# EKATI MINE

## 2025 Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program Annual Report

October 2026







BURGUNDY
DIAMOND MINES

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## Notice to Reviewers

The 2025 Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program (WEMP) Annual Report was co-authored by Burgundy Diamond Mines Ltd. and ERM Consultants Canada Ltd. This report has not been reviewed in full by Burgundy Diamond Mines Ltd. or the Receiver.

The 2025 WEMP data were collected, analyzed, and reported in accordance with the Ekati Diamond Mine: Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan. The data, analyses, and conclusions presented in this report were developed in accordance with the approved WEMP and are submitted to fulfill the requirements for the 2025 reporting year.

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# Executive Summary

Burgundy Diamond Mines Ltd. (Burgundy) implements a number of environmental plans and programs, all of which are interrelated. The results of the Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program (WEMP) are driven directly and/or indirectly by the plans in place, each with the overarching goal to protect land, air, water, and wildlife.

The following report presents the results of the 2025 WEMP conducted at the Ekati Mine to meet the requirements of the Environmental Agreement (Article V1(a) and Article VII) and the *Wildlife Act* (S.N.W.T. 2013, c. 30).

The WEMP reports on wildlife monitoring activities and documents wildlife effects resulting from mining development and associated activities at the Ekati Mine. The WEMP also assesses the effectiveness of wildlife mitigation and management efforts. The program focuses on animal species that experience residual effects from some aspects of the project which are referred to as Valued Ecosystem Components or VECs. The VECs for Ekati Mine (e.g., caribou, grizzly bear, wolf, wolverine, and raptors). This report covers the period from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025 (hereafter the 2025 reporting period).

Wildlife monitoring around the Ekati Mine is conducted in a study area of approximately 2,800 $km^2$. The predominant vegetation type within the study area is heath tundra.

## Wildlife Management and Mitigation

During the 2025 reporting period, 306 general wildlife management actions were implemented in response to wildlife activity at the Ekati Mine, including actions directed at caribou (*Rangifer tarandus;* 108), grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*; 123), wolf (*Canis lupus*; 35), fox (*Vulpes vulpes*; 6) and wolverine (*Gulo gulo*; 5). The remaining wildlife management actions (29) were general to all wildlife or a combination of species. Management actions implemented in 2025 followed a successive hierarchy, starting with site-wide notifications, wildlife notice signs, road closures, and/or work stoppages. Burgundy continues to explore effective mitigation actions to reduce potential interactions with wildlife.

The Caribou Road Mitigation Plan (CRMP), a three-level hierarchy of management and mitigation above the regular Operational Level (Blue) response to wildlife interactions with roads at the Ekati Mine, was applied to Misery Haul Road and Sable Haul Road beginning in mid-2016. The 2025 reporting year represents the ninth full year that the CRMP was implemented. In 2025, the Operational Level (Blue) was in effect for 34 days in September, October, and December, while CRMP alert levels beyond the Operational Level were triggered for the majority of the year due to caribou occurrences near the roads. Level 1 (Yellow—low risk) was triggered on two occasions for a total duration of 15 days, Level 2 (Orange—medium risk) was triggered three times for a total of 31 days, and Level 3 (Red—high risk) was triggered six times for a total duration of 285 days.

## Habitat Alteration and Loss

Habitat loss reported from November 2024 to December 2025 was the result of continued development in the Point Lake area. Habitat loss from November and December 2024 was not included in the 2024 WEMP Report as the total values had not yet been determined. Habitat loss in late 2024 was 20.97 ha and habitat loss in 2025 was 32.03 ha, for a total loss of 53.00 ha, of which 30.20 ha was terrestrial habitat (excluding deep water habitat losses). Shallow water habitat is included in total terrestrial habitat losses as shallow water areas

(i.e., wetlands) are directly influenced by terrestrial processes (USEPA 2026). Deep water (>2m) is considered aquatic habitat and has thus been excluded from terrestrial habitat loss totals.

Between 1997 and 2025, a total of 3,436.3 ha terrestrial habitat (2.69% of the total 127,735 ha pre-development terrestrial habitat included in the study area) has been disturbed or removed due to development of the mine footprint. The land cover types most affected by the development of the Ekati Mine, relative to their availability within the study area, include heath tundra bedrock (3.6%), heath tundra boulder (3.3%), tussock/hummock (3.3%), and spruce forest (3.1%). Habitat elements of special concern (EIS 1995) have also been affected by mine development, including eskers (1.3% of total habitat loss) and riparian areas/wetlands (7.2% of total habitat loss).

As mine conditions continue to change, progressive reclamation efforts are currently underway to reclaim habitat, and Ekati will continue to reclaim areas as they become available.

## Waste Management

Waste is managed to minimize the presence of wildlife attractants throughout Ekati Mine. As part of the WEMP, the landfill and waste bins are surveyed one to two times per week. The percentage of surveys detecting food or food packages at the landfill was 18% in 2025, which was lower than in 2024 (32%). The percentage of surveys detecting misdirected waste or wildlife attractants in waste bins was 4-5% in 2025, which was higher than in 2024 but still representative of a downwards trend in misplaced waste over the past 10 years.

Improper disposal of waste is an ongoing challenge that Burgundy considers a management priority and the responsibility of all staff to address.

## Wildlife Incidents and Mortalities

### *Incidents*

During the 2025 reporting period, there were a total of 46 wildlife incidents reported at the Ekati Mine. Deterrents (bear bangers, scare cartridges, rubber bullets, light vehicles, and helicopters) were used on 41 occasions during wildlife interactions that involved field crews or mine infrastructure.

Grizzly bears accounted for the majority of the incidents (n = 37) and deterrent use (n = 36). While this is the highest number of grizzly bear incidents since 2010, it should be noted that repeat incidents were likely caused by only a few bears rather than 37 distinct individuals. Caribou incidents occurred five times, with four of the incidents involving the same group of two juveniles. Overall, few caribou incidents have occurred across monitoring years (13 in total). There were four other incidents with non-VEC species, involving arctic hare, American robin, and an unknown species of fox.

During the 2025 reporting period, a total of 115 skirting inspections were completed over 115 sampling days at the Ekati Mine Camp and Misery Camp. Two reports of damage or holes to skirting were reported to facilities management for repair. Unknown fox tracks were observed on one occasion, and tracks of an unknown species were observed on one occasion.

Areas with fencing were inspected for damage on 59 occasions at Misery Camp. Damage was recorded and reported 18 times along the Misery Camp fence, although in some cases, the same damage was reported in multiple inspections due to repair delays. No wildlife was observed during fencing surveys in 2025.

Burgundy has implemented multiple mitigation practices to minimize attractants and limit the occurrence of wildlife on-site, including waste management education and awareness programs. To provide additional wildlife safety, visual monitoring, temporary road closures, site-wide notifications, and/or wildlife signs were implemented while caribou and other wildlife were adjacent to or crossing mine roads. The use of Traditional Knowledge (TK) to inform the construction of accessible road crossing ramps and implementation of the CRMP are key measures in limiting wildlife-vehicle interactions.

### *Mortalities*

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 15 mine-related wildlife mortalities reported at the Ekati Mine, down from 28 in 2024. These included arctic hare (seven individuals), caribou (one individual), arctic ground squirrel (one individual), rock ptarmigan (two individuals), unknown ptarmigan species (two individuals) and unknown species of songbirds (two individuals). 2025 was the second consecutive year where a mine-related caribou mortality occurred, following the first in 2024. As with previous years, vehicle collisions were the most common cause of mine-related mortalities in 2025. There were no aircraft-related mortalities in 2025.

Mitigation efforts to reduce wildlife conflicts with aircraft and ground traffic include always giving wildlife the right-of-way, employee education, reducing speed limits, site-wide notifications about wildlife observations, road closures, and the use of Inuksuit (traditional rock structures) to discourage wildlife from approaching high traffic areas.

During the 2025 reporting period, there were eight non-mine related wildlife mortalities reported at the Ekati Mine. They included six caribou, one greater white-fronted goose, and one common raven. All caribou mortalities were assumed caused by predation, with predators and scavengers being observed feeding on the caribou carcass. Both the common raven and greater white-fronted goose mortalities were due to unknown causes.

## Caribou

### *Collared Caribou Monitoring*

The 2025 migration paths and seasonal ranges (winter, calving, post-calving, summer, and fall migration) were mapped for both male and female Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak herd caribou. Core ranges and broader seasonal range extents were determined from 2025 telemetry data acquired from satellite-collared male and female caribou. The Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Environment and Climate Change (GNWT ECC or ECC) telemetry data indicates that the Bathurst herd has seasonal ranges that have historically overlapped with the Ekati Mine wildlife study area and the Beverly/Ahiak herd has fall and winter seasonal ranges that may overlap with the Ekati Mine.

For the Bathurst herd, telemetry data indicated that broader seasonal range extent overlapped with the Ekati Mine during winter and fall. Historically, core ranges have overlapped with the mine during summer, but in 2025 core and broader seasonal ranges for males and females were located north of the mine. In 2025, male

caribou ranges were predominantly situated further south compared to female caribou, particularly during the spring and fall migrations when female caribou travel to and from their calving grounds in Nunavut.

In 2025, the Beverly/Ahiak broad seasonal ranges of females overlapped with the Ekati Mine in winter and summer, and broad seasonal ranges and migration routes of both sexes overlapped with the Ekati Mine in fall and spring. Since 2018, the Beverly/Ahiak winter range has continued to shift southwest of the Ekati Mine. Overall, Beverly/Ahiak caribou generally have more limited interaction with the Ekati Mine than the Bathurst herd.

### *Incidental Observations*

Since 2006, caribou presence and group size have been monitored through incidental observations by Ekati Mine staff. During 2025, 149 incidental observations of caribou were reported, totaling 2,233 animals. However, it is important to note that these incidental observations likely included the same individuals or groups on multiple occasions, rather than representing 2,233 different individuals. The number of incidental observations in 2025 (149) was 28% lower than the 207 incidental observations recorded in 2024. The total number of caribou incidentally observed in 2025 (n = 2,233) was 58% lower than the number of caribou observed in 2024 (5,306) and 81% lower than the number of caribou observed in 2023 (11,555), indicating a downward trend in incidental observations in recent years. The decline in caribou observations may be partly attributable to reduced personnel numbers at the site in 2025, which lowered observation effort, as well as recent shifts in the winter ranges of the Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak herds that reduced interactions with the Ekati Mine.

Consistent with the collar data, the highest percentage of caribou incidentally observed in 2025 were recorded during the winter (42% of observations) and fall migration (40% of observations). In most reporting years, the spring and fall migration periods have been when the majority of caribou are observed around the Ekati Mine.

### *Behavioural Surveys*

Behavioural surveys are used to monitor caribou responses to mine activities at the individual and group levels. During 2025, a total of 24 focal behavioural surveys were completed on 24 caribou: 17 male, 6 female, and 1 of unknown sex. Male caribou spent most of their time bedding (53%) or alert (24%) and female caribou spent most time standing (35%) or feeding (31%). Responses to stressors such as passing haul trucks or dual powered road trains typically involved individuals raising their head to assess for danger and quickly returning to normal behaviour (<1 minute duration). In addition, four behavioural scan surveys were completed for the 2025 reporting period. Scan surveys were completed on four different caribou composition groups: one group of three adult males, one groups of three adults (unknown sex), one group of 30 adults (unknown sex), and one group of 20 adults (unknown sex). Behavioural scan surveys indicated that, on average, caribou were foraging, then travelling to find more available forage in adjacent areas. No stressors occurred during scan surveys in 2025.

### *Long Lake Containment Facility Monitoring*

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 26 caribou observations (333 individuals) over 104 surveys at the Long Lake Containment Facility (LLCF). For most observations, group size was 20 individuals or less, with the

largest group containing approximately 1,000 individuals. Walking was the most common behaviour observed, while trotting, standing, feeding, and bedding were observed less frequently

Other wildlife, scat, and tracks were also observed in the LLCF, including five species of mammal (arctic hare, grizzly bear, wolf, arctic ground squirrel, and red fox) and 36 species of bird. Raptors, which are considered VECs at the Ekati Mine, were observed on multiple occasions, but no species at-risk were recorded at LLCF in 2025. Bird breeding activity was observed on two occasions, and brooding activity was observed on five occasions, with brooding species including cackling goose, greater white-fronted goose, and green-winged teal.

### *Road Monitoring Surveys*

In 2025, road surveys and powerline surveys along Sable, Misery, and Lac du Sauvage roads were completed for 308-318 days, depending on the road, for a total of 1,891 surveys. As per ENR request, powerline and road surveys along Misery Haul Road have been combined for reporting since 2021. Caribou were observed on 294 occasions, and a total of 8,845 caribou were reported. It is important to note that these observations likely included the same individuals or groups on multiple occasions, rather than representing 8,845 different individuals. The three largest groups, estimated at 1,000 caribou each, were observed along Sable and Misery Haul Roads.

To date, no caribou injuries or deaths have been attributed to the power line, but one mortality in 2025 was caused by road traffic (see *Mortalities* above). Observations of caribou near the power line and crossing beneath the power line suggest that the power line does not impede caribou movement or change caribou behaviour.

In 2025, the most common behaviour observed during road monitoring was feeding (79 groups), followed by travelling (61 groups). 84% of caribou observations (247 groups) were recorded within 500m of the roadways, and 6% of caribou observations (18 groups) included some indication of distressed behaviour, primarily in groups of one or two individuals. Further, all instances of distressed behaviour were recorded within 500m of a roadway. Observations of caribou near and crossing all roads/powerline suggest that the roads do not impede caribou movement at a local scale;

### *Traffic Camera Monitoring*

Cameras were deployed on the Misery (1 camera), Sable (1 camera), and Lac du Sauvage (2 cameras) Haul Roads to monitor vehicle passage. The cameras were programmed to take pictures when triggered by an infrared motion sensor (motion triggered photos). From January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, these four cameras recorded for a combined total of 602 days, with notable gaps in effort during some months of the year. A total of 25,506 vehicles were detected on Misery Haul Road, 903 vehicles on Sable Haul Road, and 10,373 vehicles on the Lac du Sauvage Road. At the Misery Haul Road camera, the average daily count of vehicles in 2025 was 102, which was higher than 72 in 2024. At the Sable Haul Road camera, the average daily count of vehicles in 2025 was 10, compared to 141 in 2024. At the Lac du Sauvage cameras, average daily counts of vehicles in 2025 were 42 and 73, compared to 227 in 2024. These patterns align with shifts in activity including cessation of mining at Point Lake, and reduced mining at Sable in 2025. Overall, traffic cameras in 2025 observed approximately half of the number of vehicles observed in 2024, despite an additional camera being deployed on the Lac du Sauvage Road. However, seasonal variation in traffic and gaps in recording effort make it difficult to attribute this result to real changes in traffic patterns.

### Grizzly Bear

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 111 incidental grizzly bear sightings, totaling 158 grizzly bears on 59 separate days near the Ekati Mine. The first sighting occurred on April 25, 2025, and the last sighting prior to winter was on October 25, 2025. During the LLCF surveys, one incidental grizzly bear sighting was reported.

Multiple animals or family groups were observed on 33 occasions in 2025. The most observed family group composition included one adult female and one adult male, which was observed on nine occasions. Grizzly bear sightings tended to be concentrated around areas of active work or roads due to an increased probability of bears being seen by staff when present in these areas. The number of incidental observations is not indicative of whether the number of individuals near the mine has remained consistent, as individual bears could have been observed on multiple occasions in previous years. The total number of grizzly bears sighted in 2025 (n = 158) remained roughly the same as in 2024 (n = 136), both of which fall within the upper range of the number of sightings recorded annually between 2001 and 2021. The number of incidental observations in any given year depends on the number and awareness of observers, the number of bears in the area, and the proportion of those bears that are resident and/or tolerant of the mine. The increase in reports since 2015 may be linked to increased awareness and reporting of grizzly bears by mine staff and the decentralization of mining activity spreading the observers across a wider area. As in past years, grizzly bear site-wide notifications were delivered following the first evidence of grizzly bear activity of the season.

### Wolf

There were 42 incidental wolf sightings, totaling 80 wolves on 38 separate days near the Ekati Mine during the 2025 reporting period. One incidental wolf sighting of two individuals was reported during LLCF surveys.

Most wolf observations occurred at sites relatively close to Sable and Misery Haul Roads, in areas with increased human activity, and hence a higher probability of an animal being recorded if present. In 2025, wolf observations (80) were above the average (n = 60) from 2001 to 2025, but is still in line with interannual variation typical of past reporting years. Though family groups of two or more wolves were observed on 14 occasions in 2025, no pups have been observed since 2022. The lower number of wolf and pup observations in recent years may be associated with natural changes to wolf migratory patterns and behaviour or due to lower numbers of staff, and therefore observers, on site.

### Wolverine

In 2025, there were 6 incidental observations of individual wolverines recorded on six separate days near the Ekati Mine, which falls below the average (n = 24) number of observations recorded since 2003. No additional wolverines were recorded during LLCF surveys. Due to high numbers of incidental wolverine observations in 2005, the Ekati Mine has since implemented robust adaptive mitigation measures to reduce wolverine occurrence on site. There has been a consistent downward trend in incidental wolverine observations since 2016, which may indicate that mitigation efforts have been effective.

### Fox

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 59 incidental fox sightings, totaling 78 individual foxes over 52 separate days near the Ekati Mine, with 63 individuals identified as red fox. Seven additional observations

of eight individual red fox were recorded during LLCF surveys. Most fox sightings occurred close to mine infrastructure and potential attractants, in areas with increased human activity, and hence a higher probability of an animal being recorded if present. Though no active fox dens were reported in 2024 or 2025, observations of adults with kits suggest denning was occurring in the area. The number of foxes observed in 2025 (78) is below the average of 120 per year for the period 2007-2025, which could be indicative of natural fluctuations in population or behaviour, or due to improved management of potential attractants such as food and waste.

### Raptors

In 2025, there were 32 incidental raptor sightings over 25 separate days near the Ekati Mine. These observations included a total of 68 individuals and represented seven different species. In addition, four raptor species (16 individuals) were observed during LLCF surveys. Incidentally observed species included bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*), and snowy owl (*Bubo scandiacus*). The common raven is included with raptors due to similar nesting habitats. No breeding or nesting activity was recorded for raptors or ravens in 2025, likely owing at least partially to the success of pit wall nest monitoring and deterrence efforts.

### Migratory Birds

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 37 incidental observations of migratory birds, including 233 individuals and representing 23 species. The most common incidentally observed species were snow bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*), northern pintail (*Anas acuta*), and greater white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*). Northern pintail, along with two additional species, long-tailed duck (*Clangula hyemalis*) and red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus),* are ranked as “Sensitive” in the NWT (GNWT 2024). Red-necked phalarope is also listed on Schedule 1 of the Species At-Risk Act with “Special Concern” status (COSEWIC 2014) and was observed on two separate occasions. Breeding activity was incidentally observed on 12 occasions in 2025, including one American robin nest which was found in a laydown yard and protected until the young had fledged.

All species observed in 2025 have been observed previously at the Ekati Mine, and the total number of birds observed was in line with previous reporting years. Consistency in the diversity and abundance of migratory bird observations suggest that the Ekati Mine is not having a detrimental effect on migratory birds in the region.

### Rare or Uncommon Species

Rare or uncommon species reported in 2025 included red-necked phalarope, four adult moose, and one adult muskox. Red-necked phalarope was last reported at the Ekati Mine in 2022. Moose sightings fall within the typical number of annual observations recorded between 2013 and 2025 (typically 1-9 individuals seen per year). Muskoxen have only been reported one other time since 2017.

As arctic habitat conditions continue to change in response to global warming, forage value for moose and muskox is expected to increase near the Ekati Mine and sightings could become more typical.

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

| Abbreviation/Acronym | Definition |
|---|---|
| % | Percent |
| Burgundy | Burgundy Diamond Mines Ltd. |
| CRMP | Caribou Road Mitigation Plan |
| DAR | Developer's Assessment Report |
| DDEC | Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation |
| Diavik | Diavik Diamond Mines Inc. |
| ECCC | Environment and Climate Change Canada |
| EIR | Environmental Impact Report |
| EIS | Environmental Impact Statement |
| ERM | Environmental Resources Management |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| GNWT ENR (or ENR) | Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Environment and Natural Resources, now the Department of Environment and Climate Change |
| GNWT ECC (or ECC) | GNWT Department of Environment and Climate Change |
| ha | Hectare |
| km | Kilometre |
| KM | Kilometre marker |
| $km^2$ | Square kilometre |
| km/h | Kilometres per hour |
| LDS | Lac du Sauvage |
| LLCF | Long Lake Containment Facility |
| m | Metre |
| min | Minute |
| NABBS | North American Breeding Bird Surveys |
| NWT | Northwest Territories |
| PSD | Pigeon Stream Diversion |
| SARA | *Species at Risk Act* (2002) |
| TK | Traditional Knowledge |
| UD | Utilization Distribution |
| UTM | Universal Transverse Mercator coordinate system |
| VEC | Valued Ecosystem Component |
| WEMP | Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program |
| WMMP | Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan |

# 1. Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program

The Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program (WEMP) is a requirement of the Environmental Agreement (Articles V and VII) and the *Wildlife Act* (Subsection 95, 2013) for the Ekati Mine. The WEMP is guided by the Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP). The WMMP is based on the predicted effects to wildlife identified in the initial Environmental Impact Statement (EIS; BHP 1995a), the Environmental Assessment Report for the Sable, Pigeon, and Beartooth Kimberlite Pipes (BHP and Dia Met 2000), the Developer's Assessment Report (DAR; DDEC 2014) for the Jay Project, and the Point Lake Project Description (Arctic Canadian 2021b). Although the Jay Project has been cancelled, the wildlife monitoring and mitigation initiatives for the area (i.e., the Caribou Road Mitigation Plan, CRMP) have been adopted and implemented site wide.

The WEMP is a living document that is reviewed every five years and updated as needed. On June 1, 2017, Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation (DDEC) received conditional approval for the Wildlife Effects Monitoring Program, including the CRMP (GNWT 2017). Final approval was received in July 2018. Through a stakeholder workshop in December 2021 and subsequent comment and response cycles, the Point Lake WEMP Addendums (Arctic Canadian 2021a) were finalized in 2022, with post-dewatering monitoring and mitigations implemented.

The WEMP incorporates revisions based on feedback from extensive consultation with stakeholders, including regulators, scientists, and Indigenous people. The WEMP uses scientific methodology and Traditional Knowledge (TK) as sources of information regarding wildlife and local ecology.

The Ekati Mine employs several full-time Environmental Specialists, an Environment Advisor dedicated to the implementation of the WEMP, seasonal hires, and wildlife biologists (consultants) to assist with the WEMP as required.

## 1.1 Valued Ecosystem Components and Species of Concern

The WMMP identifies five Valued Ecosystem Components (VECs), two additional priority species, and one additional wildlife group that are studied and reported on in the WEMP Report. Wildlife VECs include caribou, grizzly bear, wolf, wolverine, raptors and listed migratory birds. Additional priority species/groups include the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Arctic fox (*Vulpes lagopus*), and non-listed migratory birds because they interact with the Ekati Mine regularly.

VECs include wildlife species and habitats identified as being of social or economic importance or of particular ecological or conservation concern. The WMMP identifies wildlife species of conservation concern based on their federal or territorial status. Federal status includes those listed on Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA; 2002) and/or by the Committee on the Status of the Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). Territorial status includes those listed on the NWT SARA (2009) or by the Canada Wild Species Working Group. Wildlife VECs selected for the WMMP and the rationale for their selection are provided in Table 1.1-1. Following the principles of adaptive management, the VECs and monitoring objectives may be periodically reviewed and changed if deemed beneficial to the monitoring program.

## Table 1.1-1 Wildlife Valued Ecosystem Components

| VEC | Rationale |
|---|---|
| Barren-ground caribou | Barren-ground caribou (*Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus*) are seasonal migrants to the area, are a biologically and culturally important component in the Arctic and are a species of conservation concern. They are federally designated as "Threatened" by COSEWIC, are under consideration for listing on SARA Schedule 1 (Government of Canada 2025) and are listed as "Threatened" under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2024). The general status rank in NWT is "At Risk". |
| Grizzly bear | The grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*; western population) is federally designated as "Special Concern" by COSEWIC, listed as "Special Concern" on SARA Schedule 1 (Government of Canada 2025) and is listed as "No Status" under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2024). The general status rank in NWT is "Sensitive". |
| Grey wolf | The grey wolf is assessed as "Secure" in the NWT (GNWT 2024) and is not listed federally. As a socially and ecologically important species in the Arctic that interacts with the mine on a regular basis, grey wolves are monitored at the Ekati Mine. |
| Wolverine | The wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) is a species of conservation concern. It is federally designated as "Special Concern" by COSEWIC, listed as "Special Concern" on SARA Schedule 1 (Government of Canada 2025), and listed as "No Status" under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2024). The general status rank is "Sensitive" in NWT. |
| Raptors | The peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum/tundrius*) is federally designated as "Not at Risk" by COSEWIC (ECCC 2023). It has been de-listed from *SARA* Schedule 1 (ECCC 2024) and is not listed under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2024). However, it remains a VEC as it is an important species in the Arctic and continues to interact with the mine on a regular basis.<br>The short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*) is federally designated as "Threatened" by COSEWIC, listed as "Special Concern" on SARA Schedule 1 (Government of Canada 2025) and is listed as "No Status" under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2025). The general status rank in NWT is "At Risk".<br>The snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*) was assessed as "Threatened" by COSEWIC in May 2025 (COSEWIC 2025), is under consideration for Schedule 1 of SARA and is listed as "No Status" under the NWT SARA (GWNT 2024). The general status rank in NWT is "Secure". |
| Listed migratory birds | The red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*) and Harris's sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) are listed as "Special Concern" by COSEWIC, listed as "Special Concern" on SARA Schedule 1 (Government of Canada 2025) and listed as "Not Applicable" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "Sensitive" in NWT (GNWT 2024).<br>The rusty blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*) is listed as "Special Concern" by COSEWIC, listed as "Special Concern" on SARA Schedule 1 and listed as "No Status" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "Sensitive" in NWT.<br>The lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*) is listed as "Threatened" by COSEWIC and is under consideration for addition to SARA Schedule 1 and listed as "Not Applicable" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "Sensitive" in NWT.<br>While less likely to be present but with the potential to occur due to shifting ranges, the barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) is listed as "Special Concern" by COSEWIC, listed as "Threatened" on Schedule 1 of SARA (Government of Canada 2025) and listed as "Not Applicable" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "Sensitive" in NWT. The bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*) is listed as "Threatened" by COSEWIC, listed as "Threatened" on Schedule 1 of SARA, and listed as "Not Applicable" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "At Risk" in NWT.<br>Based on their sensitive rankings, these migratory bird species are considered species of concern and monitored at the Ekati Mine as part of the WMMP. |

# 2. Components of the 2025 WEMP Report

The 2025 WEMP marks the 28th annual program and report to be completed at the Ekati Mine. The 2025 reporting period is the calendar year from January 1 to December 31, 2025. For comparison, observations from prior years are also provided in this report.

There are eight main components of the WEMP intended to evaluate the environmental impact predictions and potential effects on VECs, foxes, and migratory birds, and to address key residual environmental risks to wildlife as identified in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the pathways identified in the Jay Project DAR:

- Monitoring caribou;
- Monitoring carnivores, including grizzly bears, wolves, wolverine, and foxes;
- Monitoring raptors and migratory birds;
- Monitoring interactions between wildlife and traffic, and assessing success of mitigation efforts;
- Monitoring wildlife mortalities and incidents and assessing the effectiveness of mitigation efforts;
- Monitoring potential wildlife attractants and assessing the effectiveness of waste management efforts;
- Inspecting buildings (i.e., accommodation skirting) and fencing structures at the Ekati Mine's Main Camp and Misery Camp for evidence of interaction with or disturbance by wildlife; and
- Monitoring wildlife interactions with the Long Lake Containment Facility.

Results of the 2025 WEMP will be compared against predictions in the 1995 EIS during the next EIR period. The most recent EIR period included monitoring years 2022 to 2024 (ACDC 2025).

# 3. Wildlife Management and Mitigation

Wildlife is managed at the Ekati Mine through mitigations that are applied site wide and are informed by the monitoring that occurs as part of the WEMP. At the Ekati Mine, new mitigations are applied and/or current mitigations are intensified or reduced within an adaptive management framework and the ability to manage mitigations depends on the type of environmental design feature and mitigation. An increase in monitoring is often used to inform adaptive management when it is discovered that a mitigation is not achieving the desired result. For example, should monitoring demonstrate that wildlife-vehicle collisions are occurring frequently, creating a need for additional management of the issue. In response to the monitoring results, the scope and frequency of driver training is increased, speed limits are reduced, and/or other mitigation is managed adaptively to reduce wildlife collisions. To assess if the additional mitigation efforts are working, monitoring is increased, and results are assessed following a designated trial period. This adaptive management feedback loop is essential for Ekati to continuously learn, adapt, and improve wildlife mitigations at the mine.

## 3.1 General Wildlife Management

General wildlife management actions at the Ekati Mine are carried out for cases in which actual or potential interactions between wildlife and humans may compromise the safety of the animal(s) and/or human(s). Wildlife management has evolved over time based on engagement, monitoring results, and adaptive management. Management has generally increased since reporting began in 2013. In most cases, the trigger for general wildlife management activities is the observation and/or reporting of wildlife to the Environment Department by site staff.

Burgundy implements several general management actions to reduce potential interactions with wildlife, including:

1. Site-wide notification about the presence of wildlife via:
    a. site-wide emails;
    b. safety meetings at the beginning of each shift;
    c. department-specific radio channels by the Environment Department and/or the Security Department;
    d. all call radio announcement by the Security Department, and;
    e. safety alerts issued by the Health and Safety Department.
2. Wildlife awareness presentations to specific departments.
3. Posting road signs about reduced speed limits or to alert drivers that wildlife is in the area.
4. Delayed or postponed blasting activity if wildlife is within a 1 km distance of the planned blasting area.
5. Temporary road closures or work stoppages due to the presence of wildlife.

Since 2013, all wildlife management actions have been documented in the WEMP Report and reviewed as part of ongoing assessment of management measures for reducing wildlife incidents and their associated risks to both wildlife and people. These controls are in place to ensure the safety of wildlife and site staff alike.

### 3.1.1 Objectives

The purpose of general wildlife management is to proactively reduce the potential for wildlife-related safety concerns for employees, and to minimize potential effects of mine activities on wildlife. The objective of this

component of the WEMP is to document general wildlife management efforts undertaken to reduce the potential for wildlife-related incidents.

### 3.1.2 Methods

General wildlife management actions were tracked by the Environment Department, including the type of management action undertaken (i.e., site-wide notification, road signs, road closure, or work stoppage), the wildlife species involved (e.g., caribou, grizzly bear, or general if it addressed site management practices that benefit all wildlife and staff), why the management action was undertaken (e.g., a wildlife incident), and who requested the management action. Other information–such as location, time, and date–were also recorded.

### 3.1.3 Results

During the 2025 reporting period, 306 general wildlife management actions were implemented in response to wildlife activity at the Ekati Mine (Table 3.1-1). Management was mainly directed at caribou and grizzly bear, which made up 75% of wildlife management actions. In 2025, general wildlife management actions involved caribou (n = 108), grizzly bear (n = 123), wolf (n = 35), fox (n = 6) and wolverine (n = 5). No management actions were required for moose or migratory birds.

The types of management actions used for each species are summarized in Table 3.1-2. The majority (n = 251) involved sending site-wide notifications to on-site staff. In 2025, there were 13 training sessions on the use of wildlife deterrents, and eight staff members completed a Predator Defense Course to better respond to wildlife encounters at site.

### 3.1.4 Discussion

General management actions in 2025 were proactively implemented in response to wildlife being observed near infrastructure where there was the potential for harm to either wildlife or mine personnel. Site-wide notifications for caribou were largely focused on alerting staff of caribou observed in proximity to roads, in line with mitigations from the CRMP. During the summer season, a focus was placed on informing site staff of bear safety and awareness during periods of high activity, including late spring, when bears wake up from hibernation, and in the fall, when they are trying to bulk for the winter and tend to be the most dangerous. Training sessions on wildlife deterrents also occurred frequently during the summer months to ensure adequate staff were trained to respond to wildlife encounters should they occur.

Waste management procedures continue to be important as reducing attractants around site aids in reducing wildlife presence and the chance for human-wildlife interactions. Formal general management actions for waste only occurred on one occasion, which included limiting access to the landfill to reduce improper waste disposal, however the Environment department continues to inform staff of the importance of proper waste management at site on a regular basis and in the weekly ‘Welcome Back’ presentation for returning staff. As well, site awareness (e.g., closing doors), wildlife interactions, and wildlife reporting continues to be a part of the orientation that all new employees receive upon first arrival at site. Documenting wildlife management actions will continue in future years to enable ongoing evaluation of the programs and determine their effectiveness in mitigating wildlife interactions.

Table 3.1-1 Number of General Wildlife Management Actions Reported at the Ekati Mine, 2013 to 2025

| Species | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Mammals** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Caribou | 4 | 7 | 5 | 38 | 91 | 183 | 385 | 87 | 252 | 197 | 153 | 278 | 108 | **1,788** |
| Grizzly bear | 8 | 31 | 51 | 88 | 155 | 244 | 252 | 88 | 327 | 260 | 276 | 265 | 123 | **2,168** |
| Wolf | 5 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 12 | 1 | 13 | 17 | 11 | 11 | 35 | **126** |
| Fox (red, arctic, unknown) | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 6 | **26** |
| Wolverine | 3 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 28 | 54 | 103 | 27 | 106 | 80 | 19 | 45 | 5 | **489** |
| Moose | 1 | 6 | 8 | 13 | 13 | 17 | 18 | 16 | 10 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 0 | **124** |
| **Birds** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Common redpoll | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Common raven | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | **7** |
| Tundra swan | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Raptor species | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **5** |
| Unknown songbird | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| General wildlife | 7 | 1 | 15 | 14 | 6 | 14 | 22 | 15 | 10 | 7 | 26 | 27 | 29 | **193** |
| **Total** | **28** | **53** | **93** | **172** | **294** | **515** | **804** | **236** | **722** | **573** | **491** | **642** | **306** | **4,929** |

Table 3.1-2 Summary of General Management Actions Implemented at the Ekati Mine, 2025

| Species | Site-Wide Notification | Presentation or Meeting | Signs[1] | Work Stoppages | Road Closures[2] | Safety Alert | Blast Cancelled or Postponed | Training | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caribou | 83 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 142 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **236** |
| Grizzly bear | 118 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **123** |
| Wolf | 33 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **35** |
| Fox | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **6** |
| Wolverine | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **5** |
| Moose | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| General | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 21 | 1 | **29** |
| **Total** | **251** | **2** | **11** | **1** | **15** | **3** | **1** | **21** | **1** | **306** |

Notes:

[1] Signs were changed as part of the CRMP mitigation.

[2] Road closures occurred as part of the CRMP mitigation. See Section 5.4 for road closure details that occurred due to caribou.

# 4. Linear Features and Traffic

The physical presence of roads and associated traffic can potentially cause wildlife to alter their movement and behaviour. Depending on the species and traffic volume, some animals may travel across roads, be deflected along roads before crossing, or completely avoid roads. Increased traffic on the Sable, Misery, and Lac du Sauvage roads, as well as associated power lines and pipelines at the Ekati Mine site, has the potential to impede wildlife movement, including caribou movement through their annual range. The potential for these linear disturbances to disrupt wildlife movement patterns remains a key concern for Burgundy, Indigenous communities, IEMA, GNWT ECC, and the public. Linear features and traffic also pose a threat to both human and wildlife safety by causing collisions that may result in injuries and/or wildlife mortalities. As a result, Ekati has implemented several mitigation measures to avoid and limit the effects of linear features and traffic on wildlife, with the mitigations in the Caribou Road Mitigation Plan (CRMP) being a priority at the Ekati Mine (Photo 3.1-1).



Photo 3.1-1 Example of an Inuksuit (traditional rock structures) that are placed at intervals around infrastructure to deter wildlife and minimize potential interactions between mine-related traffic and wildlife.

## 4.1 Caribou Road Mitigation Plan

The Caribou Road Mitigation Plan (CRMP) is a management plan specific to managing risks to caribou and is outlined in detail in Ekati's Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan. The CRMP is a hierarchal approach to manage risks when caribou are in close proximity to or interacting with mine roads at the Ekati Mine (Figure 4.1-1) and includes mitigation and monitoring requirements (Table 4.1-1). Burgundy's strategy for managing risks to caribou associated with roads is to apply site-wide increases to mitigation and monitoring activities as caribou approach the Ekati Mine (Golder Associates 2017).

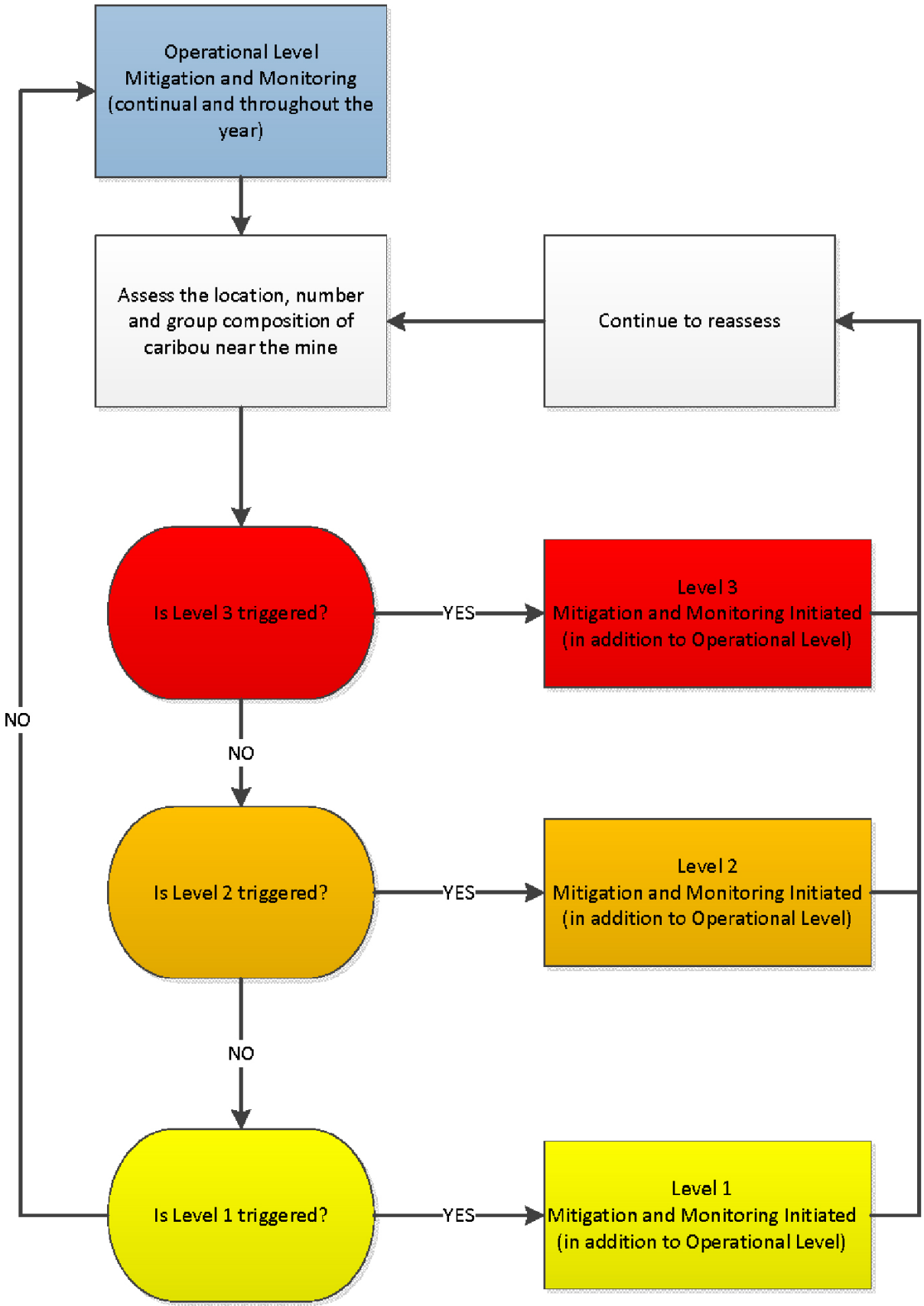



Figure 4.1-1 Decision Tree for the Caribou Road Mitigation Plan

Table 4.1-1 Action Levels (Triggers and Associated Caribou Road Mitigation and Monitoring

| Level (Alert) | Action Level (Triggers) to Initiate | Wildlife Road Mitigation | Caribou Monitoring |
|---|---|---|---|
| Operational (Blue) | • Continual and throughout the year | • Roads incorporate caribou crossings<br>• Employee education<br>• Speed limits are posted<br>• Wildlife has right-of-way on all roads<br>• Observations of wildlife on roads are communicated to the Environment Department and other drivers in the area<br>• Wildlife carcasses on or near roads are removed<br>• Road snow berm height is managed during winter (~1 m high) | • Collared caribou monitoring<br>• Incidental wildlife sightings<br>• Behavioural observations and cameras at road and esker crossings<br>• Weekly road surveys |
| 1 (Yellow) | • One or more collared caribou or caribou observed by site personnel are within 30 km of the Ekati Mine (i.e., RSA) | • Site-wide notifications of caribou approach to Ekati Mine<br>• Signage indicating caribou could be encountered (Yellow alert) | • Collared caribou monitoring<br>• Incidental wildlife sightings<br>• Behavioural observations and cameras at road and esker crossings<br>• Daily road surveys |
| 2 (Orange) | • One or more collared caribou or caribou observed by site personnel are within 14 km of the Ekati Mine | • Site-wide notifications of caribou approach to Ekati Mine<br>• Increased signage in areas where caribou might encounter the road<br>• Signage indicating caribou are likely to be encountered (orange alert)<br>• Speed limits are decreased and posted | • Collared caribou monitoring<br>• Incidental wildlife sightings<br>• Behavioural observations and cameras at road and esker crossings<br>• Daily road surveys<br>• Environment Technicians dispatched to monitor traffic and provide caribou safety (if required) |
| 3 (Red) | • One or more caribou are observed within 200 m of mine roads during any season<br>• One or more caribou are observed within 500 m of mine roads during the spring (April 20 to June 1) or fall (September 7 to November 30) migrations | • Site-wide notifications of caribou approach to Ekati Mine<br>• Signage indicating caribou are highly likely to be encountered (red alert)<br>• Road closures as necessary | • Collared caribou monitoring<br>• Incidental wildlife sightings<br>• Behavioural observations and cameras at road and esker crossings<br>• Daily road surveys<br>• Environment Technicians dispatched to monitor traffic and provide caribou safety<br>• Behavioural surveys (scan and focal sampling) will occur, when possible, at any time of year |

Monitoring is expected to provide early detection of caribou approaching roads and to assist in management of the appropriate levels of mitigation to protect caribou and other wildlife. Monitoring related to the CRMP is documented and reviewed for the purposes of adaptive management and mitigation at the Ekati Mine.

### 4.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the CRMP are to:

- Avoid and minimize (reduce) the risk of caribou and other wildlife mortalities from vehicle traffic;
- Avoid and minimize the barrier effect of the Lac du Sauvage, Sable and Misery roads (and other Ekati Mine roads) to caribou movement and migration; and
- Limit the effect of sensory disturbance from roads and traffic on caribou behaviour.

### 4.1.2 Methods

Mitigation and monitoring efforts related to the CRMP were documented in a database by the Environment Department. Information including the number of days spent at each alert level and the reason for triggering a change in the alert was recorded (Table 4.1-1). When possible, information was recorded for speed limit reductions and road closures related to the CRMP, including location (road), duration of speed limit reduction or road closure, time, and date.

### 4.1.3 Results

#### 4.1.3.1 CRMP Alert Levels

The 2025 reporting year is the ninth complete year that the CRMP has been implemented. In 2025, the Operational Level (Blue) was in effect for a total of 34 days in September, October, and December, while CRMP alert levels beyond the Operational Level were triggered for the remainder of the year due to caribou occurring in proximity to the mine (Table 4.1-2; Table 4.1-3). Level 1 (Yellow—low risk) was triggered on two occasions for a total duration of 15 days across January and December. Level 2 (Orange—medium risk) was triggered three times for a total of 31 days across January, June, and September, while Level 3 (Red—high risk) was triggered for the remaining 285 days, with occurrences distributed across all months.

Table 4.1-2 Days Spent at Each CRMP Alert Level, 2025

| Alert Level | Total Number of Days |
|---|---|
| Blue | 34 |
| Yellow | 15 |
| Orange | 31 |
| Red | 285 |
| **Total** | **365** |

## Table 4.1-3 Summary of Caribou Road and Mitigation Plan Activities at the Ekati Mine, 2025

| Event # | Start Date 2025 | End Date 2025 | Duration (days) | Previous Level | Alert Level | Alert Trigger |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1-Jan | 7-Jan | 7 | Red (from 2024) | Yellow | Caribou collar data indicated caribou within 30 km of the mine site, but outside the 14 km buffer. |
| 2 | 8-Jan | 15-Jan | 8 | Yellow | Red | Caribou observed during road surveys close to the Lac du Sauvage Road. |
| 3 | 16-Jan | 19-Jan | 4 | Red | Orange | No triggers for Alert Level 3 occurred for 3 days but caribou remained within 14 km of the mine site. |
| 4 | 20-Jan | 1-Jun | 133 | Orange | Red | Caribou observed during road surveys close to the Misery Road. |
| 5 | 2-Jun | 24-Jun- | 23 | Red | Orange | No triggers for Alert Level 3 occurred for 3 days but caribou remained within 14 km of the mine site. |
| 6 | 25-Jun | 6-Sep | 74 | Orange | Red | Caribou observed frequently during road surveys close to the mine roads and collar data showed caribou moving in and out of the study area. |
| 7 | 7-Sep | 10-Sep | 4 | Red | Orange | No triggers for Alert Level 3 occurred for 3 days but caribou remained within 14 km of the mine site. |
| 8 | 11-Sep | 20-Sep | 10 | Orange | Red | Caribou observed during road surveys close to the Sable Road. |
| 9 | 21-Sep | 22-Oct | 32 | Red | Blue | No caribou observed during road surveys and caribou collar data did not indicate caribou within 30 km of Ekati Mine. |
| 10 | 23-Oct | 7-Dec | 46 | Blue | Red | Caribou observed frequently during road surveys close to the mine roads and collar data showed caribou moving through the study area. |
| 11 | 8-Dec | 9-Dec | 2 | Red | Blue | No caribou observed during road surveys and caribou collar data did not indicate caribou within 30 km of Ekati Mine. |
| 12 | 10-Dec | 17-Dec | 8 | Blue | Yellow | Caribou collar data indicated caribou within 30 km of the Ekati Mine site, but outside of the 14 km buffer. |
| 13 | 18-Dec | 31-Dec | 14 | Yellow | Red | Caribou collar data indicated caribou located within the 14 km buffer zone around the mine site. |

Notes:

Blue (Operational): continual and throughout the year.

