



Submission to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

For

Information:

Decision: X

Issue: Request for decision on the proposed listing of Hudsonian Godwit as Threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.



Nunavut distribution of Hudsonian Godwit. Image provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Background:

Distribution

- Hudsonian Godwit breeds in sub-Arctic and Boreal regions of Canada and Alaska and overwinters in the southernmost regions of South America.
- Some local breeding sites may remain undiscovered.
- The main breeding areas in Canada are along the Hudson Bay Lowlands in Manitoba and Ontario, and in the Mackenzie Delta, Northwest Territories.
- It can be found during the breeding season in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut and can occur through the western part of the Kitikmeot region as well.
- It migrates to South America in the winter.

Assessment and Threats

- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada assessed Hudsonian Godwit as Threatened in May 2019 because of substantial population declines over the past two to three generations.
- The rate of decline is 44% over three generations (23 years).
- Systemic long-term monitoring data are lacking for this species, and estimates of population size and trends are considered imprecise.
- The most recent population estimate for Hudsonian Godwit is approximately 41,000 mature individuals.
- Threats to recovery include: climate change, habitat loss (wintering ground in South America), pollution (agricultural over the migration routes and wintering grounds, also shipping and industrial activities).

Implications of the proposed listing

- Hudsonian Godwit is a migratory bird that is protected under the federal Migratory Birds Convention Act, as are its nests. Prohibitions under the *Species at Risk Act* would not add additional protections to the individual birds or nests. This does not affect Inuit harvest.
- If Hudsonian Godwit are listed as Threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act*, a national recovery strategy will be required, which will include a plan detailing how to reverse the decline of a species.
- The Recovery Strategy will be prepared in cooperation from provincial and territorial governments, wildlife management boards, and Indigenous governments and organizations.
- The Recovery Strategy will set out goals and objectives and identifies the main areas of activities to be undertaken.
- Critical habitat, habitat which is necessary for the survival or recovery of the species, will need to be identified as a component of the Recovery Strategy.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada will work with partners in Nunavut to identify critical habitat and discuss methods for protecting it from activities likely to destroy it.
- Once critical habitat is identified, it will be protected in National Parks, National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries.

Consultation:

Materials

- Consultation packages were sent by email to nine Nunavut Hunters and Trappers Organizations and to the Government of Nunavut, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, the Kivalliq Inuit Association, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board in January 2020 and to the Kivalliq Wildlife Board in October 2020. Hard copies of all the documents were sent in March 2020. The packages included a letter, report summary, listing questionnaire, PowerPoint and a consultation booklet in English and Inuktitut.
- The nine communities were Aqigiq Hunters and Trappers Organization, Arviat Hunters and Trappers Organization, Baker Lake Hunters and Trappers Organization, Issatik Hunters and Trappers Organization, Aqiggiag Hunters and Trappers Organization,

Burnside Hunters and Trappers Association, Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Association, Omingmaktok Hunters and Trappers Association and Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Association.

- We provided a follow-up phone call to all nine Nunavut Hunters and Trappers Organizations in October 2020 and a follow-up email in December 2020, followed by four additional follow-up calls from February to April 2021.
- We provided a follow-up email to the organizations in June 2021.

Results and responses

- We received no response from the Aqigiq Hunters and Trappers Organization, the Arviat Hunters and Trappers Organization, the Issatik Hunters and Trappers Organization and the Aqiggiaq Hunters and Trappers Organization.
- We received no response from the Government of Nunavut, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, the Kivalliq Inuit Association, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board or from the Kivalliq Wildlife Board.
- We received a response of Do Not Support from the Baker Lake Hunter and Trapper Organization.
- We received a response of “Indifferent” from the Burnside Hunter and Trapper Organization, the Kugluktuk Hunter and Trapper Organization, the Omingmaktok Hunter and Trapper Organization and the Ekaluktutiak Hunter and Trapper Organization.

Next Steps:

We are requesting a decision from the NWMB on the proposed listing of Hudsonian Godwit as Threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act* as per the *Nunavut Agreement* s.5.2.34(f) and 5.3.16-5.3.23.

Following the Board’s decision, the Minister will make a recommendation to the Governor in Council that takes into account the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada’s assessment, consultations with wildlife management boards authorized for that species by a lands claims agreement (including the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board), and the regulatory impact analysis statement. The final decision or final decision as varied, as arrived at through 5.3.16 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, must be respected in the Minister’s recommendation to the Governor in Council.

As part of the federal regulatory process, a 30-day comment period follows the publication of the proposed decision in Canada Gazette, Part 1. The final step in the process is for the Governor in Council to make a final listing decision. If the Governor in Council decides to list a species, it is at this point that it becomes legally included on Schedule 1. The decision and the regulatory impact analysis statement will be published in the next edition of the Canada Gazette, Part II.