

Dolphin and Union Caribou

Island caribou, Arctic-island caribou, Mainland caribou, Barren-ground caribou (Dolphin and Union population), caribou du troupeau Dolphin-et-Union, Tuktuk, Tuktu, Tuktu/tuktut, Tuttu.



KIM POOLE

A Management Plan for the Dolphin and Union Caribou is being developed.

Scientific Name: *Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus x pearyi*

Status: **Special Concern** (may become Threatened or Endangered because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats).



Dolphin and Union Caribou occur in the Northwest Territories (NWT) and Nunavut. They are distinct from other barren-ground caribou populations and from Peary caribou. They migrate in the fall across the sea ice from Victoria Island to the mainland, where they spend their winters. In the spring, they migrate back to Victoria Island where they disperse to calve and raise their young. These migrations make seasonal connectivity of sea ice a key habitat requirement for this species.

Dolphin and Union Caribou are facing substantial threats. Their primary threat is a reduction in sea ice connectivity that results from ice-breaking activities and from sea ice loss due to climate change. For Dolphin and Union caribou, a decrease in sea ice connectivity limits their access to parts of their range, in particular, migratory routes. Predation from wolves and grizzly bears, as well as harvest activities also present threats to this species. Other important threats include icing/freeze-thaw events (affecting access to forage), increased insect harassment and a rise in parasites and diseases. Climate change is an underlying driver of many of these threats. Mining, roads, flights, and competition from other species also present threats to Dolphin and Union Caribou. There is evidence that the population of Dolphin and Union Caribou has been declining.

Why develop a Management Plan for Dolphin and Union Caribou?

Dolphin and Union Caribou play an essential role in the lives of the Inuit and Inuvialuit people. They are highly valued from a spiritual, economic, cultural and harvest perspective. They are also listed as a species of special concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) and the Northwest Territories *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*, which has triggered the need for a management plan under both legislative processes.

It is essential to have a plan that sustains this population to help ensure the survival of Dolphin and Union Caribou for future generations. To ensure coordinated and consistent planning and to avoid duplication, the management plan is being developed collaboratively by co-management partners to meet management needs in Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and at the national level. It

recognizes the shared responsibilities for management under land claim agreements and species at risk legislation, and gives equal consideration to traditional knowledge (TK), Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ), and scientific knowledge. The management plan describes management goals and objectives for Dolphin and Union Caribou and recommended approaches to achieve these objectives.

Current range of Dolphin and Union Caribou in NWT and Nunavut

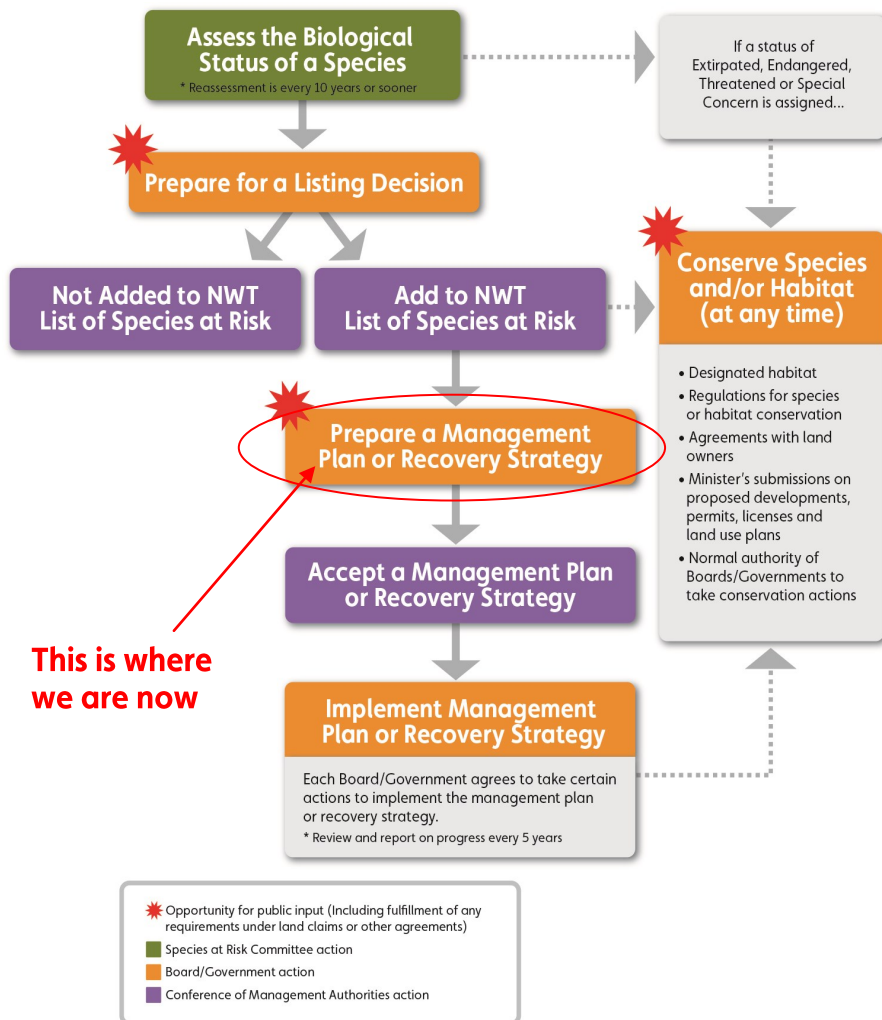


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What's next in the *Species at Risk* (NWT) Act process:



YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED ON THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

A draft management plan has been prepared with input from co-management partners in the NWT and Nunavut. We are now seeking your input.

The draft management plan is posted at: nwt-speciesatrisk.ca¹

The draft **management goal** is:

- To maintain the long term persistence of a healthy and viable Dolphin and Union Caribou population that moves freely across its current range and provides sustainable harvest opportunities for current and future generations.

The draft **objectives** for management are:

1. Adaptively co-manage Dolphin and Union Caribou using a community-based approach.
2. Communicate and exchange information on an ongoing basis between parties using a collaborative and coordinated approach.
3. Collect information to fill knowledge gaps on Dolphin and Union Caribou using IQ and TK, community monitoring and scientific methods.
4. Minimize disturbance to habitat (particularly sea ice crossings) to maintain the ability of Dolphin and Union Caribou to move freely across their range.
5. Ensure management is based on population status so future generations can benefit from sustainable harvesting opportunities.

The draft management plan includes more detail on these objectives, as well as recommended approaches on how to achieve them.

¹The draft management plan, with additional pages related to the federal adoption of the plan, is also posted at sararegistry.gc.ca.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- Do you have suggestions to improve the draft management plan?
- What actions do you think should be taken to help manage Dolphin and Union Caribou?

For more information or to tell us your views, please contact the Department of Environment and Natural Resources at sara@gov.nt.ca, or 867-767-9237 ext. 53214.

