barren-ground Caribou: Grizzly Bears (*Ursus arctos*) are effective predators on newborn calves, while Gray Wolves (*Canis lupus*, hereafter referred as Wolves) are predators of all sex and age classes throughout the year. Pathogens (including viruses, bacteria, helminths and protozoa) together with insects, play an important role in caribou ecology with effects ranging from subtle effects on reproduction through to clinical disease and death.

Population Sizes and Trends

The current population of Barren-ground Caribou is estimated at about 800,000 individuals. Between 1986 and mid-1990s, the overall trend was an increase to > two million, followed by a decline, which has persisted through today. Of 13 subpopulation units used to derive abundance estimates, eight are declining, two are increasing, and three are unknown. The median three-generation percentage decline in the total number of Barren-ground Caribou was 56.8% (range = -50.8 – -59.0%), based on the summed population change for seven subpopulations with sufficient survey data, which comprise almost 70% of the total current population. Four of these seven subpopulations declined by >80% during this period, one had a median decline of -39%, characterized by marked variability, whereas the remaining two increased. Available survey data for three additional subpopulations, representing about 25% of the total population, also suggest declines; the current trajectories of another three subpopulations are unknown, due to lack of recent surveys.

Evidence from ATK and scientific study suggests that Barren-ground Caribou subpopulations undergo periods of high and low numbers (fluctuations) that might resemble population cycles. The evidence is, however, insufficient to consistently infer a naturally occurring cyclic increase across the full range of subpopulations. Available demographic data, cumulative changes to the environment, habitats, and harvest regimes for many of these subpopulations are without historical precedent, such that it would

be risky to assume there will be a naturally occurring recovery, at least to numbers recorded in the 1990s, for many of the subpopulations.

Threats and Limiting Factors

Climate and weather influence other limiting factors important for Barren-ground Caribou, including forage availability, predation, parasites and diseases – in complex non-linear and cascading ways. So many aspects of caribou ecology are affected by weather that a warmer climate could have a significant but complicated suite of positive and negative effects.

Industrial exploration and development in Barren-ground Caribou ranges has increased over the past several decades, such that there are several new mines and hundreds of prospecting permits, mineral claims and mineral leases on several subpopulation ranges. Subsistence and sport harvest can be significant causes of mortality that can increase the rate of decline and lead to a lower population size after populations have been reduced for other reasons. Chemical contaminant levels in tissues are generally low at present. The changing conditions on the caribou ranges also include the administrative and political complexity of a mix of settled and unsettled land claims, with changes in jurisdictional boundaries and mandates. The implementation of management actions is challenged by the inter-jurisdictional complexity between political, land management and wildlife management agencies, combined with the migratory nature of caribou and their use of extensive seasonal ranges.

Protection, Status, and Ranks

Protection of Barren-ground Caribou subpopulations by territorial and provincial jurisdictions is through harvest regulation and habitat protection. The co-management regime is a shared management responsibility among governments and bodies established through land claim legislation and through renewable multi-jurisdictional agreements among public governments (for the Porcupine, Beverly and Qamanirjuaq subpopulations). The Porcupine Caribou subpopulation is the only subpopulation of Barren-ground Caribou covered by an international agreement signed between Canada and the United States in 1987. The Barren-ground Caribou designatable unit (DU) was assessed for the first time by COSEWIC as Threatened in November 2016. It is currently not scheduled under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). The 2015 national general

status for Caribou in Canada will not be available until the 2015 General Status Report is published August 2017. This Canada-wide rank will apply to all DUs of Caribou combined, with nothing specific to Barren-ground Caribou. The 2015 territorial rank for Yukon for Barren-ground Caribou is Vulnerable to Apparently Secure, and for Northwest Territories is Sensitive. At present, there is no specific rank for Barren-ground Caribou for Nunavut; however, for all DUs combined, the territory-specific general status rank for Caribou in Nunavut is Apparently Secure. Federal protected areas that exclude industrial land uses but allow continued subsistence hunting cover about 6% of Barren-ground Caribou ranges, including eight national parks.

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Cat. No.: **CW69-14/727-2016-1E-PDF**
ISBN: **978-0-660-07300-2**

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CONSULTATION ON AMENDING THE LIST OF
SPECIES UNDER THE ***SPECIES AT RISK ACT***
TERRESTRIAL SPECIES – JANUARY 2018

PRINT

ISSN: 1713-0948

Cat. No.: En1-36

PDF

Cat. No.: En1-36E-PDF

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CONSULTATION ON AMENDING
THE LIST OF SPECIES UNDER
THE ***SPECIES AT RISK ACT***
TERRESTRIAL SPECIES

JANUARY 2018

Please submit your comments by

May 22, 2018, for terrestrial species undergoing **normal** consultations

and by

October 22, 2018, for terrestrial species undergoing **extended** consultations.

For a description of the consultation paths these species will undergo, please see:

www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=8CF7461F-1

Please email your comments to the Species at Risk Public Registry at:

ec.registrelep-sararegistry.ec@canada.ca

Comments may also be mailed to:

Director General, Assessment and Regulatory Affairs

Canadian Wildlife Service

Environment and Climate Change Canada

Ottawa ON K1A 0H3

For more information on the *Species at Risk Act*, please visit the Species at Risk Public Registry at:

www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADDITION OF SPECIES TO THE <i>SPECIES AT RISK ACT</i>	4
Questions to guide your comments.....	4
The <i>Species at Risk Act</i> and the List of Wildlife Species at Risk.....	5
COSEWIC and the assessment process for identifying species at risk	5
Terms used to define the degree of risk to a species	6
Terrestrial and aquatic species eligible for Schedule 1 amendments.....	6
Comments solicited on the proposed amendment of Schedule 1	6
THE <i>SPECIES AT RISK ACT</i> LISTING PROCESS AND CONSULTATION	6
The purpose of consultations on amendments to the List	6
Figure 1 : The species listing process under SARA.....	7
Legislative context of the consultations: the Minister’s recommendation to the Governor in Council	8
The Minister of the Environment’s response to the COSEWIC assessment: the response statement.....	8
Normal and extended consultation periods.....	8
Who is consulted, and how	8
Role and impact of public consultations in the listing process	9
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ADDITION OF A SPECIES TO SCHEDULE 1	10
Protection for listed Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species	10
Recovery strategies and action plans for Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species.....	10
Permits and agreements.....	11
Protection for listed species of Special Concern.....	11
Management plans for species of Special Concern.....	11
THE LIST OF SPECIES ELIGIBLE FOR AN AMENDMENT TO SCHEDULE 1	12
Status of the recently assessed species and consultation paths.....	12
Providing comments.....	12
Table 1 : Terrestrial species recently assessed by COSEWIC eligible for addition to Schedule 1 or reclassification.....	13
Table 2 : Terrestrial species recently reassessed by COSEWIC (no consultations – species status confirmation).....	14
THE COSEWIC SUMMARIES OF TERRESTRIAL SPECIES ELIGIBLE FOR ADDITION OR RECLASSIFICATION ON SCHEDULE 1	15
GLOSSARY	16

ADDITION OF SPECIES TO THE *SPECIES AT RISK ACT*

Questions to guide your comments

The following questions are intended to assist you in providing comments on the proposed amendments to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk (see Table 1 for the list of species under consultation). They are not limiting, and any other comments you may have are welcome. We also encourage you to share descriptions and estimates of costs or benefits to you or your organization where possible, as well as to propose actions that could be taken for the conservation of these species.

Respondent information

- 1) Are you responding as
 - a) an individual, or
 - b) representing a community, business or organization (please specify)?

Species benefits to people or to the ecosystem

- 2) Do any or all of the species provide benefits to you or Canada's ecosystems? If so, please describe these benefits. If possible, please provide a monetary or quantitative estimate of their values to you.

For example:

- Do any or all of the species provide benefits by supporting your livelihood, for example, through harvesting, subsistence or medicine? If yes, can you estimate the extent of these benefits, for example, how often the harvest takes place, the quantity harvested, and the uses of the harvested species (e.g., medicine, food, clothes, etc.)?
- Do any or all of the species provide cultural or spiritual benefits, for example, recreation, sense of place or tradition? If yes, how?
- Do any or all of the species provide environmental benefits, for example, pollination, pest control or flood control? If yes, how?

Impacts of species listing on your activities and the ecosystem

- 3) Based on what you know about SARA and the information presented in this document, do you think that amending the List of Wildlife Species at Risk with the proposed listing (Table 1) would have:

- a) no impact on your activities or the species;
- b) a positive impact on your activities or the species; or
- c) a negative impact on your activities or the species.

Please explain your choice above, specifically:

- 4) Do you think that listing the species would result in cultural, social, or economic costs or benefits to you, your community or your organization?
- 5) Do you think that listing the species would result in any costs or benefits to the environment or Canada's ecosystems?
- 6) Based on the maps provided in this document, do any of your current or planned activities overlap with any of the species ranges or occurrences?
- 7) Do any current or planned activities that you are aware of (e.g., land conversion for natural resource, industrial, commercial, or residential development) have the potential to kill, harm, or harass the species and/or destroy any part of its habitat?
 - If yes, what are these activities, how would they affect the species, and/or destroy any part of its habitat?
 - If yes, what is being done, planned to be done, or could be done to avoid killing, harming, or harassing the species, or destroying its habitat? Please describe what implications and/or costs may be involved (qualitative or quantitative). Would you personally have to adjust or cease any activities?

Additional information for small businesses

If you are responding for a **small business**, please provide the following details to help Environment and Climate Change Canada gather information to contribute to the required Small Business Lens analysis that forms part of the Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement that will accompany any future listing recommendation.

1. Are you an enterprise that operates in Canada?
2. Do you engage in commercial activities related to the supply of services or property (which includes goods)?

3. Are you an organization that engages in activities for a public purpose (e.g., social welfare or civic improvement), such as a provincial or municipal government, school, college/university, hospital or charity?
4. Is your enterprise owned by a First Nations community?
5. How many employees do you have?
 - a) 0–99
 - b) 100 or more
6. What was your annual gross revenue in the last year?
 - a) Less than \$30,000
 - b) Between \$30,000 and \$5 million
 - c) More than \$5 million

To ensure that your comments are considered in time, they should be submitted before the following deadlines.

For terrestrial species undergoing normal consultations, comments should be submitted by **May 22, 2018**.

For terrestrial species undergoing extended consultations, comments should be submitted by **October 22, 2018**.

To find out which consultation paths these species will undergo (extended or normal), please see: www.registrelp-sararegistry.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=8CF7461F-1

Comments received by these deadlines will be considered in the development of the listing proposal.

