



MEETING MINUTES

MAY 24-26, 2022
9:00AM – 4:00PM

ZOOM TELECONFERENCE

Attendees	Organization
Jody Pellissey	CMA Chairperson/Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board
Sam Bullock	CMA Alternate Chairperson/Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Kaytlin Cooper	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
William Koe	Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
Heather Sayine-Crawford	Environment and Natural Resources
Brett Elkin	Environment and Natural Resources
Joanna Wilson	Environment and Natural Resources
Bruno Croft	Environment and Natural Resources
Isabelle Duclos	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Bruce Laurich	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Jessica Smart	North Slave Métis Alliance
Larry Carpenter	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Rosemin Nathoo	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Dang-dang Gruben	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Jodie Maring	Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)
Ben Dosu	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
Leslie Wakelyn	Beverly Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board
Michele Grabke	Species at Risk Secretariat
Joslyn Oosenbrug	Species at Risk Secretariat

9:00am – In-Camera Session (Management Authorities)

9:30am – Opening Prayer and Call to order (everyone)

*1. Introductions – led by Sam Bullock (Alt. Chairperson)
Roundtable introductions.*

*2. Agenda – led by Sam Bullock (Alt. Chairperson)
Review of draft agenda.*

Agenda approved without changes. Meetings occurred May 24 from 9:00am to 4:00pm, May 25 from 9:00am to 12:00pm and May 26 from 9:00am to 12:00pm.

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3. Minutes – led by Sam Bullock (Alt. Chairperson)

Review and approve draft minutes from February 2022.

Minutes approved with changes.

4. Review of Action and Decision Items – led by Michele Grabke (Secretariat)

Review of action and decision items from previous meetings and earlier outstanding action items.

Long-term action items:

- The adoption of the federal Recovery Strategy for Peary caribou will begin once ECCC finalizes the document.
- The adoption of the federal Management plan for Northern Mountain Caribou is underway.
- The analysis of commonalities among actions in management plans/recovery strategies continues to be a bring forward item and the Secretariat plans on continuing work on this project this summer.

In progress action items:

- **Action A20210511-08:** The CMA will be continuing to discuss communication strategies/initiatives today.
- **Action A20211210-02:** The Secretariat has a new tab on the website for the Species Conservation and Recovery Fund (SCARF), but will need to work with technicians to change the colour of the tab.
- **Action item A20220222-01:** Secretariat to investigate school curriculums and reach out to the necessary people to determine what steps may be involved in this type of undertaking. Secretariat will also investigate museum displays and approach the Department of Education, Culture and Employment with options to add or supplement current displays with species at risk information.
- **Action item A20220222-02:** The Secretariat will discuss with the SCARF Subcommittee on the amount of funding available and revise the section of the



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application that indicates projects typically range from \$5,000 to \$10,000 to consider removing this apparent restriction.

Decisions items include:

- **Decision D20220222-01:** Management Authorities reached consensus to add another 10-year term to the current expiration date for polar bear as a species of Special Concern.
- **Decision D20220222-02:** High level summaries of implementation will be provided in the meeting minutes. The compiled annual summary of implementation actions will be provided internally. And the 5-year progress report will be the finalized update of implementation actions made available for the public.

5. General Updates and Implementation Actions – led by Sam Bullock (Alt. Chairperson)

General high-level updates by CMA members. Opportunity for input/discussion on implementation actions annual table.

General Updates

Government of the Northwest Territories:

- **Cumulative effects and caribou**
 - ENR, in collaboration with WMAC (NWT), GRRB, SRRB, WRRB, and TG, are in the third year of developing a decision-support tool to simulate the cumulative effects of landscape changes (e.g. climate and wildfire), project development (e.g. roads), and management practices (e.g. harvest levels) on the habitat quality and population dynamics of the Bluenose-West, Bluenose-East, Cape Bathurst and Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula barren-ground caribou herds.
 - As part of this project, seasonal Resource Selection Function (RSF) models have been developed by the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute (ABMI)

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for Bathurst, Bluenose-West, Bluenose-East, Cape Bathurst and Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula.

- We continue to work on implementing the recommendations under the Bathurst Caribou Range Plan.
- **Barren-ground caribou**
 - In March 2022, a GNWT-ENR field crew placed 57 GPS satellite collars on barren-ground caribou in the Bathurst, Bluenose-East and Beverly herds.
 - In March 2022, a GNWT-ENR field crew carried out late-winter composition surveys of the Bluenose-East and Beverly caribou herds using a helicopter. A survey of the Bathurst herd was not possible because it was heavily mixed with the much larger Beverly herd. These surveys provide a calf:cow ratio which is an index of the proportion of the previous year's calves surviving to 9-10 months of age. The estimated calf:cow ratio was 46.9 calves: 100 cows for Bluenose-East caribou and 51.1 calves: 100 cows for Beverly caribou. These results suggest a healthy survival of calves born in 2021 in both herds.
- **Boreal caribou**
 - The approved Interim Wek'èezhìi Boreal Caribou Range Plan was posted publicly on GNWT-ENR's webpage in March 2022.
 - Wek'èezhìi Working Group held its 6th meeting in Yellowknife on April 28, 2022, to discuss content and schedule for the full Wek'èezhìi boreal caribou range plan. The next Working Group meeting is scheduled to take place this fall to examine Indigenous Knowledge (IK) research and mapping gathered over the summer and integrate it into the full range plan.
 - GNWT hosted a community engagement meeting to discuss boreal caribou range planning with YKDFN in Dettah on May 3, 2022.
 - IK mapping workshops (for YKDFN) and IK verification workshops (for Tł'cho Government and NSMA) are scheduled to take place between May and September 2022.
 - The first draft of the Southern NWT range plan is in progress. ENR is planning for four sub-regional workshops this year to review mapped caribou habitat and determine shared management priorities. Management class scenarios will also be reviewed and discussed. As well, there may be meetings with

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ADKFN, KTFN and SRFN to discuss how their information should be used in range planning.

- GTC has hired a contractor to facilitate Habitat Classification Workshops and Indigenous Knowledge Interviews/Workshops in the Gwich'in Region – dates TBD, possibly end of June 2022.
- We have been working with Sahtú Secretariat Inc. (SSI) to organize a workshop with their Board members/staff. Dates of the workshop are still TBD.
- **Peary caribou**
 - Collaring work was undertaken between March 22 and April 20. The field crew experienced many weather challenges during collaring effort, resulting in lower number of collar deployment than targeted. 12 caribou collars were deployed (3 Victoria Island; 6 Melville Island; 3 Banks Island). Five wolf collars were also opportunistically deployed during this work (1 VI; 2 MI; 2 BI).
 - An internal review is planned to look at whether to attempt this work again next season.
- **Polar Bear**
 - The third field season for the genetic mark-recapture survey was completed in March/April.
 - Ice conditions were challenging in various parts of the region, with mixes of high-densities and low-densities of bears in different areas.
- **Hairy braya**
 - We are planning a survey of hairy braya on Cape Bathurst peninsula in August 2022. The required permits have been obtained and fuel is in place.
 - We are planning to work with two botanists (Jim Harris, from Utah, and Paul Sokoloff, from the Canadian Museum of Nature) as well as hiring a wildlife monitor from Tuktoyaktuk.
- **Bats**
 - We are collaborating with partners in the Sahtú as well as Canadian Wildlife Service to deploy bat acoustic recorders in the Norman Wells area as part of a larger biodiversity monitoring program. Bat recorders deployed in Thaidene Néné last year will be recording this summer and retrieved later this year.