Yellow (Level 1—low risk): ≥ 1 collared caribou or caribou sightings within 30 km of the Ekati Mine (i.e., RSA).

Orange (Level 2—medium risk): ≥ 1 collared caribou within 14 km of the Ekati Mine and/or caribou sightings near roads, and/or 0.25% of total female caribou in the Bathurst herd are between 200 to 500 m of the LDS or Misery roads during any season.

Red (Level 3—high risk): 0.25% of total female caribou in Bathurst herd within 200 m of roads, ≥ 1 caribou group sighting within 500 m of roads during northern migration (May) and/or ≥ 1 caribou crossing road.

Due to difficulties determining caribou locations from collar data obtained from the regional barren-ground caribou maps prior to the development of finer-scale maps in November, the higher alert level was conservatively initiated or maintained in cases where the exact location of caribou could not be determined.

Results since the CRMP was first implemented in 2017 are presented in Table 4.1-4 and Table 4.1-5.

Table 4.1-4 Days Spent at Each CRMP Alert Level, 2017 to 2024

| Alert Level | Year | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| Blue | 14 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 31 | 33 | 52 | 50 |
| Yellow | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 17 | 24 | 15 |
| Orange | 334 | 258 | 62 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 250 | 0 |
| Red | 17 | 102 | 303 | 358 | 320 | 315 | 39 | 301 |
| **Total** | **365** | **365** | **365** | **366*** | **365** | **365** | **365** | **366*** |

* Leap year.

Table 4.1-5 Summary of Caribou Road and Mitigation Plan Activities at the Ekati Mine, 2017 to 2024

| Event # | Start Date | End Date | Duration (days) | Previous Level | Alert Level | Alert Trigger |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2017** | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1-Jan | 25-Apr | 115 | n/a | Orange | Caribou observed periodically during helicopter flights. Continued observations during power line surveys, incidental, and/or road surveys. |
| 2 | 25-Apr | 9-May | 14 | Orange | Blue | No caribou sightings near roads. |
| 3 | 9-May | 1-Nov | 176 | Blue | Orange | Caribou observed incidentally > 1.5 km from Pigeon Pit. Continued observations during power line surveys, incidental, and/or road surveys. |
| 4 | 1-Nov | 7-Nov | 6 | Orange | Orange | Alert level switched between red and orange during these 6 days pending location of caribou observations. Caribou group (5 individuals, < 0.25% cows) observed < 100 m from Sable Road at KM 15, caribou group (30 individuals, < 0.25% cows) observed crossing Sable Road at the caribou ramp near KM 14, large group (300 individuals) was reported at Sable Road near KM 10 slightly away from the road before moving to cross, and caribou group (14 individuals) observed crossing Sable Road. |
| | | | | Red | Red | |
| 5 | 7-Nov | 15-Nov | 8 | Red | Orange | Caribou group crossed the road. No additional caribou sightings near roads. Road re-opened at 8:50 pm following a short-term closure. |

| Event # | Start Date | End Date | Duration (days) | Previous Level | Alert Level | Alert Trigger |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 15-Nov | 1-Dec | 16 | Orange | Red | Caribou groups observed crossing Misery Road. Short-term road closures occurred due to caribou groups. Jay Road closed to traffic and personnel due to instability of road. |
| 7 | 1-Dec | 31-Dec | 30 | Red | Orange | No caribou sightings near roads. |
| **2018** | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1-Jan | 4-May | 123 | Orange (from 2017) | Orange | Caribou observed. |
| 2 | 4-May | 8-Jun | 35 | Orange | Red | Caribou observed crossing Misery Road at KM 11. Seven caribou were observed, with at least two bulls. |
| 3 | 8-Jun | 28-Jun | 20 | Red | Orange | This level change was triggered by caribou collar data after receiving the map, which showed all collared females have moved >10 km from site. There were also few observations of caribou crossing roads around site. |
| 4 | 28-Jun | 3-Jul | 5 | Orange | Blue | No caribou observed for several days. |
| 5 | 3-Jul | 25-Oct | 114 | Blue | Orange | Caribou observation near Misery Road KM 3. |
| 6 | 25-Oct | 30-Dec | 67 | Orange | Red | Level change triggered due to caribou observations near Misery and Sable Roads and the caribou satellite collar map. |
| 7 | 31-Dec | 31-Dec | 1 | Red | Orange | No caribou observed since December 21. |
| **2019** | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1-Jan | 31-Jan | 31 | Orange (from 2018) | Orange | No caribou had been observed since December 21, 2018. |
| 2 | 31-Jan | 14-Jun | 134 | Orange | Red | Caribou observed crossing Misery Road at KM 22. |
| 3 | 14-Jun | 8-Jul | 24 | Red | Orange | Level change based on lack of caribou sightings near the roads and satellite mapping indicated that the majority of collared individuals have moved away from the mine site (one collared individual remains within ~14 km of the Ekati mine). |
| 4 | 8-Jul | 24-Oct | 108 | Orange | Red | Level change triggered due to recent observations of caribou near Sable Road. |
| 5 | 24-Oct | 31-Oct | 7 | Red | Orange | Lack of caribou sightings near roads and mapping indicated that the majority of collared individuals have moved away from the mine site. |
| 6 | 31-Oct | 31-Dec | 61 | Orange | Red | A lone caribou was reported as injured (limping). Level change followed observations of a caribou near Sable Road and satellite collared caribou mapping. |

| Event # | Start Date | End Date | Duration (days) | Previous Level | Alert Level | Alert Trigger |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2020** | | | | | | |
| 1 | 01-Jan | 27-Oct | 300 | Red (from 2019) | Red | No change in CRMP level as of December 31, 2019. Caribou remained around Misery and Sable roads. |
| 2 | 27-Oct | 4-Nov | 8 | Red | Orange | Level change based on lack of caribou sightings near the roads. |
| 3 | 4-Nov | 31-Dec | 58 | Orange | Red | A large herd of caribou (~400) was observed around Sable Road. The herd split to either side of the road. |
| **2021** | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1-Jan | 6-Oct | 278 | Red (from 2020) | Red | Due to continued caribou presence (collar data and/or observations). |
| 2 | 6-Oct | 20-Oct | 14 | Red | Yellow | Changed from Level 3 (red) to Level 1 (yellow) based on collar data and observations. |
| 3 | 20-Oct | 1-Dec | 42 | Yellow | Red | Changed to Level 3 (red) from Level 1 (yellow) based on two large herds (~2,500) crossing roads. |
| 4 | 1-Dec | 31-Dec | 31 | Red | Blue | Changed from Level 3 (red) to Operational Level (blue) based on collar data and lack of observations. |
| **2022** | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1-Jan | 17-Jan | 16 | Blue (from 2021) | Blue | Initiated in 2022 at operational level and remained there until January 17 due to caribou presence (collar data and observations). |
| 2 | 17-Jan | 2-Feb | 16 | Blue | Yellow | Escalated to level 1 (yellow) from Operational Level (Blue) based on two caribou observed at Misery Road. |
| 3 | 2-Feb | 14-Dec | 315 | Yellow | Red | Changed from Level 1 (yellow) to Level 3 (red) based on collar data and observations. |
| 4 | 14-Dec | 31-Dec | 18 | Red | Blue | Changed from Level 3 (red) to Operational Level (blue) based on collar data and lack of observations. |
| **2023** | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1-Jan | 18-Jan | 18 | Blue (from 2022) | Blue | Initiated in 2023 at operational level and remained there until February 18 due to caribou presence (collar data and observations). |
| 2 | 18-Jan | 18-Feb | 31 | Blue | Red | Escalated to Level 3 (Red) from Operational Level (Blue) based on increased observations of caribou on site. |
| 3 | 18-Feb | 26–Oct | 250 | Red | Orange | Changed from Level 3 (Red) to Level 2 (Orange) based on collar data and observations. A herd of caribou moved into the LLCF. |

| Event # | Start Date | End Date | Duration (days) | Previous Level | Alert Level | Alert Trigger |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 26-Oct | 03-Nov | 8 | Orange | Red | Changed from Level 2 (Orange) to Level 3 (Red) based on collar data and observations. |
| 5 | 03-Nov | 07-Dec | 34 | Red | Blue | Changed from Level 3 (Red) to Operational Level (Blue) based on collar data and lack of observations. |
| 6 | 07-Dec | 31-Dec | 24 | Blue | Yellow | Escalated to Level 1 (Yellow) from Operational Level (Blue) based on one observation of a caribou on Misery Road. |
| **2024** | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1-Jan | 2-Feb | 33 | Yellow (from 2023) | Blue | Initiated in 2024 at Level 1 (Yellow) level. No caribou presence (collar data and observations) for 2 weeks. |
| 2 | 2-Feb | 12-Feb | 10 | Blue | Yellow | Changed to Level 1 (Yellow) based on Caribou observations on Fox Haul Road. |
| 3 | 12-Feb | 29-Feb | 17 | Yellow | Blue | Changed to Operational (Blue). No caribou observed during road surveys in 10 days, no collared caribou nearby. |
| 4 | 29-Feb | 19-Oct | 233 | Blue | Red | Escalated to Level 3 (Red). Collar data reported that caribou are starting to move into the Mine area. |
| 5 | 19-Oct | 24-Oct | 5 | Red | Yellow | Changed to Level 1 (Yellow). Only 3 caribou (observations and collar data) in the last 30 days. |
| 6 | 24-Oct | 31-Dec | 68 | Yellow | Red | Changed to Level 3 (Red) for the start of Caribou migration. Stayed at Level 3 until the end of 2024. |

Management actions, including monitoring and mitigation changes, were completed each time a trigger occurred, following the CRMP mitigation table. Site-wide notifications were distributed in response to each report of caribou near roads. These included details reminding vehicle operators to watch for caribou, give caribou the right-of-way and stop 100 m back of caribou if the individual is located on or in close proximity to the road, keep distances of at least 100 m away from caribou at all times, and slow to 20 km/h when caribou are within 200 m of the road or 40 km/h when caribou are within 500 m of the road. Signs were also displayed in multiple locations within Main Camp and Misery Camp to advise staff on site of changing levels of caribou activity and notifications were provided to operational departments to review with crews. When caribou attempted to cross the road (Red alert), or were in very close proximity, environment staff were consulted to ensure proper procedures to protect caribou were implemented. During the Red alert level, speed limits were decreased, and road signage at the entrance and exits of active Haul Roads changed to indicate caribou were highly likely to be encountered in the area.

#### 4.1.3.2 Road Closures

Road closures occurred when caribou were within 100 m of a mine road in any season or when caribou were located within 500 m during spring migration and their direction of travel indicated they would interact with

a mine road. In total, road closure occurred on 14 occasions during 2025 (Table 4.1-6). Road closures were initiated at Sable Haul Road 11 times for a total of 658 minutes, with caribou bedded on the road on 10 occasions and standing on 1 occasion. Misery Haul Road had one road closure lasting 60 minutes, during which caribou were foraging along the road's shoulders. Fox Haul Road and Point Lake Pit Ramp were closed on one occasion each, with closures lasting 15 minutes and 13 minutes, respectively. Most traffic delays (93%) occurred in July, with a total operational time delay of 746 minutes. There was additional loss of person-hours as several heavy, medium, and light vehicles were often stopped at one time. A summary of past road closures is presented in Table 4.1-7.

Table 4.1-6 Summary of Road Closures Due to Caribou, 2025

| Location | # of Road Closures | Total Time Delay (min) |
|---|---|---|
| Sable Haul Road | 11 | 658 |
| Misery | 1 | 60 |
| Fox Haul Road at AN Building | 1 | 15 |
| Point Lake Pit Ramp | 1 | 13 |
| **Total** | **14** | **746** |

Table 4.1-7 Summary of Road Closures Due to Caribou, 2017 to 2024

| Location | # of Road Closures | Total Time Delay (min) |
|---|---|---|
| **2017** | | |
| Sable Haul Road | 4 | 187 |
| Misery Haul Road | 1 | Not reported |
| **Total** | **5** | **187+** |
| **2018** | | |
| Sable Haul Road | 6 | 295 |
| Misery Haul Road | 2 | 10 |
| **Total** | **8** | **305** |
| **2019** | | |
| Unknown Haul Road | 120 | 5,310 |
| **Total** | **120** | **5,310** |
| **2020** | | |
| Falcon Lake road | 1 | 9 days |
| Misery Haul Road | 1 | 10 |
| **Total** | **2** | **9 days and 10 min** |

| Location | # of Road Closures | Total Time Delay (min) |
|---|---|---|
| **2021** | | |
| Sable Haul Road | 14 | Not reported, stoppages lasted 10 min to 6.5 hours |
| Misery Haul Road | 3 | Not reported, stoppages lasted 10 min to 6.5 hours |
| Fox Haul Road | 1 | Not reported, stoppages lasted 10 min to 6.5 hours |
| Polar | 1 | Not reported, stoppages lasted 10 min to 6.5 hours |
| **Total** | **19** | **Unknown** |
| **2022** | | |
| Sable Haul Road | 1 | 150 |
| **Total** | **1** | **150** |
| **2023** | | |
| Sable Haul Road | 1 | Unknown |
| Sable crusher | 1 | 120 |
| Pigeon culvert | 1 | 80 |
| Unknown | 1 | 90 |
| **Total** | **4** | **290 +** |
| **2024** | | |
| Sable Haul Road | 62 | 5,329 |
| Misery Haul Road | 4 | 165 |
| Beartooth corner | 4 | 290 |
| Unknown | 8 | 2,377 |
| **Total** | **77** | **8,161** |

### 4.1.4 Discussion

In 2025, the Red-alert level occurred six times and was in effect for 78% of the year (285 days), with the longest period occurring from January 20 to June 1 (133 days). Red alerts primarily occurred due to visual reporting of caribou in close proximity to the mine, with majority of the sightings near the Misery Haul Road. In 2025, active mining was ongoing for the Misery Underground, resulting in the most traffic along this road and leading to majority of observations. However, more road closures occurred along Sable Haul Road, as it was less frequently travelled, and caribou were observed bedded on the road during the summer months. It is likely the caribou were using the road to escape the heat and insects during times of infrequent traffic.

In the first five years of CRMP implementation, there was an increase in the number of days under the Red-level response, going from 17 in 2017 up to 358 in 2020. In 2023, there was a steep decline to 39 days spent at the Red-level, but 284 days were spent at the Orange-level due to a herd of caribou persisting in

the LLCF (outside of the 200 m Red-level threshold for roads). In 2024, the number of days spent at red increased once more to be consistent with results from 2019-2022 (i.e., over 300 days).

In 2025, the time spent at Red-level was 285 days. The number of days spent at Red-level was lower than in 2024, likely due to the addition of finer scale maps for Ekati which were developed in November and which allowed for more accurate adjustments of the CRMP alert levels. While road surveys are completed either weekly or daily depending on the CRMP alert level that is currently in effect, the Environment Department relies on the barren-ground caribou (BGC) maps produced by GNWT from collared individuals to help inform mitigation and monitoring levels as well. In November of 2025, Ekati began receiving finer scale maps every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, indicating collared caribou locations in relation to the trigger buffers (30 km and 14 km) established in the CRMP. This addition of finer scale maps helps to better show caribou location and allows for more accurate changes to CRMP alert levels. In past years, the alert level was left at Red for longer periods as a precaution, as the regional BGC maps did not show caribou location in relation to the CRMP trigger buffers. Going forward, CRMP alert levels will change more frequently and accurately based on BGC maps, incidental caribou observations and observations that occur during formal road monitoring surveys. Documenting the mitigation and monitoring efforts related to CRMP will continue in future years and provide information for adaptive management as required.

Road closures occurred 14 times in 2025 and primarily along Sable Haul Road. Sable Haul Road has seen caribou more frequently than other roads in the past, especially since 2021. The small number of road closures along Sable Haul Road in 2025 is likely a result of Sable open pit operations ceasing in May, reducing the amount of traffic along the road and thus reducing the need for road closures, especially during the summer months when caribou have been known to use the roads to escape insects prevalent in the tundra. A reduced number of road closures does not indicate a reduced number of caribou in the area, but rather a lack of interruption to mine operations because of caribou on or near Sable Haul Road.

# 5. Monitoring Programs

## 5.1 Wildlife Habitat Alteration and Loss

Direct loss of terrestrial wildlife habitat may occur through site clearing, industrial structural development, and facility expansion. The cumulative annual amount of direct habitat loss accrued from the Construction and Operation phases of the Ekati Mine has been monitored annually since 1997. The habitat loss was predicted and approved through the EIR process, including the EIS (BHP 1995), the Environmental Assessment Report conducted for Sable, Pigeon, and Beartooth in 2000 (BHP and Dia Met 2000), the amendment for Lynx Development in 2014 (Water License W2012L2-0001), the Jay Project DAR in 2014 (DDEC 2014), and the Point Lake Project (Arctic Canadian 2021b).

### 5.1.1 Objectives

The objective of this component of the WEMP is to determine the amount of direct terrestrial habitat loss due to ongoing development and operations of the Ekati Mine.

### 5.1.2 Methods

The cumulative area of direct habitat loss is determined by superimposing the current project footprint on the pre-development (i.e., baseline) habitat map of the study area using Geographic Information System (GIS) software. Both the project footprint and the baseline habitat map were developed from LANDSAT Thematic Mapper satellite imagery (BHP 2004). Direct habitat loss is measured by classifying pre-disturbance land cover into 15 habitat types (Table 5.1-1) that represent an association of vegetation, soil, and moisture characteristics using the Ecological Land Classification (ELC) system developed for the Slave Geological Province (Matthews et al. 2001). Terrestrial habitat loss is measured in hectares (ha) and calculated as cumulative successive annual changes in the project footprint. Disturbed areas that are under reclamation are included in the tabulated results.

### 5.1.3 Results

Habitat loss reported from November 2024 to December 2025 was the result of continued development in the Point Lake area. Habitat loss from November and December 2024 was not included in the 2024 WEMP Report as the total values had not yet been determined. Habitat loss in late 2024 was 21.0 ha and habitat loss in 2025 was 32.0 ha, for a total loss of 53.0 ha, 30.2 ha of which was terrestrial habitat (excluding deep water habitat losses; Table 5.1-2). Shallow water habitat is included in the terrestrial total because shallow water areas (i.e., wetlands) occur on land and are influenced by terrestrial processes (USEPA 2026). Deep water (>2m) is classified as a purely aquatic habitat and is thus excluded from the terrestrial total.

Since 1997, a total of 3,436.3 ha terrestrial habitat (2.69% of the total pre-development terrestrial habitat in the 127,735-ha study area) has been disturbed or removed due to development of the mine footprint. The land cover types most affected by the development of the mine, relative to their availability within the study area, include heath tundra bedrock (3.6%), heath tundra boulder (3.3%), tussock/hummock (3.3%), and spruce forest (3.1%).

## Table 5.1-1 Description of Habitat Types within the Ekati Mine Wildlife Study Area (WSA)

| Habitat Type | Description |
|---|---|
| Bedrock complex (> 80% rock) | Exposed bedrock with very little vegetative cover. |
| Birch seep / riparian shrub | Vegetation in areas of active water seepage through boulder fields and boulder streams. Moist and well drained areas of low shrub with continuous vegetation cover. Birch *(Betula* spp.) and willow (*Salix* spp.*)* species dominate these areas. |
| Boulder complex (> 80% rock) | Large areas of boulder fields including boulder outcrops, boulder streams and drainages. This land cover type supports very little plant growth. |
| Deep water (> 2 m) | Deep, clear lakes and major river systems with water depths greater than 2 m. |
| Esker complex | Linear structures of sand and gravel, formed by glacial rivers that provide significant topographic relief. Eskers support a number of plant communities and are important to wildlife. Esker tops are wind-swept and accumulate very little snow during winter. |
| Heath tundra (< 30% rock) | Closed mat plant community that grows on moderate to well drained soils, covering most of the upland areas. Plants generally belong to the heath family (*Ericaceae*) and vegetation covers at least 70% of the ground surface. |
| Heath tundra (30-80% bedrock) | Sparse heath tundra and bedrock outcrops are exposed; vegetation is discontinuous and described as open mat heath tundra. |
| Heath tundra (30-80% boulder) | Open mat plant community with heath tundra and boulder fields. |
| Lichen veneer | Flat islands, low peninsulas and esker tops are covered with a continuous mat of lichen that appears as “veneer”. Sites are windswept and dry, allowing very little plant growth. |
| Riparian tall shrub | Linear plant associations of birch, willow, and alder (*Alnus* spp.*)* that follow active stream courses, usually with a cobble or boulder substrate. Understory plant species may include dwarf raspberry (*Rubus pubescens)*, dwarf marsh violet (*Viola epipsila)*, cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus)*, grasses *(Poaceae* spp.*)*, sedges (*Carex* spp.), club mosses (*Lycopodium* spp.), and common horsetail (*Equisetum arvense)*. |
| Sedge wetland | Wet sedge meadows and other sedge associations of non-tussock plant species. Sedge species such as *Carex aquatilis, Carex bigelowii*, and cotton grass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) are dominant vegetation types within wet, low-lying sites where standing water is present throughout much of the growing season. |
| Shallow water (< 2 m) | Water bodies that contain submerged or emergent vegetation with water depths less than 2 m. |
| Spruce forest | Spruce-lichen woodland in lowland, sheltered areas such as river valleys. Typically, clumped forest in a predominantly tundra landscape. |
| Tussock/hummock | Plants belonging to the sedge family (*Cyperaceae* spp.) are dominant and tussock cotton grasses such as *Eriophorum vaginatum* and *Eriophorum russeolum* are common. These sites are drier and less frequently flooded than sedge wetlands. |
| Unclassified | Pixels (the smallest sub-division of the mapped area) that could not be successfully assigned to one of the above classes are considered to be unclassified. |

Source: Matthews et al. (2001)

Notes:

> = greater than; < = less than; spp. = multiple species

Table 5.1-2 Amount of Habitat in the Ekati Mine Study Area during Pre-Development and Direct Loss of Habitat (ha) from Mine Development, 1997 to 2025

| Habitat Type | Amount in Study Area during Pre-development (ha) | Predicted Habitat Loss (1995 Footprint)* | | Loss: October 1997 to October 2024 (ha) | Loss: November 2024 to December 2025 (ha) | Total Loss (ha) | Percentage Loss of Available Habitat in the Study Area (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | (ha) | (%) | | | | |
| Bedrock complex (> 80% rock) | 4,092 | 81 | 2.0 | 80.3 | 0.0 | 80.3 | 1.96 |
| Birch seep/riparian shrub | 2,971 | 36 | 1.2 | 85.1 | 0.9 | 85.9 | 2.89 |
| Boulder complex (> 80% rock) | 2,273 | 21 | 0.9 | 33.8 | 0.0 | 33.8 | 1.49 |
| Esker complex | 3,196 | 16 | 0.5 | 40.5 | 0.0 | 40.5 | 1.27 |
| Heath tundra (< 30% rock) | 28,403 | 263 | 0.9 | 766.2 | 10.0 | 776.2 | 2.73 |
| Heath tundra (30-80% bedrock) | 15,361 | 376 | 2.4 | 557.2 | 1.8 | 559 | 3.64 |
| Heath tundra (30-80% boulder) | 22,623 | 471 | 2.1 | 741.4 | 2.7 | 744.1 | 3.29 |
| Lichen veneer | 2,059 | 2 | 0.1 | 6.1 | 0.0 | 6.1 | 0.30 |
| Riparian tall shrub | 5,225 | 25 | 0.5 | 121.3 | 0.6 | 121.9 | 2.33 |
| Sedge wetland | 3,100 | 16 | 0.5 | 28.0 | 0.1 | 28.1 | 0.91 |
| Shallow water (< 2 m) | 21,979 | 294 | 1.3 | 429.9 | 4.2 | 434.0 | 1.97 |
| Spruce forest | 970 | 11 | 1.1 | 29.9 | 0.1 | 30.1 | 3.10 |
| Tussock/hummock | 14,854 | 307 | 2.1 | 477.7 | 9.8 | 487.4 | 3.22 |
| Unclassified | 629 | 6 | 1.0 | 8.9 | 0.0 | 8.9 | 1.41 |
| **Total** | **127,735** | **1,925.0** | **1.5** | **3,406.3** | **30.2** | **3,436.3** | **2.69** |

Notes:

> = greater than; < = less than

* Predicted habitat loss from the 1995 EIS.

### 5.1.4 Discussion

Habitat loss since 1997 due to the Ekati Mine is 3.6% (heath tundra 30-80% bedrock) or less for any single habitat type and total terrestrial habitat loss is 2.69% within the WSA (3,436.3 ha of 127,735 ha). Most habitat losses occurred during the initial construction of the mine. Additional habitat is primarily lost when new projects are constructed. In recent years, this has included the Point Lake project; however, operation at this pit has been paused indefinitely. Ekati continues to mine previously operated pits and is looking to begin underground mining at Fox, which will have a small surface footprint and cause limited terrestrial disturbance.

The EIS (1995) identified wildlife species and habitat elements of concern regarding habitat loss, with eskers, riparian areas, wetlands, and cliff habitats being of particular importance. To date, esker habitat accounts for 1.27% of habitat loss. Riparian areas, including birch seep/riparian shrub (2.89%) and riparian tall shrub (2.33%), account for 5.22% of total habitat loss and shallow water (<2m) accounts for 2.0%. While cliff habitat wasn't identified as a habitat type present within the Ekati Mine during baseline studies for the EIS, due to the nature of open pit mining activities, mine benches act as natural cliffs and provide nesting habitat for raptors. While Ekati maintains a deterrent program to avoid raptor species nesting in active open pits, inactive pits are not monitored, and raptors are able to nest undisturbed.

While operations at the mine continue to change, Ekati completes progressive reclamation wherever possible to return disturbed areas to a pre-disturbance state prior to closure and post-closure reclamation. Progressive reclamation efforts are currently underway to reclaim habitat within Cell B in the LLCF and Old Camp (Dominion Diamond 2018), and Ekati will continue to reclaim areas as they become available.

## 5.2 Waste Management

Improper waste disposal can attract wildlife to communities and anthropogenic sites, potentially resulting in challenges such as wildlife injuries, increased numbers of human-wildlife interactions, and disruptions to predator-prey relationships. Managing attractants at the mine, including waste, is intended to reduce the abundance of scavenging wildlife (e.g., bears, foxes, ravens) attracted to the mine. Historically, the landfill and waste bins have the highest accessibility for wildlife to waste and are therefore monitored regularly to ensure waste is properly managed.

Waste is managed to minimize the presence of attractants and toxins in the Ekati Mine landfill. Unlike a municipal landfill (which contains batteries, various chemical waste, and food waste), no reactive products or food waste products are permitted in the landfill at the Ekati Mine. Waste is sorted by using specific garbage containers for each type of waste (e.g., oil rags, used absorbent pads, oil and fuel filters, used grease, aerosol cans, incinerator waste, and inert waste). Hazardous materials such as oil filters, paint, and batteries are transported off the mine site for recycling. Food-contaminated waste (such as lunch bags) and most wood products are segregated and incinerated, with the remnant ash deposited into the landfill. Wooden pallets and heavy cardboard containers are segregated for recycling. Inert waste (such as treated wood and metal) is placed directly in the landfill, and recyclable materials are segregated at the landfill. Burgundy monitors landfill waste for misdirected attractants and hazardous waste that could be harmful to wildlife and/or increase the incidence of wildlife activity at site.

### 5.2.1 Objectives

The objectives of this component of the WMMP are to:

- Monitor the misdirection of wildlife attractants and hazardous wastes in waste bins and at the landfill to avoid and minimize possible wildlife incidents at these locations;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of waste management protocols for reducing misdirected waste in waste bins;
- Identify problem areas where improvements may be required; and
- Manage potential wildlife attractants, wildlife activity, and habituation to waste bins and the landfill.

### 5.2.2 Methods

#### 5.2.2.1 Landfill Surveys

Waste from various locations across the Ekati Mine site is hauled to the landfill, incinerator, and composter. Landfill surveys involve visual investigations of the landfill where the amount and type of animal attractants (i.e., food, food packaging, oil products, and oil-contaminated wastes) and other misdirected wastes (i.e., batteries and aerosol cans) are recorded. The availability of attractants is categorized as none, low (1 piece), medium (2 to 5 pieces), high (6 to 10 pieces), and very high (>10 pieces).

All attractants and other misdirected waste are safely removed and properly discarded or immediately buried by the Waste Management Department if attractants cannot be safely removed. The presence of wildlife and wildlife signs (such as tracks and scats) are noted, photographs are taken where possible, and behaviour of animals (if present) is recorded to document potential habituation, illness and/or injury.

#### 5.2.2.2 Waste Bin Surveys

The amount and type of animal attractants (e.g., food, food packaging, oil products, and oil-contaminated wastes) and other misdirected waste (e.g., batteries, bulbs and aerosol cans) within the various waste bin types are counted, recorded, and removed if possible. The availability of attractants is categorized as none, low (1 piece), medium (2 to 5 pieces), high (6 to 10 pieces), and very high (> 10 pieces). Wildlife signs (visual observations, tracks, scat), species, number of individuals, and behavior are also recorded. Misdirected waste (wildlife attractants and/or waste placed incorrectly in the specified waste bin category) and wildlife observations detected during surveys are reported to the Environment Department and Site Services Superintendent, and the supervisor of the area is contacted to arrange for removal of all misdirected wastes from waste bins prior to disposal in the landfill.

### 5.2.3 Results

#### 5.2.3.1 Landfill Surveys

**Attractants**

During 2025, the landfill was surveyed approximately twice per week from January 2 to December 30, for a total of 120 surveys. Wildlife attractants or misdirected waste were observed during 21 surveys (18%; Table 5.2-1). Food packaging was found on eight occasions (7% of surveys) in low (three), medium (two), high (one) and very

high (two) amounts, while food products themselves were found on six occasions (5% of surveys) in low (four), medium (one) and very high (one) amounts. Other wildlife attractants discovered during surveys included oil-product containers (four), oil-contaminated waste (six), plastics (seven), and other (eight). Attractants classified as "other" include ear plugs, wiper fluid bottles, and wet wipes. More than one type of attractant was observed during a survey on 12 occasions.

Table 5.2-1 Percentage of Surveys that Found Attractants or Misdirected Waste at the Ekati Mine and Misery Landfills, 2000 to 2025

| Ekati Mine Landfill | 2000 [1] | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percentage of surveys | 95% | 98% | 86% | 65% | 79% | 87% | 66% | 47% | 41% | 55% | 46% | 68% | 76% |
| (Total # of surveys) | (35) | (45) | (42) | (91) | (47) | (84) | (74) | (85) | (81) | (67) | (52) | (65) | (119) |

| Ekati Mine Landfill | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percentage of surveys | 80% | 69% | 69% | 52% | 35% | 39% | 49% | 20% | 40% | 34% | 27% | 32% | 17.5% |
| (Total # of surveys) | (118) | (104) | (112) | (100) | (85) | (98) | (115) | (94) | (82) | (109) | (119) | (118) | (120) |

Note:

[1] Includes only food items.

There has been a decrease in attractants categorized as "other" every year since 2015, when 61% of surveys detected attractants in this category. Overall, each category of wildlife attractant misdirected to the Ekati Mine landfill has decreased over the years. Results from 2025 show the lowest percentage of surveys with misdirected waste over the 26 monitoring years.

### Wildlife Sightings

Wildlife was observed at the landfill during 12 of 120 surveys (10%) in 2025. Four species were observed: common raven (n = 2), red fox (n = 8), Arctic fox (n = 1), and grizzly bear (n = 1). Misdirected waste was recorded during 7 of the 12 surveys involving wildlife sightings, primarily food packaging, oil impacted waste, and other. The percentage of landfill surveys with wildlife sightings in 2025 was lower than in 2024 (25%).

### Wildlife Signs

One or more wildlife signs (i.e., scat, tracks, chew marks, hair) were observed during 8 surveys (6.7%) in 2025, which was lower than in 2024 (13%), and slightly lower than the trend of observations over the past 10 years. Wildlife tracks were observed for two confirmed species (common raven and Arctic fox), while the remaining observations involved unknown species of fox or unknown species. The majority of wildlife signs were tracks from foxes (n = 8). Misdirected waste was also recorded during five of the eight surveys and involved all attractant types (except for aerosol cans and batteries) in low (n = 5), medium (n = 2) and very high (n = 3) amount.

### 5.2.3.2 Waste Bin Surveys

#### Attractants

Waste bins were surveyed at the Main Camp, Misery Camp, DPRT Laydown, Truck Shop, Security, Fox Fuel Farm, Main Fuel Farm, Koala Heavy Equipment Refueling Station, Sable Office, Process Plant, and Powerhouse between January 5 and December 25, 2025. Individual waste bins were surveyed over 142 days, totaling 2,564 waste bins surveyed in 2025.

A total of 68 wildlife attractants were recorded during 56 waste bin surveys (2.2% of total surveys), with multiple attractants being recorded during the same survey 12 times. Food was found in low amounts on three occasions and in very high amounts on one occasion. Food packaging was found in low amounts on seven occasions, medium amounts three times, and very high amounts on one occasion. Other wildlife attractants found in misdirected waste included oil contaminated waste in low (6 occasions), medium (2 occasions), high (1 occasion), and very high amounts (1 occasion); oil product containers in low (4 occasions), medium (1 occasion) and high (1 occasion) amounts; plastics in low (6 occasions), medium (1 occasion), and very high amounts (3 occasions); and aerosol cans in low (1 occasion) and medium amounts (2 occasions). In 2025, attractants classified as “other” were found on 22 occasions during waste bin surveys. Examples of “other” attractants included window washer fluid containers and cigarette butts.

At the Misery Camp, waste bins were surveyed on 61 occasions with an average of 11 bins per survey (range of 1 to 14 bins per survey), for a total of 679 surveys of bins over the year. Misdirected waste was reported in 5% of bin surveys (33 occasions), the highest of any waste site. Food was observed in low amounts (2 occasions), and food packages were observed in low (4 occasions) and medium amounts (3 occasions). Plastics were observed in low (1 occasion), medium (1 occasion), and very high amounts (3 occasions), and aerosol cans were observed once in low amounts. Oil product containers were observed in low amounts (2 occasions), and oil contaminated waste was observed in low (3 occasions), medium (3 occasions), and very high amounts (1 occasion). Other attractants were observed in low (3 occasions), medium (6 occasions), and very high amounts (1 occasion; see Methods for amount categories).

Waste bins at the Main Camp were surveyed on 54 occasions with an average of 4 bins surveyed (range of 1 to 20 bins per survey), for a total of 240 bins surveyed in 2025. There were ten instances of misdirected waste observed at the main camp (4% of all bins surveyed). Food packaging was observed in low amounts (2 occasions), oil contaminated waste was observed in low (1 occasion) and medium amounts (1 occasion), and oil product containers were observed once in a low amount. Other misdirected waste was observed three times in low amounts and twice in medium amounts.

At the Sable office located near the Sable Pit, waste bins were surveyed on 29 occasions with an average of 7 waste bins per survey (range of 1 to 9 bins per survey), for a total of 199 surveys of bins over the year. Misdirected waste was observed a total of eight times at the Sable office (4% of all bins surveyed). Food was observed in a very high amount on one occasion, food packaging was observed once in a low amount and once in a very high amount, oil product containers were observed once in low amounts, plastics were observed once in low amounts, and other waste was observed three times in medium amounts.

All other waste sites had six or fewer instances of misdirected waste observed during waste bin surveys (0-3% of survey occasions).

### Wildlife Signs

Wildlife signs were recorded on two occasions at the Ekati Mine Main Camp, once at the Fox Fuel Farm and once at the Sable Office. Unknown fox tracks were observed at Main Camp on April 5, 2025, and arctic hare scat was observed at Sable Office on March 29, 2025, and at the Fox Fuel Farm on April 11, 2025.

## 5.2.4 Discussion

Changes in staff and site activity in recent years at the Ekati Mine have highlighted the importance and benefit of ongoing waste management efforts to identify and remove attractants. Successful waste management at the Ekati Mine can largely be attributed to continual wildlife attractant awareness programs which raise awareness of the risks to wildlife associated with improper waste disposal. In recent years, the Environment Department increased the frequency of surveys to better track waste management issues, and in 2024, an additional Waste Management Awareness module was added to training to target misdirected food waste going to the landfill. A series of waste management presentations focused on identifying and eliminating wildlife attractants was delivered to departments with large numbers of temporary contractors. Temporary contractors were specifically targeted because new personnel who are unfamiliar with site procedures were identified as a likely source of improper waste disposal.

Monitoring results since 2017 show decreased amounts of misdirected waste in the landfill compared to early years at the Ekati Mine, highlighting the importance and effectiveness of continued education and waste management awareness, particularly regarding the disposal of cigarettes and cigarette packages, food and food packaging, and the management of recyclable waste. This reinforcement continues to help minimize the amount of waste misdirected to the landfill.

There was a noticeable decrease in the amount of misdirected waste and attractants at the Ekati Mine landfill in 2017, and levels have fluctuated only slightly through the years since. 2025 represents the lowest number of surveys with misdirected waste (13% of surveys) since monitoring began in 2000. This was likely due to the decrease in on-site staff and mining activities during the second half of the year, as operations at Point Lake ceased in July 2025. The second lowest number of surveys with misdirected waste occurred in 2020 (20%), as the mine switched to the Care and Maintenance phase from March to December 2020. These findings indicate that the amount of misdirected waste may be linked to the number of personnel on site. Although, even in recent years with higher numbers of staff, surveys with misdirected waste were lower than years prior to 2014, indicating a positive trend.

Surveys in 2025 with misdirected waste recorded visual observations of animals on seven occasions, primarily red fox; however, wildlife was also observed five times during surveys when no misdirected waste was identified. This suggests that wildlife species may visit the landfill in search of food even when no attractants are present, particularly wildlife species that are opportunistic scavengers and individuals that have found food at the landfill in the past.

Overall, in 2025, 4% to 5% of waste bins surveyed at Main Camp, Misery Camp, and the Sable office contained misdirected waste or wildlife attractants. During the early years of this monitoring program (2014-2016), waste detections ranged from 5% to 10% of bins at Main Camp and 2% to 6% of bins at Misery Camp. Over the past

10 years, the percentage of bins with misdirected waste has declined to 3% to 4%, reaching a low of < 1% in 2024. Misdirected waste increased in 2025 compared to 2024.

When attractants and misdirected waste are identified, they are immediately reported to the Waste Management Department to isolate the origin of the misdirected waste and confirm that the responsible department receives the proper training on waste disposal procedures. Reporting waste bin monitoring results helps identify misdirected waste and documents the types and volumes of improperly discarded waste materials. This monitoring program supports adaptive management of potential problem areas and informs updates to Burgundy staff education modules on proper waste management practices. Current waste management awareness programs (e.g., new employee orientation, presentations, and posters) contribute to reducing the amount of waste misdirected into waste bins. Continued education and waste management awareness, particularly on disposal of cigarettes and cigarette packages (beginning with the orientation tour and reinforced in the “Environmental Awareness” module), will minimize the amount of misdirected waste.

## 5.3 Wildlife Incidents and Mortalities

Natural wildlife activity and ecological processes are left undisturbed unless there is a risk to the safety of Ekati Mine staff. Incidents include wildlife-vehicle, wildlife-aircraft, wildlife-infrastructure and wildlife-human interactions where there is a potential risk of harm to humans, wildlife, and/or infrastructure. Incidents also include any action where deterrents are deemed necessary. Incidents involving wildlife near mine infrastructure —such as roads, open pits, WRSAs, and the LLCF—must be managed to minimize risk to wildlife and staff. All wildlife incidents are recorded and reviewed to adaptively manage these events.

Natural and human-caused wildlife mortalities are monitored at the Ekati Mine to determine whether wildlife VECs or other species of interest (e.g., fox, migratory birds) are being injured and/or killed when interacting with the Ekati Mine site.

Wildlife carcasses can attract predators and scavenging wildlife to the mine site, creating risks for both wildlife (e.g., being drawn to the road by carrion and subsequently being struck by a vehicle) and personnel who may encounter them. Mitigation measures, such as removing carcasses, are in place to avoid any potential negative interactions between wildlife and humans, and to reduce the likelihood of wildlife associating the site with food.

As part of the WEMP, all wildlife mortalities are recorded and reviewed to determine if mine operations contributed to a mortality event. Documenting and evaluating mortalities enables adaptive management approaches and improvements to mitigation.

### 5.3.1 Objectives

The objectives of this component of the WEMP are to:

- Document, minimize, and mitigate potential effects of mine activities and infrastructure on wildlife;
- Reduce risks to both wildlife and humans;
- Monitor if wildlife is killed or injured as a result of interactions with vehicles or aircraft; and
- Evaluate whether preventative measures are sufficient to minimize risks of wildlife injury and mortality.

## 5.3.2 Methods

### 5.3.2.1 Incidents

Wildlife incidents are reported to the Environment Department, and the details are entered into a database. The species, number of individuals, sex, age, location, condition of the animal, management response(s), wildlife behaviour, type of incident (i.e., interaction with field crew, vehicle, aircraft, mine infrastructure, other), type and number of deterrents used, and outcome are recorded. All deterrent actions are documented and reported to GNWT ECC (Table 5.3-2).

When necessary, GNWT ECC is contacted to advise when more aggressive deterrent actions are required. Where appropriate, the first response to potential wildlife interactions is to remove staff from an unsafe situation and reschedule work in the area. Only as a last resort (e.g., immediate safety concern) will a helicopter be used to deter wildlife (primarily grizzly bears) from areas where staff are working. When more aggressive measures are used to deter wildlife, the animal's energy, the terrain, and the air temperature are considered during a relocation and subsequent monitoring to ensure the animal is not becoming overly stressed.

Caribou are only deterred under specific circumstances, for example, when there are incoming flights, if there is an emergency, or the caribou themselves are at risk. Risks are assessed prior to any use of deterrents on caribou. If deterrent efforts are deemed necessary, caribou are deterred by having Environment staff park a vehicle ~150 m away from the caribou and slowly exiting the vehicle. They then proceed to move towards the caribou on foot in a calm manner. At this point, caribou typically move out of the area. If caribou prove to be stubborn and remain in place, yelling or clapping hands is used in succession. If possible, the deterrence approach is discussed with GNWT ECC prior to initiating.

Deterrent measures used during the pit wall raptor nest monitoring program are reported separately to GNWT ECC under the General Wildlife Permit reporting requirements.

Detailed inspections of skirting around buildings and fencing are conducted on a weekly basis. Surveys are completed by walking or driving around buildings with skirting (i.e., the Ekati Main Camp and Misery Camp), and around fencing structures (i.e., Misery Camp). Surveyors record any sign of wildlife (e.g., scats, tracks, and digs), as well as evidence of damage (e.g., holes, tears) to the skirting or fencing, and repair needs are communicated to Site Services for prioritized execution.

### 5.3.2.2 Mortalities

Burgundy records detailed information on wildlife mortalities in a database. Wildlife mortalities observed by Burgundy staff are reported immediately to the Environment Department and an inspection by Environment staff determines the probable cause of death. Obvious injuries, the position of the animal, and anything considered unusual is photographed and recorded. Further information including the time, date, location, estimated time of death, and any sightings of other wildlife in the area is also recorded.

Burgundy reports wildlife mortality details to GNWT ECC each time a VEC species, fox, common raven, or raptor is found dead anywhere at the Ekati Mine site (Table 5.3-1). In the unlikely event that a moose or muskox mortality occurs, Burgundy reports the event to GNWT ECC as well. Migratory bird mortalities are reported to ECCC as the agency responsible for migratory birds under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (1994). Unless

otherwise directed by GNWT ECC or ECCC, carcasses found close to the mine site are incinerated or moved away from work areas (i.e., onto the tundra) to prevent attraction of predators and other scavengers to the mine site. Natural wildlife activity and ecological processes are left undisturbed unless there is a risk of harm to onsite personnel or wildlife. For example, carcasses found in an area where they do not pose a threat to wildlife or human safety are left undisturbed.

Table 5.3-1 Management Authority Contacts and Circumstances

| Mortality | Cause of Mortality | Reporting Timeline | Management Authority | Contact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caribou mortality | Predation / natural cause | Within 24 hours | GNWT ECC | ECC Wildlife Enforcement Officer<br>If after hours, contact the Wildlife Emergency Hotline, North Slave Region (Yellowknife): 1-867-446-2073 |
| | Mine-related | Immediately | | |
| Grizzly bear, wolf, wolverine, common raven, raptor, moose, muskox, fox mortality | Predation / natural cause | In a timely manner | GNWT ECC | ECC Wildlife Enforcement Officer<br>If after hours, contact the Wildlife Emergency Hotline, North Slave Region (Yellowknife): 1-867-446-2073 |
| | Mine-related | Within 24 hours | | |
| Migratory bird mortality (including migratory raptors) | Predation / natural cause | In a timely manner | ECCC-CWS | cwsnorth-scfnord@ec.gc.ca |
| | Mine-related | Within 24 hours | | |
| Migratory bird mortality – listed species (including migratory raptors) | Predation / natural cause | Within 24 hours | ECCC-CWS | cwsnorth-scfnord@ec.gc.ca |
| | Mine-related | Immediately | | |

## 5.3.3 Results

### 5.3.3.1 Incidents

During the 2025 reporting period, a total of 46 wildlife incidents were recorded, involving 2 VEC species (5 caribou and 37 grizzly bear), and 3 non-VEC species (2 arctic hare, 1 unknown fox, and 1 American robin; Table 5.3-2). Incidents related to wildlife interactions associated with mine infrastructure–such as wildlife in dangerous areas, in proximity to camps, or interacting with equipment–accounted for most of the incidents (n = 45), with only 1 interaction between wildlife and staff occurring.

