

March 30th 2015

To: All Nunavut Regional Wildlife Organizations and Hunters and Trappers Organizations

Dear Colleagues:

Re: Written submissions for NWMB's written public hearing concerning the listing of wolverine as Special Concern under the federal Species at Risk Act

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) has scheduled a written public hearing to consider the proposed listing of wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) as Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (Environment Canada's Proposal for Decision attached). A written public hearing is one in which all submissions and supporting documentation are filed in writing, and the hearing does not have an oral component.

It would be very beneficial for the NWMB to receive written Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit submissions from hunters and elders who are willing to share their knowledge on wolverine. Included below are several questions that might be helpful to anyone who is interested in preparing a written submission:

1. Are there more wolverines in your area now than there was in the past 5 to 10 years?
2. What has been your experience with hunting a wolverine?
3. Did you travel far to hunt one?
4. Do you remember your ancestors telling stories about wolverines?
5. What is the usual way of hunting a wolverine?
6. Do you know where the wolverines usually stay?
7. Do you think wolverine should be listed as Special Concern¹ under the federal *Species at Risk Act*?

Written submissions to the public hearing must be filed with the NMWB by **May 1st, 2015** at **5:00pm (Iqaluit time)**, at the following coordinates:

Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379, Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0
Phone: (867) 975-7300
Fax: (888) 421-9832
E-Mail: receptionist@nwmb.com

¹ Under the *Species at Risk Act* there are no requirements to restrict harvest or regulate habitat for species that are listed as Special Concern; however, there is a requirement for Environment Canada to produce a management plan.

Thank you for sharing your traditional knowledge on wolverine. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheila Oolayou', written in a cursive style.

Sheila Oolayou

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Coordinator
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Attachments (1)

c.c. Jason Mikki, Qikiqtaaluk Regional Coordinator, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Jackie Price, Coordinator, Research Planning, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board;
Ema Qaggutaq, Kitikmeot Coordinator, Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board; and
Leah Muckpah, Kivalliq Coordinator, Kivalliq Wildlife Board



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Canada

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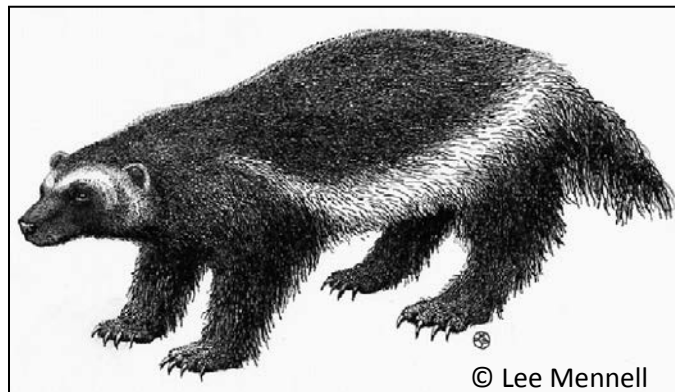


SUBMISSION TO THE NWMB FOR

Information:

Decision: X

Issue: **Approval of the Proposed listing of Wolverine as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act***



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, if a species is listed as Special Concern, there are no general prohibitions or critical habitat identified and protected; this is only a requirement for Threatened and Endangered species. There is a requirement to develop a management plan within 3 years of a species being listed.