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- We are planning our annual bat monitoring work this July, which includes ongoing monitoring of 4 maternity colonies of little brown myotis (Fort Smith, Hay River, Kakisa and Fort Providence) as well as systematic acoustic monitoring under the North American Bat Monitoring Program.
- We plan to collaborate with researchers from the Bats and Bridges program (in western Canada) to investigate bridges in southern NWT to see if they are being used by bats as roosts, and potentially collect guano as part of our white-nose syndrome surveillance program.
- We are preparing a report on the results of 10 years of acoustic monitoring for bats in the NWT (2011-2020), and we have applied for a renewal of our bat monitoring permit.
- **Species at Risk in the NWT 2022 booklet**
 - There have been some printing delays, but the booklet is expected to be available very soon. Copies will be sent to all groups and additional copies can be requested from Joanna_Wilson@gov.nt.ca.
 - The booklet is published every 2 years, and we are interested in hearing whether groups would like to receive printed copies next time, or if an electronic version would be sufficient.

[Wildlife Management Advisory Council \(NWT\):](#)

- The next WMAC (NWT) regular council meeting is June 15-17, 2022, in Ulukhaktok. We try circulating our June meeting between the 6 ISR communities.
- At its last council meeting, the WMAC (NWT) made the following decisions:
 - Supports to post for public comments on the draft of the federal polar bear management plan
 - Supports to post for public review for the federal collared pika management plan
- In 2020, WMAC (NWT) hired a contractor to revise the ISR grizzly bear management plan. At this time, the revised management plan is undergoing verification and detailed edits.



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- WMAC (NWT) collaborated with Inuvik Hunters and Trappers Committee (IHTC) and Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) on a proposal to the Town of Inuvik to open harvesting grizzly bears in the Town of Inuvik landfill.
- WMAC (NWT) is planning to meet with the ISR communities associated with the Bluenose-West and Cape Bathurst caribou herds to discuss the management actions for the herds to align with the 2021 ACCWM Action Plans.
- The SAR/WMAC (NWT) community tour will take place between October-November for the mainland ISR communities, potentially January for the island ISR communities.
- The AFSAR funding received in 2018 ended March 31, 2022. This funding was used to support collaborations between the Inuvialuit-Kitikmeot working group for Dolphin and Union caribou.
- WMAC (NWT) is in the process of hiring an ethnobiologist that will be very helpful with regards to the gathering of traditional knowledge of species that are in our region.

Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board:

- **Staffing:**
 - Chair Jozef Carnogursky left the GRRB in November. The Board has selected a Chair and is waiting on appointment by CIRNAC. William Koe is Interim Chair.
 - GRRB's Executive Director (ED) Amy Amos resigned last year; she is now DFO's Director of Operations, Arctic Region, based out of Inuvik. Our new ED is Wanda McDonald; she is on a 1-year term which expires at the end of September.
 - GRRB's finance and admin officer has been on long term leave since December and we do not have a consistent replacement for her. Our fisheries and forestry biologist also moved over to DFO in January and we do not have a replacement for her yet. Our office assistants also left in March. We are in the process of hiring for these positions, as well as two summer students.
 - Kaytlin reached her 7-year anniversary at GRRB this January!
- **Research:**

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- ***Tl'ak (insects)***: Surveys conducted this past summer and again this summer. This is a joint program with WMAC (Rosemin Nathoo), GNWT (Suzanne Carriere) and Jenny Heron in BC. Specimens from last year have been identified but don't have the data yet.
- ***Daatsao natindit' ee, daatsadh natandit'ee (bats)***: - Still haven't analysed bat data so wont be putting out recorders until this is caught up on
- ***Sheihtsoo vee (Bank Swallows)***: Funded by SCARF. Research area included the Mackenzie River and Arctic Red River near Tsigehtchic, and the Peel River near Fort McPherson ferry, as well as gravel pits along the Dempster. Data needs to be analyzed.
- ***Tsee' (beaver)***: A researcher is working with us to better understand how beaver populations have changed over time in the Mackenzie Delta. We have been granted funding to conduct a beaver TK project with GRRC and TRRC (Tsigehtchic and Ft. McPherson) this summer. Elders will share knowledge with youth, and the youth will create videos to document what they learn.
- ***Divii (dall's sheep)***: Aerial survey conducted last September in Mount Goodenough area. Data is being used to validate results from wildlife cameras. A Masters student is analysing the camera data; it will take about six months.
- ***Luk dagaii (broad whitefish)***: Studying impacts of permafrost degradation on broad whitefish in the Peel River watershed.
- Research and monitoring programs on ***dhik'ii*** (dolly varden char), ***luk dagaii*** (whitefish), and Arctic salmon program continued over the last year.
- Several TK projects related to species at risk are coming up over the next few years: *dzan* muskrat, *jak* berries, and *dzhii* birds (waiting to hear from AFSAR on funding).
- The next Research Priorities and Strategic Planning workshop is planned for February 2023. Research Priorities get updated every 5 years.
- **Management:**
 - Working on updating the *Shih* (grizzly bear) management plan for the past two years. RRCs have supported it and it is posted on our website for public review. Comments due June 5. There will be public outreach and hope to finalize in fall.



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- Town of Inuvik is installing an electric fence around the landfill, to be completed by fall. This will reduce conflict with bears in the long term, but in the short-term bears will be displaced and will likely result in more human-bear encounters in town. There were plans to cull the bears, but GTC has raised concerns.
- Beaver populations have increased recently and GRRB is hoping to meet with the Inuvialuit to work on a regional approach.
- Gwich'in Forest Management Plan is being updated.
- **Training:**
 - Traditional Ecological Knowledge UBC, Indigenous Canada UofA, and several courses focusing on working with Indigenous People and consultation and engagement through Indigenous Relations Academy.
 - Half day workshop with Gwich'in Tribal Council Department of Culture and Heritage in March as part of the Western Arctic Youth Coalition group workshop; hope to develop an educational campaign targeting “Youth as stewards of the land.”
- **Other:**
 - Ongoing participation in CMA, SARC, Wildlife Care Committee, NWT Council on Invasive Species Pests and Pathogens, National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium Indigenous Knowledge Circle, ACCWM.
 - Awarded our Wildlife Studies Fund in February. We also give out an annual scholarship.
 - Distributed our conservation calendar, and let the leaders pass (porcupine caribou) bumper stickers.

Sahtú Renewable Resources Board:

- The SRRB held the 2021 Déljné 2021 Virtual Ɂeɬets'ewéhkwe Godí (Public Listening Session – PLS) on April 25-29, 2022, as the second of the five-part PLS series, which addresses all the three ecotypes of caribou that live in or travel through the Sahtú. The 2021 session focused on caribou relations with other wildlife, including predators and competitors. A report on the 2021 PLS and reasons for decisions is currently being prepared. The SRRB is also preparing for summer fieldwork to



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prepare for future sessions that focus on wildfires and climate change, as well as caribou and the mixed economy.

- A new Conservation Planner has been hired to support Tədži (boreal caribou) Range Planning, and other activities related to the Hj̓dó Gogha Sénégots’ípá (HGS - Plan for the Future) in the Sahtú.
- Species Conservation and Recovery Fund (SCARF) funding has been received for a project to detect the presence or absence of species at risk (including boreal caribou, northern mountain caribou, northern leopard frog and bat species) in selected areas of the Sahtú Settlement Area.

[Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board:](#)

- Staffing – Laura Meinert will be returning as Wildlife Management Biologist in early June 2022. New Communications Officer, Simon Whitehouse, started in mid-May 2022; this is a shared position with the Wek'èezhìi Land & Water Board.
- Programs – WRRB office is participating in the LIFEPLAN sampling that is an ongoing global, multi-year, multi-species biodiversity monitoring project, led by the University of Helsinki. The WRRB is also participating in the Indigenous Knowledge of Berries in the NWT research project, which is just getting underway in June 2022. The Board has begun work with Forest Management Division, GNWT, and TG to develop a Wek'èezhìi Forest Management Plan. Continued participation and involvement with the CMA, SARC, Wildlife Care Committee, NWT Council on Invasive Species Pests and Pathogens, Wek'èezhìi Boreal Caribou Range Plan, and the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium (NBCKC) and NBCKC Indigenous Knowledge Circle.

[Tł'chǫ Government \[update provided via email to the Secretariat for including in the minutes\]:](#)

- **Boreal Caribou:**
 - Wek'èezhìi Range Plan –
 - Interim Range Plan submitted and approved by WRRB in December 2021.

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- Final Range plan work to commence with a verification workshop with Tłı̨chǫ elders involved in mapping workshop in December 2020 – verification workshop planned for end of May 2022
- Tłı̨chǫ Highway Monitoring Program –
 - Formation of the Tłı̨chǫ Tili De Committee to advise and make decisions for the Tłı̨chǫ Highway Monitoring program.
 - Tłı̨chǫ Highway Monitors trained in October 2021.
 - Tłı̨chǫ Highway Monitoring Program to focuses on the collection of harvest information along the Tłı̨chǫ Highway as well as implement objectives identified by the Tłı̨chǫ Tili De Committee.
 - Completed a baseline vegetation study in July 2021 prior to the road opening in December 2021.
- National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium
- **Wood Bison:**
 - In August 2020, Tłı̨chǫ Government – a member of the Mackenzie Bison Working Group (MBWG) – supported a recommendation to re-open harvesting of a limited number of male Bison. In February 2021, the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) approved the GNWT's drafted amendments for the Big Game Hunting Regulations, which will re-establish an annual total allowable harvest (TAH) of 40 bulls from the Mackenzie wood bison population until the end of the 2023/24 hunting season and reassessed.
 - Season opened in September 2021 and 4 tags were distributed in the Tłı̨chǫ region through a draw; season closed on March 15, 2022; of the 4 tags distributed only 2 were filled.
 - In April 2022, Tłı̨chǫ Government submitted a letter to the MBWG informing working group members of concerns outlined by Tłı̨chǫ leadership.
 - Request to amend harvest season to allow for a longer season
 - Request to review tag allocation to allow for an increase of tags in the Tłı̨chǫ region
 - Tłı̨chǫ Government recommends removing the specific allocation of the Mackenzie bison TAH from the NWT Big

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Game Hunting Regulations (Part 4B, wood bison). This change would introduce a certain flexibility and facilitate timely and adaptive updates to the bison TAH allocation as and when needed.

- **Barren-ground Caribou:**

- Ekwò Harvest Monitoring Program was designed and implemented in response to WRRB recommendations:
 - Recommendation #1-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò): Sahtì Ekwò Harvest Monitoring
 - Recommendation #16-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò): Tłı̨chǫ Research & Monitoring Program
 - Recommendation #2-2019 (Kök’èetì Ekwò): Community Monitors
 - Recommendation #15-2019 (Kök’èetì Ekwò): Tłı̨chǫ Research and Monitoring Program
- Ekwò Nàxoède K’è – Boots on the Ground caribou monitoring
 - Caribou monitoring usually takes place July to September
 - The program operates two camps:
 - at Koketi (Contwoyto Lake) to monitor Bathurst caribou
 - at Dezahti (Point Lake) to monitor Bluenose East caribou
 - Over 40 Tłı̨chǫ people involved in the caribou monitoring
 - This is the 8th year of the program and is continuing to expand, this upcoming season will include a camp at Lac De Sauvage which will focus on the monitoring of the Bathurst herd and objectives include to observe if there are impacts on the herd due to the Ekati and Diavik mine sites
- Wolf Harvesting Program –
 - The program has just completed its 3rd year and the goal of the program is to facilitate on-the-land knowledge transfer and provide Tłı̨chǫ with opportunities to harvest dìga and support recovery of ekwò populations
 - The program is a result of recommendations made by WRRB from the 2019 Joint Management Proposal that TG and ENR submitted to WRRB

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- The recommendation was the TG develop a community-based harvesting program
- Actively involved in BCAC and helped developed the Bathurst Management Plan and the Bathurst Range Plan
- Participation in BCAC, ACCWM, CGC and made a request for involvement in the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board
- Tłįchǫ Highway Monitoring Program includes objectives in assessing Ekwǫ habitat:
 - Completed a baseline vegetation study in July 2021 prior to the road opening in December 2021
- Barren-ground Technical Working Group
 - GWNT-ENR, WRRB and TG meet monthly and during the winter the meetings are weekly
- **Staffing:**
 - Full time Wildlife and Fisheries Biologist
 - Change in CMA members: Stephanie Behrens to member and Petter Jacobson as alternate

Environment and Climate Change Canada:

- ECCC provided species-specific updates on Dolphin and Union and Barren-ground caribou.

Beverly Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board:

- New Executive Director Tina Giroux.
- First face to face meeting was a success with a lot of participation.
- Youth engagement from northern Manitoba communities. Also brought Elders from the same communities.
- Hoping to meet in Prince Albert next time.
- Working on a new 10-year agreement for the board. Currently operating on an interim 1-year agreement.
- The management plan will also be renewed shortly.

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- Hoping to move forward on projects like harvest reporting.
- Roads, lost of habitat, predators are themes that come up often. Uncertainty on status of the herds. Nunavut government will be doing surveys. There is hopefully a push to get another survey.
- One of the main things we are trying to do is educate hunters including hunters from across the herd's range and those that come up from the south.
- We have three part time staff and are based in Yellowknife. Tina is in Prince Alberta. Comms is in Manitoba near Winnipeg.

North Slave Métis Alliance:

- There has been a lot of staff turnover at NSMA. Both the Environment Manager and Conservation Planner left NSMA. Jess Hurtubise took over for Manager, Jess Smart took over as Lead Conservation Officer, and Noah Johnson took over as Lead Regulatory Officer.
- Recently received results for eDNA project partially funded by SCARF. Results will be summarized in annual report. Highlights include:
 - Wood frog detected at Stagg River and Yellowknife River
 - Bison detected at Franks Channel
 - Porcupine and boreal caribou detected at Baker Creek (Boat Launch in Yellowknife) – possible contamination of sample, as not convinced that boreal caribou are hanging out around Giant Mine.
 - Our work included taking water quality readings (pH, turbidity, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, temperature) at each site, and installing wildlife cameras at each location.
- Secured another year of SCARF funding for the ongoing eDNA project; waiting on AFSAR funding. Latest phase of project involves deployment of audio recording units and a weather station at Old Fort Rae.
- In addition to fieldwork, NSMA continues to participate in discussions related to Bathurst and Boreal caribou and sits on several working groups and committees, including working groups for bison and wolverine.
- NSMA also started building a guardianship program last year.