These incidents exclude any reported wildlife mortalities (Section 5.3.2.2). Road closures were not considered incidents unless there was an imminent danger to wildlife. In 2025, no road closures were considered incidents.

## Table 5.3-2 Wildlife Incidents at the Ekati Mine, 2010 to 2025

| Species | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019[4] | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023[4] | 2024 | 2025 | Total[4] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Mammals** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Caribou[1] | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | **13** |
| Grizzly bear[1] | 18 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 17 | 35 | 5 | 19 | 27 | 31 | 16 | 37 | **240** |
| Fox (red, arctic, cross, or unknown) | 49 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | **88** |
| Wolf[2] | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | **16** |
| Wolverine[1] | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **7** |
| Mink | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Muskrat | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Unknown small mammal | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | **7** |
| **Birds** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| American pipit | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| American robin | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | **2** |
| Canada goose | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Common raven | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 | **11** |
| Long-tailed duck[3] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Peregrine falcon | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** |
| Surf scoter[3] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Tundra swan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| White-crowned sparrow | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |

| Species | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019[4] | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023[4] | 2024 | 2025 | Total[4] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Unknown duck | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Unknown ptarmigan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Unknown songbird | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | **4** |
| **Total[4]** | **70** | **7** | **15** | **6** | **8** | **13** | **18** | **12** | **25** | **46** | **6** | **22** | **32** | **45** | **29** | **46** | **400** |

Notes:

Numbers were updated to correct reporting errors that occurred in 2024 WEMP Report.

[1] VEC species and species of conservation concern.

[2] VEC species.

[3] Species of conservation concern.

[4] In 2019, a red fox and common raven were jointly involved in one incident, another incident jointly involved a grizzly bear and a wolverine, and a third incident jointly involved a red fox and a grizzly bear. In 2023, a common raven and red fox were both involved in one incident. The total incidents are not the sum of the individual species incidents.

### Caribou

Caribou incidents occurred five times in 2025. Four of the incidents involved caribou entering a dangerous location for wildlife in the Point Lake area. On each occasion that caribou entered a dangerous location, site personnel used gentle physical deterrence by driving a truck at a distance away from the caribou while pushing them to a safer location near the top of the Point Lake pit. Caribou consisted of one adult on two occasions and two juveniles on two occasions. Trucks were used instead of walking as the area was not safe for personnel to get out of their vehicles to deter the caribou. Caribou did not exhibit stressed behaviour during the deterrent activities and moved out of the area after the last event occurred on July 6.

On July 9, two caribou were observed foraging near the runway at the airport. As a plane was scheduled to depart, an Environment crew responded to gently push the caribou off the runway into a safe area. Two staff slowly walked towards the caribou until caribou moved out of the area. The caribou did not exhibit stressed behaviour during the deterrence.

### Grizzly Bear, Wolf, Wolverine, and Fox

There were 37 grizzly bear incidents at Ekati Mine between May 7 and September 29 in 2025. Deterrents were used for 36 of the 37 incidents to ensure the safety of both the bears and mine staff. One hundred and fifty-five deterrents were used, primarily consisting of rubber bullets and bear bangers or screamers. A helicopter was used on two occasions to push bears only after the use of other deterrents proved ineffective. Bears were always monitored after deterrent use, and it was noted they all appeared to be in good condition following a deterrent event. The Environment Department was notified of each incident.

Based on the bear's unique coloration, a single bear appears to have caused 14 separate incidents occurring between May 7 and May 18. Five of the incidents between May 7 and May 9 appeared to involve the same bear digging in the landfill and nine events between May 10 and May 18 appeared to involve the same bear as it moved around site. On June 8, the bear's activity resulted in a work stoppage of 15 minutes while deterrents were deployed to move the bear to a safer location. On June 15 and June 19, a sow and two cubs were deterred from the south end of the Misery Haul Road and the Lynx Ore Pad. On June 15, the group was difficult to deter and required the use of a helicopter during the interaction. The nine incidents that occurred between June 24 and September 8 all occurred on separate days, and it could not be determined if the incidents were caused by previously deterred bear(s) or new bear(s) moving around site. Two incidents on September 29 involved the same bear as it moved around site to forage. Deterrent efforts were used to keep this bear a reasonable distance from mine infrastructure to protect mine personnel from an unsafe interaction.

One incident involving an unknown fox occurred where a fox became stuck in a landfill bin and could not jump back out. The back of the bin was opened and left overnight to allow the fox to leave of its own accord. Once the fox exited the bin, the access points were closed, and crews were instructed to keep the lid closed at all times. No misdirected waste was identified.

### Small Mammals

Two incidents involving arctic hare occurred in 2025. One incident involved a truck slamming on its brakes when a hare ran across the road, resulting in the operator losing control of the truck and ending up in the opposite ditch. The second incident involved a leveret (baby hare) bedded underneath the tire of a forklift, which ran away when an Environment staff member approached in an attempt to move it out of the area.

### Migratory Birds and Raptors

One incident involving an American Robin occurred on June 15 when the bird was observed eating ammonium nitrate from the Ammonium Nitrate Building's floor. The bird was deterred away, and the building was checked for entry points.

### Skirting Incidents

During the 2025 reporting period, a total of 115 skirting inspections were completed over 115 survey days at the Main Camp and Misery Camp. Main Camp skirting was inspected 58 times and included two inspection reports of skirting damage. Site services were notified of the damage, and the skirting was repaired. Unknown fox tracks were recorded on one occasion, and a set of unknown tracks were reported during one inspection. Misery Camp skirting was inspected 57 times. No damage to skirting was recorded. No observations of wildlife, tracks, or scat were recorded during Misery Camp skirting inspections.

### Fencing Incidents

During the 2025 reporting period, the fence surrounding Misery Camp was inspected for damage 59 times with 18 reports of damage. Any damage was reported to Operations for repairs. In some cases, the same damage was recorded during more than one inspection due to delays repairing the fence.

## 5.3.3.2 Mortalities

### Non-Mine Related Mortalities

During 2025, eight non-mine related wildlife mortalities occurred at Ekati Mine including one common raven, one greater white-fronted goose, and three caribou (Table 5.3-3). The common raven was found on top of a building by mine personnel, and the greater white-fronted goose was found near a mine building with its body scavenged. The cause of death for both mortalities is unknown, although the greater white-fronted goose was likely predated. All non-mine related caribou mortalities were caused by predators or other natural causes. Predators and scavengers were often seen feeding on caribou carcasses or their tracks were identified in the area, including wolves, arctic fox and common ravens. Unless safety was a concern due to the location of the carcass and presence of feeding wildlife, the carcass was left undisturbed on the tundra. Only the carcass discovered at the entrance gate to the airport was moved to prevent human interactions with wildlife. GNWT ECC was notified at the time of all caribou mortalities.

### Mine-Related Mortalities

Fifteen mine-related wildlife mortalities occurred in 2025, including twelve vehicle mortalities as well as three mortalities caused by other mine operations or interactions with infrastructure (Table 5.3-4). No aircraft-related mortalities occurred in 2025. Mortalities included arctic ground squirrel (n = 1), arctic hare (n = 7), caribou (n = 1), rock ptarmigan (n = 2) and unknown species of songbirds (n = 2). The arctic ground squirrel, arctic hare, and rock ptarmigan mortalities were caused by vehicle strikes. The songbirds became trapped in dust fall jars and were unable to escape, leading to their mortality. Canadian Wildlife Service was notified at the time of the migratory bird mortalities.

Table 5.3-3 Non-Mine-Related Wildlife Mortalities at the Ekati Mine, 1997 to 2025

| Species | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Mammals** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Arctic hare | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **5** |
| Caribou[1] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 13 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | **103** |
| Grizzly bear[1] | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **4** |
| Muskrat or unknown rodent | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **5** |
| Fox (Red, Arctic, Cross, or unknown) | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **26** |
| Wolverine[1] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **10** |
| Wolf[2] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **6** |
| **Birds** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| American green-winged teal | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| American robin | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **3** |
| American tree sparrow | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Common loon | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Common Raven | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | **13** |
| Common redpoll | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **4** |
| Greater white-fronted goose | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | **3** |
| Green-winged teal | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **8** |
| Lapland longspur | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Long-tailed duck[3] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Merlin[2] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Northern pintail[3] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Northern shoveler | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Peregrine falcon[1] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Red-throated loon | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Rock ptarmigan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Rough-legged hawk[2] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | **4** |
| Savannah sparrow | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |

| Species | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Short-eared owl[1] | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Snow goose | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Snowy owl | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| White-crowned sparrow | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Willow ptarmigan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Yellow-billed loon | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Unknown goose | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Unknown merganser | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Unknown songbird | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | **15** |
| Unknown plover | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Unknown ptarmigan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **10** |
| Unknown sparrow | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **8** |
| Unknown waterfowl | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **5** |
| **Total** | **2** | **7** | **0** | **0** | **15** | **18** | **7** | **7** | **20** | **9** | **13** | **11** | **9** | **20** | **5** | **4** | **9** | **9** | **3** | **17** | **8** | **6** | **11** | **11** | **8** | **7** | **13** | **4** | **8** | **261** |

Notes:

[1] VEC species and species of conservation concern.

[2] VEC species.

[3] Species of conservation concern.

Table 5.3-4 Mine-Related Wildlife Mortalities at the Ekati Mine, 1997 to 2025

| Species | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Mammals** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Arctic ground squirrel | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | **24** |
| Arctic hare | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 6 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 7 | **125** |
| Caribou | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | **3** |
| Muskrat | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **5** |
| Fox (red, arctic, cross, or unknown) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **17** |
| Wolf[2] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Wolverine | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** |
| **Birds** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Canada goose | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Common raven | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Greater white-fronted goose | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **5** |
| Green-winged teal | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Long-tailed duck[3] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **3** |
| Rock ptarmigan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 2 | **12** |
| Rough-legged hawk[2] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Short-eared owl[1] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Peregrine falcon[1] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Unknown ptarmigan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 16 | 2 | **67** |
| Unknown songbird | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | **2** |
| Unknown waterfowl | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **12** |
| Willow ptarmigan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **3** |
| **Total** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **13** | **0** | **5** | **14** | **9** | **10** | **9** | **7** | **6** | **8** | **14** | **26** | **19** | **9** | **11** | **10** | **4** | **11** | **5** | **12** | **16** | **23** | **28** | **15** | **288** |

Notes:

[1] VEC species and species of conservation concern.

[2] VEC species.

[3] Species of conservation concern.

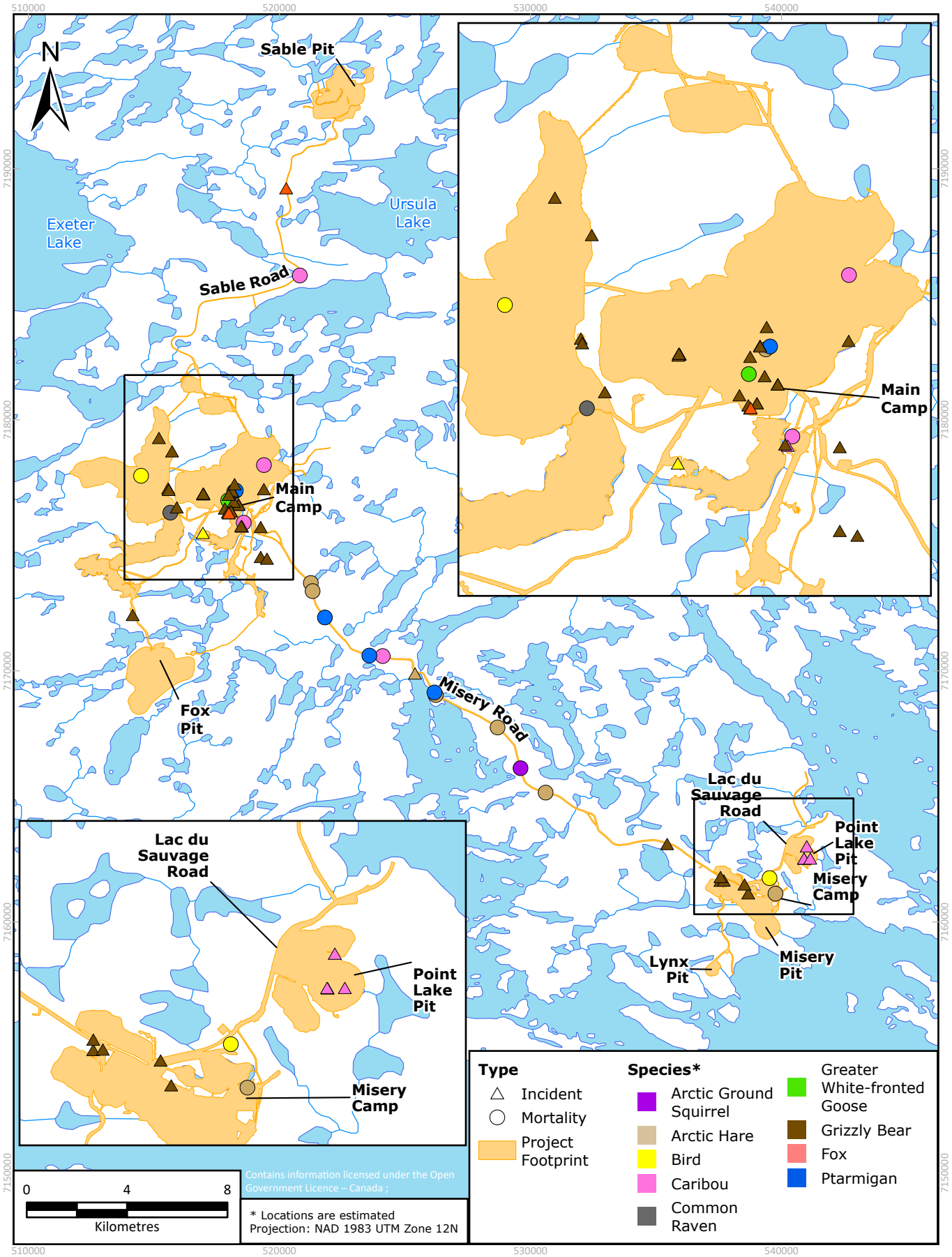



Figure 5.3-1 Incidents and Mortalities at the Ekati Mine, 2025

On December 28, a light-duty pickup truck struck an adult female caribou while travelling on the Misery Haul Road. The vehicle was travelling up a hill, limiting visibility past the peak, when a caribou ran over the top of the hill and onto the road towards the moving vehicle. As a result, a collision occurred. Personnel from the Environment Department were contacted and responded to the incident. Upon arrival, the caribou was alive but had substantial injuries and was unable to move. Environment contacted the GNWT ECC Wildlife Emergency Hotline and was instructed to dispatch the caribou. A qualified person on-site dispatched the caribou with two shots to the head. Three Indigenous employees broke down the animal and salvageable parts were saved and distributed while unusable parts of the animal were incinerated. An investigation was completed, and it was determined that the caribou was likely being chased by a wolf and ran onto the Misery Haul Road toward the pickup truck in an attempt to flee pursuit. Wolves were noted in the area earlier that same day when a haul truck was required to stop for a wolf standing in the middle of the road.

### 5.3.4 Discussion

#### 5.3.4.1 Incidents

The number of incidents that occurred in 2025 was higher than in 2024. The majority of incidents (37 of 46) were caused by grizzly bears and involved deterrent efforts (n = 36).

While five caribou incidents occurred, four of the incidents were caused by the same group of two juvenile caribou in the Point Lake area that required deterring as they had entered an unsafe area. The remaining incident involved a caribou at the airstrip, where caribou needed to be pushed into the tundra to ensure its safety prior to the departure of a scheduled flight. Overall, caribou incidents have remained low across monitoring years, totaling only 13, as Ekati has very rigorous mitigations and monitoring for caribou and enforces a stringent right-of-way policy for wildlife at the mine.

While the number of grizzly bear incidents in 2025 was the highest since 2010, it was determined that only a few bears were the cause of the majority of incidents. Deterrents were used frequently to discourage the bears from continuing to return to the mine site. The use of a helicopter is the most effective method of deterrence, but also causes the most stress to the bear(s), and so it was used as a last resort if other deterrent methods were no longer effective. This resulted in a higher number of incidents and deterrent events in 2025, as Environment staff did not want to unduly stress the bear(s) if they were still responding to less aggressive deterrent methods.

Since 2011, fewer than seven fox incidents have been reported annually. In 2025, only one incident occurred. Following six fox incidents reported in the landfill bins in 2016, the Environment Department increased efforts to raise awareness amongst staff about the importance of proper waste management. The monitoring of waste bins continues to be an important component of the WEMP for preventing misdirected waste from reaching the landfill, thereby minimizing the number of wildlife incidents.

#### 5.3.4.2 Mortalities

Between 1997 and 2025, the number of non-mine related mortalities has varied from 0 to 20 annually, with the 8 mortalities in 2025 falling at the lower end of this range. Most non-mine related mortalities each year are caribou predation events caused by wolves and grizzly bears. In 2025, a predatory kill of a greater white-fronted

goose also occurred, indicating that natural processes are occurring around the mine site. Carcasses found in an area where they do not pose any threat to wildlife or human safety are left undisturbed to allow predators to feed, while carcasses found close to the mine are incinerated or relocated away from the mine to prevent attracting predators and scavengers. If the cause of death is unknown, the carcass is collected and frozen for later necropsy if requested by GNWT ECC or ECCC.

The number of mine-related mortalities in 2025 was 15, down from 28 in 2024. Unfortunately, one caribou mortality occurred due to a collision with a vehicle. 2025 was only the second year at Ekati Mine that a mine-related caribou mortality occurred, with 2024 being the first year. The mortality occurred in December, and visibility was limited as the caribou ran over the top of a hill into the line of travel of a light duty vehicle. Arctic hare, ptarmigan, and arctic ground squirrel are the most common species killed by mine-related incidents at Ekati Mine and mortalities are primarily caused by collisions with vehicles.

Burgundy continues to implement numerous wildlife mitigations and monitoring programs at site to minimize interactions between the mine and wildlife. Mitigation measures for roads include giving wildlife the right-of-way, sending wildlife advisories when wildlife are in proximity to mine roads, closing roads as needed, and posting wildlife caution signs and reduced speed limits. The Environment Department continues to inform and educate staff at Ekati Mine and ensure that wildlife safety remains a priority.

# 6. Caribou

The WEMP includes several annual studies to monitor the predicted potential effects of the mining activities on caribou. Burgundy supports collaborative approaches to regional monitoring of caribou. Burgundy monitors annual variation in caribou seasonal ranges and core areas at a regional scale and relative to the Ekati Mine using collared caribou data from GNWT ECC (Section 6.2).

Studies incorporate ground-based monitoring by local community members, Burgundy staff, and biologists, including incidental caribou sightings (Section 6.3), traffic monitoring using cameras (Section 6.7), and behavioural surveys (Section 6.4). In response to concerns that caribou may become trapped in the processed kimberlite in the LLCF or ingest processed kimberlite within the LLCF, potentially leading to injury or death, formal surveys are conducted annually around the LLCF as part of the WEMP (Section 6.5). Road and powerline surveys are also conducted to identify when caribou are near the road and trigger mitigation (Section 6.6).

Elders and holders of TK are regularly invited to site to participate in these programs and to share their knowledge about caribou behaviour, diet, health, body condition, and movement paths while the caribou are migrating through the Ekati Mine area.

To expand on these caribou monitoring programs, a site tour with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association was hosted on October 24, 2019. It focused on the Sable Haul Road caribou crossings and receiving feedback and recommendations for these crossings. The following TK Community Based Projects occurred in 2019: Tłı̨chǫ—Boots on the Ground Caribou Monitoring; Łutselk'e Dene First Nation—Moccasins on the Ground Caribou Monitoring; and Yellowknives Dene First Nation—Dene on-the-land Caribou Monitoring Programs. Discussions with Impact Benefit Agreement communities regarding the development of a TK-based research program to study the drivers of the Zone of Influence (ZOI) and on-site sessions with the TK Elders group were deferred in 2019 while the Jay Project continued to undergo an optimization study.

More recently, Burgundy supported the comprehensive telemetry analysis on the Bathurst caribou herd to determine the effectiveness of mitigations for caribou at the Ekati Mine (Rettie et al. 2024). The comprehensive telemetry project on Bathurst caribou informed the updated WMMP to help determine the effectiveness of mitigation measures for caribou at a regional scale (Rettie et al. 2024). Using the results of the comprehensive telemetry analysis and other recent publications for the Bathurst caribou herd (Boulanger et al. 2021), minor changes to mitigation and monitoring measures from the CRMP were made where warranted. The results of this research, reported separately from the WMMP annual report, were produced in the 2024 telemetry report.

Members of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Kitikmeot Inuit Association, Łutselk'e Dene First Nation, Deninu Kų́ę́ First Nation, Fort Resolution Métis Council, North Slave Métis Alliance, and Tłıç hǫ communities had a site tour of the Point Lake area during the summer of 2022. Information on the Point Lake development, including project status updates with a focus on caribou mitigation and monitoring, was shared to solicit Traditional Knowledge (TK) and community feedback.

The following sections outline the caribou studies conducted by Burgundy as part of the 2025 WEMP requirements.

## 6.1 Background

Barren-ground caribou are a biologically and culturally important species in the Arctic. Caribou provide a critical resource for human populations living in the North, particularly Indigenous communities. Caribou also sustain predator populations such as wolves, grizzly bear, and wolverine. As a result of recent population declines, barren-ground caribou were assessed as Threatened by COSEWIC (2016) but are not currently listed in Schedule 1 of the SARA (2002). In the NWT, barren-ground caribou are listed as Threatened (GNWT 2022) and ranked as at Risk (GNWT 2024).

Caribou populations can be affected by numerous factors including harvest, disease, predation, industrial activities, climate change and environmental variability. Potential effects from industrial activities have been monitored for management of caribou for more than 20 years. To date, the effects of industrial activities on caribou populations have not been conclusively determined.

In 2021, Arctic Canadian produced a technical report that used a ZOI analytical approach to test the theory that caribou occurrence is strongly determined by the distribution of higher quality habitat (ERM 2021). Overall, the analyses indicated that the occurrence of caribou on the landscape can reasonably be explained by the percentage of land cover classes (i.e., habitat quality) alone.

To determine the effectiveness of mitigation for caribou, a comprehensive telemetry data analysis was completed in 2024 (Rettie et al. 2024). The analysis used a step-selection approach to model movement steps in relation to ecological covariates including land cover classes and proximity to mine infrastructure. Step-selection functions (SSFs) were used to examine caribou movements by season, year, and sex. The results of the analysis indicated that caribou habitat use was similar both from the mine (>30 km away) and close to it (<30 km from infrastructure). In response to mine roads, only males increased the length of their movements and only during the winter.

The results also indicated that caribou that spend time near the Ekati Mine do not travel farther than caribou that are not near the mine. Also, their arrival times on their seasonal ranges aren’t affected by travelling close to the mine. Information from TK and satellite-collared adult female caribou collected by GNWT ECC indicates that two barren-ground caribou herds, the Bathurst herd, and to a lesser extent the Beverly/Ahiak herd, have historically overlapped the area of the Ekati Mine wildlife study area (Figure 6.1-1). The historical distribution of these herds in Figure 6.1-1 represents the larger ranges occupied when populations were larger. The most southwestern portion of the Beverly/Ahiak herd range overlapped with the Ekati Mine in recent fall and winters, when Beverly/Ahiak caribou appeared to assume a broader wintering range.

Population surveys of the calving ground report that Bathurst herd declined from approximately 472,000 animals in 1986 (GNWT ENR 2012) to 31,982 animals in 2009 (Nishi et al. 2010). The herd appeared to have stabilized between 2009 and 2012 at about 34,690 animals (GNWT ENR 2013) but then declined to 19,769 animals in 2015 (Boulanger et al. 2017), 8,207 animals in 2019, and 6,240 animals in 2022 (Adamczewsk et al. 2022).

Both TK and scientific studies indicate that caribou herd size cycles relatively regularly with climate patterns (GNWT ENR 2005, 2006); however, the current Bathurst herd population estimate is low compared to its historical minimum population size.

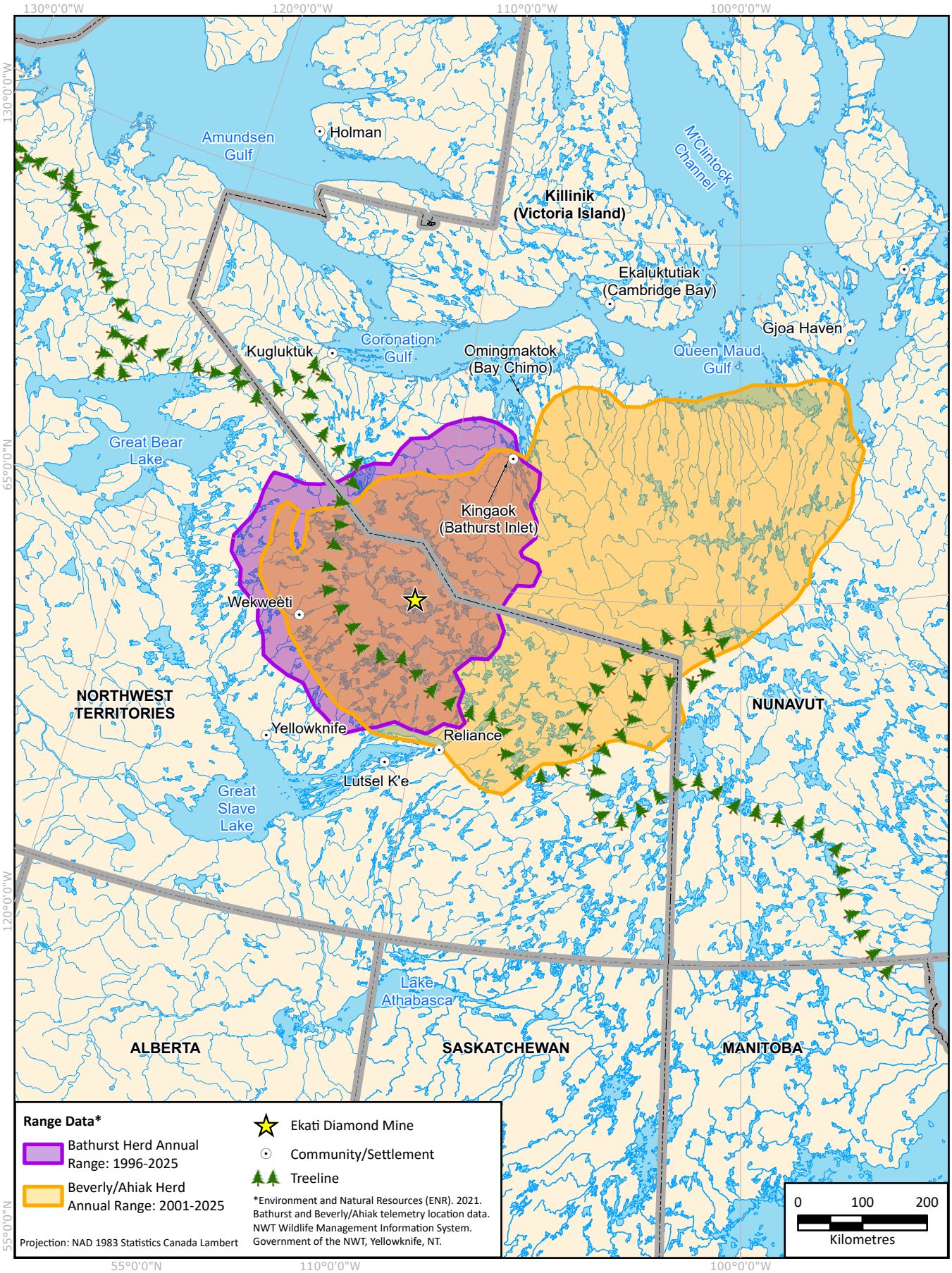



FIGURE 6.1-1 Annual Ranges of the Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak Caribou Herds

BURGUNDY DIAMOND MINES

GIS Number: EKA-23-440-12

Date: 23 October 2026

Barren-ground caribou use of the land can be broadly classified into two groups: 1) migrations (spring and fall) when the animals are moving quickly across the landscape, and 2) resident periods (calving, post-calving, summer, and winter) when the daily movement rate of caribou is lower than during migrations and the herd tends to occupy a distinct area of the landscape (Table 6.1-1).

Table 6.1-1 General Seasonal Period Dates for the Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak Caribou Herds

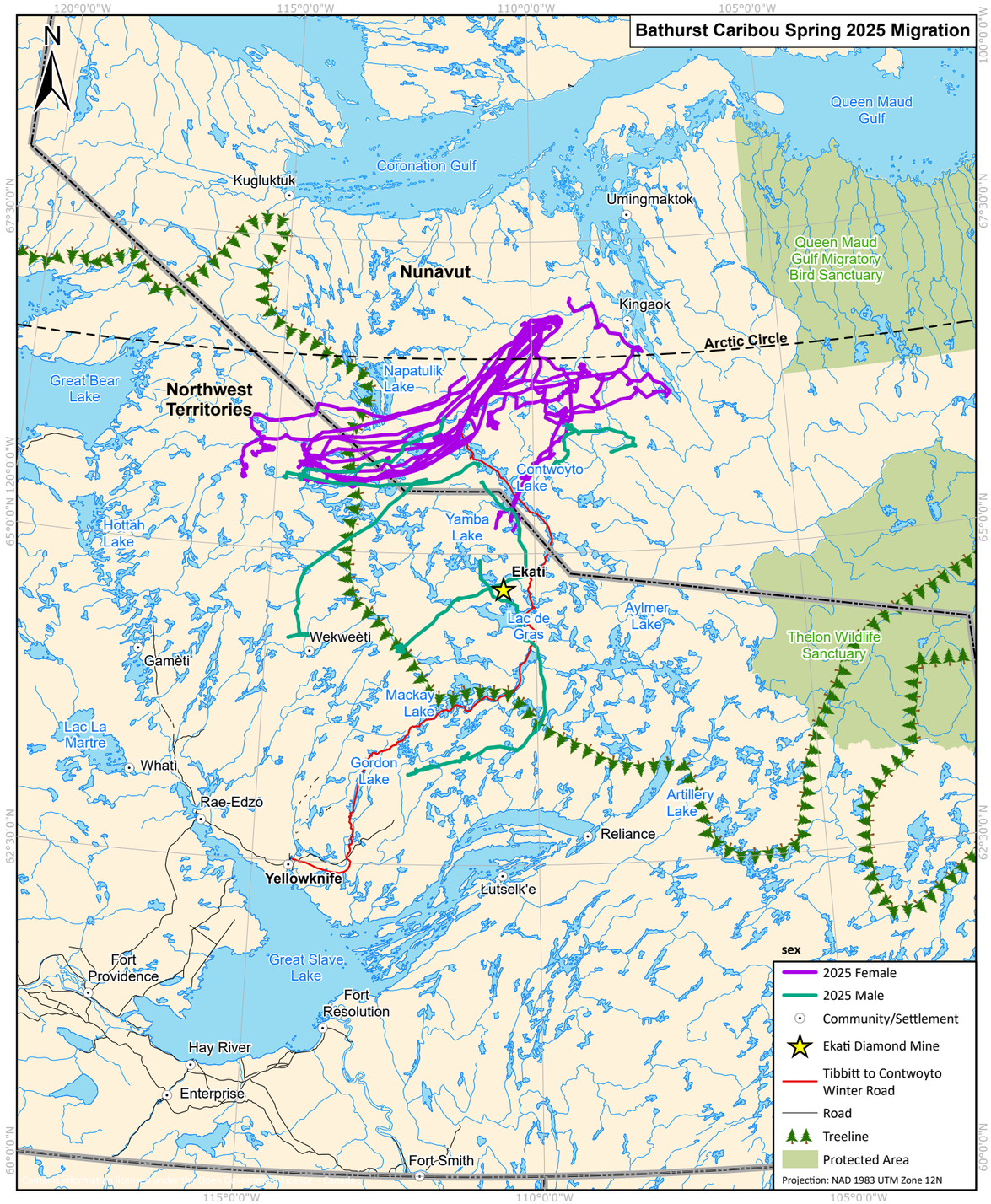
| Seasonal Period | Dates – Bathurst | Dates – Beverly/Ahiak |
|---|---|---|
| Winter | December 1 to April 19 | December 16 to April 9 |
| Spring migration | April 20 to June 1 | April 10 to June 5 |
| Calving | June 2 to June 16 | June 6 to June 19 |
| Post-calving | June 17 to June 28 | June 20 to July 8 |
| Summer | June 29 to September 6 | July 9 to September 11 |
| Fall migration | September 7 to November 30 | September 12 to December 15 |

Source: GNWT (2019b)

## 6.2 Collared Caribou Monitoring

During the winter, Bathurst herd caribou were historically found south of the tree line in the NWT, though the winter range has recently included areas north of the tree line (i.e., in each winter since 2015/2016; Burgundy Diamond Mine 2025). Bathurst caribou remain on the wintering grounds until mid-April when they begin their migration north to the calving grounds (Figure 6.2-1). In most years the core winter range did not overlap with the Ekati Mine, but the winter range has overlapped the Ekati Mine in some years, including 2025 (Figure 6.2-2). During the spring migration, Bathurst caribou migrate over a large area (275,000 $km^2$) from their wintering area to the calving grounds west of Bathurst Inlet in a relatively short period of time (Figure 6.2-2). Movement corridors varied depending on the distribution of caribou on the wintering grounds. Spring migration tracks of collared caribou have passed through or near the Ekati Mine, although in most years, migration routes of collared Bathurst caribou occur to the west or north of the Ekati Mine, while Beverly/Ahiak caribou are more evenly distributed throughout the region.

Bathurst female caribou usually arrive in late May on their calving grounds, which are currently concentrated between the James and Burnside Rivers, west of Bathurst Inlet (Figure 6.2-3), however sometimes arrive as early as April, and calving begins in early June (Table 6.1-1; KIA 2015). Female caribou that are not pregnant migrate more slowly than pregnant cows and may or may not reach the calving grounds. Male caribou and juvenile caribou (born in the previous year) likely also follow females as some are present during calving, but generally north-bound males and juveniles are thought to meet females with calves in late June and early July on the post-calving and summer ranges, which are more spread out relative to the calving grounds and located south of the calving grounds (Gunn and D'Hont 2002). The post-calving range overlapped with the Ekati Mine in earlier years (1996 to 2007) however has not overlapped since 2007 (Figure 6.2-4).



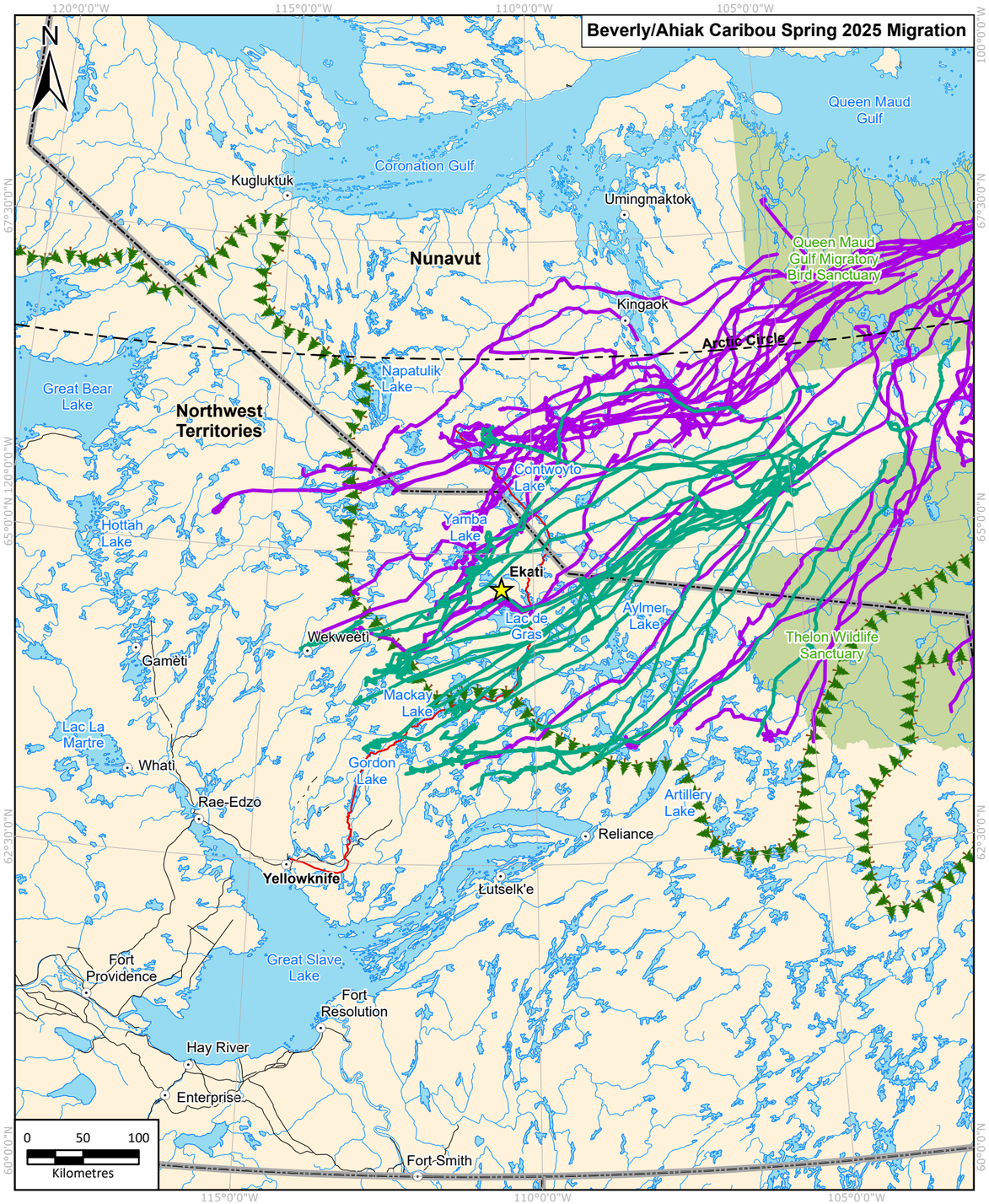
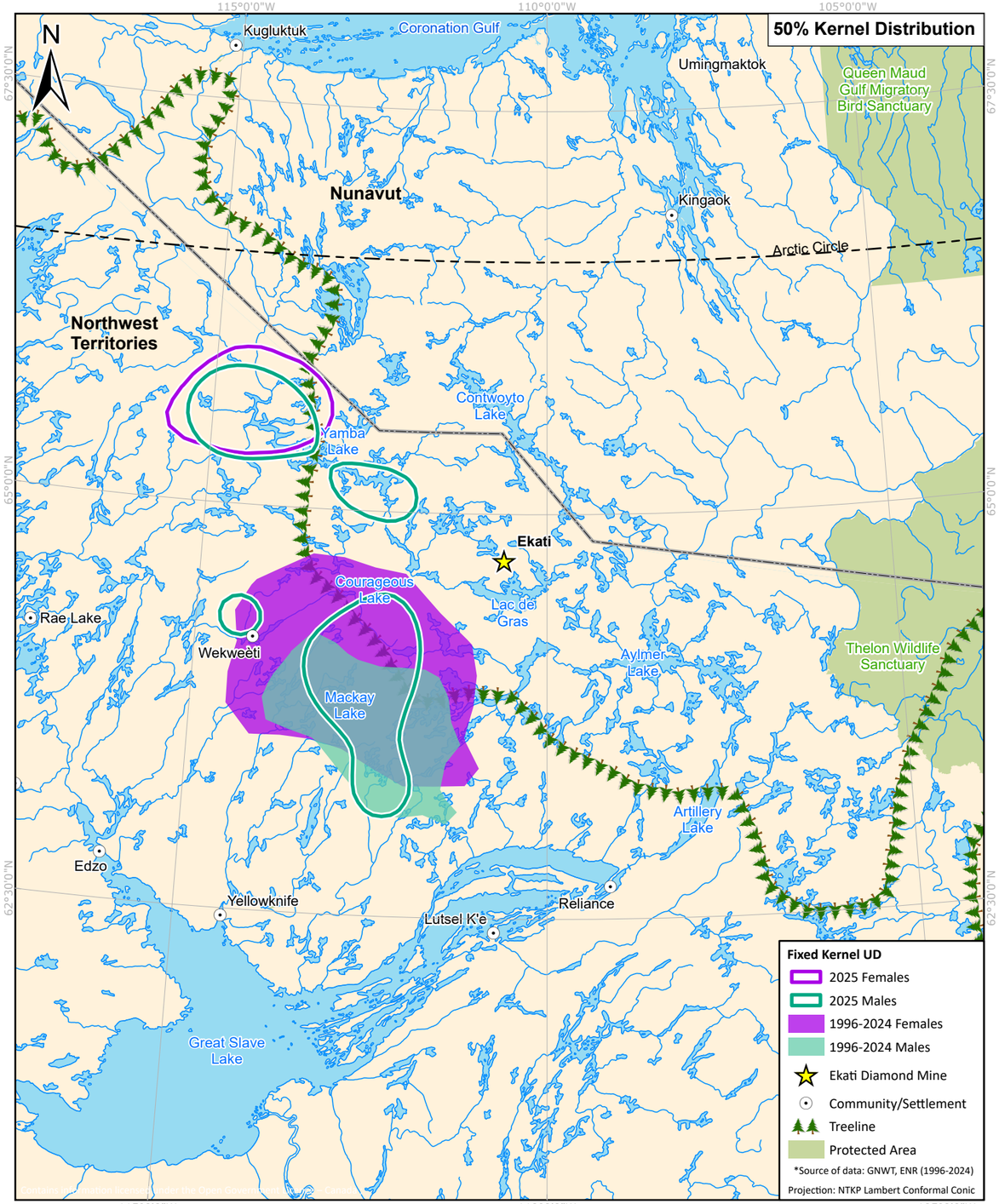




Figure 6.2-1 Spring Migration Routes of Satellite Collared Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak Caribou, 2025



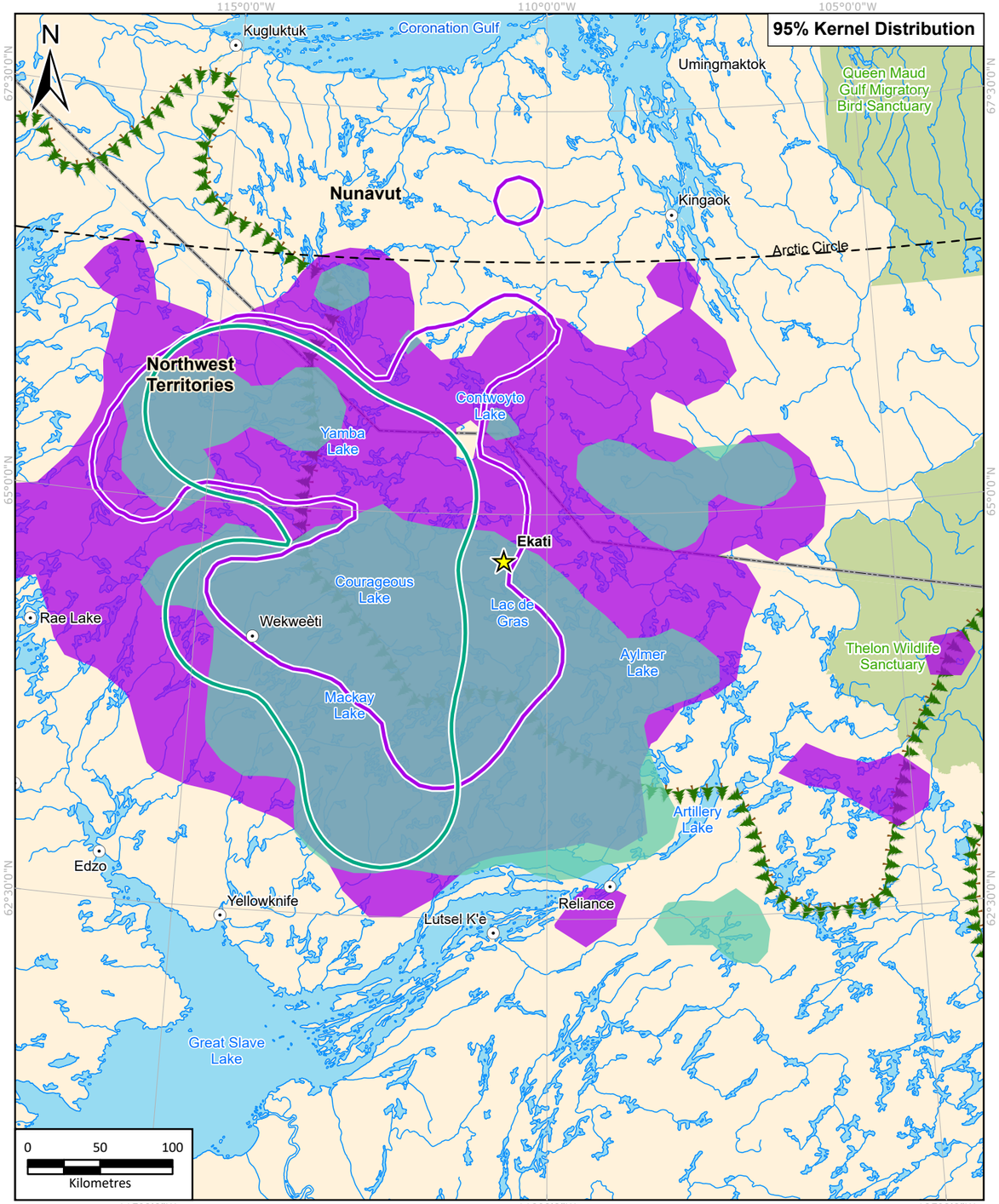
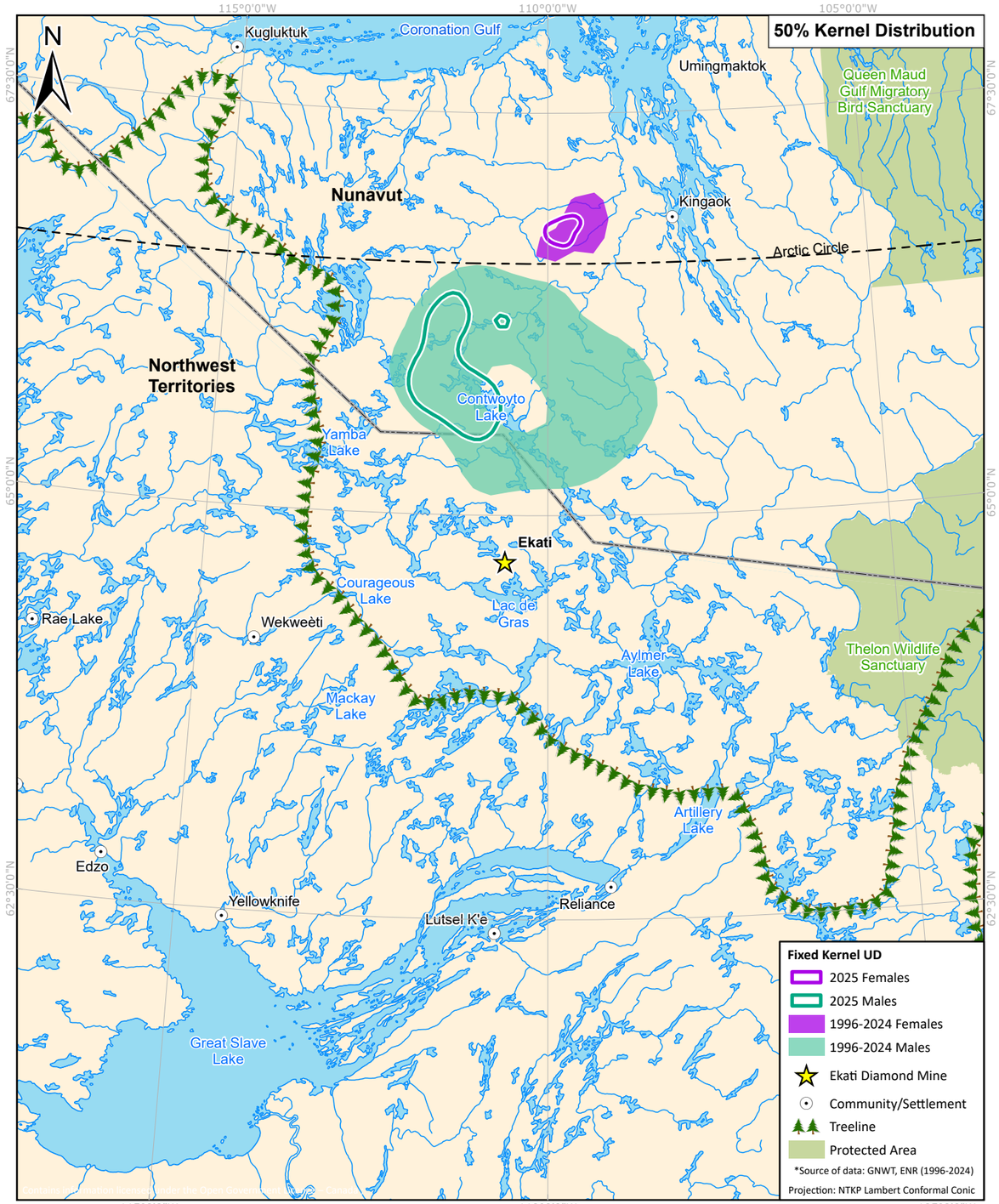