Please email your comments to the Species at Risk Public Registry at: ec.registrelp-sararegistry.ec@canada.ca

By regular mail, please address your comments to:

Director General, Assessment and
Regulatory Affairs
Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Ottawa ON K1A 0H3

The *Species at Risk Act* and the List of Wildlife Species at Risk

The Government of Canada is committed to preventing the disappearance of wildlife species at risk from our lands. As part of its strategy for realizing that commitment, on June 5, 2003, the Government of Canada proclaimed the *Species at*

Risk Act (SARA). Attached to the Act is Schedule 1, the list of the species provided for under SARA, also called the List of Wildlife Species at Risk. Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species on Schedule 1 benefit from the protection afforded by the prohibitions and from recovery planning requirements under SARA. Special Concern species benefit from its management planning requirements. Schedule 1 has grown from the original 233 to 555 wildlife species at risk. In 2017, final listing decisions were made for 44 terrestrial species and 15 aquatic species. Of these 59 species, 35 were new additions, sixteen were reclassifications, three had a change made to how they are defined, two were removed from Schedule 1, one was referred back to COSEWIC for further evaluation and two were the object of ‘do not list’ decisions. In 2017, on the recommendation of the Minister of the Environment, the Governor in Council approved listing proposals for 45 wildlife species. It is proposed that 21 species be added to Schedule 1, 11 be reclassified, 12 would have a change made to how they are defined and one would be referred back to COSEWIC for further evaluation. The listing proposals were published in *Canada Gazette*, part I for a 30-day public comment period and final listing decisions for all 45 species are expected by August of 2018.

The complete list of species currently on Schedule 1 can be viewed at: www.registrelp-sararegistry.gc.ca/species/schedules_e.cfm?id=1

Species become eligible for addition to Schedule 1 once they have been assessed as being at risk by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). The decision to add a species to Schedule 1 is made by the Governor in Council further to a recommendation from the Minister of the Environment. The Governor in Council is the formal executive body that gives legal effect to decisions that then have the force of law.

COSEWIC and the assessment process for identifying species at risk

COSEWIC is recognized under SARA as the authority for assessing the status of wildlife species at risk. COSEWIC comprises experts on wildlife species at risk. Its members have backgrounds in the fields of biology, ecology, genetics, Indigenous traditional knowledge and other relevant fields. They come from various communities, including academia, Indigenous organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations.

COSEWIC gives priority to those species more likely to become extinct, and then commissions a status report for the evaluation of the species' status. To be accepted, status reports must be peer-reviewed and approved by a subcommittee of species specialists. In special circumstances, assessments can be done on an emergency basis. When the status report is complete, COSEWIC meets to examine it and discuss the species. COSEWIC then determines whether the species is at risk, and, if so, it then assesses the level of risk and assigns a conservation status.

Terms used to define the degree of risk to a species

The conservation status defines the degree of risk to a species. The terms used under SARA are Extirpated, Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern. Extirpated species are wildlife species that no longer occur in the wild in Canada but still exist elsewhere. Endangered species are wildlife species that are likely to soon become Extirpated or extinct. Threatened species are likely to become Endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to their extirpation or extinction. The term Special Concern is used for wildlife species that may become Threatened or Endangered due to a combination of biological characteristics and threats. Once COSEWIC has assessed a species as Extirpated, Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern, it is eligible for inclusion on Schedule 1.

For more information on COSEWIC, visit: www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/committee-status-endangered-wildlife.html

On October 24, 2017, COSEWIC sent to the Minister of the Environment its newest assessments of species at risk. Environment and Climate Change Canada is now consulting on changes to Schedule 1 to reflect these new designations for these terrestrial species. To see the list of the terrestrial species and their status, please refer to tables 1 and 2.

Terrestrial and aquatic species eligible for Schedule 1 amendments

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans conducts separate consultations for the aquatic species. For more information on the consultations for aquatic species, visit the Fisheries and Oceans Canada website at www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

The Minister of the Environment is conducting the consultations for all other species at risk.

Approximately 67% of the recently assessed terrestrial species at risk also occur in national parks or other lands administered by Parks Canada; Parks Canada shares responsibility for these species with Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Comments solicited on the proposed amendment of Schedule 1

The conservation of wildlife is a joint legal responsibility: one that is shared among the governments of Canada. But biodiversity will not be conserved by governments that act alone. The best way to secure the survival of species at risk and their habitats is through the active participation of all those concerned. SARA recognizes this, and that all Indigenous peoples and Canadians have a role to play in preventing the disappearance of wildlife species from our lands. The Government of Canada is inviting and encouraging you to become involved. One way that you can do so is by sharing your comments concerning the addition or reclassification of these terrestrial species.

Your comments are considered in relation to the potential consequences of whether or not a species is included on Schedule 1, and they are then used to inform the drafting of the Minister's proposed listing recommendations for each of these species.

Questions to guide your comments are included at the beginning of the document.

THE SPECIES AT RISK ACT LISTING PROCESS AND CONSULTATION

The addition of a wildlife species at risk to Schedule 1 of SARA facilitates providing for its protection and conservation. To be effective, the listing process must be transparent and open. The species listing process under SARA is summarized in Figure 1.

The purpose of consultations on amendments to the List

When COSEWIC assesses a wildlife species, it does so solely on the basis of the best available information relevant to the biological status of the species. COSEWIC then submits the assessment to the Minister of the Environment, who considers it when making the listing recommendation to

Figure 1 : The species listing process under SARA



the Governor in Council. The purpose of these consultations is to provide the Minister with a better understanding of the potential social and economic impacts of the proposed change to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk, and of the potential consequences of not adding a species to the List.

Legislative context of the consultations: the Minister's recommendation to the Governor in Council

The comments collected during the consultations inform the Governor in Council's consideration of the Minister's recommendations for listing species at risk. The Minister must recommend one of three courses of action. These are for the Governor in Council to accept the species assessment and modify Schedule 1 accordingly, not to add the species to Schedule 1, or to refer the species assessment back to COSEWIC for its further consideration (Figure 1).