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Discussion/questions on the annual table of implementation actions 2021

Management Authorities provided verbal high-level updates on implementation activities during the February meeting. Management Authorities also submitted to the Secretariat the completed tables for Progress on Implementation of Management Plans/Recovery Strategies in 2021. The Secretariat summarized the annual (2021) implementation actions and emailed the PDF document to the CMA.

- The Secretariat will add text indicating the species name more prominently.
- The CMA discussed the content and purpose of the implementation tables. The implementation tables summarize actions directly related to approaches in management plans and recovery strategies. Specific details on outcomes or deliverables can be provided as links to external documents if/when provided by Management Authorities.

6. Annual Reports – led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)

Review draft CMA and SARC annual reports. Receive ENR annual report.

Review draft 2021-22 CMA Annual Report

Under subsection 16(1) of the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*, the Conference of Management Authorities (the Conference) must submit an annual report to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources by September 30 each year. This annual report covers the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022.

2021-22 CMA Annual Report was approved with changes including adding dates that progress reports and reviews are required by to the summary table and adding a statement on progress reports/reviews.

Receive 2021-22 SARC Annual Report

Under subsection 23(1) of the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*, the Species at Risk Committee must submit an annual report to the Conference of Management Authorities by July 1 each year. This annual report covers the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022.

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Receive ENR's 2021/22 *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* annual report

Under sections 79(8), 82(3), and 84(8) of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act (the Act), the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) must provide an annual report to the CMA by July 1 each year respecting:

- Agreements and orders made under Section 79;
- Exemptions made under Section 82(1)(a) and the reasons provided to the Minister under Section 82(2)(a); and,
- Permits issued under Section 84(1), and of those refused, including the reasons for issuing or refusing to issue a permit.

The CMA received ENR's 2021/22 *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* annual report on May 26, 2022.

7. Peregrine Falcon Assessment – led by Michele Grabke (Secretariat)

SARC presentation on peregrine falcon assessment outcome. Conservations actions, requests for clarification.

Presentation – led by Kaytlin Cooper (SARC)

SARC provided a presentation summary of the May 2022 assessment results for peregrine falcon (Not at Risk) in the NWT. Prior to beginning the assessment, SARC reviewed and approved the species status report. Status reports are required to present the best available knowledge for the species. The preparer for the peregrine falcon status report was Chris Shank.

Main factors:

- Peregrine Falcons are found throughout the NWT and their population is currently considered stable.
- Pesticide levels have now declined to levels that no longer have population-level consequences.
- Despite multiple threats to Peregrine Falcons such as bioaccumulation of pollutants, population decline of prey species, parasites and disease, human disturbance, as well as the complex effects of climate change, the species shows clear signs of resilience and adaptability.

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Additional factors:

- The diet of Peregrine Falcons consists largely of birds most of which are in steep decline. However, these declines do not seem to have affected Peregrine Falcon populations in the NWT to date.
- Although large-scale declines in bird populations (prey such as shorebirds, diving ducks and songbirds) are cause for concern, Peregrine Falcons are generalists and may be able to shift their reliance to difference species or species groups.

Positive influences to Peregrine Falcon and their habitat:

- The *NWT Wildlife Act* protects Peregrine Falcons, their nests and eggs.
- In the NWT, habitat protection is provided in areas of the Peregrine Falcon range that overlap with current and proposed protected areas.
- Peregrine Falcons are protected through international agreements and conventions.

Recommendations:

- Improve monitoring of raptors, their habitat and their prey species in the NWT.
- Prioritize Indigenous and Community Knowledge research on birds including raptors, their prey species, their habitat and their ecosystem.
- Research ecosystem level impacts of climate change on raptors and other species including pests, pathogens and parasites.
- Canada and the NWT must uphold and, if possible, exceed international climate change agreements including reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the local level. Climate change in the NWT must be addressed by implementing the *2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework and Action Plan*.

Request Clarification

There is a 60-day period in which the CMA can request clarification from SARC. If the CMA would like to submit a request for clarification on this assessment, the request should be submitted to SARC by July 9, 2022. SARC will respond within 30 days. This process is available to any management authority or the CMA in the first 60 days of receiving an assessment. The clarification can be on the reasons for the assessment decision, but not the process used



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for the assessment. The request must be in writing. SARC's response will be published on the website.

The CMA discussed the assessment of peregrine falcon and whether or to what degree avian influenza was considered as a threat. The CMA will be submitted a request for clarification on if/how avian influenza was considered in the assessment of peregrine falcon.

Decision item 20220524-01: The CMA will submit to SARC a request for clarification on if/how avian influenza was considered in the assessment peregrine falcon.

Timelines

- **May 9, 2022:** SARC provided the assessment of peregrine falcon to the Management Authorities.
- **July 9, 2022:** CMA may request clarification from SARC regarding the assessment

8. Boreal Caribou Reassessment – led by Michele Grabke (Secretariat)

SARC presentation on boreal caribou reassessment outcome. Conservations actions, requests for clarification.

Presentation – led by Kaytlin Cooper (SARC)

SARC provided a presentation summary of the May 2022 assessment results for boreal caribou (Threatened) in the NWT. Prior to beginning the assessment, SARC reviewed and approved the species status report. Status reports are required to present the best available Indigenous, community, and scientific knowledge for the species. The preparers for the boreal caribou status report were The Firelight Group and Deborah Cichowski who presented Indigenous and community knowledge and scientific knowledge components, respectively.

The Northwest Territories Species at Risk met on May 2-5, 2022 and assessed the biological status of boreal caribou in the Northwest Territories. Using both ICK and SK assessment criteria, SARC determined that boreal caribou fit criterion ICK (e) and SK (C2) (a)(ii) for Threatened.

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Criterion	Threatened
ICK(e)	There is concern expressed by knowledge holders that the species is <i>likely to experience severe declines</i> in the NWT, in its abundance, habitat quality/quantity, movements, and/or range, within their grandchildren's lifetimes.
SK(C2)(a)(ii)	SK(C2) An observed, projected, or inferred <i>continuing decline</i> in the number of mature individuals AND (ii) % of mature individuals <i>in one subpopulation</i> = 100%

Main factors (ICK):

- Boreal caribou need access to all seasonal habitat types within their range to maintain a healthy population. Boreal caribou may adapt to certain types of disturbances, but they are known to be sensitive to disturbances.
- The main threats to boreal caribou in the NWT include habitat loss, fragmentation, and disturbance. Areas burned by fire or disturbed by industry are generally not used by boreal caribou until the habitat recovers. Habitat recovery is complex and full habitat recovery takes many decades.
- Changes in the abundance of boreal caribou are local and variable; limited new information was available to update population trends.
- Climate change is increasing the size and severity of fires, which may result in a larger effect as habitat takes longer to recover. Other key concerns include changes in snow, ice and permafrost, which contribute to continuing habitat fragmentation and degradation.
- The cumulative effects of these factors are an important concern to many communities in the NWT. Knowledge holders are concerned that disturbance will increase in the future.

Main factors (SK):

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- Boreal caribou in the NWT are found in one continuous population. Due to their ecology and the need to spread out, densities are low. The current population has been estimated at just over 6,000 mature individuals.
- Boreal caribou populations declined in the past and are anticipated to decline in the future due to continued habitat fragmentation and degradation.

