



## SUBMISSION TO THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

FOR

**Information: X**

Decision:

**Issue:** New COSEWIC Assessment of Species in Nunavut

### Background:

#### New COSEWIC Assessment of Species in Nunavut

On December 5, 2016 The Committee on the Status of Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) released the results of their November 2016 assessment meeting. Three terrestrial species found in Nunavut were assessed at this meeting:

- Barren-ground Caribou was assessed by COSEWIC as Threatened
- Transverse Lady Beetle was assessed by COSEWIC as a species of Special Concern
- Torngat Mountains Caribou was assessed by COSEWIC as Endangered

Details on these species assessments are attached.

This assessment is the first step in a larger process. Next, COSEWIC will complete its final status and assessment reports and will provide them to the federal Minister of the Environment in Fall 2017. The formal response and listing process under the federal *Species at Risk Act* will begin after the federal government receives the completed assessments for these species in Fall 2017. At that time the Minister will post a response on the Species at Risk Public Registry, providing information on the scope of any consultations and the timelines for action. Consultations for a group of species will begin after this response is posted.

When consultations have been launched, CWS will provide an update to NWMB on the final COSEWIC assessment and status report, the consultation timelines, and seek advice on the consultation approach and consultation material.

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## COSEWIC Wildlife Species Assessments (detailed version), November 2016

Source: [www.cosewic.gc.ca](http://www.cosewic.gc.ca)

### Caribou

#### Barren-ground population

### *Rangifer tarandus*

### Threatened

#### Reason for Designation

This population gives birth on the open arctic tundra, and most 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 for most of these subpopulations. Status meets criteria for Endangered because of a reduction in numbers of ≥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.

Range YT NT NU AB SK MB

#### Status History

Designated Threatened in November 2016.



Photo by A. Gunn

**Transverse Lady Beetle*****Coccinella transversoguttata*****Special Concern**Reason for Designation

This species was once common and broadly distributed throughout most of Canada. Declines started in the 1970s and the species is now absent in southern Ontario and the Maritimes. In some parts of its western and northern range, the species is still commonly recorded. The spread of non-native lady beetles is considered one of the possible threats to this species through competition, intraguild predation, or introduction of pathogens. Non-native lady beetles are less commonly found in places where this species remains.

Range YT NT NU BC AB SK MB ON QC NB PE NS NL

Status History

Designated Special Concern in November 2016.



Photo by S.A Marshal

**Caribou**  
**Tornqat Mountains population**

*Rangifer tarandus*

**Endangered**

Reason for Designation

This population is restricted to the Ungava Peninsula of eastern Québec, northern Labrador, and Nunavut (Killiniq and adjacent islands). A quantitative trend is not available because survey data are limited, but the total population was estimated to be 5,000 individuals in 1980 and 930 individuals in 2014, suggesting a significant decline. Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge also indicates a decline. The population meets Endangered status because the estimated 698 mature animals exist in a single population, a population decline is evident, and a decline is predicted to continue because of harvest and a decrease in habitat quality associated with climate change. The population may be facing imminent extinction because of the low numbers remaining.

Range NU QC NL

Status History

Designated Endangered in November 2016.



Photo by Charles Jutras, MFFP