Figure 6.2-2 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Bathurst Caribou During Winter



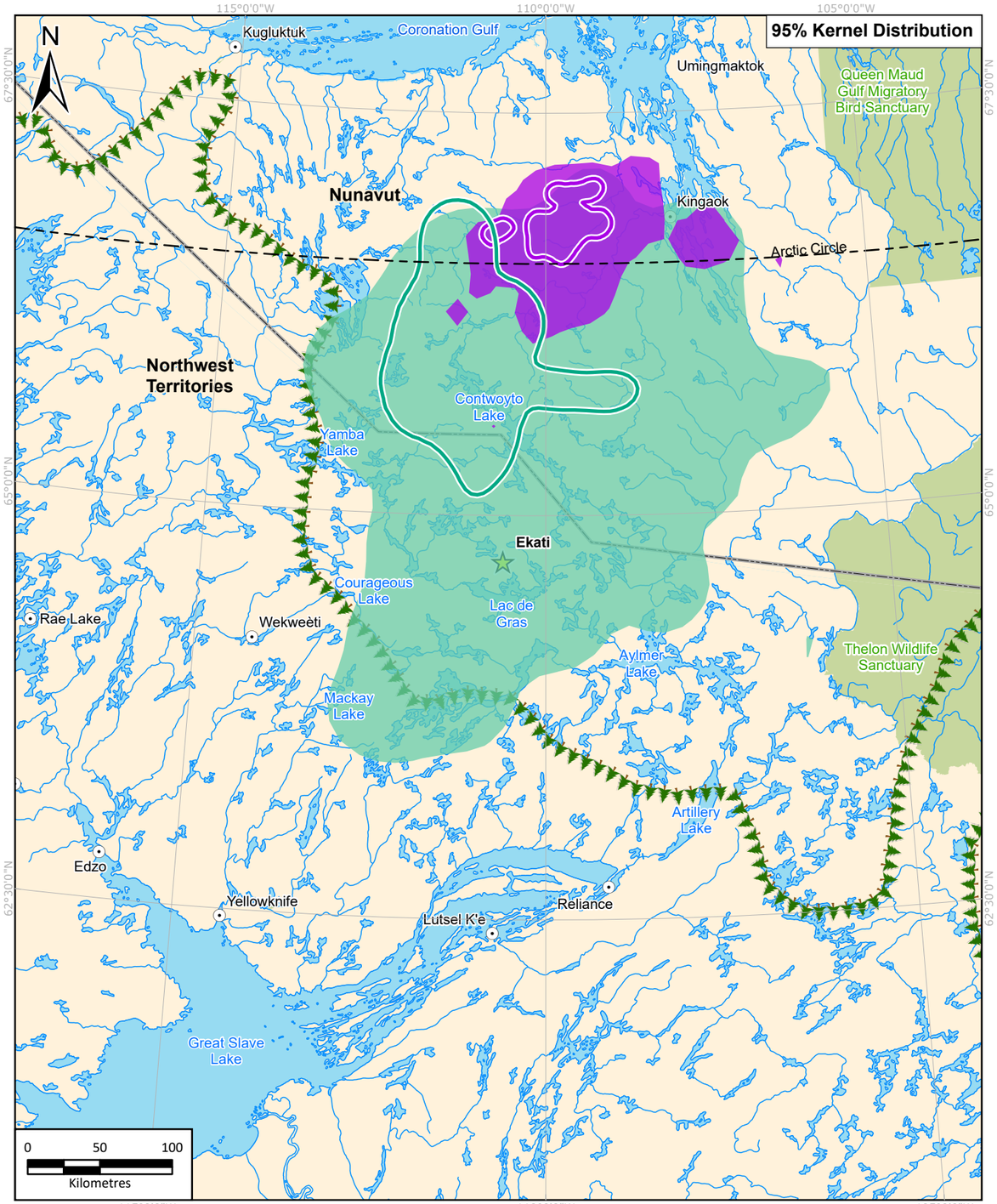
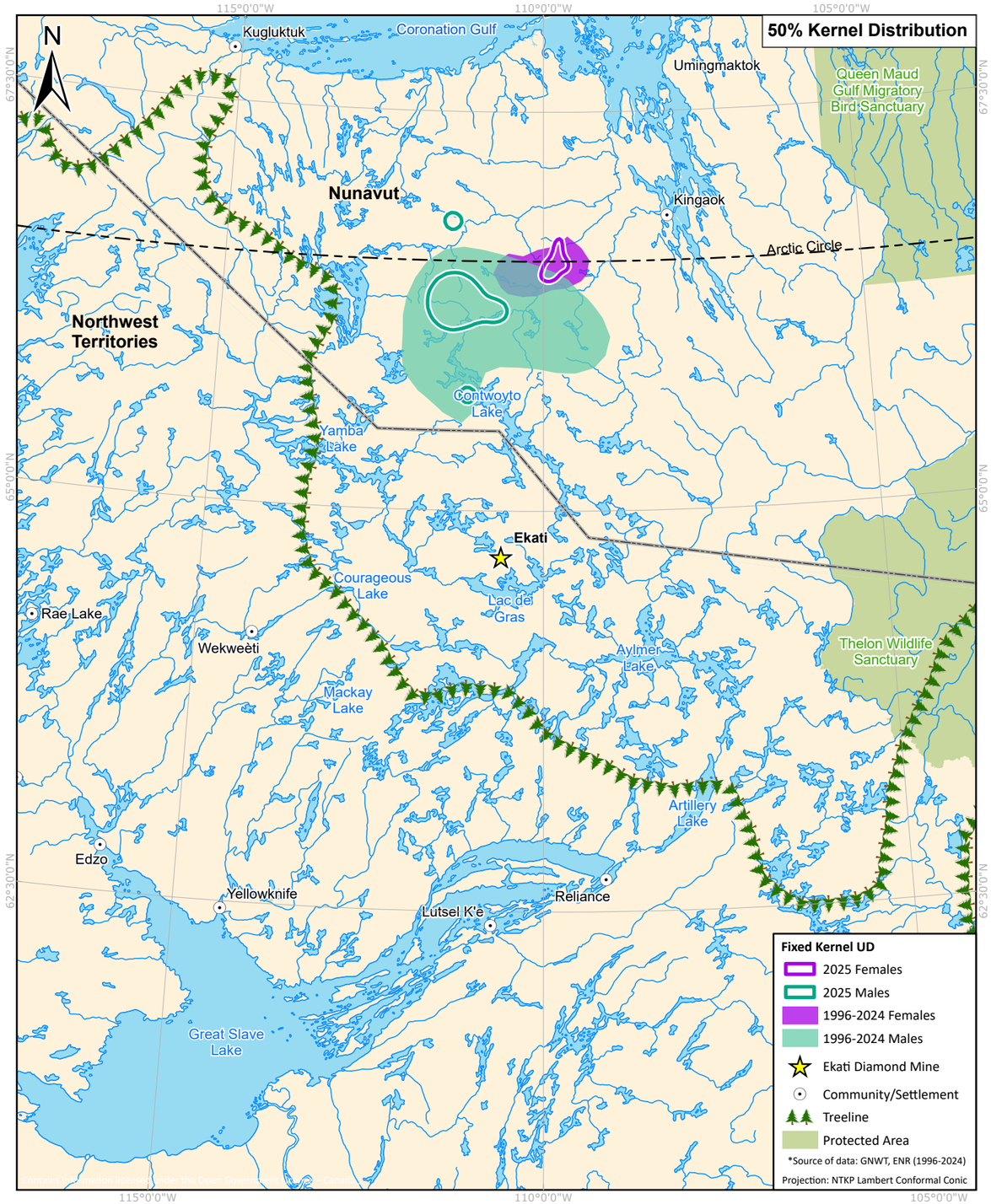




Figure 6.2-3 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Bathurst Caribou During Calving



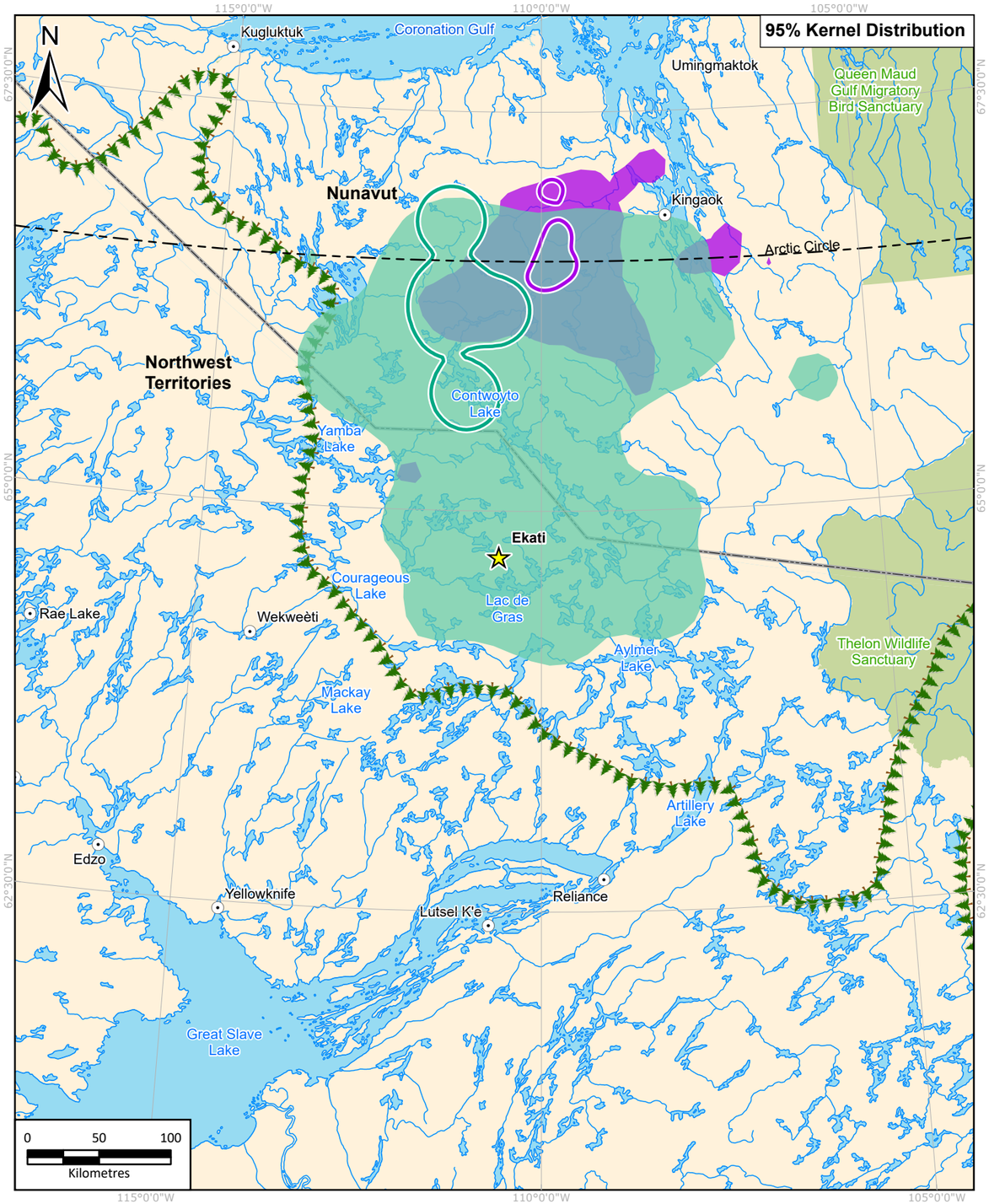




Figure 6.2-4 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Bathurst Caribou During Post-Calving

During the summer (June 29 to September 6), most of the Bathurst caribou have traditionally used the area surrounding Contwoyto Lake (Gunn et al. 2008a, 2008b). The summer range has overlapped with the Ekati Mine in several years. During the fall (September 7 to November 30), Bathurst caribou migrate south towards the winter range. A portion of the Bathurst caribou range has frequently overlapped with the Ekati Mine during the fall period.

For the Beverly/Ahiak herd, land use can likewise be grouped into periods of rapid movement during spring and fall migrations and more localized resident periods during calving, post-calving, summer, and winter. The herd occupies its winter range from mid-December to early April, followed by spring migration from mid-April to early June as caribou move north toward the calving grounds. Calving occurs primarily in early to mid-June, after which females and calves transition to post-calving areas through late June and early July. The summer range is used from early July through mid-September, when movements are generally more dispersed, before southward fall migration begins in mid-September and continues until mid-December, returning animals to their wintering areas. Near or below the treeline. Overlap of the Beverly/Ahiak herd with the Ekati Mine is most expected to occur during the fall and winter periods.

Caribou herds exhibit periodic changes in seasonal migration routes and in calving and winter ranges (Gunn et al. 1997; Gunn and D'hont 2002; BCMPC 2004; Boulanger et al. 2004). Seasonal ranges and core use areas can also vary from year to year within a large spatial extent, which can be illustrated by comparing historical collar data to more recent satellite data. The locations of collared caribou are monitored annually for movement patterns across years, as well to determine the proximity of caribou relative to the Ekati Mine in real time. Maps generated every Monday, Wednesday and Friday as well as weekly by the GNWT ECC show the location of satellite-collared individuals in proximity to the Ekati Mine and are used to inform the monitoring and mitigation levels required on site at any given time (Table 4.1-1).

### 6.2.1 Objectives

The objectives for this component of the WEMP are to:

- Provide advance warning of caribou approaching the mine roads and mine infrastructure to inform monitoring and mitigation;
- Identify potential effects, investigate drivers, and evaluate effectiveness of mitigation;
- Document the presence and annual timing of caribou movements relative to the Ekati Mine; and
- Compare temporal trends and spatial variability in migration patterns relative to the Ekati Mine.

### 6.2.2 Methods

Seasonal movements of caribou were tracked in 2025 using satellite collars on 19 female caribou and 6 males for the Bathurst herd and 29 female and 20 male caribou for the Beverly/Ahiak herd (GNWT ECC unpublished data; Table 6.2-1). Male caribou from the Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak herds were first collared in 2015 and added to the database to track movements of male caribou relative to females but were not included in previous annual WEMP reports (2015 to 2024). Male caribou were incorporated into this year's WEMP report to provide a separate analysis, including seasonal range overlaps, at the request of the GNWT.

Table 6.2-1 Maximum Number of Satellite-collared Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak Caribou and Number of Locational Data Points, 2025

| Herd | Maximum Number of Collared Caribou | Total Number of Location Data Points |
|---|---|---|
| Bathurst | 25 | 19,357 |
| Beverly/Ahiak | 49 | 40,677 |

Throughout the year, satellite collars provide point location data on caribou at fixed time intervals. With these data, linear pathways between consecutive points were created to plot spring migration routes from winter ranges north to the calving grounds. The data were also used to identify movement corridors and river crossings.

For periods other than spring migration, satellite daily collar location data were used to calculate fixed kernel UD that represent levels of use by caribou. The core range is defined by the 50% kernel UD, an area with a 50% probability that an animal (or group of animals) will be found inside that area. The seasonal range extent is represented by the 95% kernel UD, an area with a 95% probability that an animal (or group of animals) will be found inside that area. Data collected during the fall are sporadic and movements of caribou during this time are slow relative to spring migration; therefore, these data are presented as ranges rather than movement paths.

The fixed kernel UDs were analyzed by season/life history stage, which are defined by movement rates in different seasons (Nagy 2011; Table 6.1-1). For this mapping exercise, the calculation of the winter distribution uses data was combined for December 2024 to January-April 2025.

### 6.2.3 Results

Seasonal ranges were calculated for male and female Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak herd caribou in five seasons: winter, calving, post-calving, summer, and fall migration. Caribou movements during spring migration are explored as movement paths for collared individuals. The results of these analyses, the periods when caribou ranges overlap the mine, and any shifts in distribution are discussed in the following sections.

#### 6.2.3.1 Bathurst Winter

During the winter of 2024-2025, collared Bathurst caribou occupied a range that was southwest of/and overlapped the Ekati Mine (Figure 6.2-2). The broad winter ranges (95% kernel UD) straddled the tree line northwest to southeast with the female winter range overlapping the Ekati Mine. The smaller winter core use areas (50% kernel UD) also straddled the tree line to the west and south of the Ekati Mine (Figure 6.2-2).
The broad ranges of males and females were relatively similar, and overlapped with historical distributions. Core use areas for females and males were concentrated to the northwest of the Mine, while males also had an area of core use to the southwest of the Mine (Figure 6.2-2). This female core use area is north of historical core use areas for females in winter. During the winters of 2016/2017, 2017/2018, and 2018/2019 the Bathurst winter range was on the tundra (Burgundy Diamond Mines, 2025), considerably north of their historical core seasonal range along and below the tree line. Since 2020, the core winter range has moved back south and/or west to occur along the tree line.

#### 6.2.3.2 Bathurst Spring Migration and Calving

During the spring migration in 2025, Bathurst collared female caribou migrated from their winter range northwest of the Ekati Mine to the calving range in Nunavut (Figure 6.2-1). Travel was most common in a northeast direction, with most collared animals travelling east into Nunavut then north to the calving range (Figure 6.2-1). Several collared males that wintered south and east of the Mine travelled primarily north during spring migration, with two caribou passing near the Mine (Figure 6.2-1).

The calving range of Bathurst caribou in 2025 was located above the NWT and Nunavut border, with the core use area for females located just above the Arctic Circle, approximately 250 km north of the Ekati Mine, and the core use area for males located just above the NWT and Nunavut border (Figure 6.2-3). The location of the 2025 calving range (95% UD) is consistent with the historical calving range (Figure 6.2-3) from 1996 to 2024 west of Bathurst Inlet (Burgundy Diamond Mines 2025).

#### 6.2.3.3 Bathurst Post-Calving

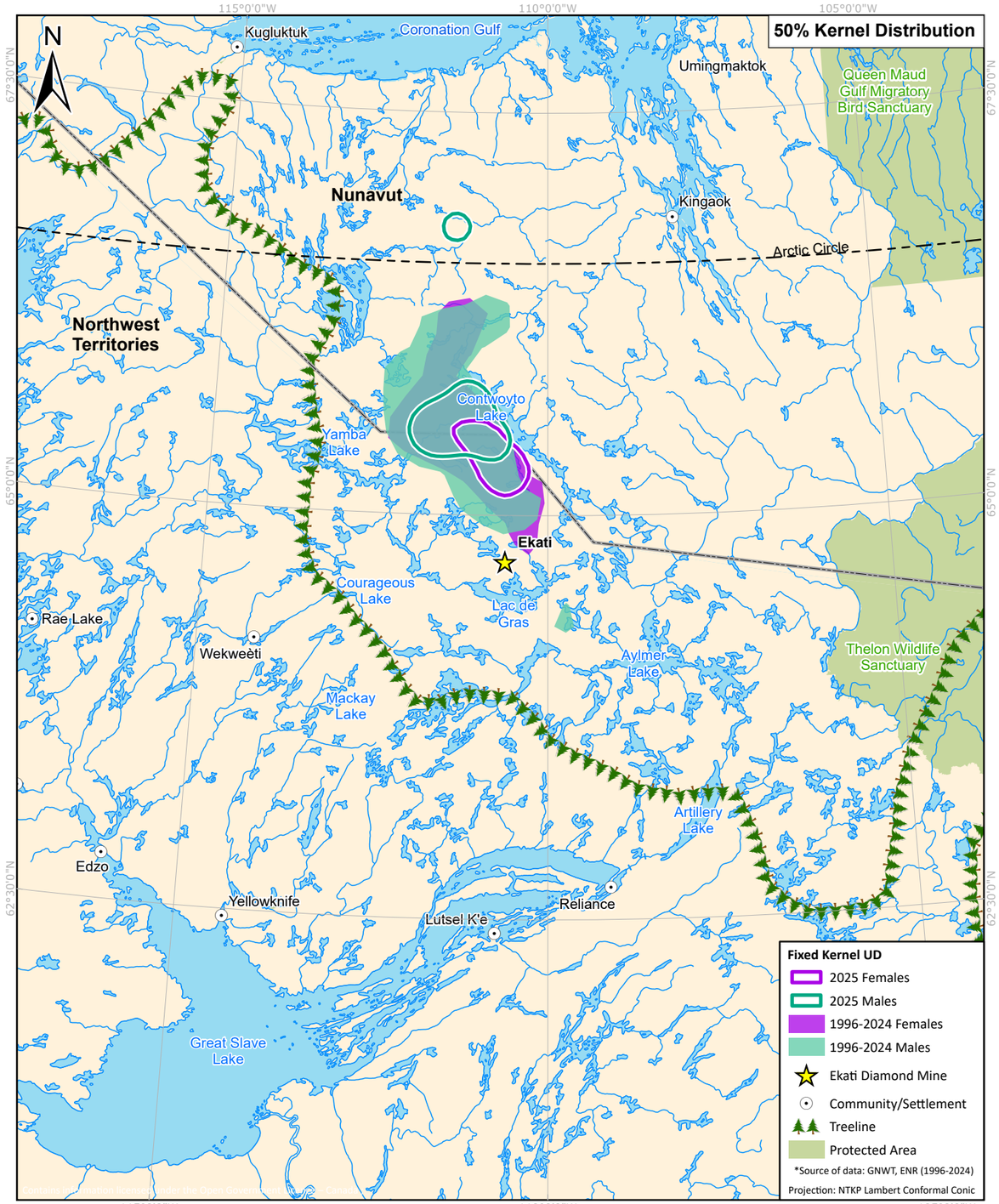
The post-calving range of Bathurst caribou in 2025 was located north of the border of NWT and Nunavut, approximately 200 km north of, and not overlapping the Ekati Mine (Figure 6.2-4). This is consistent with the historical post-calving distribution (Figure 6.2-4). The 2025 post-calving range was similar to the historical range from 1996-2024, where the range was mostly restricted to the area north of Contwoyto Lake. In 2025 the area identified in both the 50% and 95% UD is much more restricted in size compared to post-calving ranges prior to 2023 (Burgundy Diamond Mines 2025).

#### 6.2.3.4 Bathurst Summer

The summer range of Bathurst collared male and female caribou in 2025 was centered around Contwoyto Lake (Figure 6.2-5). The core use area was on the southwestern edge of Contwoyto Lake, overlapping the border of NWT and Nunavut, approximately 125 km north of the Ekati Mine (Figure 6.2-5). The male and female 95% distributions extended into Nunavut, close to the calving range. The historic summer core use area extends to just north of the Mine (Figure 6.2-5), with some historical years having core use areas overlapping the Mine (1996 to 2007, 2013, 2016, 2021, 2022 and 2023; Burgundy Diamond Mines 2025). The historical 95% UD summer range for both males and females overlapped the mine, but this was not the case in 2025.

#### 6.2.3.5 Bathurst Fall

Contwoyto Lake has been central to the fall migration range historically and in 2025 (Figure 6.2-6). During the 2025 fall migration period, the core use area of male and female Bathurst caribou remained primarily on the southwestern edge of Contwoyto Lake, north of the Ekati Mine, with an additional area of core use approximately 50 km southwest of the Mine (Figure 6.2-6). Both the male and female Bathurst caribou fall 95% UD ranges overlapped the mine in 2025. Both the male and female 95% UD range extended into Nunavut, with the male 95% UD extending north and west along the NWT and Nunavut border outside of the historical distribution. The core use area (50% UD) for both male and female caribou in 2025 was very similar to the historic core range (Figure 6.2-6). The fall 95% UD range of collared Bathurst caribou has overlapped with the mine historically, while only the historical core area (50% kernel UD) for males overlaps the mine (Figure 6.2-6). However, yearly fall migration ranges have not overlapped with the mine since 2012 (Burgundy Diamond Mines 2025).



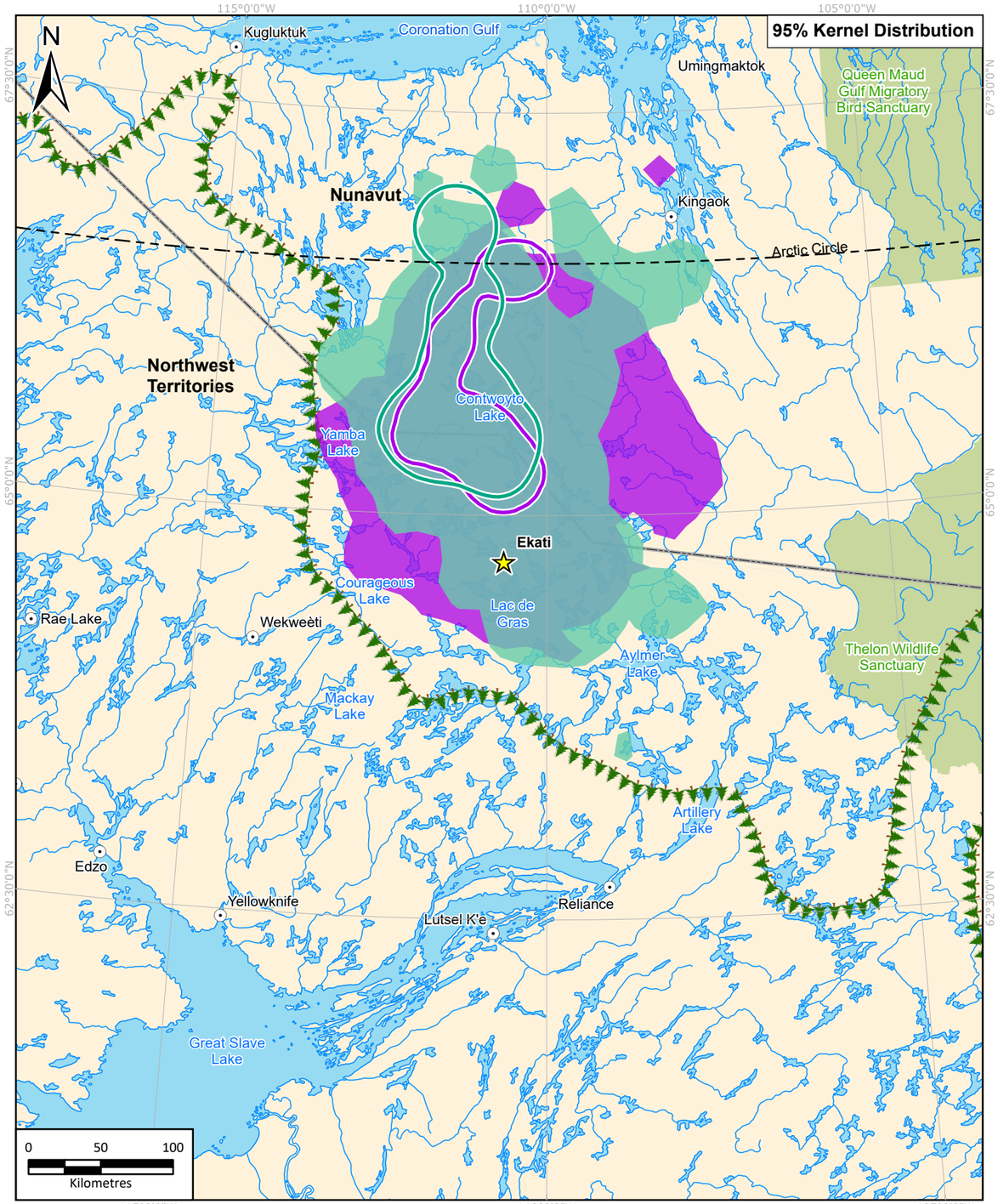
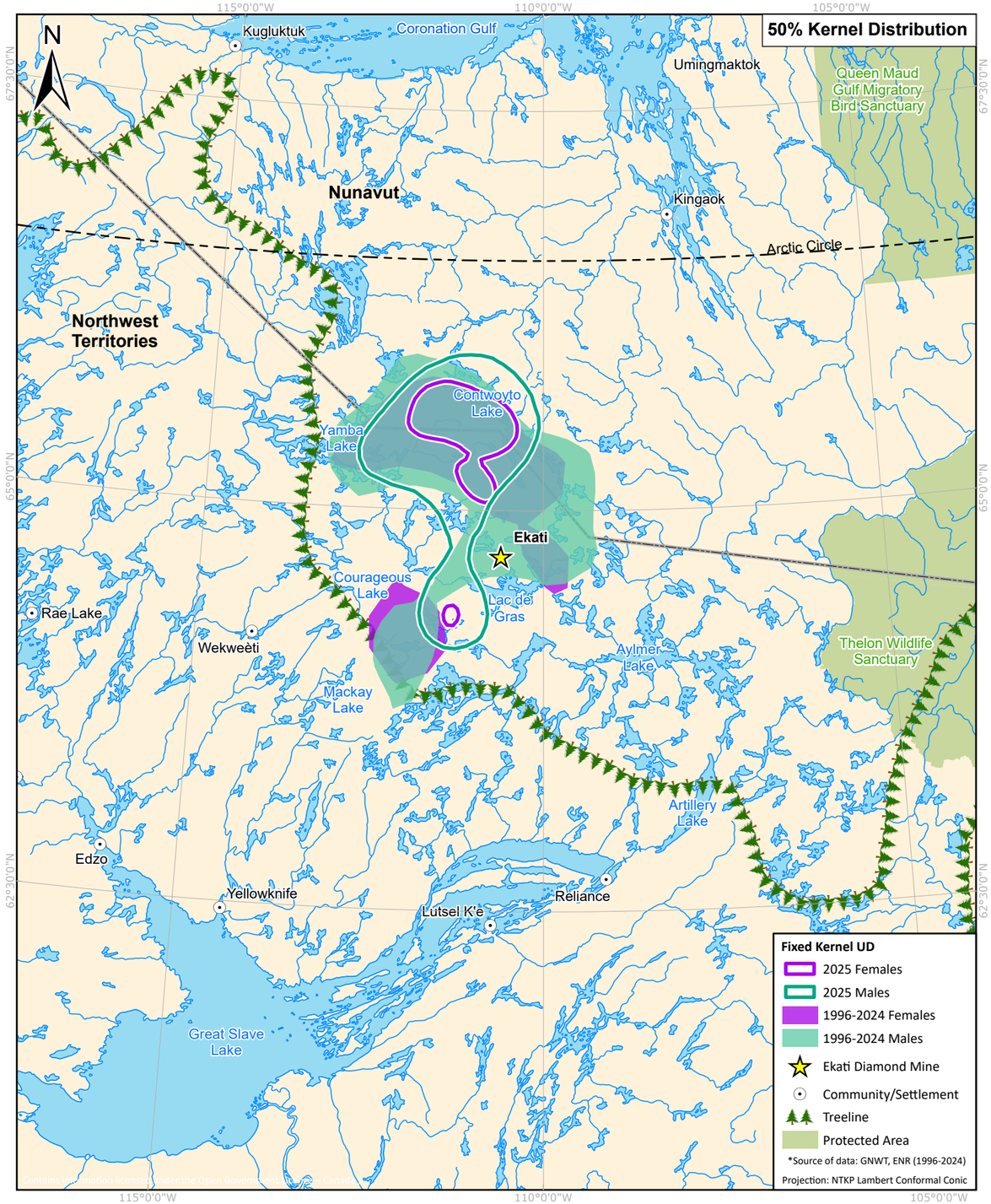




Figure 6.2-5 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Bathurst Caribou During Summer



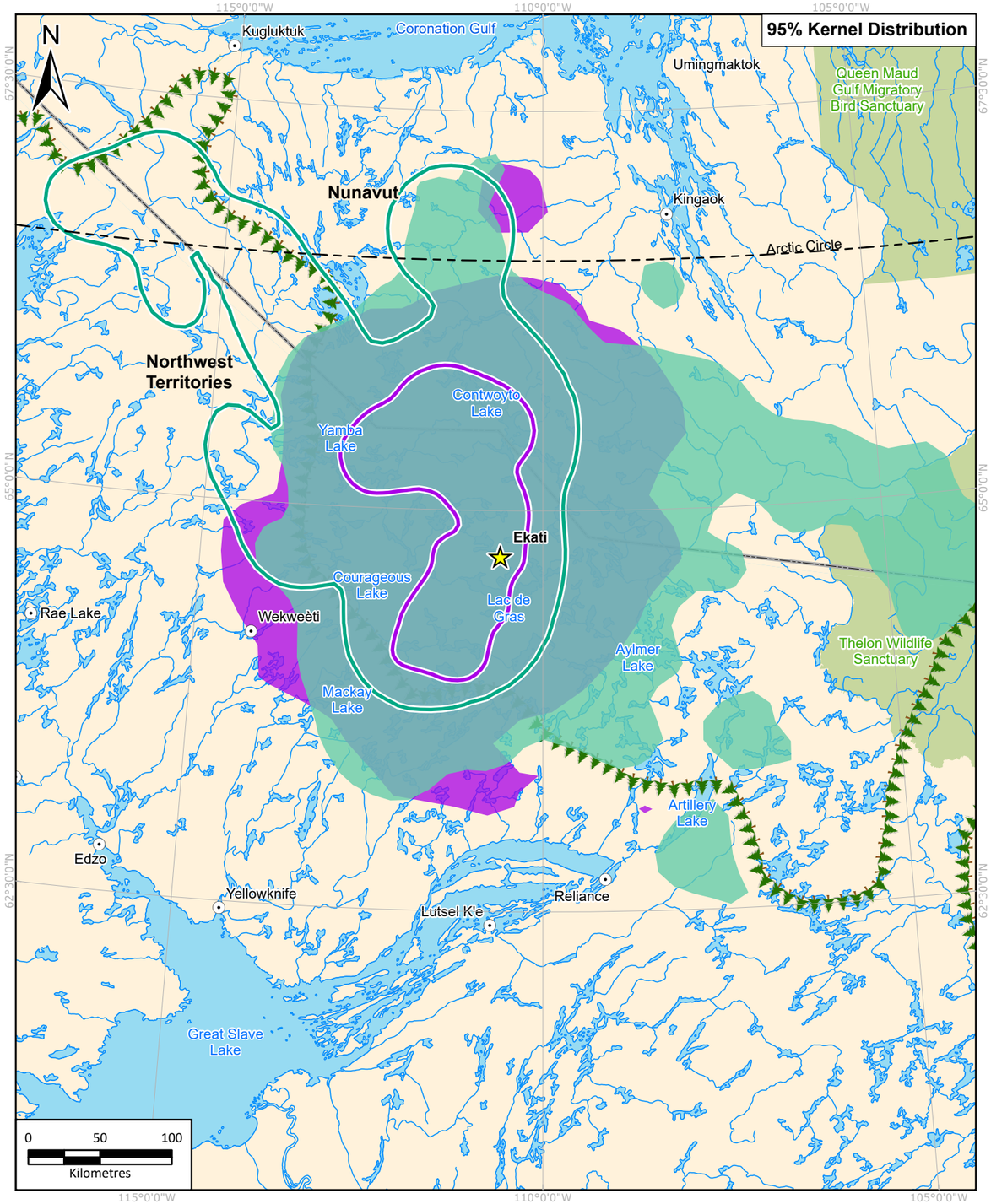




Figure 6.2-6 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Bathurst Caribou During Fall

#### 6.2.3.6 Beverly/Ahiak Winter

Mapping of the Beverly/Ahiak herd during the winter of 2024-2025 indicated that the Ekati Mine was located in the northern area of the winter range (Figure 6.2-7). The core use areas (50% kernel UD) in winter were located along the tree line to the southwest and southeast of the Mine and did not overlap with the Mine for males or females. The 95% kernel UD did overlap with the Mine for females, but not males, which had a much more restricted range than females (Figure 6.2-7). Since 2018, and continued in 2025, the range continued to shift to the southwest of the Mine (Figure 6.2-7; Burgundy Diamond Mines 2025).

The 2024-2025 winter ranges of the Bathurst herd (Figure 6.2-2) and the Beverly/Ahiak herd (Figure 6.2-7) had a high degree of overlap, suggesting potential for mixing within these herds.

#### 6.2.3.7 Beverly/Ahiak Spring Migration and Calving

During spring migration, 2025 satellite collared Beverly/Ahiak caribou exhibited east to west and south to north movement routes extending from wintering areas in the central NWT toward areas in western Nunavut (e.g., Queen Maud Gulf; Figure 6.2-1). Mapped migration paths show a broad network of routes east of the Ekati Mine, with some migration tracks passing near the mine footprint, followed by continuing to the calving grounds. Spring migration routes are spatially dispersed relative to other seasons, indicating multiple movement pathways across the landscape rather than a single, well-defined corridor.

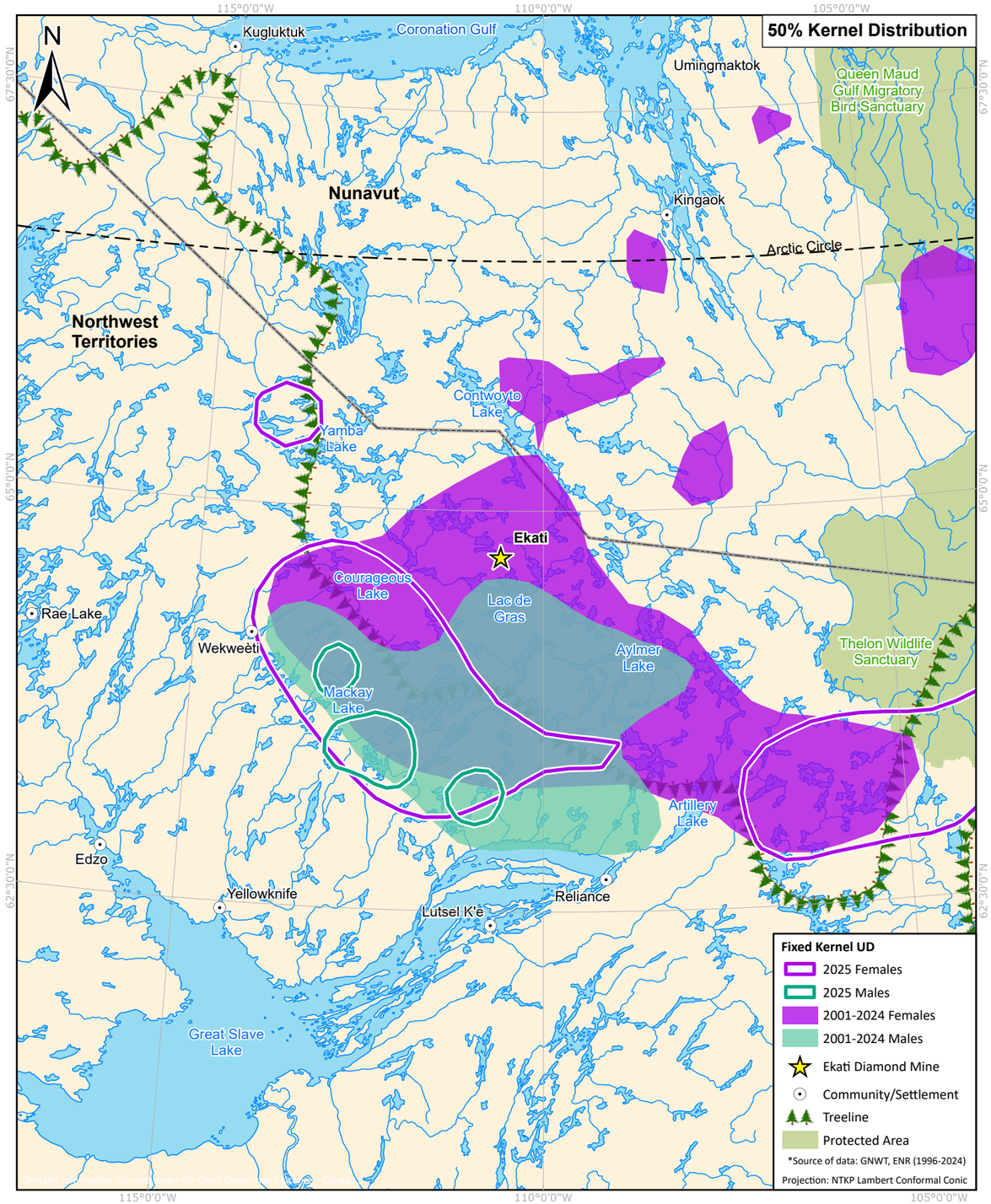
During the calving period, the distribution of satellite collared Beverly/Ahiak caribou was concentrated well east of the Ekati Mine, with core and extended kernel distributions located predominantly within Nunavut (Figure 6.2-8). The 50% kernel areas indicate a spatially focused calving range, while the 95% distributions show more diffuse use surrounding the core area, particularly by male caribou. No overlap between calving distributions and the Ekati Mine is shown on either the historical or 2025 maps, supporting a lack of interaction during this season.

#### 6.2.3.8 Beverly/Ahiak Post-Calving

Post calving distributions of satellite collared Beverly/Ahiak caribou expanded relative to the calving period, with kernel distributions extending westward and southward from the calving areas (Figure 6.2-9). Historical and 2025 post-calving 95% kernel distributions approach the Ekati Mine area but remain primarily east of the mine footprint. Core use areas remain spatially distinct from the Ekati Mine, indicating limited post calving overlap based on mapped collar data.

#### 6.2.3.9 Beverly Ahiak Summer

During summer, satellite collared Beverly/Ahiak caribou occupied a broad area spanning the central Northwest Territories and western Nunavut (Figure 6.2-10). The 95% kernel distributions in both historical and 2025 periods encompass the Ekati Mine for female caribou only, while 50% kernel areas are generally located east of the mine for both males and females, indicating that the Ekati Mine lies within the broader summer range but outside most core use areas. Summer distributions are spatially extensive, reflecting wide-ranging habitat use during this period.