Additional factors:

- Boreal caribou habitat in the NWT takes longer to recover after disturbance than it does in southern Canada. Thus, despite apparently low levels of disturbance in the NWT, there is a concern that the amount and impact of disturbance may be underrepresented. It is anticipated that continued or increased habitat fragmentation will directly impact population numbers.
- Climate change will limit the effectiveness of conservation and recovery actions.
- Knowledge holders from one First Nation of the NWT shared that the loss of hunting practice is threatening their traditional way of life and transmission of cultural practices, values, and knowledge to current and future generations.

Positive influences to boreal caribou and their habitat:

- Range planning for boreal caribou is ongoing across all five regions in the NWT with a target to have one third of the range under intensive management class, which limits human disturbance and protects important boreal caribou habitat.
- Total annual harvest of boreal caribou in the NWT is limited for resident hunters and General Hunting Licence holders and ranges between 1-3% of the estimated population. Traditional stewardship practices that include rules and guidance for a respectful relationship with caribou in both harvest and research activities can also have a positive influence.
- Conservation planning, monitoring and research efforts have accelerated the acquisition of the information required to better understand and conserve boreal caribou and their habitats in the NWT.
- Indigenous-led monitoring and research initiatives have also created networks of information sharing to better inform boreal caribou management and range planning.

Assessment History:

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- The NWT Species at Risk Committee met in December 2012 and assessed boreal caribou as Threatened in the NWT because of concerns about population declines and habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation from human-caused and natural disturbances that were thought to result in increased predation risk.
- In 2014, boreal caribou were listed Threatened in the NWT under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*.
- In 2017, the Conference of Management Authorities (CMA) developed and published the *Recovery Strategy for the Boreal Caribou (Rangifer tarandus caribou) in the Northwest Territories*.
- In 2019, a Conservation Agreement for the conservation of boreal caribou was signed between the Government of Canada and the GNWT under Section 11 of the federal *Species at Risk Act*. In 2019, A *Framework for Boreal Caribou Range Planning* was completed, which will guide the development of five regional caribou range plans that will address habitat alteration at the regional level.

Recommendations:

- Effective range management is required to support self-sustaining population growth rates. Promote habitat protection by continuing to work with traditional knowledge holders to identify and protect important boreal caribou habitat.
- Promote the use of Indigenous guardianship to continue to maintain the cultural practices, languages and knowledge transmission that supports the relationship between people and boreal caribou.
- Encourage harvest reporting and health monitoring.
- Continue monitoring the status of the NWT boreal caribou population especially in areas without current population information.
- Investigate the impacts to biocultural relationships.
- Fill other knowledge gaps identified in the status report.
- Canada and the NWT must uphold and, if possible, exceed international climate change agreements including reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the local level. Climate change in the NWT must be addressed by implementing the *2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework and Action Plan*.

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Request Clarification

There is a 60-day period in which the CMA can **request clarification** from SARC. If the CMA would like to submit a request for clarification on this assessment, the request should be submitted to SARC by July 9, 2022. SARC will respond within 30 days. This process is available to any management authority or the CMA in the first 60 days of receiving an assessment. The clarification can be on the reasons for the assessment decision, but not the process used for the assessment. The request must be in writing. SARC's response will be published on the website. No clarifications were identified during the meeting.

Conservation Actions

The CMA may discuss whether **conservation actions** are required immediately (this is an option for the CMA (section 56) as soon as a species is assessed, even prior to listing, in situations where they feel that actions need to be taken immediately). Conservation action consensus agreements become an available tool as soon as a species has been assessed (these are considered pre-listed species) but can be used at any point in the process. No conservation actions were suggested during the meeting that require action through a consensus agreement on conservation action.

Next Steps

As this is a reassessment, a consensus agreement on re-listing must set out the following information:

- That the CMA has reached a consensus
 - To remove the species from the List if the CMA considers the species not at risk,
 - To add another 10-year term to the current expiration date for the species in the same category, or
 - To list the species in another category
- If the CMA has reached a consensus on subparagraph (a)(ii) or (iii), the actions Management Authorities agree to undertake with respect to adding another 10-year term or listing the species in another category, as the case may be.

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The draft **actions needed to prepare** for a CMA consensus agreement on listing (actions to prepare) document was presented to the CMA. Management Authority revisions to this document are due by August 9, 2022. Recall that the management authorities for boreal caribou are the WMAC (NWT), GRRB, SRRB, WRRB, TG and GNWT.

With these timelines, the **consultation/engagement period** will be August to November 2022. The CMA confirmed that they would like the usual consultation/engagement package from the Secretariat (i.e. fact sheet, template presentation, template letters, and newspaper/radio/online ads for ENR's public engagement).

Timelines

- **May 9, 2022:** SARC provided the re-assessment of boreal caribou to the Management Authorities.
- **July 9, 2022:** Deadline for the CMA to request clarification from SARC regarding the assessment.
- **August 9, 2022:** Management Authorities developed actions needed to prepare for a CMA Consensus Agreement on relisting.
- **August-November 2022:** Consultation/engagement period.
- **September 27, 2022:** CMA check-in regarding consultation/engagement period.
- **December 9, 2022:** CMA meeting to review the results of consultation/engagement.
- **January 27, 2023:** Consensus Agreement Annex B's (Actions the Management Authorities have undertaken or will undertake with respect to listing) are due in anticipation of the February 2023 CMA meeting.
- **April 10, 2023:** Start signatures for consensus agreement.
- **May 9, 2023:** Deadline for Consensus Agreement on adding another 10-year term.
- **May 2023:** CMA meeting – Secretariat to draft press release for adding another 10-year term.
- **July 9, 2023:** Boreal caribou re-listed as a Threatened species. Press release.



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Action item 20220524-02: Management Authorities to submit actions to prepare for the boreal caribou consensus on relisting to the Secretariat by August 9, 2022.

9. Peary Caribou Reassessment – led by Michele Grabke (Secretariat)

SARC presentation on Peary caribou reassessment outcome. Conservations actions, requests for clarification.

Presentation – led by Kaytlin Cooper (SARC)

SARC provided a presentation summary of the May 2022 assessment results for Peary caribou (Threatened) in the NWT. Prior to beginning the assessment, SARC reviewed and approved the species status report. Status reports are required to present the best available Indigenous, community, and scientific knowledge for the species. The preparers for the Peary caribou status report were Golder Associates Ltd. (Dan Slavik) and Deborah Cichowski who presented Indigenous and community knowledge and scientific knowledge components, respectively.

The Northwest Territories Species at Risk met on May 2-5, 2022 and assessed the biological status of Peary caribou in the Northwest Territories. Using both ICK and SK assessment criteria, SARC determined that Peary caribou fit criterion ICK (e) for Threatened and SK (a) and (b) for Special Concern.

Status Category	Criterion	
Threatened	ICK(e)	There is concern expressed by knowledge holders that the species is likely to experience severe declines in the NWT, in its abundance, habitat quality/quantity, movements, and/or range, within their grandchildren's lifetimes.
Special Concern	SK(a)	The species has declined to a level of abundance at which its persistence is increasingly threatened by genetic, demographic, or environmental stochasticity, but the decline is not sufficient to qualify the species as Threatened.



