

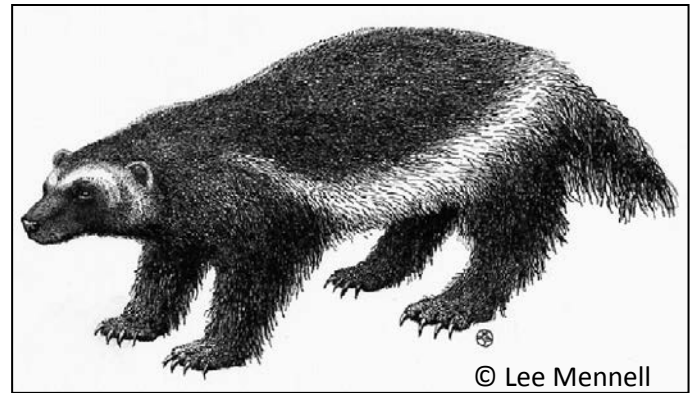


SUBMISSION TO THE NWMB
FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: COSEWIC Assessment of two Nunavut Species: Harlequin Duck (Eastern Population) and Wolverine.



Harlequin Duck (Eastern Population) – Reassessment and Confirmation of Status

Background: Harlequin Duck (eastern population) was designated the status Endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) in April 1990. COSEWIC re-examined its status and designated the species as Special Concern in May 2001. Harlequin Duck (eastern population) was listed on the federal *Species at Risk Act* in 2004 when the Act came into force. COSEWIC reassesses the status of assessed species every ten years or at any time it has reason to believe the status of a species has changed significantly. It reconfirmed the status of Harlequin Duck (eastern population) as Special Concern in November 2013. A regional management plan (Atlantic Canada and Québec) was posted on the Species at Risk registry for Harlequin Duck in 2007. The regional management plan does not include any information or activities related to Nunavut.

Harlequin Duck was designated the status of Special Concern because although some increases in southern populations have been recorded, the population size of this sea duck remains relatively small. It is highly susceptible to catastrophic events such as oil spills because the species tends to gather in large groups when they are moulting feathers and on its marine wintering grounds. These threats are very big threats and are likely increasing. Because the Harlequin Duck is a long-lived species, it can be slow to recover from

any disaster. Its population relies on continued management efforts, particularly those involving restrictions on hunting in the provinces.

Harlequin Duck (eastern population) occurs in Nunavut, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador.

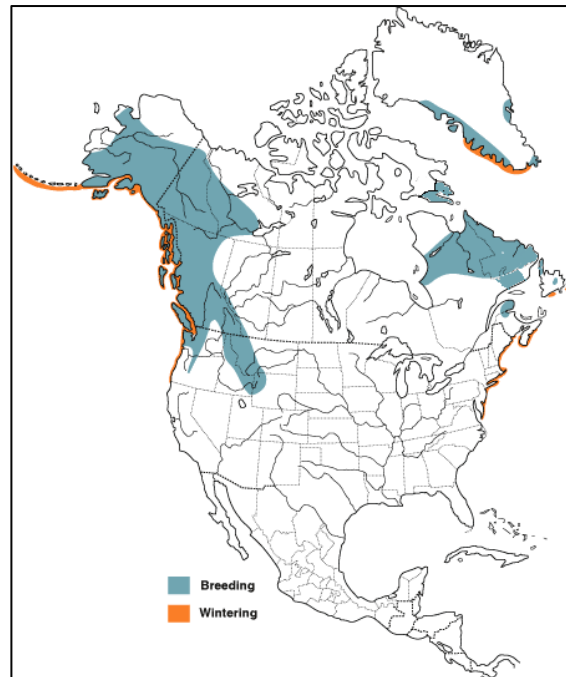


Figure 1. This is Figure 1 from the COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report for Harlequin Duck (eastern population). It shows the breeding (in blue) and wintering (in orange) ranges for both the eastern and western populations of the species. The eastern population of Harlequin Ducks is the focus of this reassessment.

Wolverine – Reassessment and Proposed Listing

Background: Wolverine was reassessed by COSEWIC in May 2014. COSEWIC recommended that this species be listed as Special Concern because population declines have been reported in the southern part of the range. The species habitat is increasingly fragmented by industrial activity, especially in the southern part of its range. Increased vehicle access also increases harvest pressure. Climate change is believed to be impacting animals in the southern part of the range, and is expected to increase northward. The species has a low reproductive rate, is sensitive to human disturbance and requires large areas of land to maintain healthy populations.

In 2003, wolverine was assessed as two separate populations: Western and Eastern. The Eastern population, occurring only in Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador, was assessed as Endangered; the Western population, occurring in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, was assessed as Special Concern. In May 2014, COSEWIC reassessed

Wolverine and the Eastern and Western populations were considered as a single unit across the Canadian range. Wolverine was designated the status of Special Concern.