The Minister of the Environment's response to the COSEWIC assessment: the response statement

After COSEWIC has completed its assessment of a species, it provides it to the Minister of the Environment. The Minister of the Environment then has 90 days to post a response on the Species at Risk Public Registry, known as the response statement. The response statement provides information on the scope of any consultations and the timelines for action, to the extent possible. It identifies how long the consultations will be (whether they are "normal" or "extended") by stating when the Minister will forward the assessment to the Governor in Council. Consultations for a group of species are launched with the posting of their response statements.

Normal and extended consultation periods

Normal consultations meet the consultation needs for the listing of most species at risk. They usually take two to three months to complete, while extended consultations may take one year or more.

The extent of consultations needs to be proportional to the expected impact of a listing decision and the time that may be needed to consult. Under some

circumstances, whether or not a species will be included on Schedule 1 could have significant and widespread impacts on the activities of some groups of people. It is essential that such stakeholders have the opportunity to inform the pending decision and, to the extent possible, to provide input on its potential consequences and to share ideas on how best to approach threats to the species. A longer period may also be required to consult appropriately with some groups. For example, consultations can take longer for groups that meet infrequently but that must be engaged on several occasions. For such reasons, extended consultations may be undertaken.

For both normal and extended consultations, once they are complete, the Minister of the Environment forwards the species assessments to the Governor in Council for the government's formal receipt of the assessment. The Governor in Council then has nine months to come to a listing decision.

The consultation paths (normal or extended) for the terrestrial species listed in Table 1 will be announced when the Minister publishes the response statements. These will be posted by **January 22, 2018**, on the Species at Risk Public Registry at: www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=8CF7461F-1

No consultations will be undertaken for those species already on Schedule 1 and for which no change in status is being proposed (Table 2).

Who is consulted, and how

It is most important to consult with those who would be most affected by the proposed changes. There is protection that is immediately in place when a species that is Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened is added to Schedule 1 (for more details, see below, "Protection for listed Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species"). This immediate protection does not apply to species of Special Concern. The nature of protection depends on the type of species, its conservation status, and where the species is found. Environment and Climate Change Canada takes this into account during the consultations; those who may be affected by the impacts of the automatic protections are contacted directly, others are encouraged to contribute through a variety of approaches.

Indigenous peoples known to have species at risk on their lands, for which changes to Schedule 1 are being considered, will be contacted. Their engagement is of particular significance, acknowledging their role in the management of the extensive traditional territories and the reserve and settlement lands.

A Wildlife Management Board is a group that has been established under a land claims agreement and is authorized by the agreement to perform functions in respect of wildlife species. Some eligible species at risk are found on lands where existing land claims agreements apply that give specific authority to a Wildlife Management Board. In such cases, the Minister of the Environment will consult with the relevant board.

To encourage others to contribute and make the necessary information readily available, this document is distributed to known stakeholders and posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry. More extensive consultations may also be done through regional or community meetings or through a more targeted approach.

Environment and Climate Change Canada also sends notice of this consultation to identified concerned groups and individuals who have made their interests known. These include, but are not limited to, industries, resource users, landowners and environmental non-governmental organizations.

In most cases, it is difficult for Environment and Climate Change Canada to fully examine the potential impacts of recovery actions when species are being considered for listing. Recovery actions for terrestrial species usually have not yet been comprehensively defined at the time of listing, so their impact cannot be fully understood. Once they are better understood, efforts are made to minimize adverse social and economic impacts of listing and to maximize the benefits. SARA requires that recovery measures be prepared in consultation with those considered to be directly affected by them.

In addition to the public, Environment and Climate Change Canada consults on listing with the governments of the provinces and territories with lead responsibility for the conservation and management of these wildlife species. Environment and Climate Change Canada also consults with other federal departments and agencies.

Role and impact of public consultations in the listing process

The results of the public consultations are of great significance to informing the process of listing species at risk. Environment and Climate Change Canada carefully reviews the comments it receives to gain a better understanding of the benefits and costs of changing the List.

The comments are then used to inform the Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS). The RIAS is a report that summarizes the impact of a proposed regulatory change. It includes a description of the proposed change and an analysis of its expected impact, which takes into account the results of the public consultations. In developing the RIAS, the Government of Canada recognizes that Canada's natural heritage is an integral part of our national identity and history and that wildlife in all its forms has value in and of itself. The Government of Canada also recognizes that the absence of full scientific certainty is not a reason to postpone decisions to protect the environment.

A draft Order (see Glossary) is then prepared, providing notice that a decision is being taken by the Governor in Council. The draft Order proposing to list all or some of the species under consideration is then published, along with the RIAS, in the *Canada Gazette*, Part I, for a comment period of 30 days.

The Minister of the Environment will take into consideration comments and any additional information received following publication of the draft Order and the RIAS in the *Canada Gazette*, Part I. The Minister then makes a final listing recommendation for each species to the Governor in Council. The Governor in Council next decides either to accept the species assessment and amend Schedule 1 accordingly; or not to add the species to Schedule 1; or to refer the species assessment back to COSEWIC for further information or consideration. The final decision is published in the *Canada Gazette*, Part II, and on the Species at Risk Public Registry. If the Governor in Council decides to list a species, it is at this point that it becomes legally included on Schedule 1.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ADDITION OF A SPECIES TO SCHEDULE 1

The protection that comes into effect following the addition of a species to Schedule 1 depends upon a number of factors. These include the species' status under SARA, the type of species and where it occurs.

Protection for listed Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species

Responsibility for the conservation of wildlife is shared among the governments of Canada. SARA establishes legal protection for individuals as soon as a species is listed as Threatened, Endangered or Extirpated, and, in the case of Threatened and Endangered species, for their residences. This applies to species considered federal species or if they are found on federal land.