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	SK(b)	The species may become Threatened if factors suspected of negatively influencing the persistence of the species are neither reversed nor managed with demonstrable effectiveness.
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The Species at Risk Committee determined that Peary caribou fit ICK criterion for Threatened, and SK criterion for Special Concern. In their application of the Precautionary Principle, which states that a lack of certainty will not be used as a reason to delay measures to alleviate a threat to a species at risk, the Species at Risk Committee determined an overall assessment of Threatened for Peary caribou.

Main factors (ICK):

- Peary caribou remain a preferred source of food for residents of Sachs Harbour and Ulukhaktok. Knowledge holders understand that Peary caribou populations naturally fluctuate widely.
- Sachs Harbour knowledge holders are reporting more caribou as well as signs of productivity including healthy caribou, large groups, big bulls and twins – suggesting that numbers are increasing. In recent years, Ulukhaktok knowledge holders are reporting relative stability at low densities. Increased numbers of Peary caribou are being observed however the population has yet to reach historic levels.
- Knowledge holders express concern that the species' medium- to long-term future may be uncertain. Based on these concerns Peary caribou may experience severe declines in the future.
- Knowledge holders noted that climate change could have negative effects on Peary caribou. For example, a warming climate and changing wind-ice regime could impede their ability to access important habitat and affect the way they cope with severe weather conditions.
- Knowledge holders have concerns about the negative effects of future industrial development and expanded shipping activities on Peary caribou. These threats, including climate change effects, are expected to increase within their grandchildren's lifetimes.

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- Peary caribou require vast amounts of land and connectivity between and within islands, and habitat use depends on their annual life cycle and forage accessibility. Caribou may be less able to cope with severe weather events when sea-ice conditions are less robust.
- Sustained interventions are required to support Peary caribou recovery.

Main factors (SK):

- Subpopulations of Peary caribou in the NWT have increased, however they are still at lower levels than they were 40-60 years ago.
- Over the last three generations (1992 to 2019), Peary caribou on Banks Island have increased from an estimated 1,015 caribou to 1,913 caribou at an average annual rate of 3.3%.
- Primary factors believed to have contributed to declines in the past were over harvesting, predation, reduced forage availability caused by deep snow and icing/freezing rain events, and competition with high numbers of muskoxen.
- While some of the threats from the past have been mitigated, some are ongoing and continue to be a concern such as climate change, grizzly bear range expansion, industrial development and marine traffic.
- Although the population is currently showing signs of recovery, the lingering threats suggest that Peary caribou populations could decline in the future.

Additional factors:

- Inuvialuit Elders have seen a correlation between high muskoxen populations and low caribou populations, suggesting that muskox and caribou naturally cycle opposite to each other.
- Currently Peary caribou numbers are on the rise and muskoxen numbers are decreasing.
- Earlier green-up of vegetation related to climate change is potentially beneficial to the forage available for Peary caribou.

Positive influences to Peary caribou and their habitat:

- Voluntary restrictions and harvest quotas for Peary caribou have greatly reduced hunting pressure on both Banks and Northwest Victoria Islands.

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- A proposed *Recovery Strategy for Peary Caribou in Canada* was posted for public comment in 2021. In the proposed recovery strategy, sea ice crossings were included in the identification of candidate critical habitat for Peary caribou.
- Community Conservation Plans include specific land management guidelines for some areas important for Peary caribou and designate the highest degree of protection to calving areas.

Assessment History:

- The NWT Species at Risk Committee met in December 2012 and assessed Peary caribou as Threatened in the NWT because of concerns with low population numbers and variable population size indicating that Peary caribou are vulnerable to random catastrophic events.
- In 2014, Peary caribou were listed Threatened in the NWT under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*.
- A national recovery strategy is being finalized and will be adopted by the NWT.

Recommendations:

- Continue harvest reporting and current co-management regime.
- Continue monitoring population numbers of Peary caribou, muskoxen and predators, habitat quality/quantity, sea ice changes, and understand how threats impact Peary caribou on the landscape.
- Support and encourage Indigenous and community knowledge systems that provide information about Peary caribou and their ecosystem.
- Enhance capacity to monitor weather changes on the NWT Arctic islands.
- Encourage implementation and enforcement of the *Inuvialuit Settlement Region – Cruise Ship Management Plan 2022-2025* which proactively sets standards to manage cruise ships and avoid travel when sea ice is crucial for Peary caribou migration/movement.
- Canada and the NWT must uphold and, if possible, exceed international climate change agreements including reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the local level. Climate change in the NWT must be addressed by implementing the *2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework and Action Plan*.

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Request Clarification

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Conservation Actions

The CMA may discuss whether **conservation actions** are required immediately (this is an option for the CMA (section 56) as soon as a species is assessed, even prior to listing, in situations where they feel that actions need to be taken immediately). Conservation action consensus agreements become an available tool as soon as a species has been assessed (these are considered pre-listed species) but can be used at any point in the process. The CMA noted that the federal recovery strategy is being finalized. No conservation actions were suggested during the meeting that require action through a consensus agreement on conservation action.

Next Steps

As this is a reassessment, a consensus agreement on re-listing must set out the following information:

- That the CMA has reached a consensus
 - To remove the species from the List if the CMA considers the species not at risk,
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The draft **actions needed to prepare** for a CMA consensus agreement on listing (actions to prepare) document was presented to the CMA. Management Authority revisions to this document are due by August 9, 2022. Recall that the management authorities for Peary caribou are the WMAC (NWT), and GNWT.

With these timelines, the **consultation/engagement period** will be August to November 2022. The CMA confirmed that they would like the usual consultation/engagement package from the Secretariat (i.e. fact sheet, template presentation, template letters, and newspaper/radio/online ads for ENR's public engagement).

Timelines

- **May 9, 2022:** SARC provided the re-assessment of Peary caribou to the Management Authorities.
- **July 9, 2022:** Deadline for the CMA to request clarification from SARC regarding the assessment.
- **August 9, 2022:** Management Authorities developed actions needed to prepare for a CMA Consensus Agreement on Listing.
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- **April 10, 2022:** Start signatures for consensus agreement.
- **May 9, 2023:** Deadline for Consensus Agreement on adding another 10-year term.
- **May 2023:** CMA meeting – Secretariat to draft press release for adding another 10-year term.
- **July 9, 2023:** Peary caribou re-listed as a Threatened species. Press release.



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Action item 20220524-03: Management Authorities to submit actions to prepare for the Peary caribou consensus on relisting to the Secretariat by August 9, 2022.

10. Species at Risk Committee – led by Michele Grabke (Secretariat)

Update on membership, review/approve proposed 2023-2027 Species Assessment Schedule and status reports.

Current SARC membership

MEMBERS:	Expires	ALTERNATES:	Expires
Leon Andrew (Chairperson)	May 30, 2026	Dr. Deborah Simmons	May 30, 2026
Dr. Suzanne Carrière (Alternate Chairperson)	March 31, 2025	n/a	
Alestine Andre	Feb. 1, 2026	n/a	
Rosemin Nathoo	Jan. 14, 2026	Allison Thompson	Jan. 14, 2023
Arthur Beck	Sept. 20, 2023	Daniel Beck	Sept. 20, 2023
Kaytlin Cooper	March 27, 2025	James Firth	March 27, 2025
Lynda Yonge	March 23, 2027	n/a	
Moise Rabesca	March 15, 2025	Aimee Guile	July 19, 2023
Dr. Nicholas (Nic) Larter	March 31, 2025	n/a	
Petter Jacobsen	Dec. 19, 2024	n/a	

Membership Updates

The SARC membership term for Lynda Yonge (appointed by the GNWT) expired March 23, 2022; Lynda's SARC membership was extended for another 5-year term.