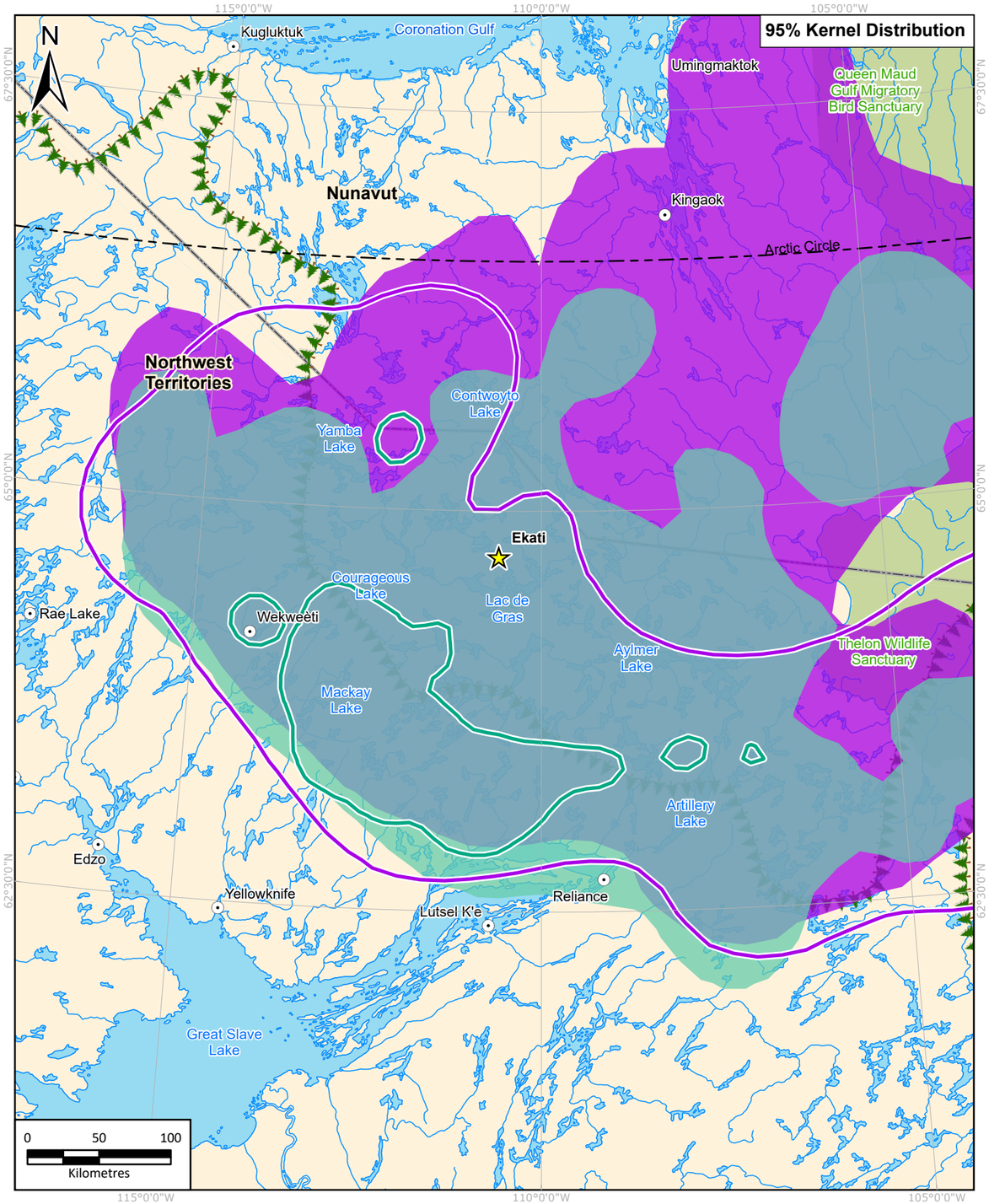
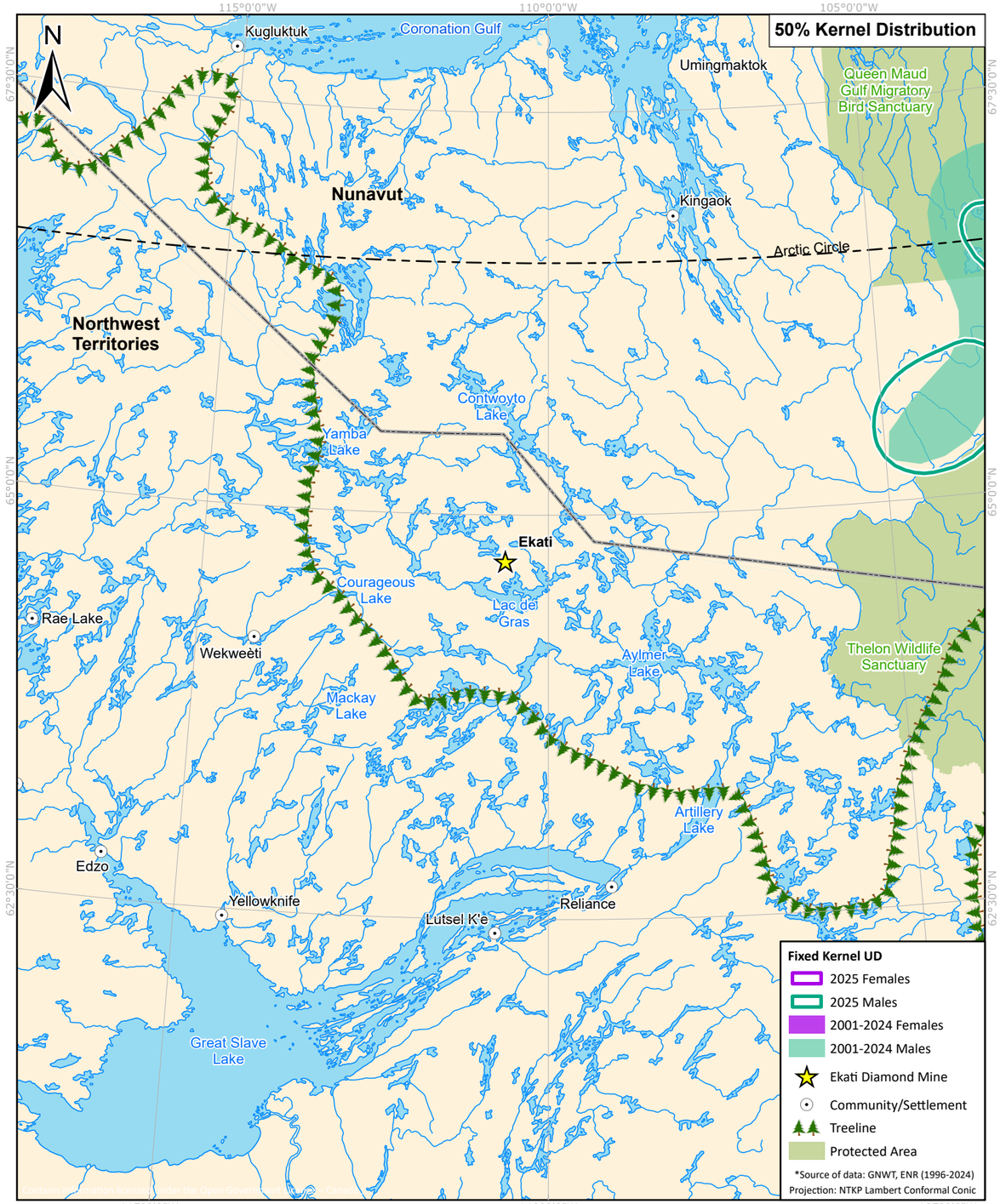




Figure 6.2-7 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Beverly/Ahiak Caribou During Winter



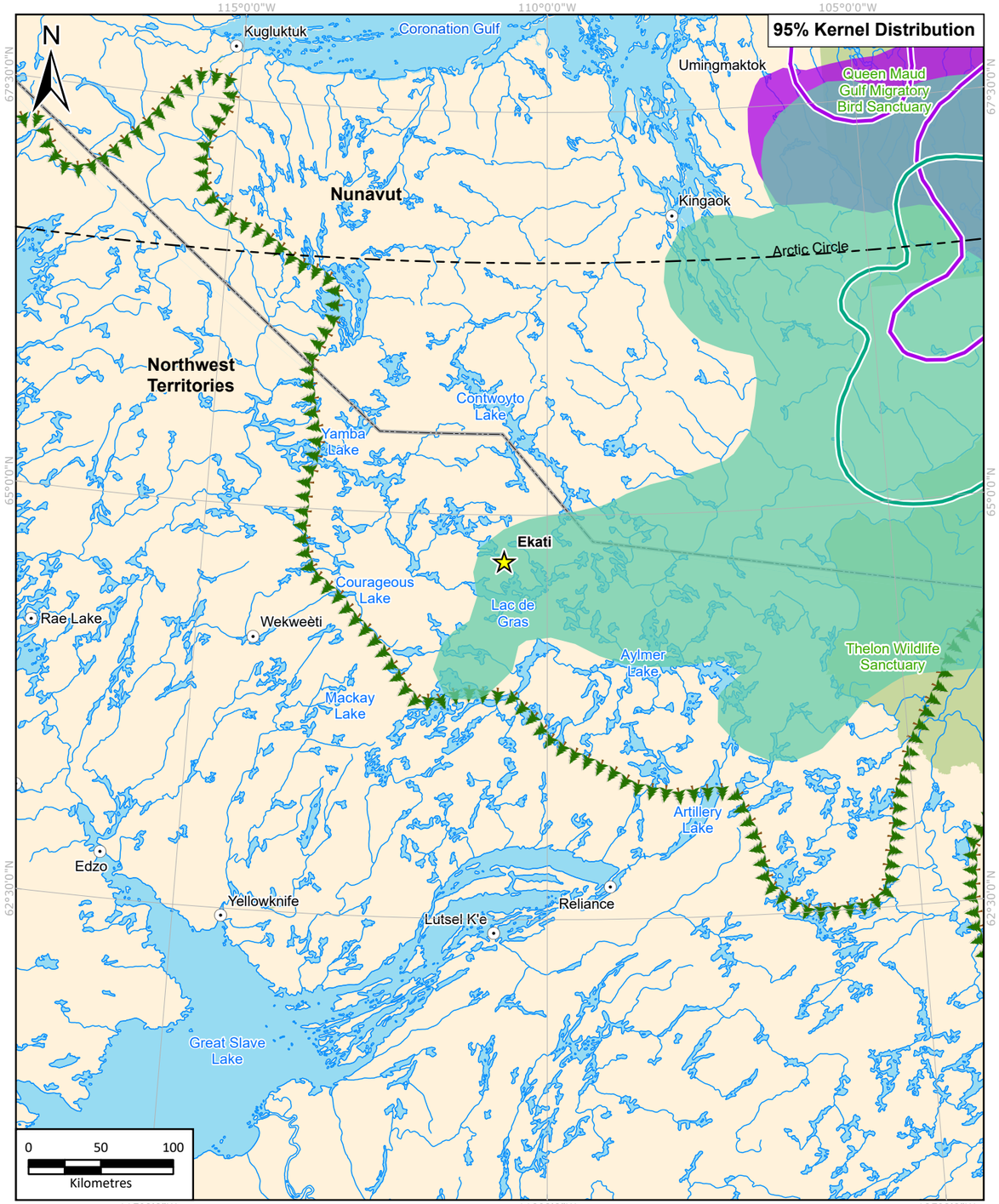
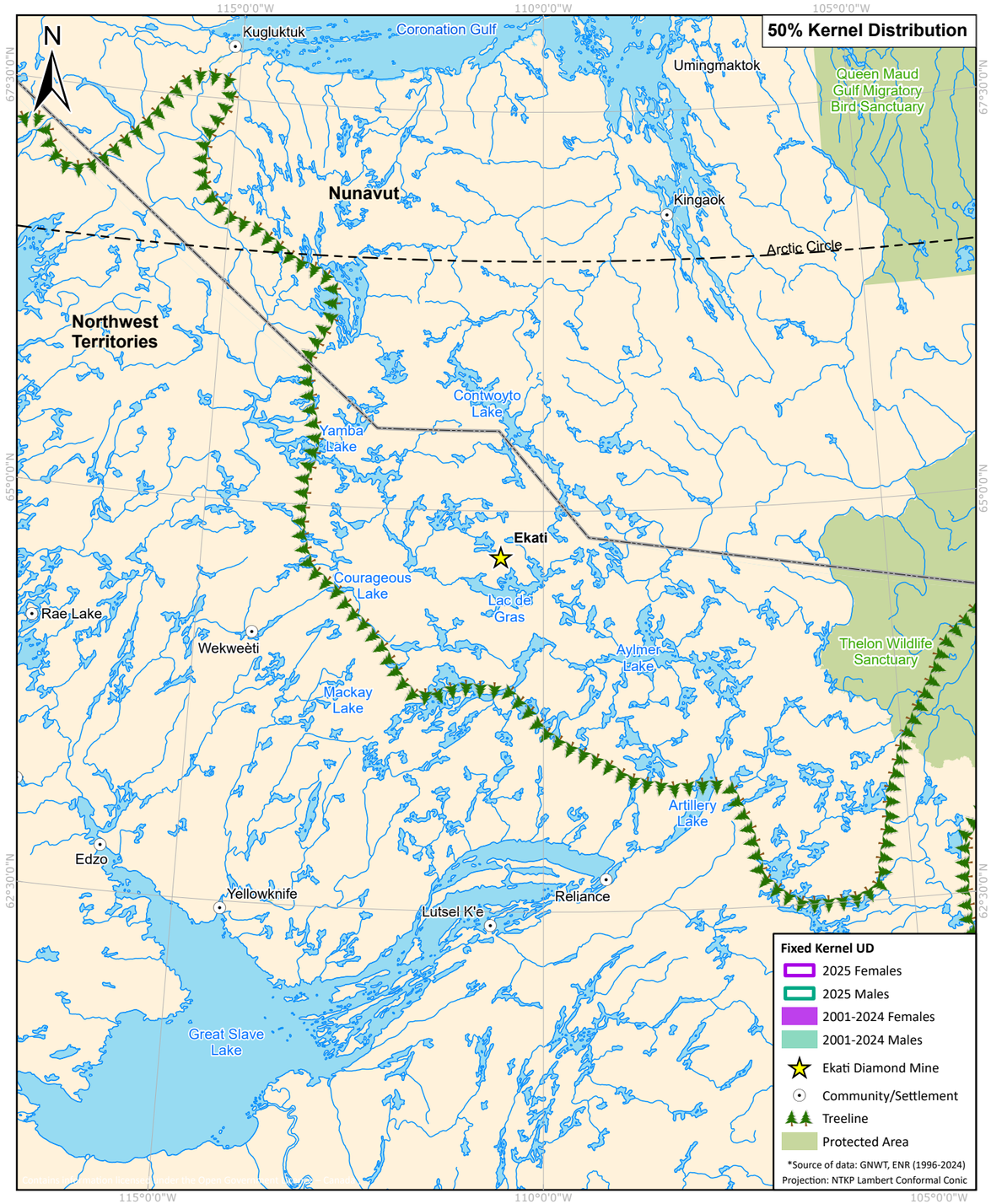




Figure 6.2-8 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Beverly/Ahiak Caribou During Calving



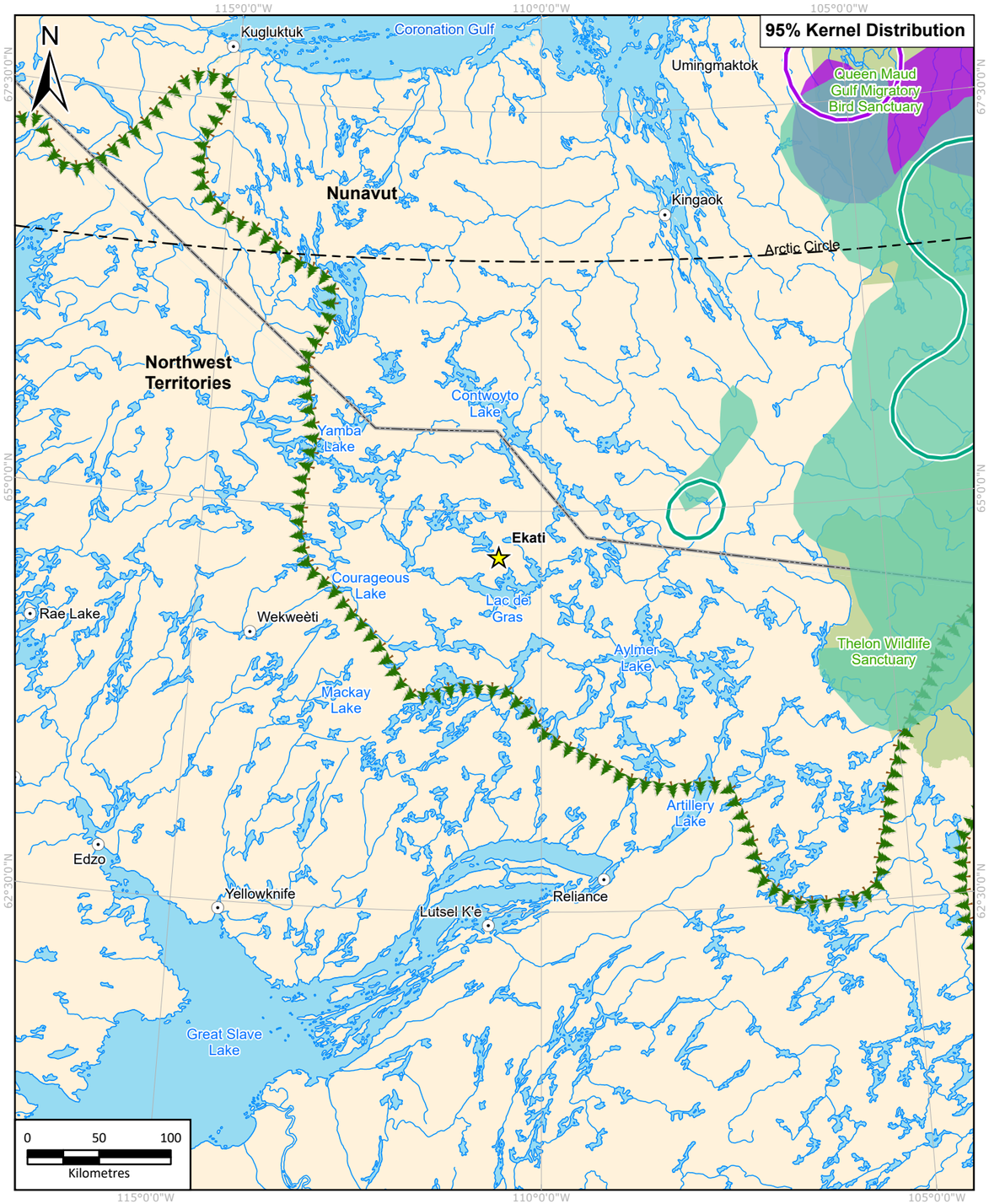
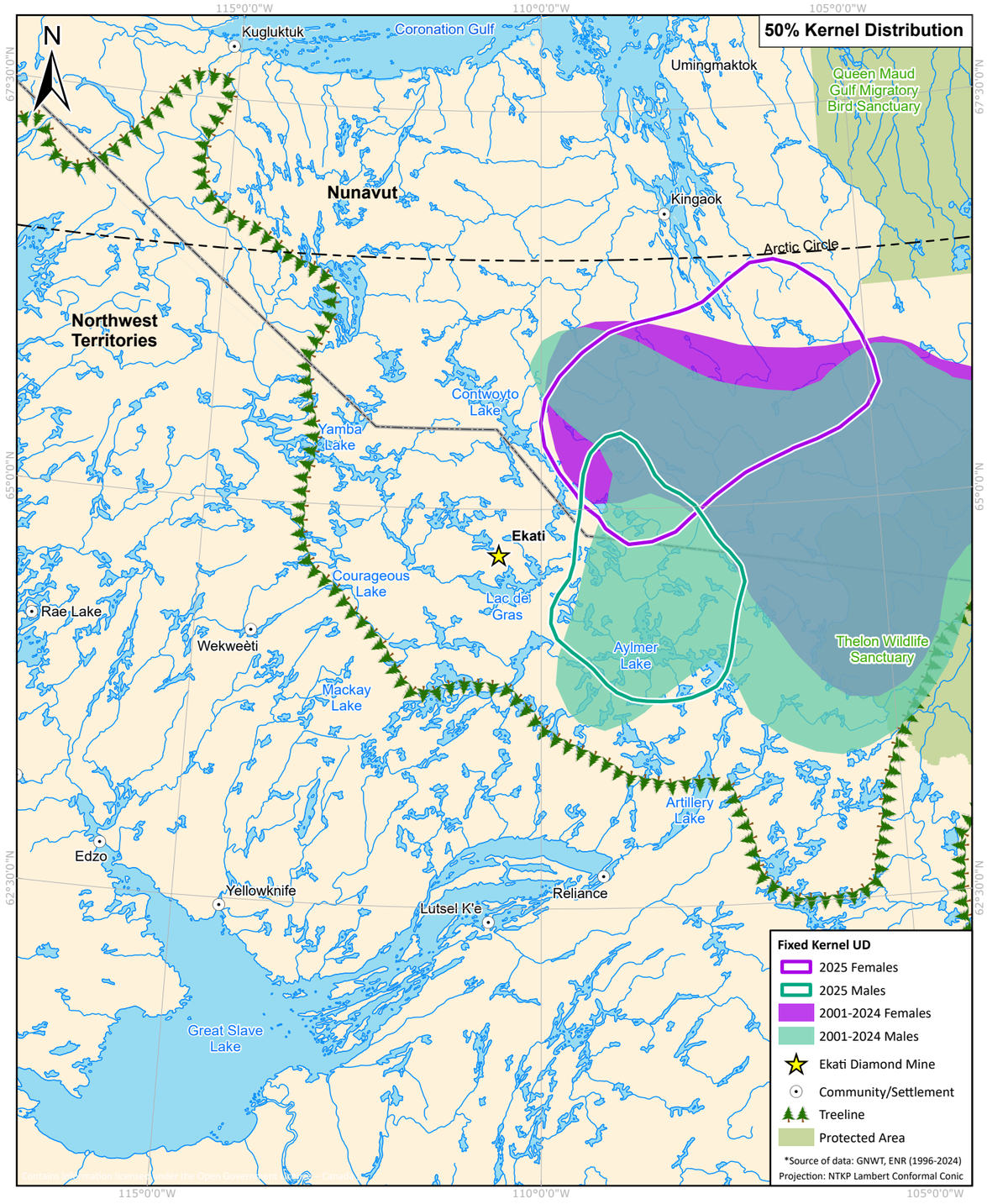




Figure 6.2-9 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Beverly/Ahiak Caribou During Post-Calving



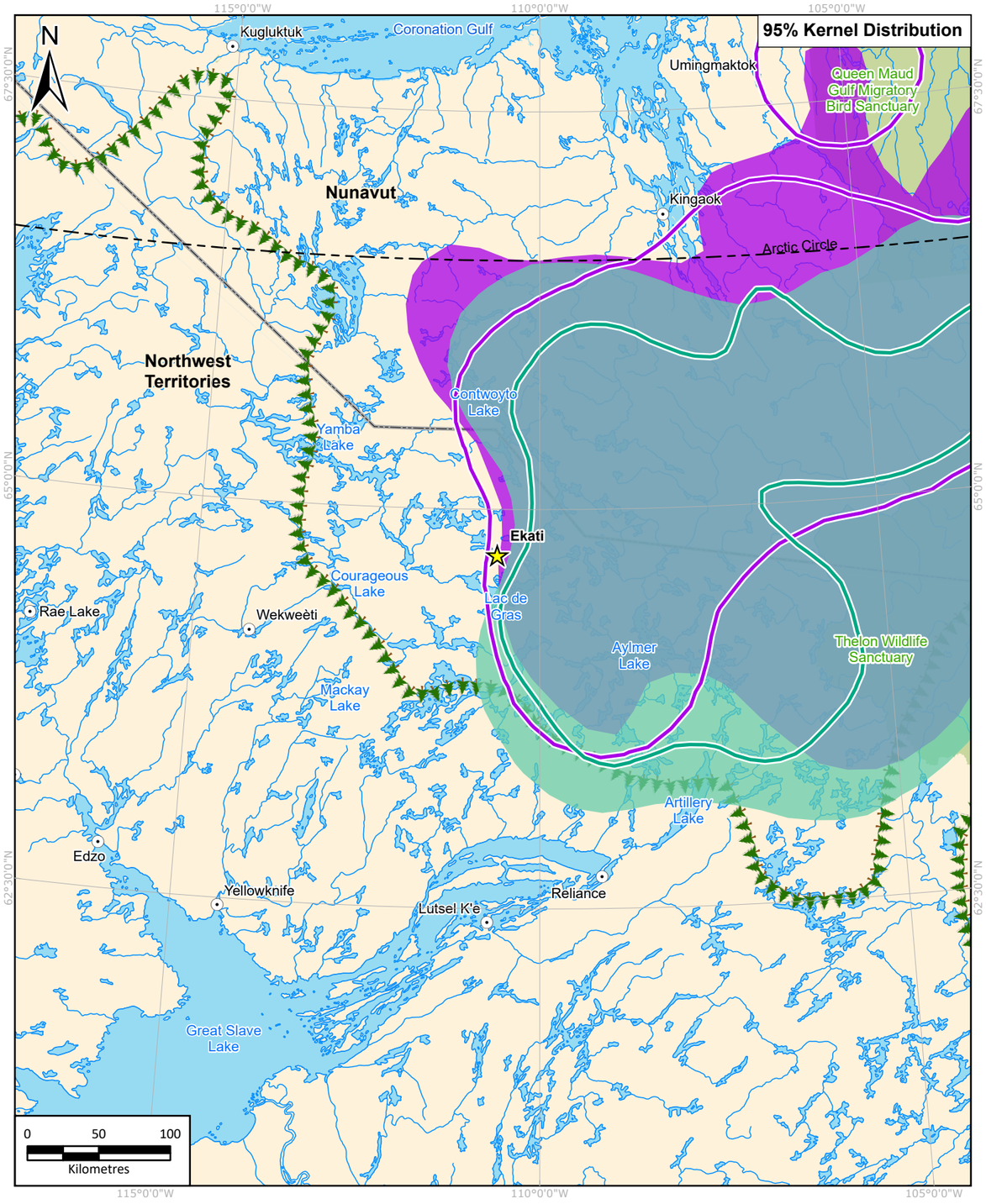




Figure 6.2-10 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Beverly/Ahiak Caribou During Summer

#### 6.2.3.10 Beverly Ahiak Fall

In fall, satellite-collared Beverly/Ahiak caribou distributions shift southward and westward, with both historical and 2025 kernel distributions showing overlap with the Ekati Mine (Figure 6.2-11). In 2025, the core (50% kernel) range did not overlap the Ekati Mine for male or female caribou. The Ekati Mine is located within both 50% and 95% fall kernel distributions historically for both sexes, indicating that portions of the herd's fall range include areas near the mine.

### 6.2.4 Discussion

#### 6.2.4.1 Bathurst

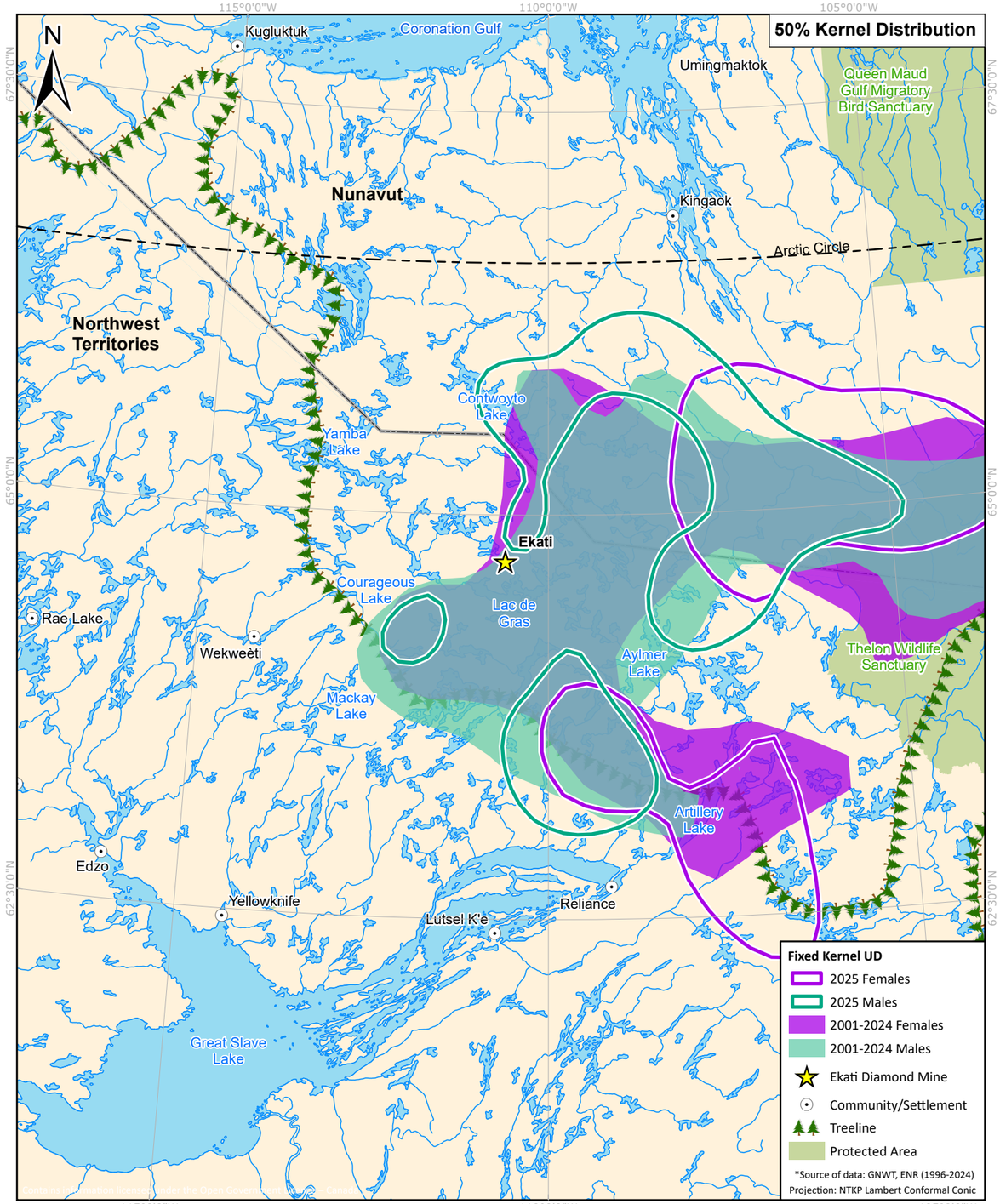
Analysis of satellite collared Bathurst caribou indicates that the herd has continued to overlap the Ekati Mine during certain seasons, particularly winter, summer, and fall, based on 95% kernel utilization distributions. During the winter of 2024–2025, both male and female Bathurst caribou occupied ranges that overlapped the mine, with core use areas located primarily west and south of the mine along the tree line. This represents a southward shift relative to winters from 2016 to 2019, when the herd wintered predominantly on the tundra north of the tree line.

During spring migration in 2025, several collared male and female Bathurst caribou migrated through areas near the Ekati Mine while travelling from winter range to calving grounds in Nunavut, although most migration routes occurred north of the mine. Calving and post calving ranges in 2025 were located more than 200 km north of the Ekati Mine and did not overlap the mine, consistent with patterns observed since 2007.

The 2025 summer range of Bathurst caribou was centered around Contwoyto Lake, approximately 125 km north of Ekati Mine, with no overlap of core summer use areas. While historical summer ranges frequently overlapped Ekati Mine, particularly prior to 2017, the 2025 summer core use area was located north of the mine. During fall, 95% kernel distributions for both sexes overlapped the mine, although core fall use areas remained north of Ekati Mine, consistent with patterns observed since 2012. Incidental caribou observations in 2025 are consistent with kernel utilization and migration mapping, which show most caribou presence near the mine occurring during spring and fall migration periods. Ongoing receipt of winter collar data continues to support operational preparedness and Caribou Road Mitigation Plan (CRMP) implementation.

#### 6.2.4.2 Beverly/Ahiak

Analysis of satellite collared Beverly/Ahiak caribou indicates that the herd's interaction with the Ekati Mine is seasonally variable and generally more limited than that of the Bathurst herd. During the winter of 2024–2025, the Ekati Mine was located near the northern extent of the Beverly/Ahiak winter range. Female 95% kernel utilization distributions overlapped the mine, while male winter ranges were more restricted and did not overlap Ekati Mine. Core winter use areas for both sexes were located along the tree line southwest and southeast of the mine. Since 2018, the winter range has continued to shift southwest of Ekati Mine, and substantial spatial overlap between Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak winter ranges suggests potential for seasonal herd mixing.



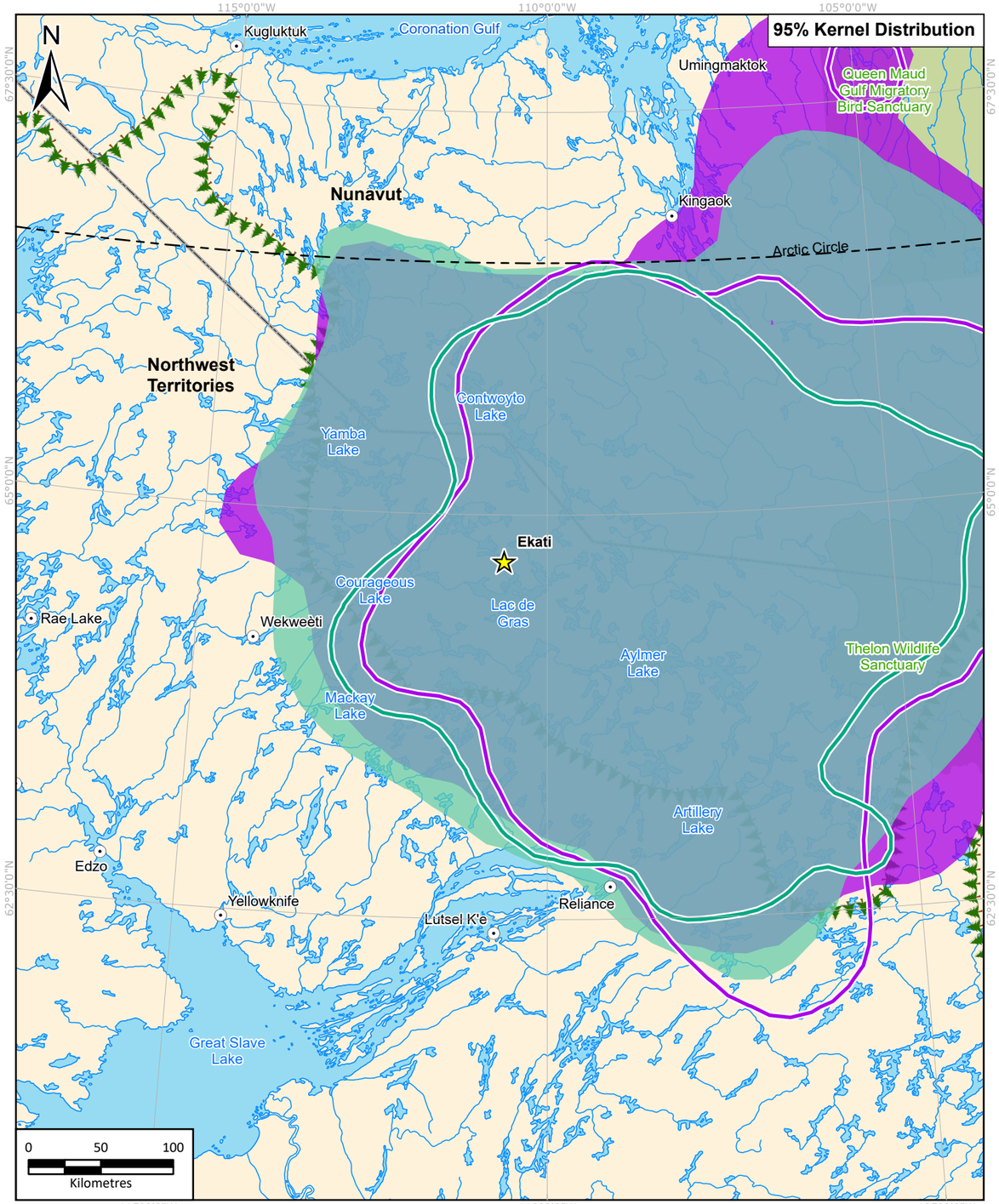




Figure 6.2-11 Historical and 2025 Distribution of Male and Female Satellite-Collared Beverly/Ahiak Caribou During Fall

During spring migration in 2025, Beverly/Ahiak caribou followed multiple, spatially dispersed movement routes from wintering areas in the central Northwest Territories toward calving grounds in western Nunavut. While most migration pathways occurred east of the Ekati Mine, some individual migration tracks passed near the mine footprint. Calving distributions in 2025 were concentrated well east of Ekati Mine within Nunavut, with no overlap between calving kernel distributions and the mine, indicating a lack of interaction during this sensitive period.

Post calving distributions expanded westward and southward relative to calving areas; however, both historical and 2025 core and extended post calving ranges remained primarily east of Ekati Mine. During summer, female 95% kernel distributions encompassed the mine, whereas male summer ranges did not. Core summer use areas for both sexes were located east of the mine, indicating that Ekati Mine lies within the broader summer range but outside most core habitats. In fall, historical 95% kernel distributions for both sexes overlapped Ekati Mine, although in 2025 neither male nor female core fall use areas overlapped the mine, suggesting lesser use of areas near Ekati Mine during this season.

## 6.3 Incidental Observations

Incidental caribou observations around the mine site are monitored and recorded to minimize potential risks associated with human and wildlife interactions, and to identify mine structures that might be acting as potential barriers to caribou movement. Furthermore, recording incidental caribou observations aids in determining the composition (e.g., age and sex) of caribou herds moving through the study area in conjunction with data collected from other caribou monitoring programs.

### 6.3.1 Objectives

The objectives of incidental caribou observation monitoring of the WEMP are to:

- Identify the composition of caribou groups moving through the Ekati Mine area;
- Document the annual timing of caribou use of the Ekati Mine area to compare temporal trends in migration patterns; and
- Track any trends in the number of caribou moving through the Ekati Mine area over years.

### 6.3.2 Methods

Incidental caribou observations at the Ekati Mine are reported to the Environment Department by helicopter operators, ground-based field workers, other mine site personnel, and people from visiting groups. For each caribou observation, the date, number of individuals, and location (UTM coordinates when possible) are recorded. Other information such as composition, dominant behaviour, distance to mine infrastructure, and presence of a satellite-collar are recorded when possible. Details from incidental observations are entered into a database by the Environment Department. Environment staff respond to caribou sightings of concern if required.

Incidental observations of caribou are summarized by broad seasonal periods (discussed in Section 6.1 and outlined in Table 6.1-1), recognizing that these seasonal periods vary annually, particularly dates surrounding the calving and post-calving periods (Sutherland and Gunn 1996; Russell et al. 2002; Gunn et al. 2013).

In cases where the caribou group size was provided as an approximate number (e.g., greater than 70 individuals), group size was conservatively assumed to be the lower value (i.e., 70 individuals), whereas when group size was estimated as a range of values (e.g., 800 to 1,000 individuals), group size was assumed to be the average value (i.e., 900 individuals).

### 6.3.3 Results

There were 149 incidental observations of caribou reported on 72 separate days during the 2025 reporting period; Table 6.3-1). Visual observations of caribou with sufficient location information were plotted on a map of the study area (Figure 6.3-1).

Across all observations in 2025, 2,233 animals were counted, however, this count does not indicate that 2,233 different individuals were observed, as many of these observations may have been the same caribou recorded on multiple occasions. Observations spanned from January 20 to December 4 (Table 6.3-1).

In 2025, the highest number of individual caribou was observed in the winter and during the fall migration, with 42% of the total 2,233 caribou observed in the winter and 40% during the fall (Table 6.3-1). In most years, caribou were observed during the winter, spring migration, and fall periods, consistent with the results in 2025 (Table 6.3-1). The highest number of incidental observations of caribou occurred during the summer period (n = 97; Table 6.3-1), however, they were mostly smaller groups (1 to 7 individuals per observation). These observations accounted for only 8% of the total caribou observed (Table 6.3-1). The seasons with the lowest recorded caribou observations were the calving and post-calving seasons, which were both below 1%. Specific details for caribou incidents are included separately in Section 4.

#### 6.3.3.1 Group Size

The largest caribou group sizes in 2025 occurred during the winter (December 1 to April 19), spring migration (April 20 to June 1) and fall migration (September 7 to November 30). Group sizes ranged from 100 to 200 in January and 100 to 300 in February, with a group in May consisting of 150 individuals and groups in November consisting of 300 and 353 animals. However, most incidental caribou observations during these periods were of individual animals (n = 6) or smaller groups ranging from 2 to 40 animals (n = 26) and one group of 92. In the summer (June 29 to September 06), observations of caribou were observed in groups of seven or less, for 62% (n = 92) of observations.

In 2025, most observations included caribou in small groups of 9 or fewer animals, approximately 81% (120 of the total 149 observations; Table 6.3-2). An additional 8% of observations were of groups consisting of 11 to 40 caribou and 5% were groups with 100 to 300 caribou, accounting for 72% of all individuals counted. Groups of unknown numbers accounted for the remaining 2% of all observations. The highest group number, estimated at 353 caribou, occurred on November 16.

Groups of more than 1,000 caribou were recorded commonly until 2011 and then intermittently in 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020, and 2021 (Table 6.3-3). The largest group ever recorded incidentally was an estimated 7,500 caribou in a single group 2009 (Table 6.3-3).

## Table 6.3-1 Incidental Caribou Observations at Ekati Mine by Seasonal Period, 2025

| Seasonal Period | Days in Seasonal Period [1] | Days with Observations | Number of Caribou Observations | Total Caribou Observed | Percent (%) | Adults Observed | | | Juveniles Observed | | | Unknown Sex and Age |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Bull | Cow | Unknown | Male | Female | Unknown | |
| Winter[2] | 140 | 23 | 25 | 942 | 42.2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 940 |
| Spring migration | 43 | 8 | 10 | 202 | 9.0 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 200 |
| Calving | 15 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0.1 | - | - | - | - | - | | 3 |
| Post-calving | 12 | 3 | 7 | 16 | 0.7 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 12 |
| Summer[3] | 70 | 30 | 97 | 177 | 7.9 | 50 | 13 | 7 | 2 | - | 19 | 89 |
| Fall migration | 85 | 7 | 9 | 893 | 40.0 | 8 | 1 | 3 | - | - | - | 120 |
| **Annual Total** | **365** | **72** | **149** | **2,233** | **100** | **60** | **16** | **11** | **2** | **0** | **22** | **2,122** |

Notes:

[1] Seasonal periods are as defined in Table 6.1-1.

[2] Three groups of unknown numbers were observed during the winter period.

[3] Five groups of unknown numbers were observed during the summer period.

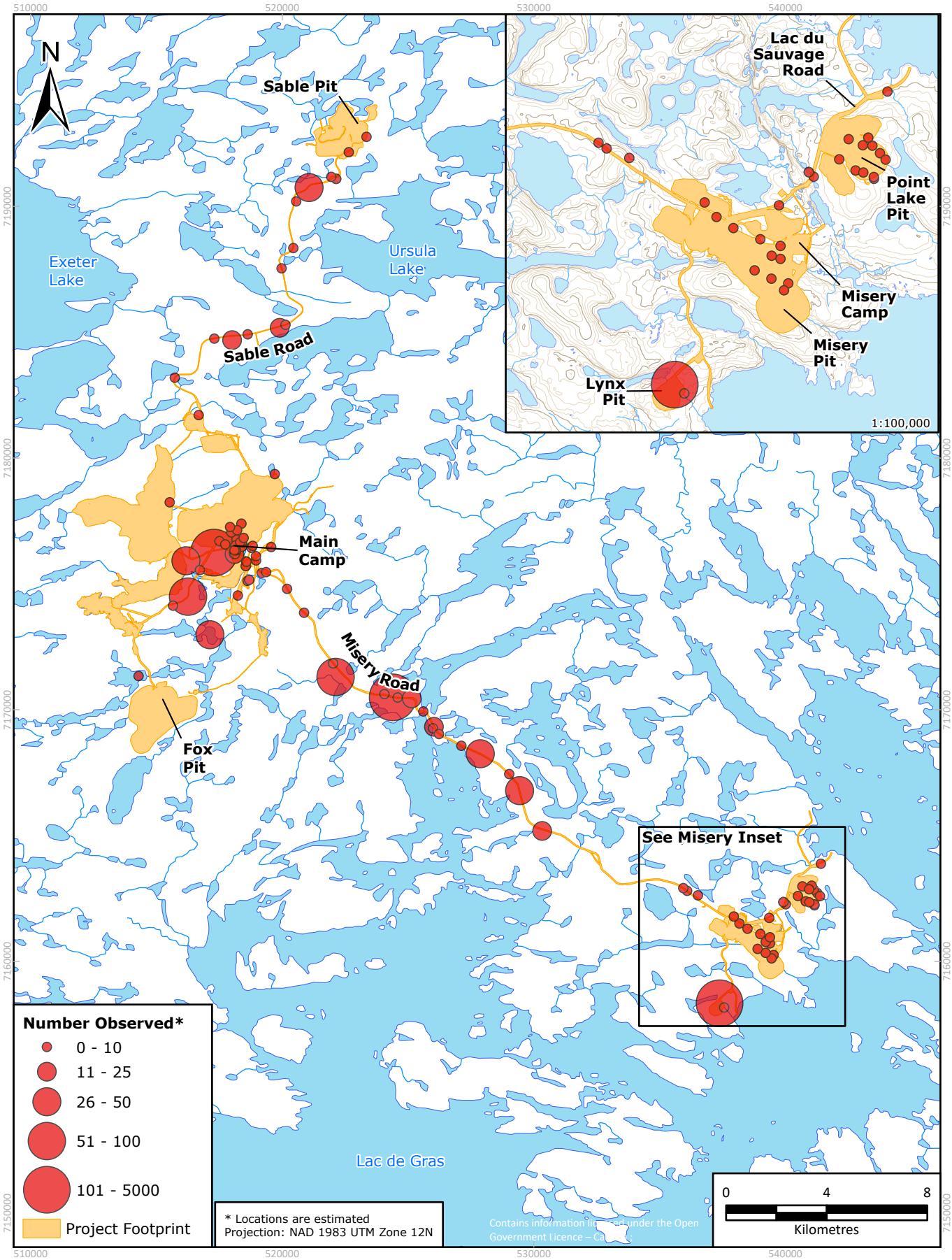



Figure 6.3-1 Incidental Caribou Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2025

Table 6.3-2 Incidental Caribou Observations by Group Size, 2025

| Group Size | Number of Observations |
|---|---|
| ≤ 10 | 120 |
| 11–50 | 12 |
| 51–100 | 4 |
| 101–200 | 2 |
| 201–500 | 3 |
| > 500 | 0 |
| Unknown | 8 |
| **Total** | **149** |

Table 6.3-3 Summary of Incidental Caribou Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2006 to 2025

| Caribou | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of caribou observed[1] | 20,403 | 20,092 | 876 | 19,633 | 11,571 | 14,766 | 4,674 | 2,653 | 1,508 | 306 |
| Number of observations[2] | 57 | 193 | 66 | 106 | 87 | 191 | 199 | 136 | 53 | 74 |
| Largest group size observed[3] | >5,000 | ~7,000 | ~300 | ~7,500 | >3,000 | >5,000 | ~400 | ~500 | >200 | 30 |

| Caribou | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of caribou observed[1] | 25,225 | 52,583 | 3,347 | 9,507 | 5,604 | 5,203 | 1,362 | 11,555 | 5,306 | 2,233 |
| Number of observations[2] | 438 | 484 | 205 | 269 | 141 | 285 | 154 | 206 | 207 | 149 |
| Largest group size observed[3] | 2,000 | 2,500 | 300 | >1,000 | 1,500 | 2,135 | 300 | 5,000 | 1,500 | 353 |

Notes:

[1] Numbers are approximate and likely include observations of the same animals recorded on multiple occasions.