Federal species include migratory birds, as defined by the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, and aquatic species covered by the *Fisheries Act*. Federal land means land that belongs to the federal government, and the internal waters and territorial sea of Canada. It also means land set apart for the use and benefit of a band under the *Indian Act* (such as reserves). In the territories, the protection for species at risk on federal lands applies only where they are on lands under the authority of the Minister of the Environment or the Parks Canada Agency.

Migratory birds are protected by the *Migratory Birds Regulations*, under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, which strictly prohibits the harming of migratory birds and the disturbance or destruction of their nests and eggs.

SARA's protection for individuals makes it an offence to kill, harm, harass, capture or take an individual of a species listed as Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened. It is also an offence to damage or destroy the residence of one or more individuals of an Endangered or Threatened species or an Extirpated species whose reintroduction has been recommended by a recovery strategy. The Act also makes it an offence to possess, collect, buy, sell or trade an individual of a species that is Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened.

Species at risk that are neither aquatic nor protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, nor on federal lands, do not receive immediate protection upon listing under SARA. Instead, in most cases, the protection of terrestrial species on non-federal lands is the responsibility of the provinces and territories where they are found. The application of protections under SARA to a species at risk on non-federal lands requires that the Governor in Council make an order defining those lands. This can only occur when the Minister is of the opinion that the laws of the province or territory do not effectively protect the species. To put such an order in place, the Minister would then need to recommend the order be made to the Governor in Council. If the Governor in Council agrees to make the order, the prohibitions of SARA would then apply to the provincial or territorial lands specified by the order. The federal government would consult before making such an order.

Recovery strategies and action plans for Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species

Recovery planning results in the development of recovery strategies and action plans for Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened species. It involves the different levels of government responsible for the management of the species, depending on what type of species it is and where it occurs. These include federal, provincial and territorial governments as well as Wildlife Management Boards. Recovery strategies and action plans are also prepared in cooperation with directly affected Indigenous organizations. Landowners and other stakeholders directly affected by the recovery strategy are consulted to the extent possible.

Recovery strategies must be prepared for all Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species. They include measures to mitigate the known threats to the species and its habitat and set the population and distribution objectives. Other objectives can be included, such as stewardship, to conserve the species, or education, to increase public awareness. Recovery strategies must include a statement of the time frame for the development of one or more action plans that will state the measures necessary to implement the recovery strategy. To the extent

possible, recovery strategies must also identify the critical habitat of the species, which is the habitat necessary for the survival or recovery of the species. If there is not enough information available to identify critical habitat, the recovery strategy includes a schedule of studies required for its identification. This schedule outlines what must be done to obtain the necessary information and by when it needs to be done. In such cases, critical habitat can be identified in a subsequent action plan.

Proposed recovery strategies for newly listed species are posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry to provide for public review and comment. For Endangered species, proposed recovery strategies are posted within one year of their addition to Schedule 1, and for Threatened or Extirpated species, within two years.

Once a recovery strategy has been posted as final, one or more action plans based on the recovery strategy must then be prepared. These include measures to address threats and achieve the population and distribution objectives. Action plans also complete the identification of the critical habitat where necessary and, to the extent possible, state measures that are proposed to protect it.

Permits and agreements

For terrestrial species listed on SARA Schedule 1 as Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened, the Minister of the Environment may authorize exceptions to the Act's prohibitions, when and where they apply. The Minister can enter into agreements or issue permits only for one of three purposes: for research, for conservation activities, or if the effects to the species are incidental to the activity. Research must relate to the conservation of a species and be conducted by qualified scientists. Conservation activities must benefit a listed species or be required to enhance its chances of survival. All activities, including those that incidentally affect a listed species, its individuals, residences or critical habitat must also meet certain conditions. First, it must be established that all reasonable alternatives to the activity have been considered and the best solution has been adopted.

Second, it must also be established that all feasible measures will be taken to minimize the impact of the activity on the listed species. And finally, it must be established that the activity will not jeopardize the survival or recovery of the species. Having issued a permit or agreement, the Minister must then include an explanation on the Species at Risk Public Registry of why the permit or agreement was issued.

Protection for listed species of Special Concern

While immediate protection under SARA for species listed as Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened does not apply to species listed as Special Concern, any existing protections and prohibitions, such as those provided by the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* or the *Canada National Parks Act*, continue to be in force.

Management plans for species of Special Concern

For species of Special Concern, management plans are to be prepared and made available on the Species at Risk Public Registry within three years of a species' addition to Schedule 1, allowing for public review and comment. Management plans include appropriate conservation measures for the species and for its habitat. They are prepared in cooperation with the jurisdictions responsible for the management of the species, including directly affected Wildlife Management Boards and Indigenous organizations. Landowners, lessees and others directly affected by a management plan will also be consulted to the extent possible.

THE LIST OF SPECIES ELIGIBLE FOR AN AMENDMENT TO SCHEDULE 1

Status of the recently assessed species and consultation paths

On October 24, 2017, COSEWIC submitted 28 assessments of species at risk to the Minister of the Environment for species that are eligible to be added to Schedule 1 of SARA. Thirteen of these are terrestrial species, and 15 are aquatic species. COSEWIC also reviewed the classification of species already on Schedule 1, in some cases changing their status. Four terrestrial species are now being considered for down-listing on SARA (to a lower risk status) and 3 terrestrial species are now being considered for a higher risk status on SARA. One species, the Sonora Skipper, is being considered for removal from the list, as it was found to be not at risk in its latest assessment. In all, 21 terrestrial species that are eligible to be added to Schedule 1, to be removed from Schedule 1, or to have their current status on Schedule 1 changed are included in this consultation (Table 1).