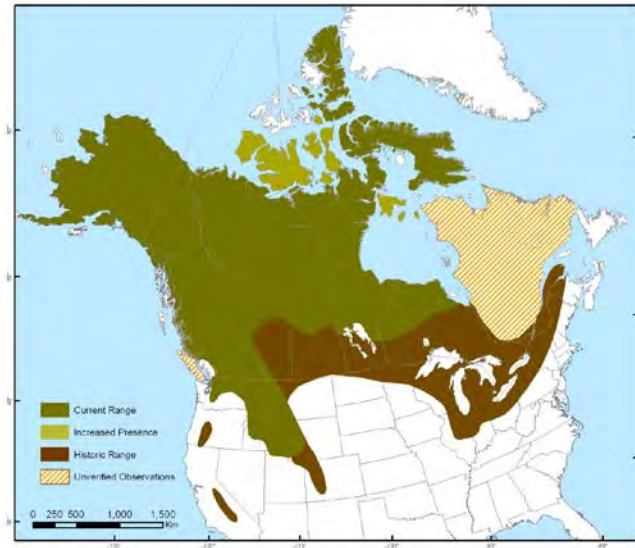


Figure 2. This is Figure 3 from the COSEWIC Assessment and Status Summary for Wolverine. It shows the North American distribution of wolverine. The dark green colour shows the current range of wolverine, the light green colour shows where they have increased their presence, the brown colour shows where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

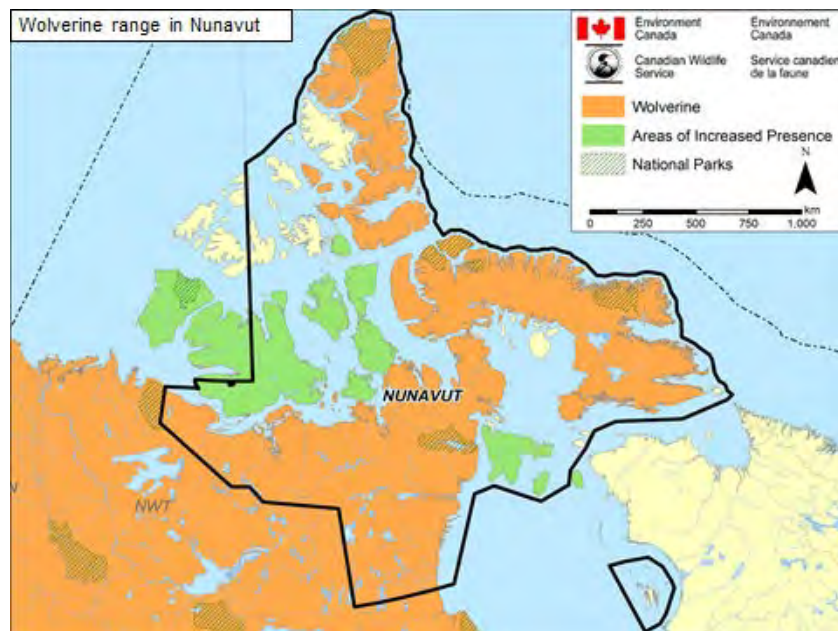


Figure 3. This figure shows the range of wolverine in Nunavut. The range encompasses all communities in Nunavut with the exception of Resolute Bay.

Consultation:

EC sent 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 was 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 were 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.

Consultation Results:

Communities were sent an email reminder on January 15th, and phone calls to follow up with communities who have not responded were made on January 19th and January 28th.

Responses from 12 Hunters and Trappers Associations/Organizations (HTA/HTO) were received. Two HTA/HTOs will be having a meeting in February to discuss. We have been unable to obtain responses from 11 additional HTA/HTOs. The table below details the received responses:

HTA/HTO	Response
Arviat	Does not support
Chesterfield	Does not support
Clyde River	Does not support
Coral Harbour	No wolverines there but they support the listing
Gjoa Haven	Does not support
Grise Fiord	No wolverines there and are not concerned
Hall Beach	Stated that they have no concerns
Iqaluit	Has no concerns and no interest in Wolverine
Kugluktuk	5 individuals do not support 1 individual is indifferent 1 individual has checked off both supports and indifferent.
Repulse Bay	Does not support

Recommendations:

The NWMB is asked to consider whether or not they wish to make a formal decision on supporting the proposed listing of Wolverine as a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act*, and if so, whether they support the proposed listing.

Prepared by: Lisa Pirie, Wildlife Biologist
Canadian Wildlife Service, Iqaluit, NU
Phone No: 867-975-4638
Date Drafted: 2015-Feb-02