Under SARA, there are no requirements to restrict harvest or regulate habitat for species that are listed as Special Concern. There is a requirement to develop a management plan within 3 years of a species being listed.

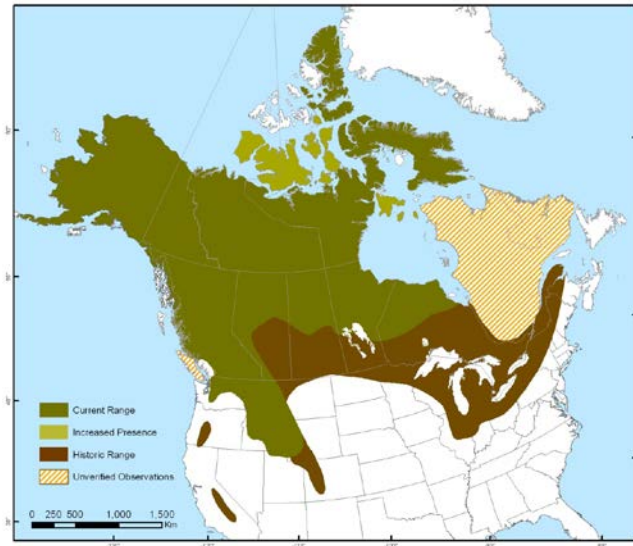


Figure 2. This is Figure 3 from the COSEWIC Assessment and Status Summary for Wolverine. It shows the North American distribution of wolverine. The dark green colour shows the current range of wolverine, the light green colour shows where they have increased their presence, the brown colour shows where they used to be and the yellow striped colour shows where there have been unconfirmed observations.

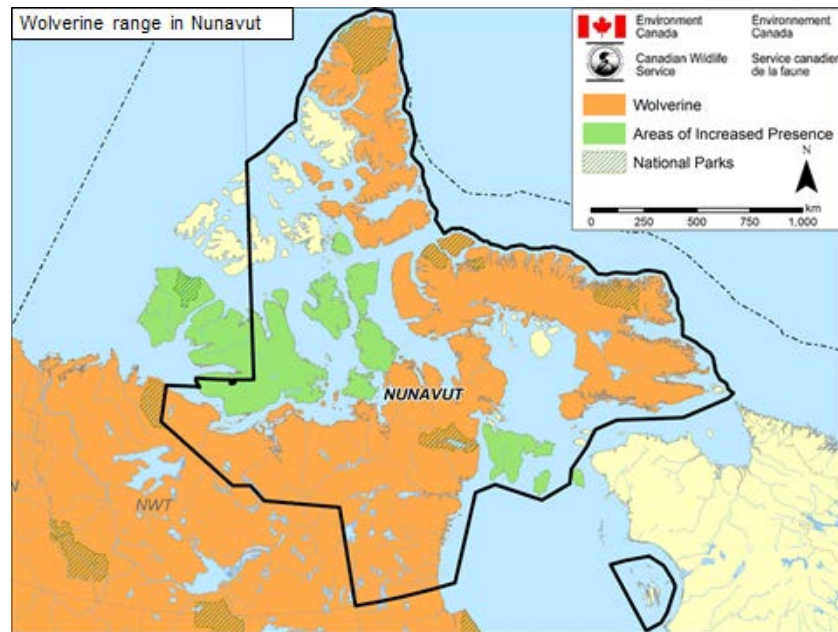


Figure 3. This figure shows the range of wolverine in Nunavut. The range encompasses all communities in Nunavut with the exception of Resolute Bay.

Consultation:

EC will send out consultation packages (in English and Inuktitut) to Hunters and Trappers Associations in all communities in Nunavut by mail and email November 2014. Resolute Bay will be included in the consultation process because hunters may encounter/harvest wolverine during their travels to other areas. Consultation packages consisted of:

- A letter regarding the proposed listing of wolverine.
- A plain language summary of the COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report for Wolverine. It provided information about the species, threats facing the species and the reasoning behind their recommendation for listing.
- A narrated powerpoint presentation providing detailed information about wolverine, the COSEWIC assessment and details on what the proposed listing means. Furthermore it outlines the differences between the 2003 COSEWIC Assessment and Status report for Wolverine (western population) and 2014 COSEWIC Assessment and Status report.
- The complete COSEWIC Assessment and Status report for Wolverine (a digital copy in English only).
- A questionnaire/response form to provide comments and indicate whether the HTAs support/do not support/are indifferent to the proposed listing.

Communities will be asked to review the information in the packages and to respond in writing (by 15 January 2015) to the Canadian Wildlife Service with 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.

Steps Forward:

EC welcomes any suggestions from the NWMB regarding the consultation process that has been undertaken to obtain HTA's input/support for the proposed listing of Wolverine. EC plans to come back to the NWMB for their March quarterly meeting to ask for a formal decision on supporting COSEWIC's recommendation to list wolverine as a species of Special Concern on the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA).

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