COSEWIC also submitted the reviews of species already on Schedule 1, confirming their classification. Twelve of these reviews were for terrestrial species. These species are not included in the consultations because there is no regulatory change being proposed (Table 2).

For more information on the consultations for aquatic species, visit the Fisheries and Oceans Canada website at www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

Providing comments

The involvement of Canadians is integral to the listing process, as it is to the ultimate protection of Canadian wildlife. Your comments matter and are given serious consideration. Environment and Climate Change Canada will review all the comments that it receives by the deadlines provided below.

Comments for terrestrial species undergoing normal consultations must be received by **May 22, 2018**.

Comments for terrestrial species undergoing extended consultations must be received by **October 22, 2018**.

Most species will be undergoing normal consultations. For the final consultation paths, please see www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=8CF7461F-1 after **January 22, 2018**.

For more details on submitting comments, see the section “Comments solicited on the proposed amendment of Schedule 1” of this document.

Table 1: Terrestrial species recently assessed by COSEWIC eligible for addition to Schedule 1 or reclassification

Taxon	Species	Scientific Name	Range
Species eligible for addition to Schedule 1 (13)			
Endangered (4)			
Lichens	Golden-eye Lichen (Great Lakes population)	<i>Teloschistes chrysophthalmus</i>	ON
Mammals	Caribou (Eastern Migratory population)	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>	MB ON QC NL
Mammals	Caribou (Torngat Mountains population)	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>	NU QC NL
Molluscs	Eastern Banded Tigersnail	<i>Anguispira kochi kochi</i>	ON
Threatened (2)			
Birds	Lark Bunting	<i>Calamospiza melanocorys</i>	AB SK MB
Mammals	Caribou (Barren-ground population)	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>	YT NT NU AB SK MB
Special Concern (7)			
Arthropods	Magdalen Islands Grasshopper	<i>Melanoplus madeleineae</i>	QC
Arthropods	Transverse Lady Beetle	<i>Coccinella transversoguttata</i>	YT NT NU BC AB SK MB ON QC NB PE NS NL
Birds	Evening Grosbeak	<i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i>	YT NT BC AB SK MB ON QC NB PE NS NL
Birds	Harris's Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia querula</i>	NT NU AB SK MB ON
Lichens	Golden-eye Lichen (Prairie / Boreal population)	<i>Teloschistes chrysophthalmus</i>	MB ON
Reptiles	Bullsnake	<i>Pituophis catenifer sayi</i>	AB SK
Vascular Plants	Long's Bulrush	<i>Scirpus longii</i>	NS
Reclassifications: Up-list (3)			
From Threatened to Endangered (2)			
Birds	Pink-footed Shearwater	<i>Ardenna creatopus</i>	BC Pacific Ocean
Reptiles	Blanding's Turtle (Great Lakes / St. Lawrence population)	<i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>	ON QC
From Special Concern to Endangered (1)			
Arthropods	Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	NT BC AB SK MB ON QC NB PE NS NL
Reclassifications: Down-list or Delist (5)			
From Endangered to Threatened (2)			
Reptiles	Western Painted Turtle (Pacific Coast population)	<i>Chrysemys picta bellii</i>	BC
Vascular Plants	Spotted Wintergreen	<i>Chimaphila maculata</i>	ON QC
From Threatened to Special Concern (1)			
Vascular Plants	Anticosti Aster	<i>Symphotrichum anticostense</i>	QC NB
From Endangered to Special Concern (1)			
Mosses	Rusty Cord-moss	<i>Entosthodon rubiginosus</i>	BC SK
From Special Concern to Not at Risk (1)			
Arthropods	Sonora Skipper	<i>Polites sonora</i>	BC

**Table 2: Terrestrial species recently reassessed by COSEWIC
(no consultations – species status confirmation)**

Taxon	Species	Scientific Name	Range
Status Confirmations (12)			
Endangered (8)			
Arthropods	Gold-edged Gem	<i>Schinia avemensis</i>	AB SK MB
Birds	Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	BC AB SK MB
Birds	Prothonotary Warbler	<i>Protonotaria citrea</i>	ON
Mammals	Ord's Kangaroo Rat	<i>Dipodomys ordii</i>	AB SK
Mosses	Nugget Moss	<i>Microbryum vlassovii</i>	BC
Reptiles	Blanding's Turtle (Nova Scotia population)	<i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>	NS
Vascular Plants	Butternut	<i>Juglans cinerea</i>	ON QC NB
Vascular Plants	Western Prairie Fringed Orchid	<i>Platanthera praeclara</i>	MB
Special Concern (4)			
Birds	Rusty Blackbird	<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>	YT NT NU BC AB SK MB ON QC NB PE NS NL
Mammals	Nuttall's Cottontail <i>nuttallii</i> subspecies	<i>Sylvilagus nuttallii nuttallii</i>	BC
Reptiles	Western Painted Turtle (Intermountain - Rocky Mountain population)	<i>Chrysemys picta bellii</i>	BC
Vascular Plants	American Hart's-tongue Fern	<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i> var. <i>americanum</i>	ON

THE COSEWIC SUMMARIES OF TERRESTRIAL SPECIES ELIGIBLE FOR ADDITION OR RECLASSIFICATION ON SCHEDULE 1

For a brief summary of the reasons for the COSEWIC status designation of individual species, and their biology, threats, distribution and other information, please consult:

http://registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/document/default_e.cfm?documentID=3200

For a more comprehensive explanation of the conservation status of an individual species, please refer to the COSEWIC status report for that species, also available on the Species at Risk Public Registry at:

www.sararegistry.gc.ca

or contact:

COSEWIC Secretariat
c/o Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Ottawa ON K1A 0H3

GLOSSARY

Aquatic species: A wildlife species that is a fish as defined in section 2 of the *Fisheries Act* or a marine plant as defined in section 47 of the Act. The term includes marine mammals.