[2] WEMP Reporting Periods from 2006 to 2010 were October to October. The reporting period for the 2011 WEMP included October 2010 to December 2011. Thereafter, WEMP reporting periods were January 1 to December 31.

[3] The exact count of individuals was not determined on a number of occasions through the years, and an approximate number or a range of individuals observed was provided. In the first case, the lower number was used as a conservative estimate of the numbers observed. When a range of numbers was given, the average number of caribou was used.

## 6.3.4 Discussion

In 2006, it was recognized that information regarding caribou presence and group size should be recorded on an ongoing basis at the Ekati Mine to better monitor caribou habitat use around the mine site. Incidental observations improve our understanding of caribou occurrence and numbers of individuals moving through the area.

In 2025, caribou observations were reported by Ekati Mine staff on 149 occasions, showing a decrease of caribou observations from 207 observed in 2024. The total number of recorded individuals declined further from 11,555 in 2023 and 5,306 in 2024 to 2,233 in 2025. Despite this decrease, the total number of individual caribou recorded remained higher than the 876, 1,508, 306 and 1362 individuals recorded in 2008, 2014, 2015 and 2022, respectively. The observed decrease in caribou numbers from 2024 to 2025 may be due to smaller group sizes, with the largest group in 2025 only consisting of roughly 350 individuals, compared to 1,500 in 2024 and 5,000 in 2023 (Table 6.3-3). The decrease is likely also influenced by reduced personnel on site, as Ekati Mine operated with a smaller staff than usual for most of 2025, limiting observation effort.

Shifts in the Bathurst and Beverly/Ahiak winter ranges beginning in the winter of 2016 (Section 6.2) may help to explain the changes in observations during winter. The number of incidental observations were higher during 2016-2017 when the Bathurst herd wintered to the north of the tree line on the tundra and their winter range overlapped the mine. Since then, the Bathurst have wintered further south on the tree line and fewer incidental observations have been recorded in winter.

Calving is typically the period when the fewest caribou are recorded incidentally at the Ekati Mine. In 2025, only one incidental caribou observation of three individuals occurred during the calving season. Peak calving is typically during early June, and for the Bathurst herd, occurs north of the Ekati Mine and west of the Bathurst Inlet. It is most likely that the caribou reported during previous calving periods were males migrating north to their summer range. This is consistent with male migration timing and patterns as males often lag behind pregnant females and often do not make it to the calving grounds.

In most reporting years, the migration periods have been when most animals are observed around the Ekati Mine. The number of observations of caribou was highest during the fall migration period (n = 97) in 2025, however, most individuals were recorded during the winter season (942 of 2,233). This is unique from past years and may have been influenced by the uncharacteristically warm conditions that the Northwest Territories experienced in 2025, particularly January 2025, which recorded temperatures above 0°C for the first time in 20 years (Government of Canada 2026).

## 6.4 Behavioural Surveys

Caribou behaviour can be influenced by industrial development (Bradshaw et al. 1997). Adult female caribou with calves are more sensitive to disturbances than other caribou (Miller 2001). Roads and traffic may affect caribou behaviour, as roads can act as visual barriers or breaks in habitat. In response to traffic, caribou may run, move away, and/or increase vigilance behaviour (Wolfe et al. 2000). In some situations, mine infrastructure and mine-related activities can inhibit normal caribou behaviours (i.e., feeding and resting) (Nellemann and Cameron 1996). Caribou behavioural responses tend to increase in proportion to the sound intensity of overhead aircraft, and helicopters induce stronger responses than fixed wing aircraft (Larkin 1996).

To determine what potential mine-effects are on caribou, behaviour surveys are conducted to evaluate their typical behavioural responses to stressors such as vehicle traffic, aircraft activity, the presence of mine staff, and blasting.

### 6.4.1 Objectives

The objective of caribou behavioural studies is to:

- Determine if caribou behaviour changes with distance from the mine or in response to various potential stressors.

### 6.4.2 Methods

To record behaviours of caribou, two approaches, focal watches and scan surveys (Altmann 1974), were used in the wildlife study area. Focal observations of a single animal are ideal for obtaining information on activity budgets (i.e., the proportion of time an animal is engaged in different behaviours), the temporal sequence of behaviours relative to stressors or other stimuli, and the length of time it takes the animal to return to a non-stressed state following a stressor event (Martin and Bateson 1993). Scan samples of a group of animals are more useful for quantifying the frequencies of dominant behaviours in a group over time (Altmann 1974), which can be thought of as an activity budget at the group level.

Behaviour surveys were conducted by Environment staff following an Ekati standard operating procedure. For both focal and scan sampling, when first arriving on site, the observers waited five minutes before commencing the surveys. During that time, distance from mine infrastructure, information on group location and insect harassment was recorded, and a composition count conducted. If caribou remained on site for sufficient periods of time, or additional staff were not available, priority was given to focal sampling over scan sampling.

For focal surveys, an individual caribou was randomly selected from a group, and in the case where focal observations were conducted on multiple individuals from a group, the sex of the individual selected for observation would alternate. The location of each group from which an individual was randomly sampled was recorded, and group composition was tallied (males, females, calves, yearlings, unknowns). There was no distinction made between nursery and non-nursery groups for analysis. Observations were conducted on either females with calves, lone females, males, or juveniles. An attempt was made to monitor the behaviour of individuals for a minimum of 20 minutes; however, survey length was reduced in cases where caribou moved out of the observer's sight line. Depending on the size of the group, observations on several individuals may occur, time permitting. Surveys were recorded as completed if the survey took place for the full 20 minutes or if it was under 20 minutes and stressors were recorded.

For scan surveys, a caribou group was selected for monitoring. For groups of 10 to 30 animals, all animals were included in the scan. For larger groups, a subsample of 20 to 30 animals was observed. Priority was placed on surveying nursery groups (groups with calves). The group composition (males, females, calves, yearlings, unknowns) and group size was recorded for the total group present, or the subsample group surveyed.

An attempt was made to monitor groups for a minimum of 32 minutes at 4-minute intervals; however, survey length was reduced in cases where caribou moved out of the observer's sight line, and the duration between surveys differed between surveyors. Surveys were recorded as completed if the survey took place for the full 32 minutes or if it was under this time and stressors were recorded. Incomplete focal and scan surveys were excluded in the analysis.

The following behaviours were recorded: bedding (e.g., sitting with all four legs tucked under body, lying down, sleeping on the ground), feeding (i.e., actively grazing, ruminating, chewing cud), standing, alert (e.g., quickly raising the head and orienting it toward a stimulus, pricking the ears and rotating them towards a stimulus, remaining motionless in an alarm posture), walking, trotting, running, and sparring.

In the event that a stressor occurred during a focal or scan observation, the observers recorded the immediate response in terms of a change in behaviour from one state to another. Estimated distance from the stressor was also recorded. Categories of potential stressors recorded during focal surveys included aircraft (e.g., helicopter and airplane), three categories of vehicles (light [e.g., pick-up truck], medium [e.g., water truck], and heavy truck [e.g., haul truck]), blasts from pits, and humans on foot. Observers would, where possible, watch the animal for at least 15 minutes following a stressor event to record the time it took to return to a non-alert behaviour.

### 6.4.3 Results

#### 6.4.3.1 Focal Surveys

In 2025, 24 focal surveys were completed over 15 days, between June 25 to November 16, 2025. Of the 24 surveys, 2 surveys occurred near mine buildings, 6 near open pits, 14 near mine roads, and 1 near the Misery Ore Pad. Survey location distance to the mine ranged from zero to 289 m from infrastructure.

Focal surveys in 2025, were completed on a total of 24 caribou: 17 male, 6 female, and 1 of unknown sex. Surveys were completed for a combined total of 14 hours and 20 minutes, with an average survey time of 36 minutes. Caribou surveyed were primarily observed in solitary groups, with two mixed groups of one male and one female, two pairs of unknown juveniles, and one large herd consisting of 352 individuals. Dominant behaviours included bedding, feeding, walking, running, trotting, standing and alert behaviour. On average male caribou spent most of their time bedding (53%) or alert (24%) and female caribou spent most time standing (35%) or feeding (31%). Secondary behaviours included bedding, walking, grooming, stretching legs, scratching, running, shaking, standing, and peeing while caribou were engaged in dominant behaviours.

Twelve potential stressor events occurred during the surveys (one to two stressors per survey) causing alert behaviour on 11 of those 12 occasions for a duration of 13 min. Caribou behaviour typically returned to normal quickly (<1 minute) while the longest instance of alert behaviour lasted just over 4 minutes. Stressors included light vehicles (e.g., pick-up trucks), heavy vehicles (e.g., haul trucks and DPRT), humans on foot, other wildlife, and aircraft. Stressor events occurred between 2 and 900 m (aircraft) from caribou. Generally, caribou did not react strongly to stressors, except on two occasions when caribou responded by running when a haul truck passed.

#### 6.4.3.2 Scan Surveys

During 2025, four scan surveys were completed between October 23 and November 16 along mine roads. Survey distances ranged from 100 m to 310 m to mine infrastructure. Scan surveys were completed on subsects of larger groups, including two groups of three adults, one group of 30 adults and one group of 20 adults. Groups consisted primarily of unknown adults with one group of three consisting of adult males only.

Surveys were completed using time intervals of 4 minutes; however, if needed, behaviours immediately following a stressor event were recorded prior to the 4-minute interval. Two of the four surveys were completed for the

full 32 minutes, while one survey was stopped after 27 minutes and one survey was stopped after 20 minutes due to caribou moving away from the surveyor.

The most common primary behaviour was feeding, with a secondary behaviour of walking, indicating the caribou were foraging as they travelled. Feeding was the primary behaviour 90% of the time caribou were observed, with walking as the primary behaviour only accounting for the remaining 10%. The primary behaviour of two of the groups changed to walking near the end of the survey, indicating they were moving to find available forage, while two caribou groups continued to feed for the entire 32-minute survey. Secondary behaviours involved standing and walking and were considered as such because the caribou spent less time displaying these behaviours during the 4-minute interval than the primary behaviour.

In 2025, no caribou were observed displaying other behaviours such as trotting, running, or alert behaviour, however, no stressors occurred during the surveys that would be hypothesized to trigger alert behaviour.

### 6.4.4 Discussion

Focal surveys are appropriate for examining caribou behaviour in response to mine activity at an individual level. 2025 focal surveys indicated that individual caribou reacted the most strongly to passing haul trucks or dual powered road trains in comparison to other stressors. Caribou behaviour typically returned to normal quickly (< 1 minute) and often involved caribou raising their head to assess for danger. In the case where the caribou ran away from the passing heavy vehicle on two occasions, it was a group of two juveniles during a single focal survey. The longest instance of alert behaviour lasted just over 4 minutes and involved an adult female caribou raising her head to a standing alert position in response to a haul truck before returning to walking.

Caribou responding to stressful stimuli with alert behaviour has been well documented in studies (Pruitt 1960; Horejsi 1981; Tyler 1991), however, relatively short durations of stress responses in both focal and scan surveys have been observed at Ekati Mine over monitoring years. Ekati takes care to implement management measures in accordance with the CRMP to reduce caribou disturbance from stressors. This includes giving caribou the right-of-way on all mine roads and managing traffic based on caribou response when caribou are located in proximity to roads.

## 6.5 Long Lake Containment Facility (LLCF) Monitoring

Wildlife use of the LLCF is monitored as part of the WEMP. The LLCF consists of five cells (A to E) with processed kimberlite currently stored in three of the cells. Cells A and C, receive fine processed kimberlite (sand sized and smaller, <5 mm) from the Process Plant as a slurry (i.e., suspended in water). The fine processed kimberlite settles out and dries, taking on the consistency of hard, fine sand. At Cell B, progressive reclamation and reclamation research is in progress with plantings of grasses along the western edge of the Cell conducted in 2014 and continued re-vegetation work from 2015 to 2021 (Arctic Canadian 2021c). Cells D and E remain open water and there are no plans to deposit processed kimberlite into these two cells.

WEMP Report reviewers requested that monitoring be conducted to determine whether caribou are ingesting processed kimberlite and if there is a potential for injury or entrapment in the LLCF. An important consideration is that the processed kimberlite at the Ekati Mine does not contain the same metals, nor does it require processing with chemicals typical of gold and other metal mines. Environmental studies have shown that the

processed kimberlite is salty and may attract wildlife but the risk to caribou from ingesting processed kimberlite is very low (BHP Billiton 2005; Rescan 2006).

### 6.5.1 Objectives

The objectives of this component of the WEMP are to:

- Determine if any caribou injuries can be attributed to the LLCF;
- Determine the frequency that caribou use the LLCF; and
- Determine the group size, group composition, and dominant group behaviours of caribou observed within the LLCF.

### 6.5.2 Methods

The surveys involved a visual scan of the LLCF to observe and record caribou presence. Surveys of the LLCF were conducted via vehicle along the Long Lake Road and dykes to monitor all LLCF cells (A, B, C, D, and E). Cells A, B, and C were the primary focus and surveyed on a weekly schedule during most months. Weekly surveys of Cells D and E were conducted during the open water season. Incidental sightings of caribou in the LLCF outside of formal LLCF surveys were reported to the Environment Department and recorded as incidental observations (Section 6.3).

When caribou were observed during surveys, the group size, composition, dominant behaviour, and signs of caribou stress were recorded. Though caribou may exhibit a wide variety of behaviours, for the purposes of the LLCF surveys, behaviour data were grouped into four categories: bedding (included bedded alert), feeding, standing (included standing alert), and travel (included walking, trotting, and running). Observations of wildlife and wildlife signs within the LLCF were also recorded during each survey, particularly the presence, abundance, and nesting activity of waterfowl.

### 6.5.3 Results

#### 6.5.3.1 Caribou Observations at the LLCF

In 2025, 103 LLCF surveys occurred between January 2 and December 30 with 333 caribou observed during 26 surveys, for a total of 25% of surveys recording observations. Caribou tracks were observed four times in combination with visual caribou observations, while caribou droppings and tracks were observed once each during surveys. Caribou observations occurred between February 8 and December 18 with each cell recording observations. Caribou were observed in Cell A four times, Cell B eight times, Cell C three times, Cell D nine times, and Cell E twice.

In total, 1,578 surveys have been conducted between 1999 to 2025, recording a total of 4,270 caribou observed in the LLCF. The number of surveys has varied annually with the range extending from 10 surveys completed in 2002 to 190 surveys completed in 2021. Higher numbers of surveys conducted per year have primarily occurred since 2012, with the exception of 2018 to 2020 where the numbers of surveys ranged from 38 to 41, falling below the average number of surveys conducted per year of 57. Over the monitoring years, caribou have been detected in an average of 19% of the surveys completed (Table 6.5-1).

Table 6.5-1 Summary of Caribou Frequency within the Long Lake Containment Facility, 2000 to 2025

| Caribou | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Surveys (#) | 64 | 27 | 22 | 10 | 60 | 25 | 43 | 17 | 18 | 58 |
| # of surveys with caribou occurrences | 27 | 3 | 15 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 14 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| % of surveys with caribou occurrences | 42 | 11 | 68 | 60 | 3 | 32 | 33 | 18 | 0 | 5 |
| **Total caribou individuals observed in LLCF (#)** | **-** | **3** | **48** | **7** | **3** | **40** | **66** | **402** | **0** | **16** |

| Caribou | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Surveys (#) | 22 | 16 | 65 | 100 | 91 | 78 | 76 | 62 | 53 | 38 |
| # of surveys with caribou occurrences | 1 | 4 | 5 | 13 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| % of surveys with caribou occurrences | 5 | 25 | 8 | 13 | 13 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| **Total caribou individuals observed in LLCF (#)** | **2** | **30** | **5** | **23** | **27** | **2** | **0** | **10** | **3** | **7** |

| Caribou | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Surveys (#) | 38 | 41 | 190 | 94 | 84 | 83 | 103 | **1,578** |
| # of surveys with caribou occurrences | 8 | 3 | 41 | 22 | 11 | 13 | 26 | **246** |
| % of surveys with caribou occurrences | 21 | 7 | 22 | 23 | 13 | 16 | 25 | **19** [1] |
| **Total caribou individuals observed in LLCF (#)** | **1,721** | **4** | **237** | **189** | **51** | **1,041** | **333** | **4,270** |

Note:
[1] Value is the average across years of survey data.

### 6.5.3.2 Group Size

Groups consisting of 20 caribou or less were recorded in 23 of the 26 surveys with caribou observations. Three larger groups were recorded in Cells C and D, consisting of 40, 80 and 100 individuals each.

Larger groups of caribou were most frequently observed at the LLCF in 2019 with four of the eight observations in 2019 consisting of 100 or more caribou and one observation recording a group of 1,721 individuals, which accounts for 40% of all caribou observed from 1999 to 2025.

#### 6.5.3.3 Composition

Often caribou composition could not be specifically determined during LLCF surveys. During the 26 surveys with caribou observations in 2025, caribou sex and/or age could only be determined for 10 individuals or groups. Six groups consisted of adult males only, three groups were adult females only, one group included both adult males and females and one juvenile male was identified on its own.

#### 6.5.3.4 Dominant Behaviour

In 2025, all observations contained single behaviours. Walking was the primary behaviour observed, occurring 12 times, while other behaviours were observed less frequently. Caribou were observed feeding (n = 5), bedded alert (n = 3), standing (n = 1) or standing alert (n = 1), and trotting (n = 2). Behaviours were not determined for two observations. From 2000 to 2025 caribou were observed feeding or walking more frequently than the other behaviours.

From 2000 to 2025, caribou were observed feeding in the LLCF basin on 35 occasions, on the dykes on two occasions, on the road on 13 occasions, and on the tundra adjacent to the LLCF on 50 occasions.

#### 6.5.3.5 Wildlife Observations

In addition to caribou, there were 27 observations of 34 mammals, including 32 visual observations and two observations of mammal scat and tracks at the LLCF in 2025. Mammals observed included arctic hare (14 visual observations of 16 individuals), grizzly bear (1 visual observations of 1 individual and separate observations of scat and tracks), wolf (1 observation of 2 individuals), Arctic ground squirrel (2 observations of 5 individuals), and red fox (7 observations of 8 individuals).

Behaviours of mammals included travelling through the area (either walking, trotting or running), bedding, and feeding. Mammal observations were recorded in all Cells but primarily occurred in Cells B (n = 16). One sign of distress was observed in 2025, when an Arctic hare was reported bedded alert on the road at Cell B.

In 2025, LLCF surveys also recorded 142 observations of 6,032 birds of 32 species. These bird species recorded included 6 upland bird species (182 individuals), four raptor species (16 individuals), 2 shorebird species (10 individuals) and 20 waterbird species (5,194 individuals) and mixed groups or unknown groups of waterbirds were observed 6 times and consisted of 630 individuals. Most birds observed per species at the LLCF included greater white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*; n = 2,452), Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*; n = 2,001), and snow goose (*Anser caerulescens*; n = 412). The remaining 19 species accounted for the additional 537 individuals. No species at risk were observed during LLCF surveys in 2025; however, raptors, which are considered VECs at Ekati Mine, were observed on multiple occasions.

Birds were recorded in Cells A (23 times), B (40 times), C (49 times), and D (24 times) and E (4 times). Breeding activity was recorded on two occasions during 2025 LLCF surveys, which included a male and a female pair swimming. Observations with broods were recorded on five occasions between July 16 and September 22, including cackling goose, greater white-fronted goose and green-winged teal. Brood sizes ranged from 5 to 7 for a total of 30 young. No discharge occurred into the LLCF during the migratory bird nesting season (May 15 to August 18).

### 6.5.4 Discussion

To date, no caribou injuries or deaths have been attributed to the LLCF, which suggests the area does not pose a risk to caribou. Surveys indicate caribou are either travelling through, foraging on the tundra near the LLCF, or using the area for refuge from insect harassment during the summer months as the LLCF basin is large and flat, with large non-vegetated areas and wind-exposed habitat not associated with mosquito and botfly activity. Observational data collected since 2000 suggests caribou recorded in or near the LLCF basin are mostly travelling through the area and feeding as they pass through, which likely indicates its use as a travel corridor. In years where caribou were primarily observed feeding and bedded down, surveys indicate caribou departed the area within two days to two weeks.

Burgundy submitted an updated WMMP in May of 2026, which will be implemented upon final Ministerial approval. The updated WMMP does not include LLCF surveys as surveys have not indicated impacts attributed to the LLCF (DDEC 2022). As such, this section will be removed once the updated WMMP is approved.

## 6.6 Road Monitoring Surveys

Road surveys are completed by vehicle along the Lac du Sauvage, Misery, and Sable roads to determine the location and number of caribou as they approach the Ekati Mine and to inform CRMP management and mitigation Environment Department staff surveying the roads implement additional mitigations, such as deploying signs to notify staff to the presence of caribou or road closures, as needed based on the survey results.

### 6.6.1 Objectives

The objective of this component of the WEMP is to:

- determine the location, numbers, and proximity of caribou relative to Ekati Mine site roads.

### 6.6.2 Methods

One to two observers travel by light vehicle along Sable, Misery, and Lac du Sauvage roads and record the location, number, and proximity of caribou adjacent to roads. When caribou are observed, information on group size, composition, dominant behaviour, and signs of caribou stress are recorded. Though caribou may exhibit a wide variety of behaviours, for the purposes of the road survey, behaviour data are grouped into four categories: bedding, feeding, standing and travel (including walking, trotting, and running). Signs of distress (deflection, hesitation, and alert behaviour) are also noted. Observations of wildlife and evidence of wildlife activity (i.e., tracks, scat), are also recorded during each survey. In cases where caribou tracks are identified, surveyors note the direction of movement. In cases where the caribou group size is provided as an approximate number (e.g., greater than 70 individuals), group size is conservatively assumed to be the lower value (i.e., 70 individuals).

Road monitoring surveys occur once per week during the Operational Level and become more frequent as higher action levels occur (Section 4.1) as per the CRMP mitigation. The number of surveys completed during the monitoring year is dependent on the presence of caribou in proximity to the mine site causing alert levels and monitoring frequency to change.

## 6.6.3 Results

### 6.6.3.1 Caribou Frequency

During the 2025 reporting period, road surveys were completed on the Misery Haul Road, Sable Haul Road, and Lac du Sauvage Haul Road. Surveys occurred between January 1 and December 31 with caribou observations occurring throughout the year between January 8 and November 28. Surveys on Misery Road were completed over 318 days, with 118 caribou observations occurring over 60 days; Sable Road surveys were completed over 308 days, with 115 caribou observations over 66 days; and Lac du Sauvage Road surveys were completed over 313 days, with 21 caribou observations over 15 days. The number of caribou observed and largest group size for each road is presented in Table 6.6-1. Misery Haul Road had the largest number of observations (118; 46% of all observations) and the highest number of individuals (4,265). Group sizes were comparable between Misery and Sable, with the largest group recorded being 1,000 individuals.

Table 6.6-1 Summary of Caribou Observations during Road Monitoring Surveys, 2025

| Road Monitoring Surveys | Misery Haul Road | Sable Haul Road | Lac du Sauvage Road |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of Survey Days | 318 | 308 | 313 |
| Number of Days with Observations | 60 | 66 | 15 |
| Number of Observations | 118 | 155 | 21 |
| Number of Caribou Observed | 4,265 | 3,601 | 979 |
| **Largest Group Size Observed** | **1,000** | **1,000** | **500** |

In total along all roads, there were 294 observations of 8,845 caribou. It's important to note that observations likely included the same caribou individuals or groups on multiple occasions, rather than representing different individuals. There were 979 caribou observed along Lac du Sauvage Road, 4,465 caribou on Misery Haul Road, and 3,601 caribou on Sable Haul Road (Photo 6.6-1).

### 6.6.3.2 Group Size

Of the 294 groups observed, there were 182 (72%) observations that were of groups of one to three animals. There were 48 observations with groups of 4 to 10 caribou (19%), 37 observations with groups between 11 and 50 (15%), 9 observations with groups between 50 and 100 caribou (4%), 15 observations of between 100 and 500 caribou (6%), and three larger groups estimated at 1,000 animals each (1.2%). Groups with 100 or more caribou, including the groups of 1,000 individuals, were primarily observed during the fall (September 7 to November 30; 13) and spring (April 20 to June 1; 3) migrations, with two outliers occurring in January.

### 6.6.3.3 Composition

Sex and/or age were confirmed for 498 (6%) of the caribou observed. Of the 155 groups with animals classified, 106 (68%) contained at least one male, 54 groups (35%) contained at least one female, 28 groups (18%) contained at least one calf, and 11 groups (7%) contained at least one yearling. 23 of the groups (15%) contained at least one male and one female. Of the 600 individuals that were classified, 335 (56%) were adult males, 63 (27%) were adult females, 86 (14%) were calves, and 16 (3%) were yearlings.



Photo 6.6-1 Caribou observed along Misery Haul Road, June 24, 2025.

### 6.6.3.4 Dominant Behaviour

Caribou behaviours near the three roads were recorded for 194 (66%) of the total 294 groups observed. Of the 194 groups with recorded behaviours, 79 (41%) were feeding, 61 (31%) were travelling through the area (i.e., walking, trotting, running), 29 (15%) were standing, and 25 (13%) were bedded. Caribou were observed feeding within 10 to 1,500 m from Misery Haul Road/power line, Lac du Sauvage Road, or Sable Haul Road. Bedded groups were observed within 20 to 1,500 m from the Haul Roads and were noted to sometimes be alert at distances of < 150 m. Standing groups were observed at distances between 10 and 700 m from the three roads, with observations of alert behaviour sometimes noted at distances of less than 130 m. Groups were observed walking at distances between 2 and 2,000 m from the roads and trotting or running at distances between 4 m and 600 m from the roads.

### 6.6.3.5 Semi-Permeable Barrier Effects

Of the 4,105 individual caribou observed travelling through the area, 25 (<1%) were seen travelling on or near Misery Haul Road, Lac du Sauvage Road, or Sable Haul Road. The other 4,080 caribou were recorded travelling on the tundra or another feature. However, 25% (n = 1,043) of caribou seen travelling through the area were observed within 500 m of the roads or power line. Overall, <1% (n = 58) of all caribou recorded were observed on or near one of the three roads, most of which (n = 25) were observed travelling. Additional behaviour recorded on or near the roads included 19 individuals observed standing, 5 observed feeding, and 9 observed bedded. Response behaviours were recorded in 6% of caribou observations (on 18 occasions), all of which occurred within 500 m of a road (Table 6.6-2).

Table 6.6-2 Summary of Caribou Recorded Showing Signs of Distress During Road/Power Line Surveys, 2025

| Season | Date | Road | # of Caribou | Juveniles Present? | Comments Associated with Observation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Winter/Spring Migration | 18-Apr-25 | Misery Haul Road | 2 | No | Caribou observed at KM 9. |
| Summer | 9-Jul-25 | Lac du Sauvage Road | 1 | No | - |
| | 30-Jul-25 | Misery Haul Road | 2 | No | - |
| | 30-Jul-25 | Sable Haul Road | 2 | No | - |
| | 30-Jul-25 | Sable Haul Road | 1 | No | - |
| | 30-Jul-25 | Sable Haul Road | 1 | No | - |
| | 30-Jul-25 | Sable Haul Road | 1 | No | - |
| | 2-Aug-25 | Sable Haul Road | 1 | No | Caribou observed at KM 6.5. |
| | 2-Aug-25 | Sable Haul Road | 1 | No | Caribou observed at KM 10. |
| | 7-Aug-25 | Sable Haul Road | 1 | No | - |
| | 26-Aug-25 | Sable Haul Road | 1 | No | - |
| Fall Migration | 1-Nov-25 | Sable Haul Road | 6 | No | Caribou startled and ran when lube truck passed. |
| | 2-Nov-25 | Misery Haul Road | 1 | No | - |
| | 9-Nov-25 | Sable Haul Road | 13 | Yes (2) | One female observed limping with a broken leg. The caribou left the road naturally, then were observed running on the tundra after leaving the road. The road area where the caribou were observed had a safety berm, but they maneuvered around the berm without concern. |
| | 15-Nov-25 | Misery Haul Road | 1 | No | Injured Caribou that was reported by security early on in the morning was observed north of the Misery Road at KM 21. Caribou observed bedded at first and momentarily stood up. |
| | 17-Nov-25 | Sable Haul Road | 1 | No | - |
| | 21-Nov-25 | Misery Haul Road | 1 | No | Limping on the front leg. |
| | 21-Nov-25 | Misery Haul Road | 1 | No | KM 8. Front leg injured, limping. |

## 6.6.4 Discussion

Road surveys were completed over 309 to 320 days for each road in 2025. In the 2025 reporting year, caribou were observed on 294 occasions, with a total of 8,845 caribou reported. The largest groups observed in 2025 contained approximately 1,000 caribou and were observed walking on the tundra from Misery Haul Road and

Sable Haul Road during November (fall migration). Misery Haul Road/powerline and Sable Haul Road also had the most recorded observations and most of the total caribou observed. These numbers are approximately 30% lower than the overall numbers observed in 2024 (n = 12,646).

In 2025, at least one caribou was observed with an injured or broken front leg during road surveys; however, the cause of the injury was unknown.

In 2025, the most common behaviour observed was feeding (41%; n = 79), followed by travelling through the area (31%; n = 61). The most common behaviours recorded in 2025 followed the most common behaviours recorded in 2024. Signs of distress were recorded on 18 occasions, mostly in groups of one or two caribou.

In 2025, 84% of positive caribou observations and 48% of individuals were observed within 500 m of the roadways, and 6% of positive observations involved distressed caribou. All observations of signs of distress were recorded within 500 m of roadways, suggesting that road traffic contributes to caribou distress (Wolfe et al. 2000). At least one observation of distress was directly caused by road traffic, when a group of six caribou were startled away by a passing lube truck. The percentage of distressed caribou observations in 2025 was higher than in 2024 (2%). During fall migration, the largest groups of caribou (n = 1,000) were all observed more than 500 m from roadways; however, groups of fewer than 500 individuals were sometimes observed closer to roadways, with one observation of a group of 500 within 20 m of Lac du Sauvage Road.

Data on the location, number, group composition, and behaviour of caribou on or near the roads/power line provides feedback for mitigation and adaptive management. Caribou proximity to roads/power line, number of caribou, and caribou group composition informs the mitigation and monitoring intensity through the CRMP framework. Documentation of road/power line survey results will continue to be refined in future years to provide ongoing evaluation of the program to determine their effectiveness in mitigating caribou interactions with roads/power line.

## 6.7 Camera Monitoring

Communities and regulators are particularly concerned about potential mine-related effects to caribou in light of the population declines observed in recent decades. Burgundy is committed to the ongoing evaluation of its wildlife programs and implements the best techniques to monitor and mitigate impacts to wildlife and provide the most accurate information regarding wildlife-mine interactions. Of importance at the Ekati Mine is the degree to which roadways and other infrastructure (i.e., powerlines, dewatering pipelines) may act as semi-permeable barriers to wildlife movement, particularly caribou. To monitor the effects these types of infrastructure have on wildlife, Ekati maintains a robust camera program across site year-round.

Camera trapping, the use of remotely triggered cameras that automatically take images when triggered by motion (Rovero and Marshall 2009), is routinely used as an effective tool for monitoring wildlife and has a long history in wildlife research (Cutler and Swann 1999). Over the past two decades wildlife cameras have become more readily available and affordable, resulting in rapid and diverse growth of application (Rowcliffe and Carbone 2008). Remote camera monitoring has replaced traditional methods of visual surveys, drive counts, radiotelemetry, and track counts (Silveira et al. 2003) and can be completed year-round (with some maintenance of the cameras through the winter). In addition, cameras remove any observer and sample timing bias by providing data coverage 24 hours per day. Combined with 1-year battery life and memory storage for

approximately 30,000 photos, data collection opportunities increase over traditional techniques with minimal human involvement or invasiveness to wildlife. Due to the many benefits, wildlife cameras are now used to monitor wildlife activity around roads and other human infrastructure (Olsson et al 2008; Braden et al. 2008; Dunne and Quinne 2009; Noel et al. 2006).

The Ekati Mine has implemented the use of motion-triggered cameras to primarily monitor caribou activity near the mine site. The camera monitoring program was initiated in 2011 as an alternative survey methodology to monitor potential effects on caribou movements and behaviour, which informs the ongoing evaluation and implementation of effective mitigation measures. The program has continued annually, and with improvements in data processing and data standardization, thorough analysis has continued throughout the duration of the program. TK continues to be an important component in establishing the annual objectives of this program and for highlighting important locations where cameras should be deployed.

While the scope of the Camera Monitoring Program is confined to investigate the behaviour of caribou that occur immediately at camera monitored Ekati Mine roads, other data sources are suitable to investigate caribou movements at greater distance to the mine site (e.g., radio-collar data). Together, results from the camera program as well as telemetry monitoring, behavioural monitoring and road monitoring serve to provide a better overall picture of caribou movement across site.

Analysis and reporting of wildlife camera monitoring data is completed on a three-year schedule. The next camera monitoring analysis is planned to be included in the 3-year comprehensive WEMP report scheduled for submission in 2027. The report will include camera data from mid-2023 to the end of 2026.

As part of the Point Lake WEMP Addendum, created to account for new and additional monitoring and mitigation for the Point Lake Project that fell outside of the existing Wildlife Effects Monitoring Plan at the time, Ekati Mine established post-de-watering monitoring. This monitoring included wildlife cameras to monitor for caribou in the Point Lake development area and details can be found in the stand-alone Point Lake WEMP Addendum Report.

### 6.7.1 Traffic Camera Monitoring

Results from other caribou monitoring programs have demonstrated that caribou occur on site and occupy areas near and on mine roads, however, traffic data was never formally collected to aid in determining the impact traffic has on caribou behaviour around Ekati Mine. Traffic data was recorded previously from traffic logs and daily trip summaries and were specific to haul trucks and road trains. However, concern was raised with regard to roads being semi-permeable barriers and the effect traffic volumes are having on caribou crossing roads. It was determined that additional traffic monitoring would be required to monitor the volume of all traffic along Misery, Sable Haul, and Lac du Sauvage roads to investigate whether there is a relationship between caribou presence and passage through site and traffic levels on mine roads that intersect caribou habitat.

Traffic monitoring across the Haul Roads at Ekati Mine was committed to as part of the Point Lake WEMP Addendum (Arctic Canadian 2021a). A full traffic monitoring dataset began in 2023 and has continued annually since.

#### 6.7.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of this component of the WEMP are to:

- Determine hourly traffic volumes;
- Analyze traffic volumes associated with caribou crossings identified from wildlife cameras and caribou collar data; and
- Attempt to determine impact of traffic levels on road response behaviour of caribou.

#### 6.7.1.2 Methods

Cameras are deployed annually to monitor traffic on the Misery, Sable, and Lac du Sauvage roads (both east and west of the Point Lake Access Road). Based on current mine operations and infrastructure, four traffic monitoring cameras are deployed. Burgundy aims to keep the number of cameras deployed constant across years, however, as mine operations and infrastructure changes, the number may vary as needed.

The cameras are programmed to take pictures when the motion infrared sensor is triggered. One motion-triggered photo is taken whenever the camera's infrared signal-monitoring system detects movement in the camera's field of view. There is no time delay set to occur between motion-triggered events. The date and time of each digital image is recorded.

Each camera is checked once a month to determine battery levels, the available memory remaining on the SD card, if the camera is still operating as programmed, and to ensure it has not been disturbed by wildlife or weather. Memory cards and batteries are exchanged as needed to prevent data loss. Data from memory cards are retrieved for processing and analysis.

Camera activity data were not available for 2025. Based on the observed traffic volumes (averaging 173 vehicles per day), we assumed that cameras were inactive (e.g., due to obstruction by snow, camera mount failure, or theft) on days when they did not have a vehicle detection.

#### 6.7.1.3 Results

From January 6, 2025, to December 15, 2025, the four traffic cameras recorded for a combined 602 active days. The Lac du Sauvage Road had the highest monitoring effort, with the two cameras active for a total of 285 days (190 and 95 days at each camera), with notable gaps in camera activity across both cameras from May 7 to June 5, 2025, and July 7 to August 6, 2025. The Misery traffic camera was active for a total of 226 days, with notable gaps in effort observed June 18 to July 5, 2025 and July 8 to August 6, 2025. The Sable traffic camera was active for only 91 days, with notable gaps in effort between January 25 and August 6, 2025, and after November 3, 2025. There is no recorded traffic data available during the gaps in camera effort.

There was a total of 25,506 vehicles recorded on the Misery Haul Road which included traffic travelling in both directions (Table 6.7-1 and Figure 6.7-1). The months with the highest traffic recorded were April (6,151 vehicles) and May (6042 vehicles) and the month with the lowest traffic and at least seven days of traffic data was November (547 vehicles). Average daily counts were highest in April (205 vehicles per day), June (201 vehicles per day), and May (195 vehicles per day) and lowest in November (26 vehicles per day; Table 6.7-1).

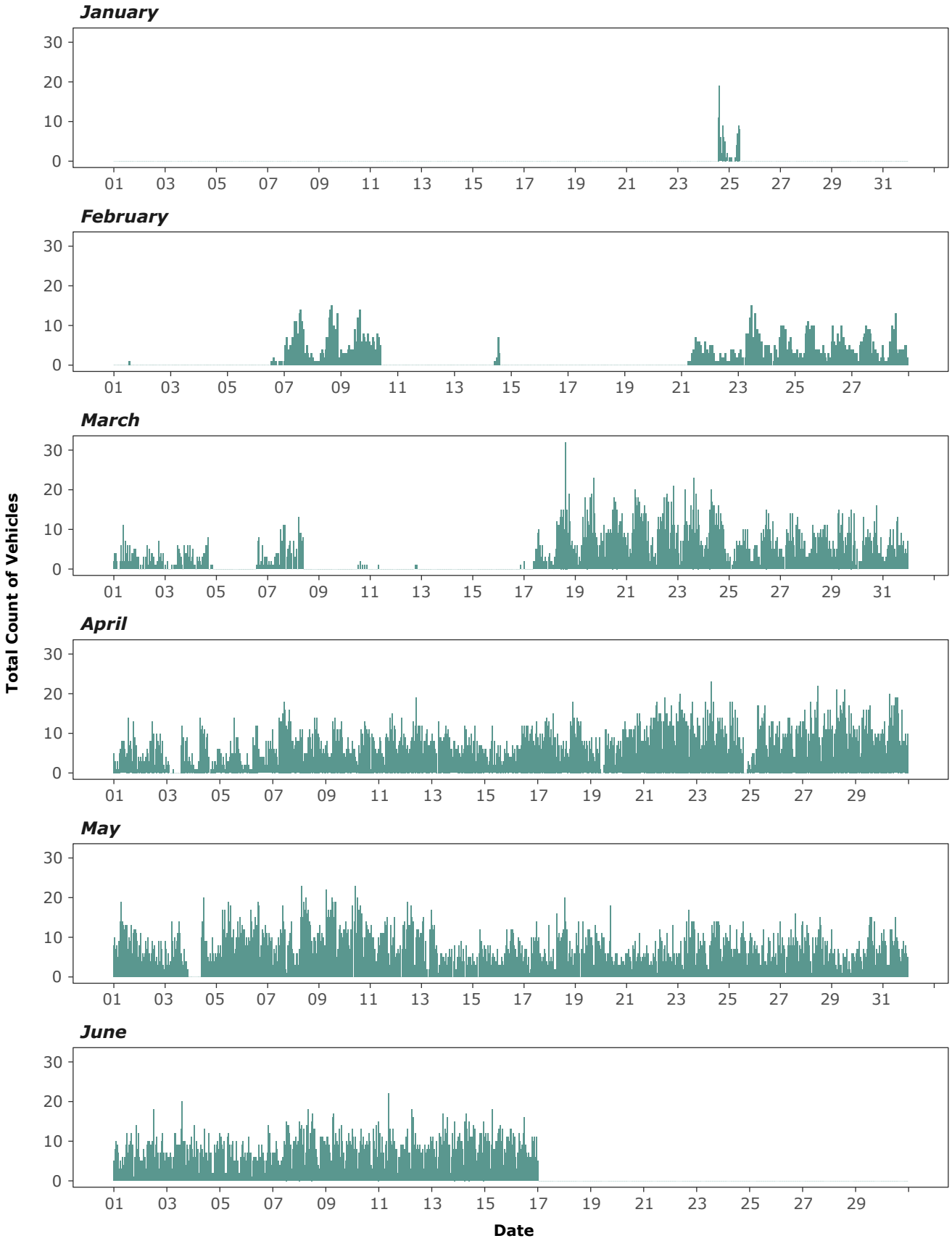



Figure 6.7-1a Total Number of Vehicles Detected per Hour, Misery Haul Road, 2025

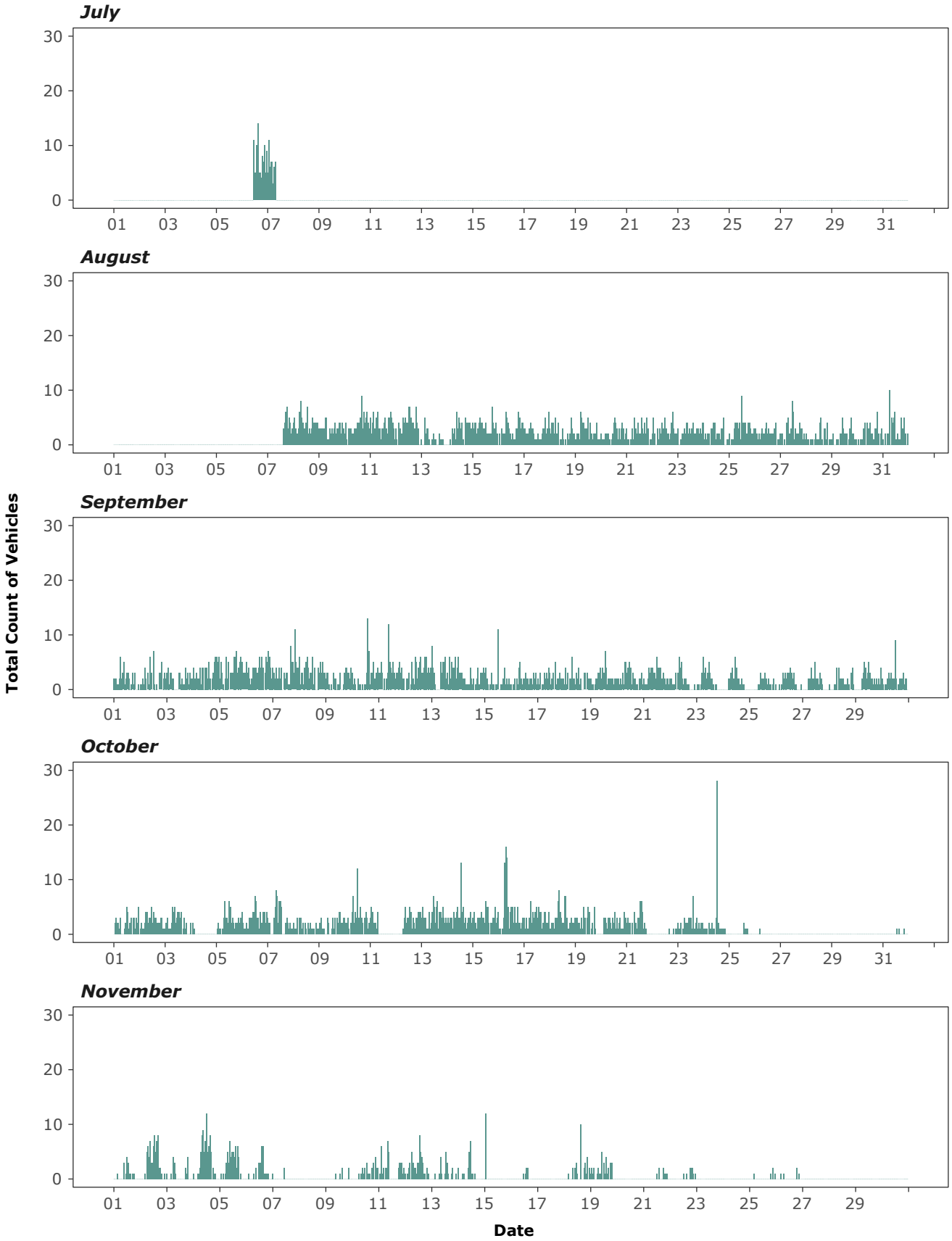



Figure 6.7-1b Total Number of Vehicles Detected per Hour, Misery Haul Road, 2025

Table 6.7-1 Number of Vehicles Counted on Misery Haul Road, 2025

| Month | Average Daily Count | Days Recording | Total Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| January | 46 | 2 | 93 |
| February | 84 | 15 | 1,260 |
| March | 130 | 26 | 3,388 |
| April | 205 | 30 | 6,151 |
| May | 195 | 31 | 6,042 |
| June | 201 | 17 | 3,416 |
| July | 74 | 2 | 149 |
| August | 60 | 25 | 1,505 |
| September | 55 | 30 | 1,657 |
| October | 48 | 27 | 1,298 |
| November | 26 | 21 | 547 |
| December | - | 0 | - |
| Average (all months other than December) | 102.2 | 20.5 | - |
| **Total count-** | | **226** | **25,506** |

There was a total of 903 vehicles recorded on the Sable Haul Road which included traffic travelling in both directions (Table 6.7-2 and Figure 6.7-2). The traffic camera recorded was inactive from February to July and had limited activity in November and December 2025 (Table 6.7-2).

