

News Release

NWT and Nunavut leaders continue collaboration on Barren-ground caribou management

Kugluktuk, Nunavut (June 22, 2022) - Nunavut's Minister of Environment David Akeeagok and the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) for the Northwest Territories, Shane Thompson hosted a meeting on barren-ground caribou management on June 16, 2022.

They were joined by Nunavut co-management partners from Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Kitikmeot Inuit Association, Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization and Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association. Also attending from the NWT were representatives from the Tłįchǫ Government, Northwest Territory Métis Nation and North Slave Métis Alliance.

This gathering was the latest in a series of regular meetings of wildlife co-management partners to discuss research, monitoring, and management actions to support barrenground caribou management and conservation.

Leaders and officials from both jurisdictions talked about how to enhance communication and coordination between wildlife co-management partners as they continue to work together to help support the conservation and recovery of shared transboundary caribou herds, in particular the Bathurst and Beverly herds.

Discussions included:

- A review of the most recent survey results for the Bathurst barren-ground caribou herd.
- A review of current Nunavut and NWT co-management board proposals and recommendations on caribou management.
- An update on Bathurst caribou co-management actions, including the Bathurst Caribou Advisory Committee and Bathurst Caribou Management Plan.
- Discussions on how to promote respectful and legal harvesting, including outcomes from a meeting of NWT harvesters in December 2022.
- Continued implementation of the GNWT-GN Memorandum of Understanding on the management of barren-ground caribou.

Both Environment Ministers recognize that protecting barren-ground caribou is a shared responsibility, and requires dedication, commitment, and action of all co-management partners.

Participants in this week's meeting reaffirmed a shared goal of wisely managing barrenground caribou herds to ensure this important resource is protected for future generations.

Quotes

"Caribou is central to the Inuit way of life. It has profound cultural significance and is a vital source of food. Both of our Territories have robust and collaborative wildlife management systems consisting of Indigenous people and co-management partners. We are committed to working collaboratively on this continued path of coordinated management of our shared herds for the benefit of present and future generations." - *David Akeeagok*, *Nunavut Minister of Environment*

"Barren-ground caribou are an invaluable resource for residents in the NWT, and it is up to all of us to do our part to support them during this time of low population numbers. By coming together as wildlife co-management partners, we are building on our shared expertise to strengthen the ways we work together to ensure caribou remain for future generations."

- Shane Thompson, NWT Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

Quick facts

- There have been significant declines in many barren-ground caribou herds over the last three decades.
 - Get details: <u>News release: 2021 Barren-ground caribou population survey</u> results
- Collaboratively developed management plans are in place for most barrenground caribou herds in the NWT and Nunavut, including the Bathurst and Beverly herds.
- Many factors may be contributing to caribou population declines, including weather and climate change, nutrition, disease, harvest, predators and habitat disturbance.
- Management actions are focused on those factors we can control, including human influences (harvest, development, and fire management) and predators.
- The most recent population estimate for the Bathurst herd was released in 2021.
 - View: <u>2021 Barren-ground caribou population survey results</u>

Relevant links

- News release: Bathurst caribou management plan
- Barren-ground caribou

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