Canada Gazette: The *Canada Gazette* is one of the vehicles that Canadians can use to access laws and regulations. It has been the “official newspaper” of the Government of Canada since 1841. Government departments and agencies as well as the private sector are required by law to publish certain information in the *Canada Gazette*. Notices and proposed regulations are published in the *Canada Gazette*, Part I, and official regulations are published in the *Canada Gazette*, Part II. For more information, please visit canadagazette.gc.ca.

Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council: The Council is made up of federal, provincial and territorial ministers with responsibilities for wildlife species. The Council’s mandate is to provide national leadership and coordination for the protection of species at risk.

COSEWIC: The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. The Committee comprises experts on wildlife species at risk. Their backgrounds are in the fields of biology, ecology, genetics, Indigenous traditional knowledge and other relevant fields. These experts come from various communities, including, among others, government and academia.

COSEWIC assessment: COSEWIC’s assessment or re-assessment of the status of a wildlife species, based on a status report on the species that COSEWIC either has had prepared or has received with an application.

Down-listing: A revision of the status of a species on Schedule 1 to a status of lower risk. A revision of the status of a Schedule 1 species to a higher risk status would be up-listing.

Federal land: Any land owned by the federal government, the internal waters and territorial sea of Canada, and reserves and other land set apart for the use and benefit of a band under the *Indian Act*.

Governor in Council: The Governor General of Canada acting on the advice of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada, the formal executive body that gives legal effect to those decisions of Cabinet that are to have the force of law.

Individual: An individual of a wildlife species, whether living or dead, at any developmental stage, and includes larvae, embryos, eggs, sperm, seeds, pollen, spores and asexual propagules.

Order: An order issued by the Governor in Council, either on the basis of authority delegated by legislation or by virtue of the prerogative powers of the Crown.

Response statement: A document in which the Minister of the Environment indicates how he or she intends to respond to the COSEWIC assessment of a wildlife species. A response statement is posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry within 90 days of receipt of the assessment by the Minister, and provides timelines for action to the extent possible.

RIAS: Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement. A document that provides an analysis of the expected impact of a regulatory initiative and which accompanies an Order in Council.

Species at Risk Public Registry: Developed as an online service, the Species at Risk Public Registry has been accessible to the public since proclamation of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). The website gives users easy access to documents and information related to SARA at any time and location with Internet access. It can be found at www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca.

Schedule 1: A schedule of SARA, also known as the List of Wildlife Species at Risk, which presents the list of species protected under SARA.

Up-listing: A revision of the status of a species on Schedule 1 to a status of higher risk. A revision of the status of a Schedule 1 species to a lower risk status would be down-listing.

Wildlife Management Board: Established under the land claims agreements in northern Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Yukon, Northwest Territories, British Columbia, and Nunavut, Wildlife Management Boards are the “main instruments of wildlife management” within their settlement areas. In this role, Wildlife Management Boards not only establish, modify and remove levels of total allowable harvest of a variety of wildlife species, but also participate in research activities, including annual harvest studies, and approve the designation of species at risk in their settlement areas.

Wildlife species: Under SARA, a species, subspecies, variety, or geographically or genetically distinct population of animal, plant or other organism, other than a bacterium or virus. To be eligible for inclusion under SARA, a wildlife species must be wild by nature and native to Canada. Non-native species that have been here for 50 years or more can be considered eligible if they came without human intervention.



Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment and Climate Change Canada
PO Box 2310 – 5019 – 52nd Street
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7

22 January 2018

RE: Proposed Listing of **Barren-ground Caribou** under the federal Species at Risk Act as a Threatened species

The purpose of this package is to share information and get your feedback on the proposed listing of **Barren-ground Caribou** as a Threatened species under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA).

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) completed the assessment of Barren-ground Caribou in November 2016 as a Threatened species. The assessment report was released in January 2018.

You are invited to submit comments on the potential impacts of amending the List of Wildlife Species at Risk according to this COSEWIC status assessment. Your comments will be considered and will inform the federal Minister of the Environment's recommendation on whether to add Barren-ground Caribou to the list of Species at Risk as a Threatened species.

We are sending you a narrated PowerPoint presentation, fact sheet and questionnaire about the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou. Please review these items and complete the questionnaire with input from your board / group members.

The COSEWIC status and assessment report is available for download at:
http://sararegistry.gc.ca/document/default_e.cfm?documentID=3189

We hope you will review the information in this package. If you have any additional questions, concerns or information that you feel should be considered in the listing decision, please let us know and we will follow up with you as needed. If you feel this package provides enough information for you to make a decision, please respond in writing to the Canadian Wildlife Service telling us your formal position on the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou as a Threatened species. You can either send us a letter or you can fill in the attached questionnaire.

There will also be an opportunity to provide comments during the 30-day public consultation period associated with pre-publication in Canada Gazette Part I.



If you would like to request a call-in or a face to face presentation of this material, please let us know by **April 13th, 2018**. Otherwise, we request your response by **October 22, 2018**.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact:

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Yours sincerely,

Christian Bertelsen
A/Regional Director | A/Directeur regional
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Figure 1. Distribution of Barren-ground Caribou subpopulations. Map by Bonnie Fournier, GNWT.