Table 6.7-2 Number of Vehicles Counted on Sable Haul Road, 2025

| Month | Average Daily Count | Days Recording | Total Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| January | 14 | 11 | 157 |
| February – July | - | 0 | - |
| August | 13 | 25 | 331 |
| September | 9 | 29 | 254 |
| October | 7 | 21 | 137 |
| November | 3 | 4 | 13 |
| December | 11 | 1 | 11 |
| Average (all months excluding February – July) | 9.5 | 15.2 | - |
| **Total count** | | **91** | **903** |

The month with the highest traffic recorded was August (331 vehicles) and the month with the lowest traffic and at least seven days of traffic data was January (157 vehicles). Average daily counts were highest in January (14 vehicles per day) and August (13 vehicles per day) and lowest in November (3 vehicles per day; Table 6.7-2).

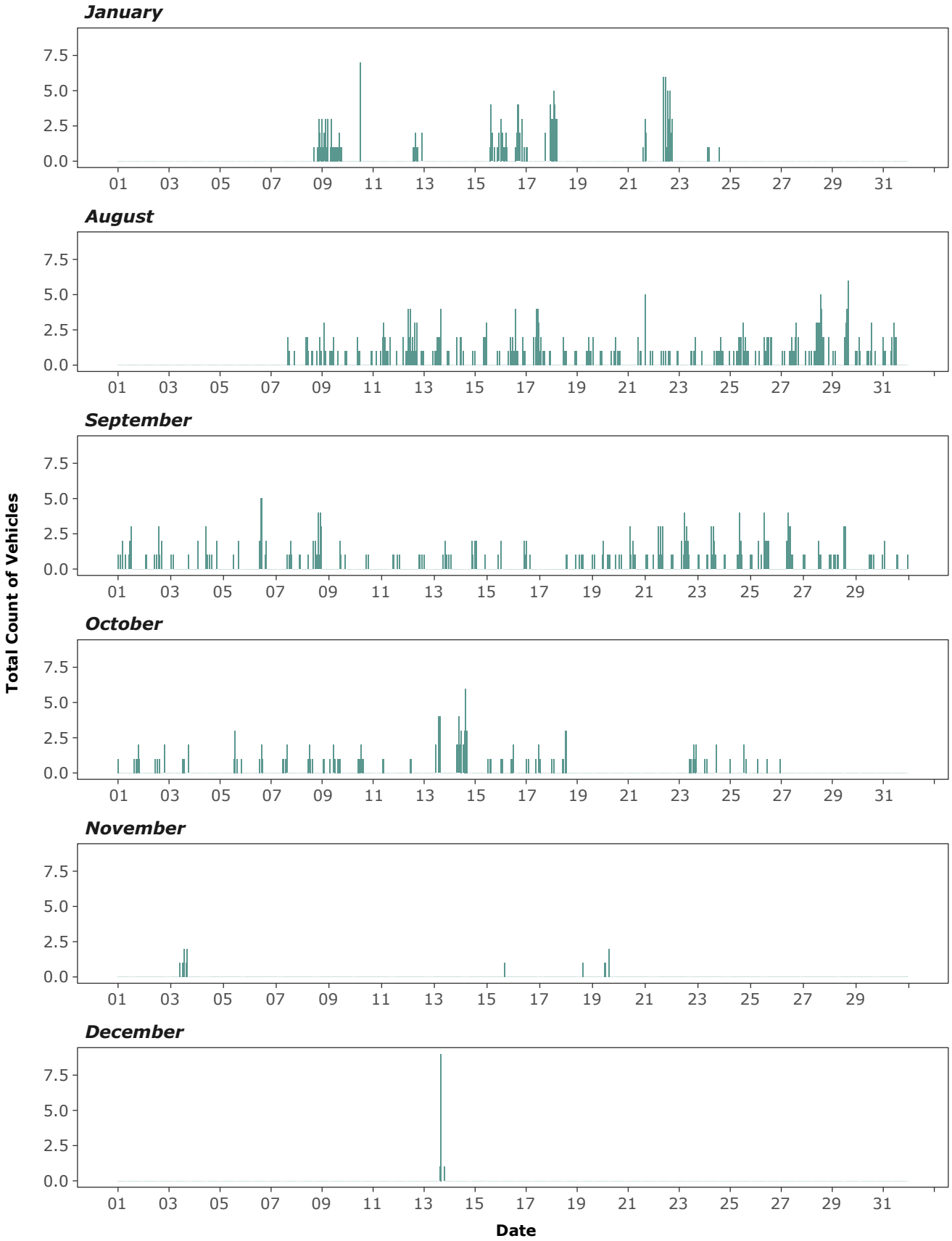



Figure 6.7-2 Total Number of Vehicles Detected per Hour, Sable Haul Road, 2025

There was a total of 10,373 vehicles recorded on the Lac du Sauvage Road traffic cameras (7,319 vehicles on camera 1 and 3,054 on camera 2) which included traffic travelling in both directions (Table 6.7-3 and Figure 6.7-3). Camera 1 on the Lac du Sauvage Road was active in all months of the year, but had six or fewer active days in January, May, July, November, and December. Camera 2 on the Lac du Sauvage Road was active in January and from June to October. The highest traffic occurred in June (2,300 vehicles at camera 1 and 315 vehicles at camera 2) and April (2289 vehicles at camera 1) and the lowest traffic in a month with at least seven days of traffic data occurred in February (114 vehicles; Table 6.7-3). The average daily counts were highest in May (182 vehicles per day at camera 1) and lowest in October to December (1-3 vehicles per day at each camera).

Table 6.7-3 Number of Vehicles Counted on Lac du Sauvage Road, 2025

| Month | Average Daily Count | | Days Recording | | Total Count | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | LDS 1 | LDS 2 | LDS 1 | LDS 2 | LDS 1 | LDS 2 |
| January | 14 | 84 | 6 | 12 | 86 | 1011 |
| February | 11 | - | 10 | 0 | 114 | - |
| March | 12 | - | 31 | 0 | 382 | - |
| April | 76 | - | 30 | 0 | 2289 | - |
| May | 182 | - | 6 | 0 | 1090 | - |
| June | 92 | 158 | 25 | 2 | 2300 | 315 |
| July | 90 | 165 | 6 | 6 | 542 | 991 |
| August | 6 | 10 | 24 | 25 | 153 | 253 |
| September | 12 | 15 | 28 | 28 | 324 | 410 |
| October | 2 | 3 | 18 | 22 | 31 | 74 |
| November | 1 | - | 5 | 0 | 7 | - |
| December | 1 | - | 1 | 0 | 1 | - |
| Average (excluding inactive months) | 41.6 | 72.5 | 15.8 | 15.8 | - | - |
| **Total count** | | | **190** | **95** | **7,319** | **3,054** |

### 6.7.1.4 Discussion

The traffic monitoring methods in 2025 were successful to identify vehicles travelling on Misery Haul Road, Sable Haul Road and the Lac du Sauvage Road in the Point Lake development area. Improved methods from the end of 2022 for traffic detection along the roads have carried over into full years of monitoring since 2023. Although data was not recorded for all months on all roads in 2025, a total of 36,782 vehicles were detected over a combined 602 active camera days at 4 cameras compared to 2025 where a total of 87,952 vehicles recorded over a combined 564 days of camera effort at 3 cameras. Compared to 2024, 2025 observed a lower number of vehicles recorded, approximately half of what was observed in 2024, despite an additional camera deployed on the Lac du Sauvage Road. However, gaps in effort and seasonal variation in traffic must be taken into account when comparing traffic levels from camera monitoring.

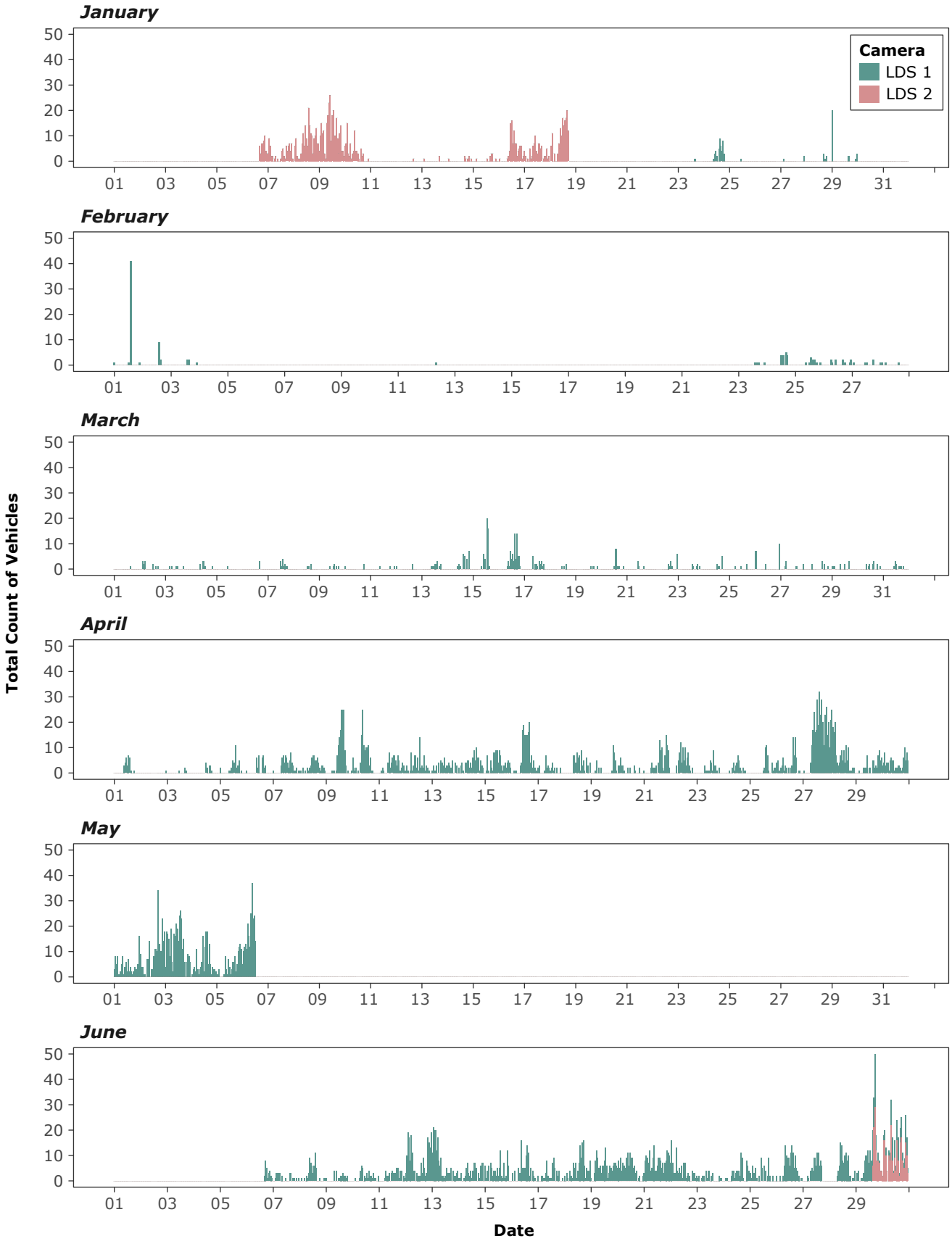



Figure 6.7-3a Total Number of Vehicles Detected per Hour, Lac du Sauvage Road, 2025

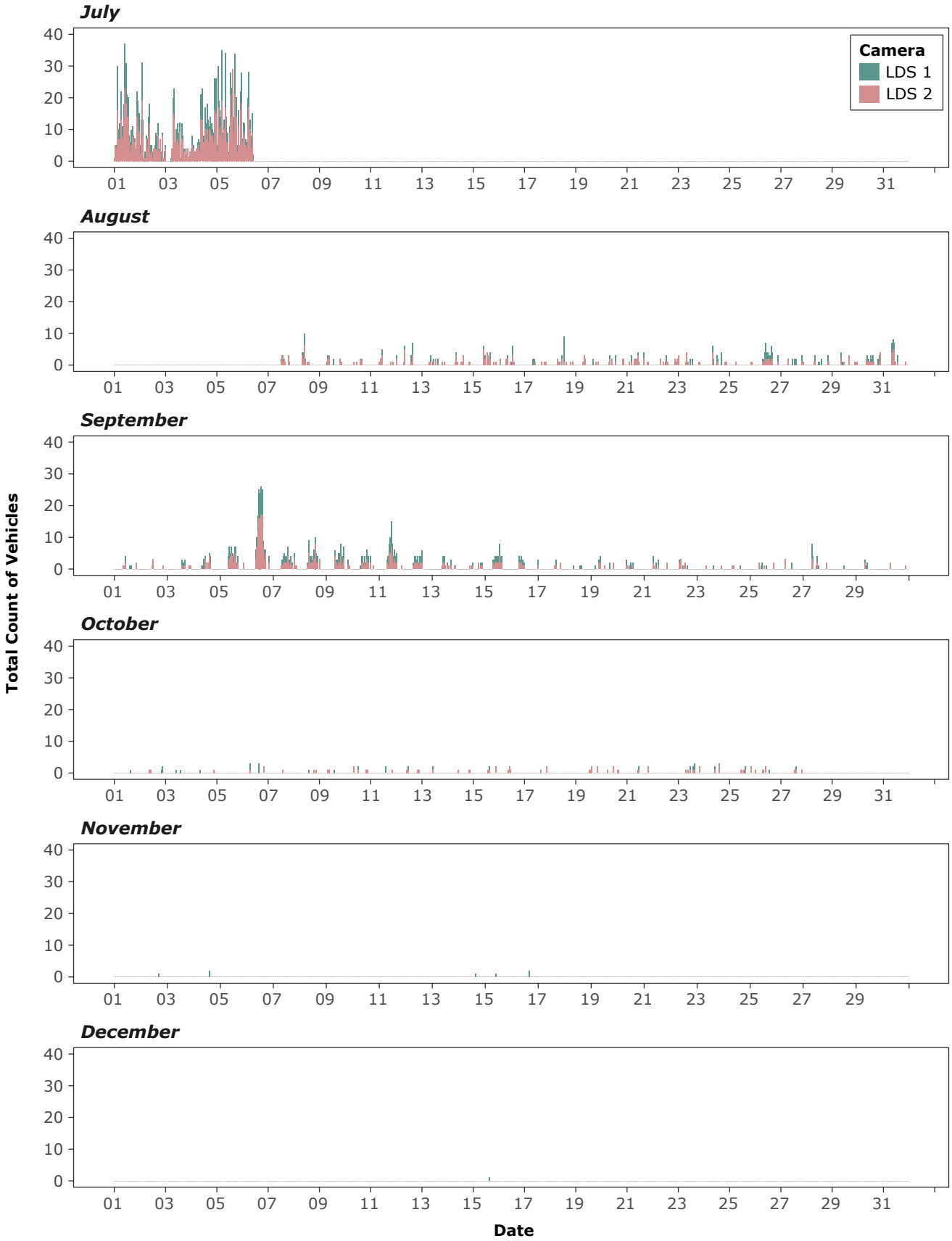



Figure 6.7-3b Total Number of Vehicles Detected per Hour, Lac du Sauvage Road, 2025

The number of vehicles recorded on Misery Haul Road in 2025 (25,506 vehicles) was higher than in 2024 (15,448 vehicles), and although camera effort was also higher in 2025 than in 2024 (2025: 226 active days, 2024: 172 active days), effort-adjusted detections were still higher in 2025 (113 vehicles per active day) than in 2024 (90 vehicles per active day). In 2025, traffic levels peaked from April to June, unlike in both 2024 and 2023 when peaks were observed in March. Average daily counts during the peak months in 2025 (195–205 vehicles per day) exceeded peak traffic levels in 2024 (150 vehicles per day), and the overall average daily vehicle count was also higher in 2025 than 2024 (102 vehicles vs. 72 vehicles).

Sable Haul Road had a lower number of vehicles recorded in 2025 (903 vehicles) than in 2024 (36,291 vehicles), as well as lower camera effort (2025: 91 days, 2024: 257 days), but the yearly average of 10 vehicles per day in 2025 was still dramatically reduced from 2024 (141 vehicles per day). Camera effort at Sable was reduced in part by high snow berms obstructing the camera's view of the road. Of the months with traffic data in 2025, January and August had the highest number of daily vehicles (13-14 vehicles), but the Sable camera was not active in July, which was the highest traffic month in 2024 with 285 vehicles per day. Even in August and September when camera effort was high (25 and 29 active days, respectively), vehicle detection rates were lower than in 2024 (117 vs 13 daily vehicles in August and 24 vs 9 daily vehicles in September).

The Lac du Sauvage traffic cameras recorded less traffic in 2025 (10,373 total vehicles across both cameras) compared to the first year of monitoring in 2024 (36,213 total vehicles from July to December), despite higher camera effort (2025: 285 days, 2024: 135 days). In 2025, traffic was highest from May to July, which is consistent with July being the highest traffic month in 2024. However, peak traffic rates in 2025 were approximately half of recorded rates in 2024 (July 2025: 90 and 165 vehicles per day, July 2024: 436 vehicles per day). While an additional camera was added to the Lac du Sauvage Road in 2025 to monitor traffic near Point Lake, this camera was only active for 95 days, with gaps in activity due to obstruction by the snow berm in February and March and the camera being removed in April and May due to conflicts with mining activities.

# 7. Grizzly Bear

## 7.1 Background

Grizzly bears are considered a wildlife VEC within the Ekati Mine study area. The grizzly bear (western population) is federally designated as "*Special Concern*" by COSEWIC, listed as "*Special Concern*" on SARA Schedule 1 (Government of Canada 2025) and is listed as "*No Status*" under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2024). The general status rank in NWT is "*Sensitive*".

Grizzly bears occur at low densities in areas of low vegetative productivity and high seasonality (McLoughlin et al. 1999), which generally results in large home ranges in NWT. On average, female ranges are roughly 2,000 $km^2$ while male ranges can be up to 7,000 $km^2$ (McLoughlin et al. 2003). The Lac de Gras region supports a large number of grizzly bears because of the prevalence of esker habitats for secure denning, seasonal access to caribou, abundant lakes and streams supporting robust fish populations, productive forage in riparian zones, and the relatively low level of hunting in the area. Due to large home-ranges of grizzly bear in NWT and the location of the Ekati Mine make it likely that individuals in the region will encounter the mine site, as well as other mines in the area, over their lifetime (McLoughlin et al. 1999).

From 2012 to 2017, the Ekati and Diavik mines collaborated on a Regional Grizzly Bear DNA study as part of their wildlife monitoring programs (ERM 2018). Over the six-year study, grizzly bear densities ranged from 2.0 to 3.0/1,000 $km^2$ for males and 3.6 to 4.7/1,000 $km^2$ for females, confirming that the central barrens of the NWT is a productive area for grizzly bears. Grizzly bear numbers appear to be stable to increasing, since estimates for the Slave Geological Province were last obtained in the late 1990s (3.5/1,000 $km^2$; McLoughlin and Messier 2001), although direct comparison of the two studies is somewhat limited as the method used to achieve each population estimate varied. McLoughlin and Messier (2001) predicted, however, that the grizzly bear population in the area will remain stable if the annual removal rate does not increase from 13.4 bears/year. Only four grizzly bear mortalities have occurred at the Ekati Mine from 1997 to 2025, indicating that the mine has had negligible impacts to the annual removal rate of grizzly bears per year that would affect the regional population.

Waste from mine sites may potentially act as wildlife attractants, increasing the likelihood of human-wildlife interactions and wildlife habituation. Grizzly bears moving through the Ekati Mine site pose a risk to both human and wildlife safety, hence the need to monitor for these interactions and adaptively manage mitigations based on the results. Burgundy has a robust Waste Management Plan in place to limit the likelihood of attracting grizzly bears to site and discouraging habituation that may result in wildlife incidents or mortalities. As previous studies indicate that the mine is not influencing the regional population, grizzly bears are monitored at the Ekati Mine through incidental observations and documenting incidents.

## 7.2 Incidental Observations

Recording incidental grizzly bear observations in the study area provides information on grizzly bear activity, which can help locate and eliminate bear attractants and minimize human-bear interactions. Once a bear is observed within the mine site, personnel are notified and work activities are adjusted, if necessary, to avoid encounters. Incidental observations can also be used to monitor changes in bear activity near the mine over

time, assess differences in activity by population demographic (e.g., age, sex groups) and identify problem locations on site.

### 7.2.1 Objectives

The objectives of the grizzly bear monitoring are to:

- Avoid and minimize bear-human interactions
- Identify the presence and composition of incidental bear observations in the study area, and
- Document and determine the cause of direct mine-related mortality of bears should they occur.

### 7.2.2 Methods

Incidental observations of grizzly bears in the vicinity of the Ekati Mine are reported by staff to the Environment Department on an ongoing basis. This includes all grizzly bear observations by helicopter operators, field workers, and by other staff on all working shifts. For each bear observation, the date, number of individuals, sex and age (when possible), condition, behaviour, presence of a collar, and UTM coordinates (when possible) or a description of the location are recorded.

All observations of persistent grizzly bears reported near roads, personnel, and mine structures at the Ekati Mine are investigated, as these are of particular concern with regards to human and wildlife safety. Where necessary, grizzly bears are deterred from these areas using vehicles (truck, helicopter), air horns, screamers, bear bangers, and/or bean bags in order of increasing intensity.

### 7.2.3 Results

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 111 incidental observations of grizzly, totaling 158 grizzly bears over 59 days near the mine (Table 7.2-1; Photo 7.2-1). This does not indicate that 158 unique grizzly bears were observed, as it is possible the same bear or group was observed on multiple occasions. Observations spanned the period from April 25 to October 25, 2025. Grizzly bear observations with sufficient location information were plotted on a map of the study area (Figure 7.2-1).

Multiple animals were observed on 33 occasions totaling 80 bears observed in 2025. The most observed family group composition included one adult female with one adult male, which was observed on nine occasions, however, due to the nature of incidental observations, the observations may not have been of the same pairing. Many of the other family groups could not be determined to sex and age.

Incidental grizzly bear sightings during LLCF surveys are reported in Section 6.5.3.

### 7.2.4 Discussion

The 158 grizzly bears observed in 2025 falls within the upper recorded range at the mine, which spans from 36 sightings in 2001 to 170 in 2021. This number is above the annual average of 84 grizzly bears observed per year. The 33 family groups observed in 2025 was also within the recorded range of observations at the mine and suggests a healthy population near the mine. The remaining 78 grizzly bear observations in 2025 were of solitary animals, with 26 of unknown age and 52 adults. No cubs were observed on their own in 2025. Most

observations were of undetermined sex, with three confirmed male adults, and nine confirmed female adults. Many of these observations were likely the same bears observed on multiple occasions. Grizzly bear observations that resulted in incidents are discussed in Section 5.3.3.

Table 7.2-1 Summary of Incidental Grizzly Bear Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2001 to 2025

| Grizzly Bear | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 36 (18) | 37 (30) | 42 (n/r) | 60 (43) | 76 (54) | 63 (48) | 47 (35) | 62 (45) | 69 (48) | 46 (36) |
| Family group observations | 11 | 13 | 15 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 10 | 24 | 13 |

| Grizzly Bear | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 70 (45) | 72 (53 | 52 (44) | 60 (52) | 60 (60) | 147 (94) | 128 (84) | 145 (80) | 161 (74) | 68 (51) |
| Family group observations | 32 | 26 | 4 | 11 | 33 | 54 | 16 | 37 | 48 | 14 |

| Grizzly Bear | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 170 (80) | 109 (54) | 132 (80) | 94 (65) | 158 (111) |
| Family group observations | 16 | 27 | 30 | 19 | 30 |

Notes:
Family groups include all sightings of multiple bears.
n/r = not reported

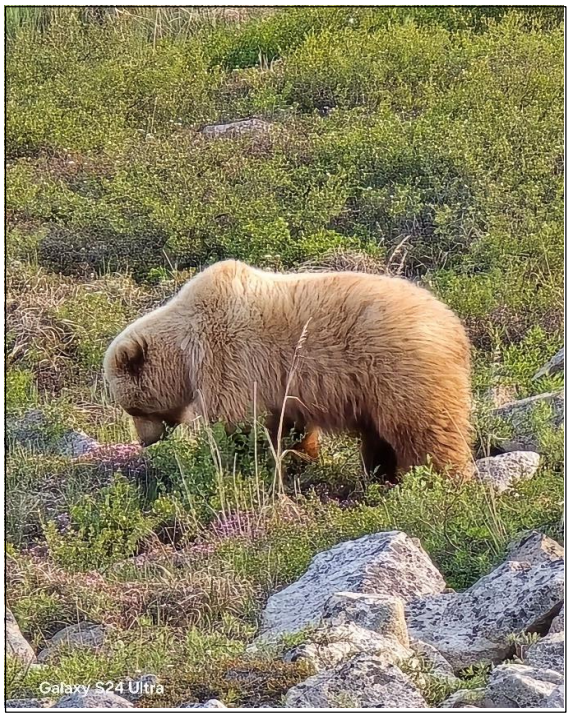



Photo 7.2-1 Grizzly spotted on the tundra in front of Main Camp, June 25, 2025.

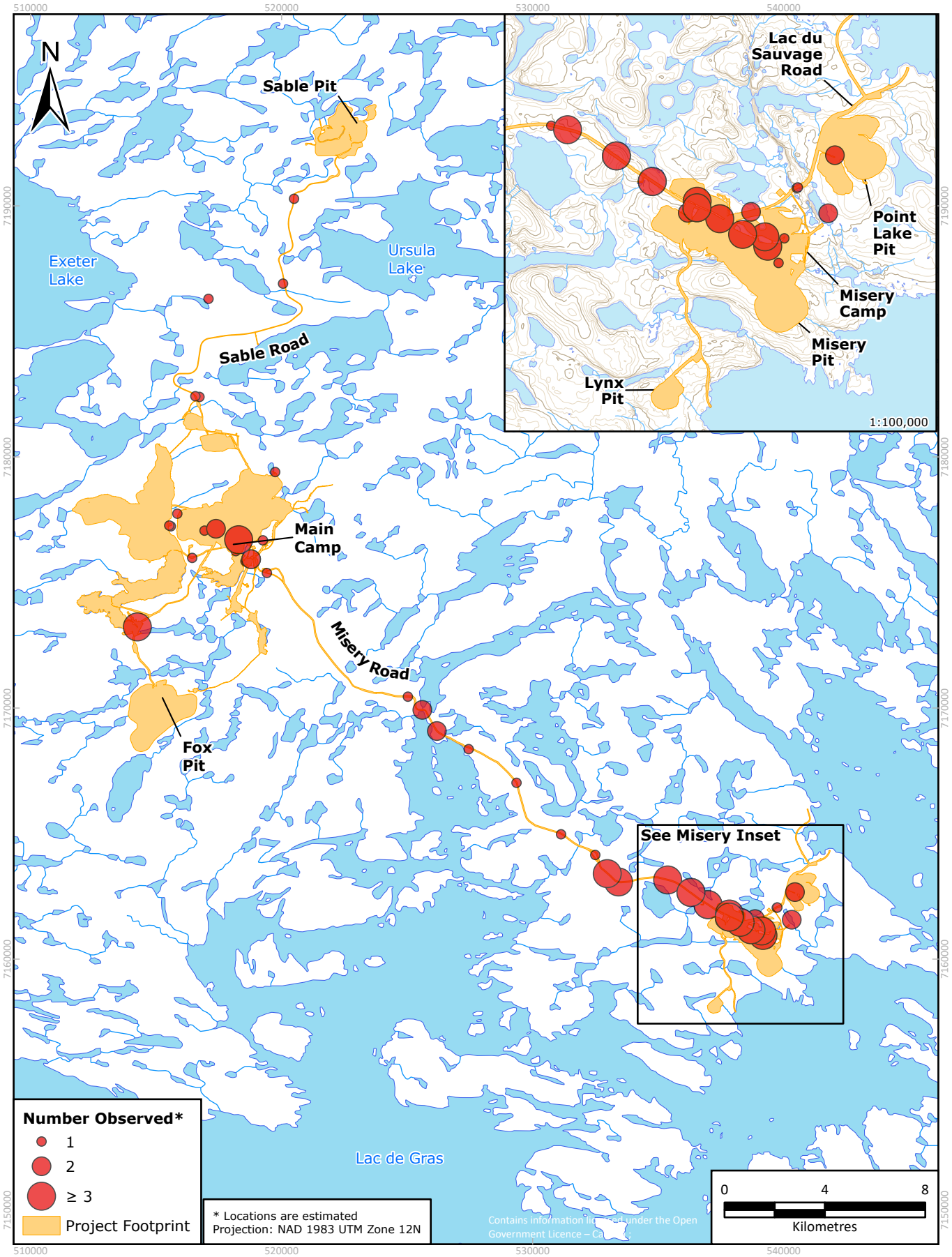



Figure 7.2-1 Incidental Grizzly Bear Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2025

The number of incidental observations is likely a product of the observation rate (how many people are looking), the number of bears, and the proportion of those bears that are resident/tolerant of the Ekati Mine. The increase in reports since 2015 may be linked to increased awareness and reporting of grizzly bears by mine staff and the decentralization of mining activity spreading the observers across a wider area. In contrast, observations were very low in 2020 due to the mine being in Care and Maintenance with few staff on site.

Continued improvements in wildlife management in recent years have been reflected in a departure from aggressive pre-emptive measures to an emphasis on monitoring behaviour and assessing risk. Burgundy's ongoing effort toward on-site bear awareness education, reporting bear sightings, and monitoring bears within the mine site vicinity continually minimizes the risk of major human/bear interactions. Site-wide notifications that alert staff about grizzly bear presence and annual Bear Aware training sessions have also increased communication and awareness of grizzly bears.

# 8. Wolf

## 8.1 Background

The wolf is assessed as "*Secure*" in the NWT (GNWT 2024) and is not listed federally but is monitored as it is an important species in the Arctic and interacts with the mine on a regular basis. As such, wolves are considered a wildlife VEC within the Ekati Mine study area. Populations are stable or increasing within their Canadian range, except in northern Alberta and some parts of NWT (Frame et al. 2008). Previously, Ekati Mine was within the Enhanced North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Area, where increased incentives were available for wolves harvested in the area by harvesters from both the NWT and Nunavut (GNWT ENR 2022). This program began in 2018 to support the recovery of Bathurst and Bluenose East caribou populations however the incentive program ended in May 2024.

Wolves in the region depend on the Bathurst caribou herd as their main source of prey (Kuyt 1972; Walton et al. 2001). During the spring, wolves follow the Bathurst caribou herds north of the treeline and choose den sites south of the Bathurst calving grounds. This strategy likely optimizes the availability of food resources for rearing pups (Heard and Williams 1992). Wolf pups usually leave the natal den in early August, but do not leave the summer range until October. As predators of migratory caribou, wolves in the central barrens have larger home ranges and exhibit less territorial behaviour than wolves in other parts of North America (Walton et al. 2001). Food availability for wolves has been reduced by barren-ground caribou population declines. As a result, resource availability may decrease adult fitness and pup survival, both of which could have implications for population growth (Klaczek et al. 2015).

Potential risks for the local wolf population may also arise from habitat removal and human disturbance in the region (Clark et al. 1996). Human development can result in avoidance behaviour (Johnson et al. 2005); however, certain features of human developments (such as landfills and infrastructure) can act as attractants, increasing the likelihood of wildlife interaction and habituation with mine sites. In response to these concerns, Burgundy monitors wolves near mine infrastructure, and supports regional wolf monitoring initiatives coordinated by GNWT ECC. Between regional wolf monitoring study periods, wolves are monitored at the Ekati Mine through incidental observations and documenting incidents.

## 8.2 Incidental Observations

Potential risks associated with human-wildlife interactions may be avoided by monitoring incidental wolf observations in the study area. Once a wolf is observed within the mine site, Burgundy personnel at risk of encountering the wolf are notified and work actions are adjusted accordingly. In addition, incidental wolf observations help determine the timing and family composition of wolf packs moving through the study area.

### 8.2.1 Objectives

The objectives of incidental wolf monitoring are to:

- Avoid and minimize wolf-human interactions;
- Identify the presence and group composition of incidental wolf observations in the study area; and
- Document and determine the cause of direct mine-related mortality of wolves should they occur.

### 8.2.2 Methods

Incidental wolf observations in and near the Ekati Mine are reported to the Environment Department. This includes all wolf observations made by helicopter operators, field workers, and other staff on all working shifts. For each wolf observation, the date, location, number of individuals sighted, sex and age of individuals (when possible), dominant behaviour, condition of the animal, and the presence or absence of a radio or satellite collar are recorded. Where necessary, wolves are deterred from areas using vehicles (truck, helicopter), air horns, screamers, bear bangers, and/or bean bags in order of increasing intensity.

### 8.2.3 Results

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 42 incidental wolf sightings, totaling 80 wolves observed on 38 separate days near the Ekati Mine (Table 8.2-1; Photo 8.2-1). This does not indicate that 80 unique wolves were observed, as it is possible the same wolf or family group was observed on multiple occasions. Observations with sufficient location information were plotted on a map of the study area (Figure 8.2-1). Most observations occurred near the Sable and Misery Haul Roads, occurring 13 and 14 times respectively.

Table 8.2-1 Summary of Incidental Wolf Observations near the Ekati Mine, 2001 to 2025

| Wolf | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 38 (n/r) | 59 (42) | 54 (27) | 58 (46) | 58 (40) | 47 (43) | 34 (30) | 55 (45) | 58 (45) | 25 (23) |
| Family group observations | n/r | n/r | n/r | 22 | 20 | 13 | 21 | 16 | 20 | 10 |

| Wolf | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 38 (n/r) | 80 (55) | 55 (47) | 82 (66) | 69 (52) | 95 (68) | 93 (78) | 79 (59) | 117 (77) | 23 (21) |
| Family group observations | n/r | 20 | 13 | 23 | 19 | 32 | 41 | 20 | 38 | 12 |

| Wolf | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 93 (63) | 53 (42) | 22 (41) | 45 (39) | 80 (42) |
| Family group observations | 36 | 13 | 5 | 12 | 14 |

Notes:
Family groups include all sightings of multiple wolves
n/r = not reported.

Fourteen of the 42 incidental wolf observations were of multiple wolves, totaling 52 individuals (Table 8.2-1). Groups including more than one wolf were mainly observed along the roads, with one group being observed near the Fox pit and one in the Point Lake area. Groups of wolves observed in 2025 included:

- Three observations of two wolves;
- Five observations of three wolves;

- Two observations of four wolves;
- Three observations of five wolves;
- One observation of eight wolves; and
- Two observations of an undetermined number.



Photo 8.2-1 Wolf travelling along the Lac du Sauvage Road, November 2025.

The remaining incidental wolf observations included 28 observations of solitary individuals (one adult female, 15 adults of unknown sex, and 12 wolves of unknown sex and age). For wolf observations that resulted in incidents, see Section 5.3.3.

Incidental wolf sightings during LLCF surveys are reported in Section 6.5.3.

### 8.2.4 Discussion

Overall, wolf occurrences near the mine have remained relatively consistent across years, from a low of 23 wolves observed in 2020 to a high of 117 wolves observed in 2019. In 2025, wolf observations (80) were above the average (n = 60) from 2001 to 2025.

Family groups of two or more adult wolves were observed on 14 occasions for a total of 52 wolves in 2025 in several locations including near Misery and Sable Haul Roads. However, no pups were observed in 2025. Pups have been observed each year since 2014, except for 2016, 2023, 2024 and 2025. Most wolf observations were made by drivers near Haul Roads.

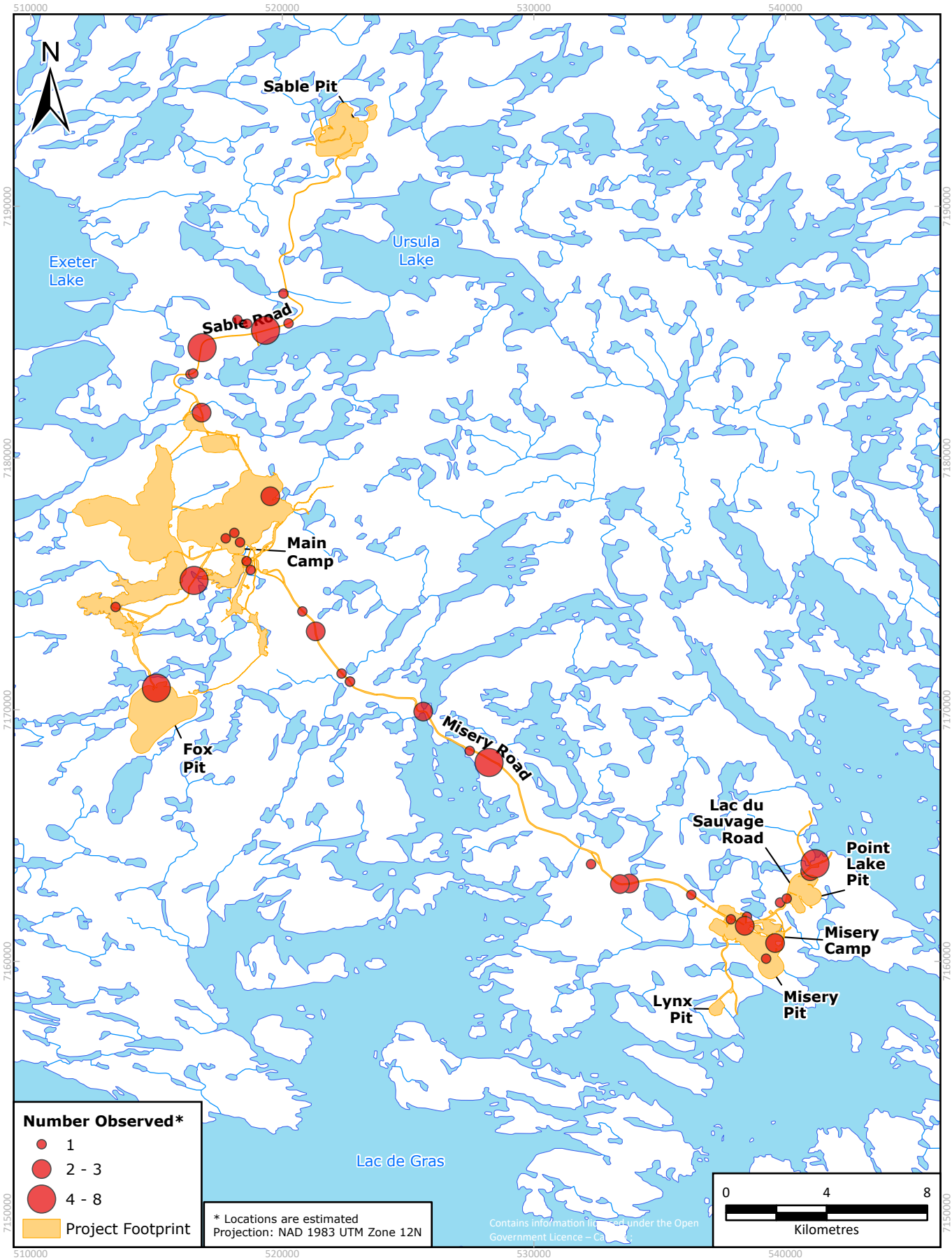



Figure 8.2-1 Incidental Wolf Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2025

# 9. Wolverine

## 9.1 Background

The wolverine is considered a wildlife VEC within the Ekati Mine study area. Wolverines, the largest member of the weasel family, has a circumpolar distribution in the tundra, taiga plains, and boreal forests of North America (Weir 2004). Wolverine (eastern and western population designations) is federally designated as "*Special Concern*" by COSEWIC, listed as *"Special Concern"* on Schedule 1 of the SARA (Government of Canada 2025), and is listed as *"No Status"* under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2024). The general status rank is *"Sensitive"* in NWT.

Wolverines are curious animals and will investigate human-made structures and food caches when humans are not present (COSEWIC 2014). They prefer undisturbed areas, but home ranges may overlap with human infrastructure, such as trap lines and logging roads (COSEWIC 2014). Wolverine home ranges are typically 400 $km^2$ for females and 1,580 $km^2$ for males (Rowland et al. 2003; COSEWIC 2014). They opportunistically travel on snowmobile trails and scavenge along trap lines and at hunter kills (COSEWIC 2014). Human activity, including mining, hunting, trapping, and major transportation routes, may displace or alter wolverine travel routes and lead to increased human-caused mortalities (Weir 2004).

Wolverines moving through human-occupied areas pose a risk to both wildlife and human safety. Food and food waste may potentially act as wildlife attractants, increasing the possibility of wildlife habituation. In response to these concerns, Burgundy monitors for these interactions on an annual basis and adaptively manages mitigations based on the results (i.e., repairing wildlife gates at the incinerator, repairing damaged skirting around buildings). Burgundy has contributed previously to regional wolverine hair snagging studies led by GNWT ECC to monitor populations using a DNA mark-recapture analysis. Based on the results of these studies indicating that population impacts are not occurring regionally, wolverines are monitored at the Ekati Mine through incidental observations and documenting incidents.

## 9.2 Incidental Observations

Monitoring incidental wolverine observations near the mine site helps to avoid the potential risks associated with human–wolverine interactions. Once a wolverine is sighted within the mine site area, personnel that are at risk of encountering the wolverine are notified and work activities are adjusted accordingly.

### 9.2.1 Objectives

The objectives of incidental observations of wolverines are to:

- Avoid and minimize wolverine-human interactions;
- Identify the presence and composition of incidental wolverine observations in the study area; and
- Document and determine the cause of direct mine-related mortality of wolverines, should they occur.

### 9.2.2 Methods

Incidental observations of wolverines are reported to the Environment Department. This includes all wolverine observations made by helicopter operators, field workers, and other staff on all shifts. Each wolverine observation

includes the date, number of individuals, sex and age (when possible), location (UTMs when possible), behavior, and condition of the animal. Where necessary, wolverines are deterred from areas using vehicles (truck, helicopter), air horns, screamers, bear bangers, and/or bean bags in order of increasing intensity.

### 9.2.3 Results

During the 2025 reporting period, six incidental observations of wolverines were recorded on six days near the Ekati Mine (Table 9.2-1). Observations with sufficient location information were plotted on a map of the study area (

Figure 9.2-1).

In 2025, three observations of wolverine occurred near the Misery Haul Road, while no observations were recorded near camps. Three individuals were classified as unknown adults, with the remainder were recorded as unknown sex and age. No confirmed young were recorded in 2025. For wolverine observations that resulted in incidents, please see Section 5.3.3.

Table 9.2-1 Summary of Incidental Wolverine Observations near the Ekati Mine, 2003 to 2025

| Wolverine | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 14 (12) | 32 (25) | 128 (86) | 23 (23) | 9 (8) | 40 (35) | 12 (11) | 18 (18) | 12 (11) | 29 (25) | 18 (17) | 21 (20) |

| Wolverine | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 26 (22) | 39 (36) | 33 (29) | 23 (22) | 23 (18) | 13 (13) | 14 (12) | 9 (9) | 6 (6) | 10 (9) | 6 (6) |

## 9.2.4 Discussion

In 2025, there were six incidental observations of wolverines recorded on six separate days near the Ekati Mine, which falls well below the average number of wolverines observed (n = 24) recorded since 2003. The number of incidental wolverine observations have varied over the years, ranging from a high of 128 wolverines observed in 2005, to a low of 6 wolverines observed in 2023 and 2025. However, the number of wolverine observations has been decreasing consistently since 2016, with 2023 and 2025 being the lowest number of observations. No confirmed young or dens were recorded in 2025.

Five wolverines were removed (one mortality, and four were relocated 200 km away) from the area in 2005. Due to the high numbers observed in 2005, Ekati Mine implemented robust adaptive mitigation measures to reduce wolverine occurrences on site. The reduction in observations likely indicates that mitigation is working. These measures include a proactive waste management program, increased educational awareness, improvements and regular examination and maintenance to the accommodation structures that inhibit possible access to buildings by wolverines, and proactive management activities that include site-wide notifications about wolverine and other wildlife sightings near infrastructure.

