

Research Bulletin

NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program

Ways of Knowing: Sharing Inuvialuit Traditional Knowledge of Boreal Caribou Habitat Use

Summary

Inuvialuit Traditional and local Knowledge shared in this project provides regionally-grounded detail that strengthens understanding of boreal woodland caribou habitat use in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. It helps identify where boreal woodland caribou are encountered, which habitats they use, the changes participants are observing, and how those changes are understood in relation to land use, and habitat disturbance. It also shows that boreal woodland caribou are understood not only through ecological mapping, but also through long-term relationships with specific places and seasonal habitat use.

Why is This Important?

Boreal caribou are a culturally significant species and an essential source of food security for the Inuvialuit people. This species is currently listed as threatened under the Species at Risk Acts of both the NWT and Canada. Gathering more knowledge on boreal caribou behaviour and movement helps to support management of their habitat and can assist in their long-term recovery.

What Did We Do?

Two workshops and 33 individual interviews were held across four Inuvialuit communities including Aklavik, Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk. Researchers gathered Traditional and local Knowledge from Elders and land-users that focused on Inuvialuit habitat classification and boreal caribou behaviour and movement.



The Inuvik workshop was interrupted by an extended power outage during an extreme cold snap, so participants improvised, to continue with the mapping exercise. (Credit: G. McNaughton)





Study Area map showing part of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, NWT.



Verification interviews took place to ensure that land-users' Traditional and local Knowledge had been documented accurately (Paulatuk). (Credit: M. Thrasher)

This Traditional Knowledge study examined the behaviour and movement of boreal caribou from a Traditional and local Knowledge perspective. This information will help to inform the most effective way to manage the range of this species.

What's Next?

This Traditional Knowledge study will directly inform development of the Inuvialuit Boreal Caribou Range Plan, as it provides valuable information on boreal caribou behaviour and their use of habitat from a Traditional and local perspective. This knowledge will be a key component of the Range Plan.

For More Information

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NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program (CIMP244)

Conference of Management Authorities. (2017). Recovery Strategy for the Boreal Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*) in the Northwest Territories. *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* Management Plan and Recovery Strategy Series. Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT. 57 + x pp. [Recovery Strategy for Boreal Caribou in NWT](#)

Environment and Climate Change Canada. (2020). Amended Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*), Boreal Population, in Canada. *Species at Risk Act* Recovery Strategy Series. Environment and Climate Change Canada, Ottawa. xiii + 143pp. [Amended Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou](#)

Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT). (2019). A Framework for Boreal Caribou Range Planning. Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT. 87 pp.

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