Ms. Alestine Andre has resigned from the NWT Species at Risk Committee effective June 1, 2022. Alestine is a member appointed by the Minister of ENR, on the advice of the Conference of Management Authorities. GNWT is seeking suggestions/nominations to fill this membership as an Indigenous and Community knowledge holder or practitioner. Please send names and biographies to the Secretariat by June 24, 2022.



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Action item 20220524-04: The Secretariat and GNWT will send an email out to the CMA seeking suggestions/nominations to fill a membership position on SARC for an Indigenous and Community knowledge holder or practitioner. The CMA is to provide names/biographies by June 24, 2022.

2023-2027 Species Assessment Schedule (review/approve)

SARC submitted the proposed 2023-2027 Species Assessment Schedule on May 11, 2022 to the CMA.

The assessment date for red-sided garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis parietalis*) was changed from 2026 to 2024. Common muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*) was changed from 2024 to 2026. SARC suggested moving common muskrat to 2026 to allow additional time for the collection of Indigenous and community knowledge. SARC also added rock cranberry (lingonberry) for assessment in 2026.

In the submission letter SARC also provided recommendations regarding monitoring and management of red-sided garter snake, rock cranberry (lingonberry), muskrat, rusty blackbird and short-eared owl.

The proposed 2023-2027 Species Assessment Schedule follows. The updated priority scores were provided in the meeting binder for your information.

- **2023:** Dolphin and Union caribou (reassessment) and American white pelican
- **2024:** hairy braya (reassessment) and red-sided garter snake
- **2025:** Canadian toad, western toad (re-assessment) and northern leopard frog (reassessment)
- **2026:** wood bison (reassessment), common muskrat and rock cranberry (lingonberry)
- **2027:** Northern myotis (reassessment), little brown myotis (reassessment), barren-ground caribou (reassessment)

After discussion and review, the CMA accepted SARC's assessment schedule as submitted.



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Decision item 20220524-05: The species assessment schedule was accepted as presented by SARC.

Status Report Updates

There are currently five status reports in progress:

- Peregrine falcon (2022 assessment) – finalized and published May 2022
- Boreal caribou (2022 reassessment) – finalized and published May 2022
- Peary caribou (2022 reassessment) – finalized and published May 2022
- American white pelican (2023 assessment)
- Dolphin and Union caribou (2023 re-assessment)
- Hairy braya (2024 reassessment)
- Red-sided garter snake (2024 assessment)

Request for proposals for the following species status reports will go out spring 2022:

- Hairy braya (2024 re-assessment)
- Red-sided garter snake (2024 assessment)

11. Species Conservation and Recovery Fund (SCARF) – led by Joslyn Oosenbrug (Secretariat)

Summary of the 2022/23 SCARF Projects.

SCARF 2022/23 Application Period

The 2022/23 application period for the Species Conservation and Recovery Fund opened January 15, 2022, and closed March 1, 2022. A total of six projects are being funded by the Species Conservation and Recovery Fund (SCARF) in 2022/23 to receive a total of \$55,058.75. Six applications were received for the 2022/23 fiscal year. Five projects were approved for funding. One project that could not be completed in 2021/22 was moved into the new fiscal year.

- Youth Culture Camp, Athabasca Denesuline Nene Land Corporation
- Boreal Caribou Habitat Enhancement (Year 1 Monitoring), Deninu Kue First Nation

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- Hairy Braya Education and Awareness, Ecology North
- Community-led Species at Risk Detection: eDNA Sampling in Traditionally Important Water Bodies of the North Slave Region, North Slave Métis Alliance
- Presence or Absence of Species at Risk in the Sahtú Settlement Area, Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
- Bluenose-West Caribou Hunting and Knowledge Exchange, Inuvik Hunters and Trappers Committee

For more information on these projects see the website at:

<https://www.nwtspeciesatrisk.ca/SCARF>

12. Species at Risk Communication Strategy – led by Joslyn Oosenbrug (Secretariat)

Progress update on communications strategies underway and upcoming.

School curriculum

In February 2022, the CMA directed the Secretariat to investigate options to develop material to support school curriculum on species at risk. Secretariat to reach out to the necessary people to determine what steps may be involved in this type of undertaking.

The Secretariat reached out via email to Ms. Jessica Brace, Director of Curriculum Development and Student Assessment at the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Ms. Brace indicated that the new NWT curriculum (to be adopted from B.C.) is not topic-specific, meaning that there would not be an opportunity to directly input specific topic areas into the renewed curriculum. However, connections could be made to species at risk at various points in the science curriculum. For example, **Environmental Science 11** examines the following 'Big Ideas':

- Complex roles and relationship contribute to diversity of ecosystems;
- Changing ecosystems are maintained by natural processes;
- Human practices affect the sustainability of ecosystems; and
- Humans can play a role in stewardship and restoration of ecosystems.



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Grade 3 Science may also provide an early opportunity to introduce concepts of biodiversity and ecosystem interconnectedness:

- Living things are diverse, can be grouped, and interact in their ecosystems.

Ms. Brace indicated that her team would be able to review and support any educational materials and resources for which direct links to specific curriculum learning have been identified. CMA should keep in mind that the selection of resources used in classrooms is up to the discretion of the education bodies and the teachers themselves; however, ECE is willing to promote and recommend the use of resources that are directly aligned with curriculum and incorporate Indigenous knowledge and worldviews of the NWT.

Previous direction provided by the CMA on development of material to support school curriculum on species at risk includes the following:

- Include stories about species at risk from communities.
- Materials shouldn't just focus on success stories and current species at risk, but also stories about species that have become extirpated or extinct.
- Reflecting the Dene perspective - the big guys and the little guys are connected. In the school curriculum we should also tell the school kids that species have also been extirpated. Fact sheets, curriculum shouldn't just focus on success, but also stories that ended in loss of a species.

Additional resources:

- [FAQ – NWT adopting British Columbia's JK-12 curriculum](#)
- [Fact Sheet - Indigenous Perspectives in Curriculum](#)
- Department of Infrastructure Energy program – [Lesson 1: Where does our energy come from?](#)

Discussion

- CMA discussed the benefits of providing high school students (grades 10, 11 and 12) with species at risk-related education materials to help prepare students for post-secondary, versus introducing younger grades to concepts of biodiversity and species loss to give them early exposure to these ideas.
- CMA identified the need to not just provide educational materials but provide teacher training in these subject areas as well.

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- Several Management Authorities (WMAC (NWT), GNWT, GRRB, WRRB) already have a presence in schools (as part of community tours, Nature Day, career fairs, etc.).
- GRRB is looking at refreshing its outreach materials for school presentations. This may be an opportunity for coordination.
- There is more research to be done to determine how species at risk fit into the existing curriculum and in the classroom, the resources that are currently available and how they are being used, and the need for new/different materials to expand what is available (identify gaps).

