



## **Backgrounder: Bathurst and Bluenose-East Caribou Populations**

- A calving-ground survey of the Bathurst herd was carried out in June 2018, as well as a composition survey to determine the number of breeding females.
- Breeding females are the single most important part of the herd, and a declining trend is a concern for long-term herd stability.
- The total herd population estimate is calculated from the results of both calving ground and composition surveys for each herd.
- Currently, there is no harvest allowed for Bathurst caribou and a mobile conservation zone is in place to protect the herd.
- Since implementation of harvest restrictions on the Bathurst herd in 2010, the Bluenose-East caribou herd has become the main barren-ground caribou harvested by Tłı̨chʼo communities and Délı̨ne, with some harvest from Kugluktuk in Nunavut.
- The Bluenose-East herd has been under harvest management since 2015, with a limited harvest open only to Indigenous harvesters.
- A total harvest of 750 bulls is permitted for the Bluenose-East herd in the Wek'èezhìi management area, but actual harvest has been much lower in recent years, at fewer than 25 caribou per year in the North Slave Region.
- As the primary harvesting community of the Bluenose-East herd in the Sahtú region, Délı̨ne has implemented its own community-based caribou conservation plan, which supports a limited harvest of 150 caribou and allows for community self-regulation of caribou harvesting.
- All GNWT management actions to promote the recovery of barren-ground caribou in the Northwest Territories are made in collaboration with our co-management partners, including the Tłı̨chʼo Government and regional Renewable Resource Boards.
- A *Bathurst Caribou Range Plan* to manage disturbance to caribou and caribou habitat in the Bathurst range is being finalized to provide guidance for decision-makers.
- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will work with the Tłı̨chʼo Government and affected communities on joint management plans for the Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou for submission to the Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resource Board, as well as a proposal on the Bluenose-East caribou for the Sahtú Renewable



Resources Board. All three management proposals will lay out further actions to be taken to protect the herds.

- For the Bluenose-East caribou, the *Taking Care of Caribou* management plan sets our path forward. As we prepare a Recovery Strategy for barren-ground caribou and finalize the *Bathurst Caribou Range Plan*, we must also consider what immediate actions each of us can take to ensure the future of these herds.