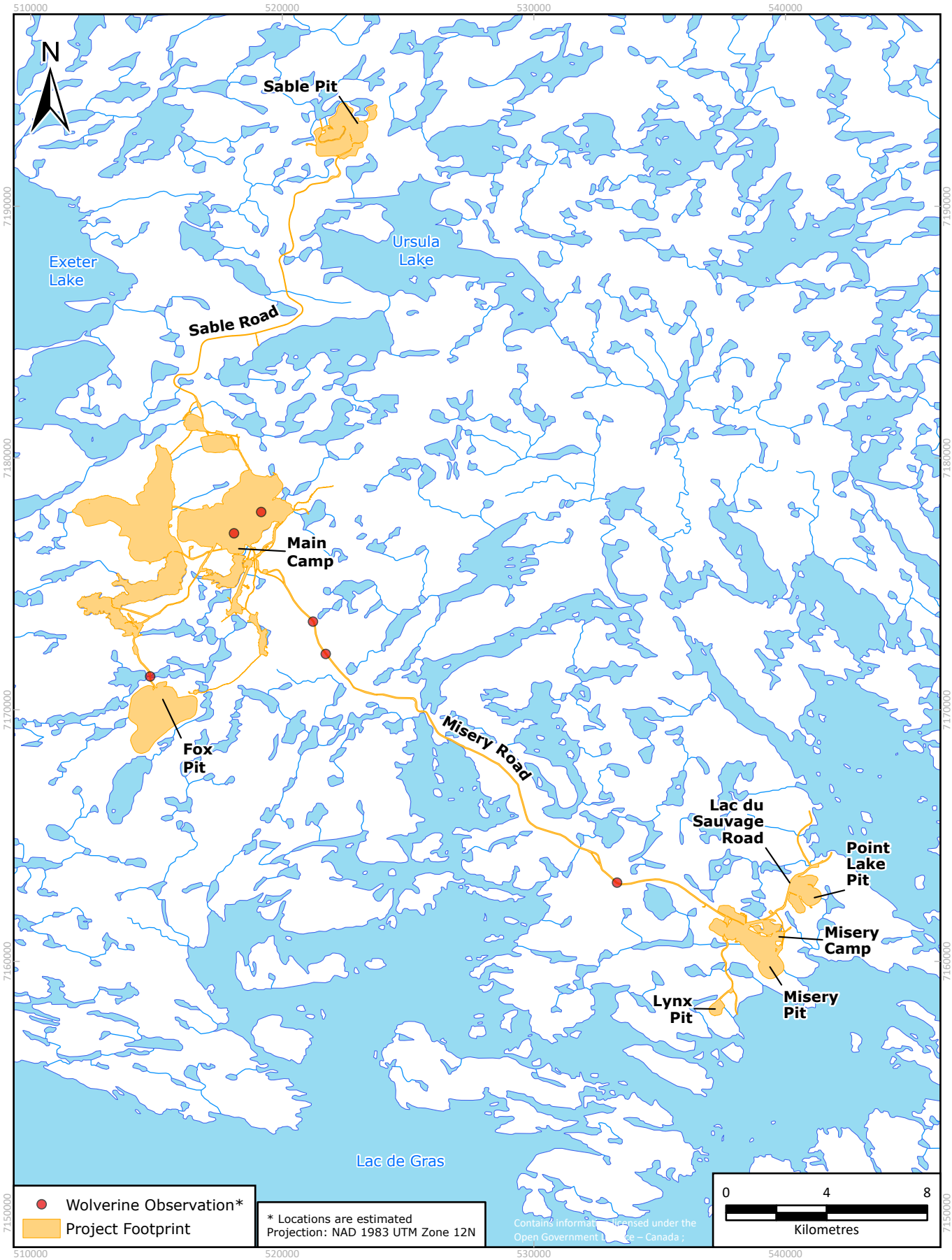



Figure 9.2-1 Incidental Wolverine Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2025

# 10. Fox

## 10.1 Background

Two species of fox inhabit the Slave Geological Province of NWT: the red fox and the Arctic fox. The population sizes of Arctic and red fox for the region are unknown but estimates based on surveys from 2007 are > 10,000 for both species combined (GNWT ENR 2016). Both species are considered "*Secure*" in NWT (GNWT 2024) and are not federally listed in Canada (Government of Canada 2025). Arctic fox and red fox were not identified as a VEC during the assessment process however, foxes (especially Arctic fox) are considered important furbearers in the north for fur trade.

Foxes are opportunistic foragers. As human activity in the Arctic increases, fox populations occasionally thrive near landfills and other artificial food sources. Along with increased fox populations near mining camps and areas with other human activities, the risk of disease transmission also increases. Of particular concern is the transmission of rabies to humans. Foxes are the primary animal vector of rabies in NWT (Walker and Elkin 2005). In response to these concerns, foxes are monitored at the Ekati Mine through incidental observations and documenting incidents.

## 10.2 Incidental Observations

Monitoring incidental fox observations near the mine site may help to avoid and minimize potential risks associated with human and wildlife interactions. Once a fox is observed within the mine site area, personnel that are at risk of encountering the fox are notified, and work activities are adjusted accordingly.

### 10.2.1 Objectives

The objectives for incidental observation monitoring of fox are to:

- Avoid and minimize fox-human interactions;
- Identify the presence and demographic composition of incidental fox observations in the study area;
- Document and determine the cause of direct mine-related mortality of foxes should they occur, and
- Document abnormal behaviour in foxes to identify possible cases of rabies.

### 10.2.2 Methods

Incidental observations of foxes are reported to the Environment Department. Observations include those made by helicopter operators, field workers or any other Burgundy staff. Each fox observation includes the species (if known), number of animals, sex and age (when possible), location (UTM coordinates when possible), dominant behavior, and condition of the animal.

All observations of persistent foxes reported near roads, personnel, and mine structures at the Ekati Mine are investigated, as these are of particular concern with regards to human and wildlife safety. Where necessary, foxes are deterred from areas using vehicles (truck, helicopter), air horns, screamers, bear bangers, and/or bean bags in order of increasing intensity.

### 10.2.3 Results

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 59 incidental sightings of 78 foxes over 52 days near the mine (Table 10.2-1). This does not indicate that 65 unique foxes were observed, as it is possible the same fox was observed on multiple occasions. Observations with sufficient location information were plotted on a map of the study area (Figure 10.2-1).

Table 10.2-1 Summary of Incidental Fox Observations near the Ekati Mine, 2025

| | Red Fox[1] | Arctic Fox | Unknown Fox | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **By Sex** | | | | |
| Male | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| Female | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| Unknown | 63 | 4 | 11 | **78** |
| **Total** | **63** | **4** | **11** | **78** |
| **By Age** | | | | |
| Adult | 27 | 2 | 2 | **31** |
| Kit | 10 | 0 | 1 | **11** |
| Adult and kit | 7 | 0 | 0 | **7** |
| Unknown age | 19 | 2 | 8 | **29** |
| **Total** | **63** | **4** | **11** | **78** |

Note:
[1] Red fox includes fox classified as “silver fox” and “cross fox”.

Fox sightings were distributed mainly along roads, and potential sources of attractants (i.e., the Main Camp, Misery Camp, waste management building, and landfill area; (Figure 10.2-1). Most sightings occurred relatively close to mine infrastructure (< 500 m; Figure 10.2-1), which is also where staff are located and thus recording incidental sightings. Most observations were red fox (63 individuals) and unknown fox (11 individuals). Solitary foxes were most frequently observed (47 times), however, there were twelve observations of multiple foxes (Table 10.2-1). Groups of foxes observed in 2025 included:

- Four observations of two red fox of unknown sex and age
- Two observations of two adult foxes of unknown sex
- Three observations multiple juveniles including a group of two, five and three kits of unknown sex, and
- Two observations of adults and juveniles, including one adult and three kits and one adult and 2 kits.

The number of incidental reports has been relatively low in recent years (2020 to 2025) in comparison to previous years. The number of foxes observed in 2025 (78) is below the average of 120 per year for the period 2007-2025 (Table 10.2-2).

For fox observations that resulted in incidents, see Section 5.3.3. There were no suspected cases of rabies in 2025. Incidental fox sightings during LLCF surveys are reported in Section 6.5.3.

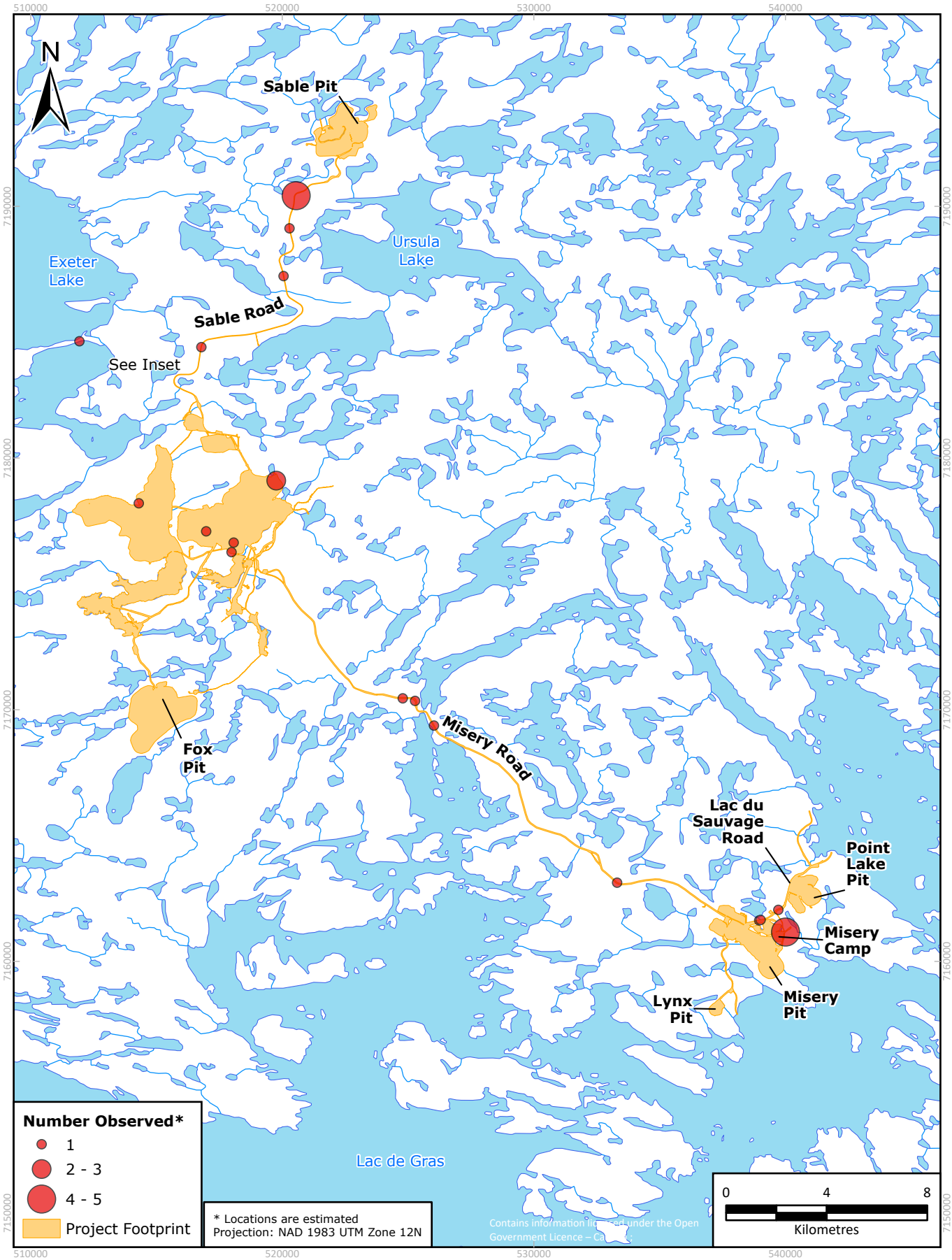



Figure 10.2-1 Incidental Fox Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2025

Table 10.2-2 Summary of Incidental Fox Observations near the Ekati Mine, 2007 to 2025

| Fox | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 162 (n/a) | 174 (124) | 126 (90) | 174 (120) | 61 (55) | 170 (124) | 189 (114) | 135 (99) | 182 (132) | 255 (153) |
| Sightings of multiple animals | n/r | 14% | 11% | 7% | 5% | 6% | 6% | 12% | 5% | 7% |

| Fox | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 147 (102) | 138 (99) | 113 (80) | 69 (51) | 52 (40) | 44 (40) | 50 (43) | 65 (57) | 78 (59) |
| Sightings of multiple animals | 7% | 5% | 4% | 23% | 12% | 12% | 0% | 18% | 9% |

Note:
n/r = not reported

## 10.2.4 Discussion

Arctic fox and red fox were not identified as VECs during the initial Environmental Impact Statement. However, fox occurrence at the Ekati Mine is an ongoing concern and a decision was made to monitor foxes in 2007. Continued monitoring of foxes near the site provides information on potential changes in occurrence, frequency, behaviour and/or composition on an annual basis. Fox observations are typically close to mine infrastructure, where their relatively small size is easier to observe and where they are likely to be attracted.

Active dens were established adjacent to the Ekati Mine airstrip annually between 1994 and 2011 but have not been observed there since 2012. In 2015 there were two active dens observed at KM 5 and KM 17 on Misery Haul Road; however, these dens were not confirmed to be active from 2016 to 2019. One active fox den was confirmed at the Ekati Mine in 2018 and 2019 at Lynx Road. A second active den was confirmed in 2019 near the G wing of the Main Accommodation Building at the Ekati Mine. No active dens were recorded in 2020, 2021, or 2022. Two active fox dens were reported in 2023: one by the Sable primary explosive magazine storage facility and one by the main accommodations. No active fox dens were reported in 2024 or 2025 however, adults with kits were observed near mine infrastructure at the Main camp in 2025, indicating denning may be occurring somewhere in the area.

### 10.2.4.1 Arctic and Red Fox Trends

During baseline studies at the Ekati Mine, Arctic foxes were more commonly reported than red foxes in the study area (BHP and Dia Met 1995). In 1994, nine fox dens were identified in proximity to the mine, seven of which were Arctic fox dens, while the remaining two were red fox dens. However, from 2009 to 2025, red fox observations have become more common near the Ekati Mine. This apparent increase in the red fox may be due to the difficulty in separating the two species during spring and summer; Arctic foxes are predominantly reported in the winter when their white coat makes them easy to tell apart from red foxes while during the summer most reports are of red foxes. Alternatively, the northern extent of the red fox range is limited by cold weather (Bartoń and Zalewski 2007) and may be expanding north with climate change (Hersteinsson and MacDonald 1992), resulting in the displacement of Arctic foxes (Tannerfeldt et al. 2002).

Although Arctic foxes were not reported in 2022 or 2023, three Arctic foxes were observed in 2024 with four observed in 2025, with the potential for more due to difficulty distinguishing species in certain seasons. This data indicates Arctic foxes continue to be present in the Ekati Mine study area and Burgundy will continue to look for population trends.

#### 10.2.4.2 Rabies in Foxes

In NWT, the most prevalent rabies strain is the Arctic strain, named after the Arctic fox, accounting for 83% of reported cases of the disease 1998 to 2004 (Walker and Elkin 2005). Rabies has also been documented in other wildlife in NWT, such as wolf, caribou, and polar bear but is less common (*Ursus maritimus*; Walker and Elkin 2005).

Concerns about potentially rabid foxes have been reported at the Ekati Mine since 2002. In 2007, there were six confirmed cases of rabid foxes at the mine, five cases of rabies in red foxes and one in an unknown fox species. In 2014, there were two suspected cases of rabies that resulted in the potentially infected animals being dispatched, as directed by GNWT ECC. Results of two red fox necropsies suspected of rabies in 2014 were provided to Ekati and rabies was confirmed in both cases. There was one unconfirmed case in 2015, but this fox was not located for dispatching. There were no suspected cases of rabies observed in foxes during the 2016 to 2025 reporting periods.

# 11. Raptors

## 11.1 Background

Raptors are considered a wildlife VEC within the Ekati Mine study area. Raptors (i.e., eagles, falcons, hawks, and owls) and corvids (i.e., ravens and crows) can serve as indicators of the effects of human activities on ecosystem health. As predators in the upper levels of the food chain with large home ranges, they are more sensitive to environmental alterations and disturbances (Steenhof et al. 1999). Legislation for the protection of raptor species prevents destruction and/or disturbance to individuals, eggs, or nests, even if unoccupied, under the NWT *Wildlife Act*, Section 51(1) (2013), and the Phase 2 Regulations (2019).

Three species of cliff-nesting raptors observed frequently nesting within the Ekati Mine study area include peregrine falcon, gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), and rough-legged hawk (*Buteo lagopus*). Common ravens *(Corvus corax*) are considered to be functional raptors, as they use similar food and breeding resources as cliff-nesting raptors, and construct stick nests that are used by falcon species for nesting (Poole and Bromley 1988; Poole 2011). Of these cliff-nesting raptor species, the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum/tundrius*) is now federally designated as "*Not at Risk*" by COSEWIC (ECCC 2023), de-listed from Schedule 1 of the SARA (ECCC 2024) and not listed under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2024). However, it remains a VEC as it is an important species in the Arctic and continues to interact with the mine on a regular basis.

Three species of ground-nesting raptors that have been observed in the study area are the short-eared owl, snowy owl (*Bubo scandiacus*), and northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*). Short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*) is federally designated as "*Threatened*" by COSEWIC, listed as "*Special Concern*" on SARA Schedule 1 (Government of Canada 2025) and is listed as "*No Status*" under the NWT SARA (GNWT 2024). The general status rank in NWT is "*At Risk*". Snowy owl was assessed as "*Threatened*" by COSEWIC in May 2025 (COSEWIC 2025), is under consideration for Schedule 1 of SARA and is listed as "*No Status*" under the NWT SARA (GWNT 2024). The general status rank in NWT is "*Secure".*

All other cliff-nesting and ground-nesting raptor species likely to be found at the Ekati Mine are listed as "*Secure*" or "*Apparently Secure*" in the NWT and were assessed by COSEWIC as "*Not at Risk*" or were not assessed (e.g., northern harrier, common raven).

The monitoring of raptors is a priority at Ekati Mine, particularly for birds that have a federal or territorial conservation status. Burgundy monitors raptors near mine infrastructure and supports regional falcon monitoring initiatives coordinated by GNWT ECC. Previous results from regional falcon studies have indicated that impacts are not occurring at a regional scale and as such, raptors are currently monitored at the Ekati Mine through incidental observations and pit wall nest monitoring surveys.

## 11.2 Incidental Observations

Incidental raptor observations around the mine site are monitored and recorded to minimize potential risks associated with human-wildlife interactions, to identify mine structures that are used by raptors as nesting locations, and to identify any species of conservation concern in the Ekati Mine site area.

### 11.2.1 Objectives

The objectives of incidental raptor monitoring are to:

- Avoid and minimize raptor-human interactions;
- Document the presence of breeding raptors at the Ekati Mine;
- Document sightings of uncommon raptors or species of conservation concern in the area; and
- Document and determine the cause of direct mine-related mortality of raptors, should they occur.

### 11.2.2 Methods

Helicopter operators, ground-based field workers, and other mine site personnel report incidental raptor observations of cliff-nesting and ground-nesting raptors in the Ekati Mine study area to the Environment Department. Each raptor observation includes the date, species, number of individuals, location and habitat type, behavior, and any breeding evidence.

### 11.2.3 Results

During the 2025 reporting period, there were a total of 32 incidental sightings of 68 raptors over 25 days near the Ekati Mine (Table 11.2-1). Six species of cliff-nesting raptors (bald eagle, common raven, gyrfalcon, northern goshawk, and peregrine falcon) and two species of ground nesting raptors (northern harrier, snowy owl) were observed. Raptor observations with sufficient location information were plotted on a map of the study area (Figure 11.2-1). Raptor sightings were mainly located near pits and roads. Most sightings occurred relatively close to mine infrastructure (< 500 m; Figure 11.2-1).

Table 11.2-1 Summary of Incidental Raptor Observations, 2025

| Raptor Species | Scientific Name | # of Individuals |
|---|---|---|
| **Cliff-nesting** | | |
| Bald eagle | *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* | 4 |
| Common raven | *Corvus corax* | 37 |
| Gyrfalcon | *Falco rusticolus* | 20 |
| Northern Goshawk | *Accipiter gentilis* | 1 |
| Peregrine falcon | *Falco peregrinus* | 2 |
| **Ground-Nesting** | | |
| Northern harrier | *Circus hudsonius* | 1 |
| Snowy Owl | *Bubo scandiacus* | 4 |
| **Total** | | **68** |

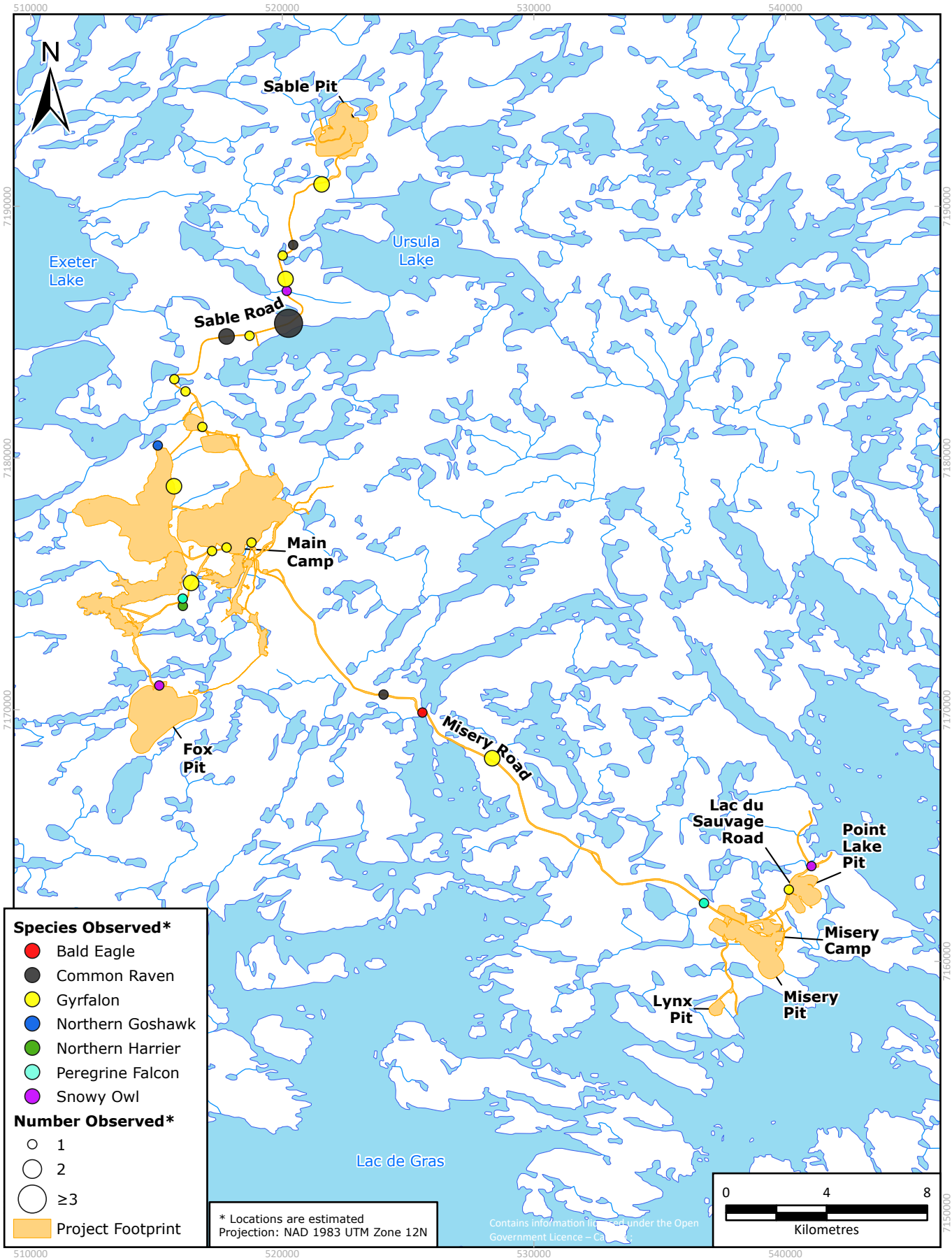



Figure 11.2-1 Incidental Raptor Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2025

In 2025, roughly 22% of observations occurred during the breeding season for raptors (May to August). The other 88% of observations occurred during the non-breeding seasons for raptors (September to April). No breeding raptor species were incidentally observed in 2025.

Incidents and mortalities for raptors are described in Sections 5.3.3.

Incidental raptor sightings during LLCF surveys are reported in Section 6.5.3.

### 11.2.4 Discussion

Overall, similar raptor species are observed within the mine site each year. Species observed in 2025 are similar to the previous five years. Breeding activity has been observed during Pit Wall Nest Monitoring, but not during incidental observations, however incidental observations remain important to determine raptor use inactive pits and other areas at Ekati Mine.

## 11.3 Pit Wall Nest Monitoring

In northern environments, bird species such as peregrine falcons, rough-legged hawks, gyrfalcons, and common ravens nest on ledges and cliff faces (Photo 11.3-1). In landscapes with human-made structures, cliff-nesting birds have been observed to nest on human-built ledge structures such as cairns, buildings, towers, mining dredges, and bridges (Kessel 1989). Open pit walls at the Ekati Mine resemble steep-sided ledges and offer attractive nesting locations for falcons and other cliff-nesting birds.

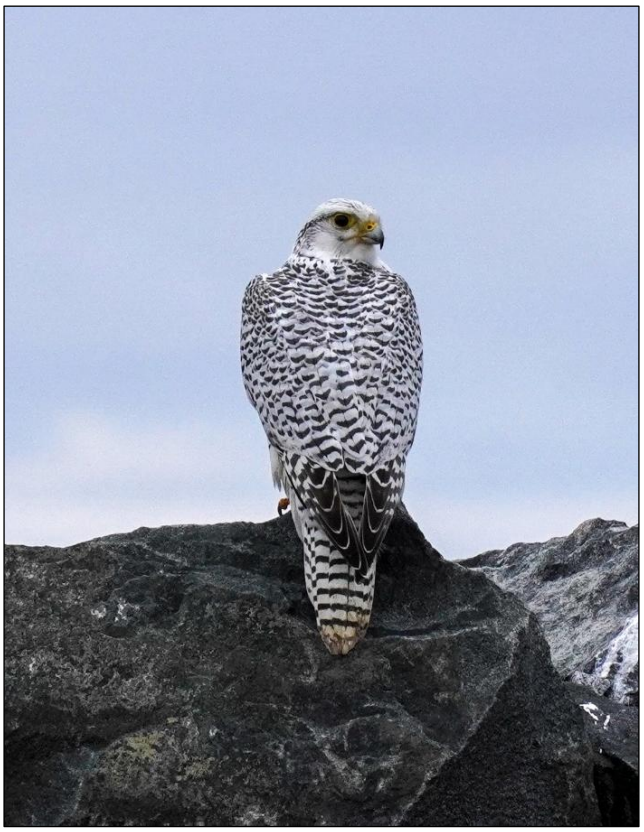


Photo 11.3-1 Gyrfalcon at Sable Pit, 2025.

The monitoring of cliff-nesting birds on pit walls is a priority at the Ekati Mine, particularly for birds that have a conservation status based on federal listings on Schedule 1 of SARA (2002) or COSEWIC (Government of Canada 2025), or under the NWT SARA (2009). The eggs, nests, and individuals of gyrfalcon, peregrine falcon, and other raptor species (e.g., rough-legged hawk, golden eagle [*Aquila chrysaetos*]) are legally protected under the NWT *Wildlife Act,* Section 51(1) (2013) and the Phase 2 Regulations (2019).

The use of active pits for nesting could pose a risk to raptors and their young. Raptor deterrence methods are used to minimize the number of raptors that are impacted by mining operations and prevent raptors from nesting and raising young in high-risk areas. Intensive monitoring and a bird deterrent program at active open pits ensure that nests are not established in potentially unsafe areas for the raptors and to prevent temporary cessation of mining activities, which would be required for the duration of the nesting period should nests be located close to blasting areas.

### 11.3.1 Objectives

The objectives for pit wall nest monitoring are to:

- Determine if pit walls or other mine infrastructure are utilized as nesting sites for raptors;
- Determine nest success (occupancy and productivity) of raptor nests; and
- Document effectiveness of nest deterrent efforts that may be employed.

### 11.3.2 Methods

Formal visual surveys for nesting activity occurs by designated trained monitors at all active pits at the Ekati Mine during the sensitive breeding period. Observations of birds, breeding behaviour, nests, and nesting activity (i.e., nest construction, perching, and incubation are recorded. All bird observations are reported to the Environment Department.

If breeding or nesting behaviour is observed by monitors, appropriate mitigation is used to deter the birds before a nest can be constructed and become active. Deterrents can include bear bangers, screamers, mesh netting and nest removal prior to becoming active. If an active nest occurs or is discovered, the Environment Wildlife Advisor and GNWT ECC will be notified immediately for advice on mitigation. Mitigation will be applied on a case-by-case basis.

### 11.3.3 Results

In 2025, Sable and Point Lake open pits were monitored during periods of active operation for bird presence and nesting activity. Monitoring was conducted between March 26 and May 7, 2025 at Sable open pit and between March 27 and June 25, 2025 at Point Lake open pit. Mine operations transitioned from Sable to Point Lake in the spring of 2025 and Sable open pit did not require monitoring past May 7, 2025.

Peregrine falcon, rough-legged hawk and common raven were observed in the Point Lake open pit over the monitoring period while peregrine falcon and common raven were observed in Sable open pit. Due to persistent deterrent efforts no nests were successfully established in either open pit during active mining operations at Ekati Mine during the 2025 breeding season. Complete monitoring and deterrent details are reported in the 2025 Bird Deterrent and Nest Monitoring Program Report.

Regional GNWT ECC falcon surveys (last conducted by GNWT ECC in 2010 on an annual cycle) were not conducted between 2012 and 2014, as per recommendations received from technical and community workshops held on June 28, 2010, and October 5–6, 2010, respectively. The surveys were repeated in 2015, and results were presented in the 2015 WEMP Report (ERM 2016). No regional ENR/GNWT ECC falcon surveys were conducted from 2016 to 2025.

### 11.3.4 Discussion

Pit wall nest monitoring and deterrence remains an important component of the WEMP to limit breeding activity near active mining operations. While deterrence limits the nesting of raptors in active open pits, Burgundy does not actively monitor or deter raptors in inactive pits, which allows raptors to breed if the pit benches provide suitable habitat. While cliff habitat was not identified in the1995 EIS as a habitat type present in the Ekati Mine WSA, open pit mining activities have created suitable habitat that mimics natural cliffs and provides nesting habitat for cliff-nesting raptors in the area.

# 12. Migratory Birds

## 12.1 Background

The general nesting period for the Ekati Mine study area extends from mid-May to mid-August. Small perching song birds and shorebirds are the most common breeders in the area, including the American tree sparrow (*Spizella arborea*), Harris's sparrow (listed as "*Special Concern*" by COSEWIC, listed as "*Special Concern*" on SARA Schedule 1 [Government of Canada 2025] and listed as "*Not Applicable*" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "*Sensitive*" in NWT [GNWT 2025], lapland longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*), least sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*), and savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*). Other species present but less common include lesser yellowlegs (listed as "*Threatened*" by COSEWIC and is under consideration for addition to SARA Schedule 1 and listed as "*Not Applicable*" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "*Sensitive*" in NWT), pectoral sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Setophaga coronate*), red-necked phalarope (listed as "*Special Concern*" by COSEWIC, listed as "*Special Concern*" on SARA Schedule 1 and listed as "*Not Applicable*" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "*Sensitive*" in NWT), and rusty blackbird (listed as "*Special Concern*" by COSEWIC, listed as "*Special Concern*" on SARA Schedule 1 and listed as "*No Status*" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "*Sensitive*" in NWT).

While less likely to be present but with the potential to occur due to shifting ranges, barn swallow is listed as "*Special Concern*" by COSEWIC, listed as *"Threatened"* on Schedule 1 of SARA and listed as "*Not Applicable*" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "*Sensitive*" in NWT while bank swallow is listed as "*Threatened*" by COSEWIC, listed as "*Threatened* on Schedule 1 of SARA, and listed as "*Not Applicable*" under the NWT SARA with a general status ranking of "*At Risk*" in NWT.

Natural and human-induced disturbances that occur during the breeding period can correlate with changes in migratory bird density, species richness, and diversity (Rottenborn 1999; Debinski and Holt 2000; Hennings and Edge 2003; Jokimaki and Kaisanlahti-Jokimaki 2003; Thorington and Bowman 2003). Consequently, migratory birds within the Ekati Mine study area were previously monitored annually. Avian species are often selected for use in monitoring programs because they represent an abundant and diverse group that can be surveyed with relative ease.

The formal migratory bird survey was terminated in 2009 in consultation with GNWT and other stakeholders, following a review of 13 years of bird monitoring data that indicated no long-term consistent trends for overall species density near the Ekati Mine. Previous operators of the Ekati Mine also monitored migratory birds through the North American Breeding Bird Surveys (NABBS) from 2003 to 2019. However, due to evidence that effects to migratory birds are localized (Smith et al. 2005), these regional studies are no longer conducted. Incidental observations of migratory birds in the study area are recorded to document any signs of breeding activity and to identify mine structures that provide potential nesting platforms. Bird species of conservation concern or uncommon species in the region are also documented when observed.

## 12.2 Incidental Bird Observations

Incidental bird observations around the mine site are monitored and recorded to minimize potential risks associated with human and wildlife interactions, to identify mine structures that are used by migratory birds as nesting locations, and to identify any species of conservation concern in mine site area.

### 12.2.1 Objectives

The objectives of incidental bird observation monitoring are to:

- Document the presence of migratory birds at the Ekati Mine;
- Document sightings of uncommon birds or species of conservation concern in the area; and
- Document and determine the cause of direct mine-related mortality of migratory birds should they occur.

### 12.2.2 Methods

Incidental migratory bird observations around the Ekati Mine are recorded by Environment Department staff. For each bird observation, the species, number of individuals, date, location (UTM coordinates, where possible), habitat, breeding evidence, and behaviour are recorded.

Burgundy reports any confirmed detections of barn and bank swallows to Canadian Wildlife Services as soon as possible to ensure adequate mitigation and monitoring measures are put in place.

### 12.2.3 Results

During the 2025 reporting period, there were 37 incidental migratory bird sightings, including 233 individuals from 23 species (Table 12.2-1). Three observed species are ranked as "Sensitive" in the NWT (GNWT 2024) including the long-tailed duck (*Clangula hyemalis*), northern pintail (*Anas acuta*) and red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*), which is also listed as "Special Concern" by COSEWIC and Schedule 1 of the SARA. All incidental observations were recorded near mine infrastructure, primarily on waterbodies across site. Snow bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*; n = 70), northern pintail (n = 23) and greater white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrosn;* n = 19) accounted for roughly half (48%) of all bird observations (n = 233).

Table 12.2-1 Summary of Incidental Migratory Bird Observations, 2025

| Common Name | Scientific Name | # of Individuals | COSEWIC [1] | SARA [1] | NWT [1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Pipit | *Anthus rubescens* | 3 | - | - | - |
| American Redstart [1] | *Setophaga ruticilla* | 1 | - | - | - |
| American Robin | *Turdus migratorius* | 4 | - | - | - |
| Belted Kingfisher | *Megaceryle alcyon* | 1 | - | - | - |
| Bufflehead | *Bucephala albeola* | 2 | - | - | - |
| Cackling Goose | *Branta hutchinsii* | 5 | - | - | - |
| Canada Goose | *Branta canadensis* | 5 | - | - | - |

| Common Name | Scientific Name | # of Individuals | COSEWIC [1] | SARA [1] | NWT [1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Greater Scaup | *Aythya marila* | 7 | - | - | - |
| Greater White-fronted Goose | *Anser albifrons* | 19 | - | - | - |
| Green-winged Teal | *Anas crecca* | 6 | - | - | - |
| Herring Gull | *Larus argentatus* | 3 | - | - | - |
| Hermit Thrush | *Catharus guttatus* | 1 | - | - | - |
| Long-tailed Duck | *Clangula hyemalis* | 3 | - | - | Sensitive |
| Northern Pintail | *Anas acuta* | 23 | - | - | Sensitive |
| Northern Shoveller | *Spatula clypeata* | 4 | - | - | - |
| Northern Shrike | *Lanius borealis* | 1 | - | - | - |
| Red-necked Phalarope [2] | *Phalaropus lobatus* | 4 | Special Concern | Special Concern | Sensitive |
| Sandhill Crane | *Antigone canadensis* | 11 | - | - | - |
| Savanna Sparrow | *Passerculus sandwichensis* | 1 | - | - | - |
| Semipalmated Plover | *Charadrius semipalmatus* | 1 | - | - | - |
| Snow Bunting | *Plectrophenax nivalis* | 70 | - | - | - |
| Tundra Swan | *Cygnus columbianus* | 6 | - | - | - |
| Yellow Warbler | *Setophaga petechia* | 1 | - | - | - |
| **Total** | | **233** | - | - | - |

Notes:

[1] Conservation Status is as of the latest assessment for each species.

[2] Rare or uncommon in area.

Bird species not protected under the MBCA were also recorded as incidental observations at the Ekati Mine, including ptarmigan species and a belted kingfisher.

Breeding activity was observed 12 times in 2025 during incidental observations, which included bird pairs observed, nests, or young present (Table 12.2-2). Pairs were observed on six occasions, including northern shoveller, herring gull, greater scaup, bufflehead, and sandhill crane, young were present on five occasions, including greater white-fronted goose, Canadian Goose, cackling goose, and greater scaup, and one American robin nest was discovered in a laydown yard and mitigations were implemented to protect the active nest until young fledged. Breeding activity was observed in areas that did not receive discharge water during the migratory bird nesting season at Ekati Mine (May 15 to August 18).

During LLCF surveys, 142 observations of 6,032 birds of 32 species were recorded in 2025 and are reported in more detail in Section 6.5.3.

Table 12.2-2 Breeding Activity Observed during Incidental Observations at Ekati in 2025

| Date | Species | Breeding Activity | # of Adults | # of Young Present |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20-May-25 | Northern Shoveller | Pair | 4 | 0 |
| | Herring Gull | Pair | 2 | 0 |
| 15-June-25 | American Robin | Nest | 1 | 2 |
| 21-Jun-25 | Greater Scaup | Pair | 2 | 0 |
| 24-Jun-25 | Greater White-fronted Goose | Young present | 1 | 14 |
| | Bufflehead | Pair | 2 | 0 |
| 28-Jun-25 | Sandhill Crane | Pair | 7 | 0 |
| 06-Jul-25 | Sandhill Crane | Pair | 2 | 0 |
| 10-Jul-25 | Canada Goose | Young present | 1 | 3 |
| 25-Jul-25 | Cackling Goose | Young Present | 2 | 3 |
| | Greater Scaup | Young present | 1 | 4 |
| 13-Sep-25 | Greater White-fronted Goose | Young present | 2 | 2 |

### 12.2.4 Discussion

During 2025, the majority of migratory bird observations occurred during LLCF surveys rather than by incidental observations, as the LLCF contains suitable habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds, which accounted for the majority of birds observed. However, incidental observations recorded birds at waterbodies other than the LLCF remain useful to capture species and habitat use of different waterbodies and thus will continue to be conducted at Ekati Mine.

All migratory bird species recorded incidentally in 2025 have been previously recorded in the study area, either during bird surveys conducted between 1996 and 2008 (Rescan 2010), during the NABBS from 2003 to 2019, incidentally, or during LLCF surveys. Observing a similar suite of species and number of individuals over the monitoring years at Ekati Mine indicates that the mine is not having a detrimental effect on migratory birds in the region.

In 2025, one species of conservation concern was recorded, which was the red-necked phalarope and is listed as “Special Concern” by COSEWIC and on Schedule 1 of SARA and “Sensitive” in NWT. Further details are provided in Section 13.1.3.

## 12.3 North American Breeding Bird Survey (NABBS)

The NABBS is designed to collect long-term data on the population status and trends of breeding birds throughout North America. Previous operators of the Ekati Mine also monitored migratory birds through the NABBS from 2003 to 2019. However, due to evidence that effects to migratory birds are localized (Smith et al. 2005) these regional studies are no longer conducted. Currently, incidental observations of migratory birds in

the study area are recorded, including species of conservation concern or uncommon species, to document any signs of breeding activity and to identify mine structures that provide potential nesting platforms.

Burgundy submitted an updated WMMP in May of 2026, which will be implemented upon final Ministerial approval. The updated WMMP does not include NABBS and as such this section will be removed once the updated WMMP is approved.

# 13. Rare or Uncommon Species

## 13.1 Incidental Observations

### 13.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of this component of the WMMP are to:

- Document presence of rare or uncommon species at the Ekati Mine.

### 13.1.2 Methods

Burgundy will record all incidental observations of rare or uncommon species (e.g., species that have expanded or shifted their range so that they occur more frequently in the study area) that are observed within the Ekati Mine study area. For each observation, the species, number of individuals, date, location (UTM coordinates, where possible), habitat, breeding evidence, and behaviour are recorded.

### 13.1.3 Results

#### 13.1.3.1 Birds

Red-necked phalarope were reported in 2025 on two occasions for a total of four individuals, and are reported in further detail in Section 12.2.3. This species had been last observed in 2022, with one individual being reported during that period (Table 13.1-1).

Table 13.1-1 Rare or Uncommon Species Observed in 2025

| Rare or Uncommon Bird Species | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Red-necked Phalarope | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | **5** |

#### 13.1.3.2 Moose

During the 2025 reporting period, there were incidental sightings of four adult moose, including one male and one female that could be identified. Three sightings occurred in July on separate days near Ekati Mine (Table 13.1-2), including the male and female and one individual of unknown sex. The number of observations in 2025 was similar to those observed in 2023 and 2024 but fewer than observed in 2019 (n = 23) and 2022 (n = 13), when the number of observations was higher than the normal range. A total of 110 individual moose sightings have been recorded at Ekati Mine between 2013 to 2025 (Table 13.1-2).

Two moose were observed along Misery Haul Road and one was observed along the Sable Haul Road, with observations occurring during caribou monitoring surveys. The remaining observation occurred along the Koala ring road.

Table 13.1-2 Summary of Incidental Moose Observations near the Ekati Mine, 2013 to 2025

| Moose | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 1 (1) | 2 (2) | 23 (9) | 6 (5) | 5 (4) | 8 (6) | 23 (18) | 8 (8) | 9 (9) | 13 (12) |

| Moose | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incidental observations (over separate days) | 6 (5) | 2 (2) | 4 (4) | **110** |

### 13.1.3.3 Muskox

Muskox were again observed in 2025 making it the second year they were observed since 2017. Muskox are reported infrequently at Ekati Mine, however they. are distributed throughout the NWT and their predicted range overlaps the mine site. During the 2025 reporting period, there was one incidental observation of one adult muskox. Observations with sufficient location information were plotted on a map of the study area (Figure 13.1-1).

## 13.1.4 Discussion

A changing climate in the Arctic is allowing movement of animals into areas where they were not previously found. While moose is prevalent south of the treeline, its range may be expanding as warmer winter temperatures lead to less snowpack and greening of the tundra. Tundra greening includes the expansion of tall canopy-forming shrubs into areas not previously found (NOAA 2025) and increases forage value in habitats that did not previously support moose populations. This trend may cause the presence of moose to be more frequent at the mine as they follow available forage into the tundra that did not previously support them.

The muskox observed at Ekati Mine occurred during the summer (July) when muskox require wetter tundra areas with abundant vegetation (Cuyler et al. 2020). As NWT has experienced severe wildfires in recent years and hot, dry conditions (Lamberink 2024), leading to reduced available vegetation, muskox are travelling further distances to find suitable forge. Studies have found that on the Canadian Arctic mainland, muskox are currently extending their range southward (Cuyler et al., 2020), increasing the potential for muskox to interact with the Ekati Mine more frequently as habitat conditions continue to change due to climate variation.

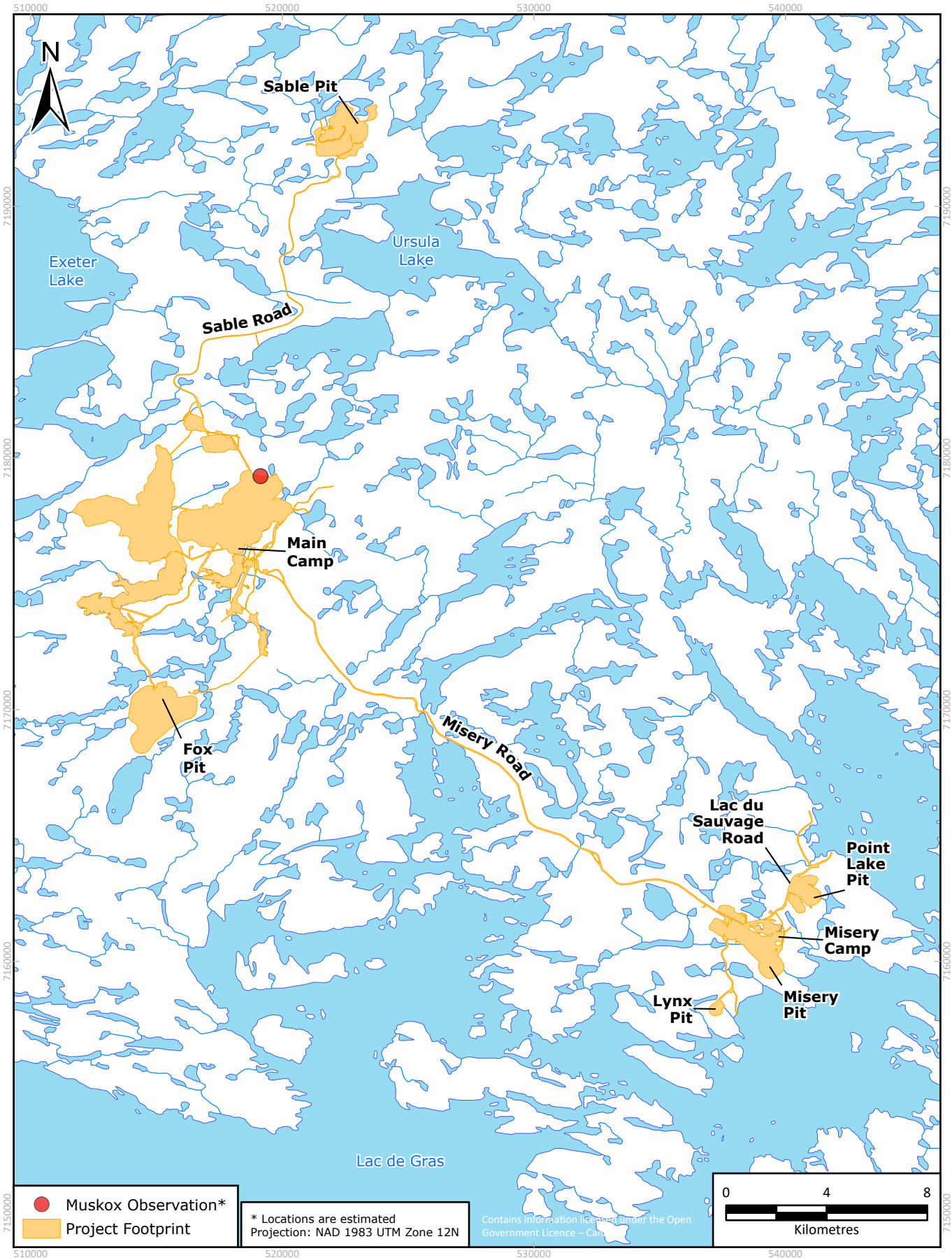



Figure 13.1-1 Incidental Muskox Observations at the Ekati Mine, 2025

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