COSEWIC Wildlife Species Assessments, November 2016

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/committee-status-endangered-wildlife.html>

Barren-ground Caribou | *Rangifer tarandus*

Status: Threatened

Last Examination and Change: Not applicable

Canadian Occurrence: YT, NT, NU



Reason for Designation: Members of this population give birth on the open arctic tundra, and most subpopulations (herds) winter in vast subarctic forests. Well-known for its large aggregations, lengthy migrations, and significant cultural and social value to northern Aboriginal Peoples and other Canadians, its 14-15 subpopulations range from northeastern Alaska to western Hudson Bay and Baffin Island. Numbering more than 2 million individuals in the early 1990s, the current population is estimated at about 800,000. Most subpopulations have declined dramatically, but two are increasing, including the Porcupine Caribou Herd. For 70% of the population with sufficient data to quantify trends, the decline is estimated at 56% over the past three generations (since 1989), with several of the largest herds having declined by >80% from peak numbers. Available survey data for an additional 25% of the total population also indicate declines. Evidence from both local Aboriginal people and scientific studies suggests that most herds have undergone natural fluctuations in numbers in the past; however, available demographic data indicate no sign of rapid recovery at this time and cumulative threats are without historical precedent. Status meets criteria for Endangered because of a reduction in numbers of $\geq 50\%$, but Threatened is recommended because, overall, this population does not appear to be facing imminent extinction at this time. Despite worrisome declines across most of the range, the current numerical abundance of the Porcupine Caribou Herd and the initiation of numerous management actions by governments, wildlife management boards, and communities support Threatened as a more appropriate conservation status. The status of these subpopulations will have to be carefully monitored and may warrant re-assessment within five years.

Status History: Designated Threatened in November 2016



Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

For

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Pre-listing consultations for the Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA)



Background:

- Barren-ground caribou was assessed as Threatened by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) in November 2016.
- Barren-ground caribou are medium-sized and have longer legs than Peary caribou and Dolphin and Union caribou, but shorter legs than Boreal caribou. They have dark brown legs, backs and antler velvet, with a distinctive brown and white coat pattern in the fall.
- COSEWIC's reason for designation: Most of the Barren-ground caribou herds have declined dramatically. Overall, the decline is estimated at 56% over the past three generations. The Porcupine caribou herd is one of the few exceptions to this trend and is increasing. There are currently 800,000 Barren-ground caribou, down from over 2 million in the early 1990s.
- A number of threats are thought to be causing the decline, such as climate and weather changes that are affecting forage availability, predation, parasites and diseases. Some others are Industrial exploration and development, fragmentation of habitat in their winter range from forest fires and increasing human presence, as well as subsistence and sport harvests that are a significant cause of mortality.

- The decline of Barren-ground caribou is so drastic that it could have been assessed as Endangered. However, COSEWIC recommended the Threatened status in recognition of the numerous management actions that are being initiated by governments, wildlife management boards and communities, and because Barren-ground caribou do not appear to be facing imminent extinction at this time.
- In October 2017, COSEWIC submitted its assessment of the species to the Minister of the Environment. The Minister of the Environment will respond within 90 days, by posting a response on the SARA Public Registry. The response statement will indicate the scope of the consultation and timelines.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) will consult with the appropriate Minister(s), wildlife management boards and Indigenous organizations on changes to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk (Schedule 1) of the *Species at Risk Act* for terrestrial species.
- For species that are listed as Threatened, a recovery strategy is to be prepared within two years of the species' addition to Schedule 1 and added to the Species at Risk Registry. Recovery strategies are prepared in cooperation with the jurisdictions, wildlife management boards, and Indigenous organizations.
- If Barren-ground caribou are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* a national recovery strategy will be written that identifies the threats to the species and its habitat, and sets population and distribution objectives for the survival and recovery of the species. The national recovery strategy will identify critical habitat to the extent possible. After critical habitat is identified, CWS will work with partners to find the best method to protect the habitat from activities that would destroy it.
- Prohibitions against killing or harming Barren-ground caribou will automatically come into force if the species is listed. In the territories, these automatic prohibitions only apply on federal lands that are under the authority of the Minister of the Environment or the Parks Canada Agency, such as National Parks and National Wildlife Areas. As well, these automatic prohibitions do not apply to people engaging in activities in accordance with conservation measures under a land claims agreement.

Next Steps - Consultation Process:

- Jurisdictions and wildlife management boards, including the NWMB and the Government of Nunavut, will be asked to review and provide input into the draft Terrestrial Issues Flagging (TIF) document, which outlines the species' current status, presence on the landscape, projected impact of listing, and issues flagged. This process helps inform the decision on the consultation timeline – normal or extended.
- It is expected that consultations on the proposed listing will be held between January and October 2018. Organizations such as hunters and trappers organizations (HTOs) and regional wildlife boards are asked to provide their formal position on the proposed listing (i.e. oppose, support or are indifferent) and with any other comments, concerns or information that they feel should be considered. ECCC will ask partners to provide feedback by April 30, 2018 in order for ECCC to follow up on any outstanding questionnaires or participation in meetings by October 2018.
- Given the range of the species, CWS plans to consult all Nunavut communities with the exception of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay.
- Consultation packages, in Inuktitut and English, will be sent by mail and email, include: a letter, a PowerPoint, and a questionnaire. The full COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report will be provided in digital format in English only.
- To support consultations, CWS will extend an offer to provide more information, if requested, in the best means possible, including attending a board meeting by teleconference or in-person. A reminder email and

follow-up phone calls, to the extent possible, will be done to seek input from as many organizations as possible.

- Following consultations, CWS will summarize the consultation results and present them to the Board at the next quarterly meeting following the consultation period and seek NWMB's decision on the proposed listing of the species.

Request of the NWMB:

- That the NWMB provide Environment and Climate Change Canada with any feedback on the consultation process to obtain input and a decision on support from Hunters and Trappers Organizations for the proposed listing of Barren-ground Caribou as Threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.