Action item 20220524-06: Secretariat to follow up on education initiative by:

- Contacting schools and teachers to determine how species at risk are covered in the classroom and what kinds of materials are needed/lacking;
- Contacting the Department of Infrastructure and Ecology North to find out how materials they have developed are being used in the classroom;
- Looking at other materials from around the country (and the world) that have already been developed on species at risk;
- Finding out what materials and messaging are already being used by Management Authorities to talk about species at risk in schools (including GNWT's On the Land Unit/Field Support); and
- Identifying gaps and opportunities to coordinate on species at risk outreach in schools.

Museum displays

The CMA also asked the Secretariat to investigate museum displays and approach the Department of Education, Culture and Employment with options to add or supplement current displays with species at risk information.

On April 28, 2022, the Secretariat met with Dot Van Vliet, Assistant Director of Culture and Heritage and Mary Buckland, Curator of Heritage Education and Public Programs, at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC). Both Ms. Van Vliet and Ms. Buckland indicated interest in incorporating species at risk information into display materials. However, they also emphasized that development of new display materials does not happen quickly. New species at risk signage will not be possible as the PWNHC currently has

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other plans to add more cultural graphics and objects to the dioramas. The natural history information will continue to be on the reader rails. They suggested the best way to reach museum patrons would be through public programs and education (e.g. interpretive tours), where information on species at risk could be conveyed verbally as part of a presentation.

PWNHC staff also discussed the possibility of developing a presentation (or possible speaker series) that links to the PWNHC exhibits and natural history mandate. The PWNHC may also be willing to partner with the CMA for events (e.g. a biodiversity nature walk) that links to museum exhibits, and suggested the CMA consider Parks Canada as well – since they have a larger budget for interpretation.

The Secretariat has offered to provide the PWNHC with:

- A summary of current species status information for species featured in the exhibits, as well as some context on species co-management and the species at risk processes in the NWT.
- A pitch for a speaker or speaker series that links in to the PWNHC exhibits and natural history mandate and some ideas for educational programming timed with current events (e.g. International Biodiversity Day, May 22; Northern mountain caribou public engagement, Aug-Oct 2022).
- Copies of NWT Species 2021-2026 and Species at Risk in the NWT 2022, as soon as available. These two reference publications will provide the most up to date information about species in the NWT and their status.

For reference, the Mission and Vision of the PWNHC are as follows:

Mission: To explore, preserve, and share the unique stories of the NWT with the world.

Vision: To be a centre of excellence that presents and enriches northern culture – a place where visitors, community members, and researchers can explore the past, present and future of the NWT.

CMA members have previously noted that any ongoing work for NWT Species at Risk communication/outreach will need to ensure that work reaches the communities and not just Yellowknife.

Discussion:

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- CMA discussed additional opportunities for speakers on species at risk, such as the summer speaker series at the Aurora Research Institute and Suzanne Carriere's trip to Inuvik at the end of June. Ecology North has organized natural history talks at the museum in the past.
- It was also noted that not all communities have museums, and the opportunity for a speaker series should consider communities across the NWT.

Action item 20220524-07: Secretariat to: investigate and propose topics/speakers on species at risk, as well as opportunities for events (e.g. International Biodiversity Day); investigate what it would cost to hire someone on contract to organize a speaker series; reach out to Parks Canada, ENR's On the Land Unit, Ecology North and others who may already be doing outreach and education on species at risk to discuss further opportunities to coordinate efforts.

New Initiatives

The Species at Risk Secretariat is working on a Communication Plan for the CMA on species at risk. The objective is to be more strategic and deliberate in CMA communications and outreach activities. Activities proposed to date will be included in the new communication plan, along with an audience analysis that should support the CMA in prioritizing efforts for future communication and outreach. The Communications Plan will be available for discussion at the February 2023 meeting.

These initiatives may include:

- Developing short clips explaining the species at risk process
- Further defining species at risk in the NWT
- An initiative to celebrate Indigenous concepts associated with species at risk
- Developing species-specific fact sheets, posters, etc.
- Branding/advertising in partnership with northern vendors (including developing more Five Antlers Ale or species at risk merchandise)
- Hosting a festival of nature or species summit
- Update tools for industry portion of the NWT Species at Risk website
- Museum display
- Create a wildlife viewing program
- Enhance interactive elements of the NWT Species at Risk website

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- Develop school curriculum
- Television/social media advertising
- Additional/further language work (e.g., build upon past species at risk language workshops, translate some of the new SARC objective biological criteria)
- Look into expanding the size of the SCARF funding pot

Action item 20220524-08: Secretariat will develop a Communication Plan for NWT Species at Risk and the Communication Plan will brought to the February meeting and will be used going into the new fiscal year (2023/24).

Social media

The Secretariat is proposing to create a Facebook page/group for NWT Species at Risk. This would be a tool for disseminating information from CMA and SARC and sharing other information related to species at risk in the NWT.

Reasons for creating the account include:

- Less reliance on ENR Comms to distribute SAR information.
- Clearer public distinction between ENR's responsibilities for SAR and the roles of CMA and SARC.
- Increasing the profile of CMA and SARC and their roles in species at risk conservation and management.
- Ability to share other information (e.g. pests and pathogens, International Biodiversity Day events, etc.)

Discussion:

CMA discussed the idea of a combined Facebook page and members spoke to their own experiences with using social media to promote their organization's activities. CMA supports combining CMA and SARC, and agreed Facebook has been the most effective platform for disseminating information and engagement. Metrics on page use are helpful and enabling the sharing function could allow for synergy with NWT Species FB page.

CMA raised several questions about how the page would work that need to be considered, including:

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- Workload
- Approvals
- Translation (not likely required)
- Whether an offline page can be created until the content has been approved
- Whether news releases would continue to be distributed through the GNWT Press Secretary

Action item 20220222-09: Secretariat to develop a social media strategy that identifies different kinds of content that would be provided on the page and how it would be approved, as well as a schedule for posts and sources of proposed content (e.g. linkages with NWT Species page, NWT Council on Invasive Species, Pests and Pathogens, etc.).

Action item 20220222-10: Secretariat to investigate why news releases are distributed through the GNWT Press Secretary and whether this would continue to be necessary.

13. Polar Bear – led by Jody Pellyssey (Chairperson)

Approval of consensus agreement on adding another 10-year term.

Consensus Agreement

Consensus agreement to add another 10-year term was submitted to the Minister April 28, 2022.

Timelines

- **April 28, 2021:** SARC provided the re-assessment of polar bear to the Management Authorities.
- **July 28, 2021:** Management Authorities developed actions needed to prepare for a CMA Consensus Agreement on Listing.
- **August-November 2021:** Consultation/engagement period.
- **September 17, 2021:** CMA check-in regarding consultation/engagement period.
- **December 10, 2021:** CMA meeting to review the results of consultation/engagement.

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- **January 28, 2022:** Consensus Agreement Annex B's (Actions the Management Authorities have undertaken or will undertake with respect to listing) were due in anticipation of the February 2022 CMA meeting.
- **April 18, 2022:** Start signatures for consensus agreement.
- **April 28, 2022:** Deadline for Consensus Agreement on adding another 10-year term.
- **May 25-27, 2022:** CMA meeting – Secretariat to draft press release for adding another 10-year term.
- **July 28, 2022:** Polar bear re-listed as a species of Special Concern. Press release.

Press Release (review/approval):

Press release approved with revisions to add text regarding the framework for action versus the table. Management Authorities will review the final draft over email. Secretariat will email the press release for a deadline to comment for June 3.

Action item 20220524-11: Secretariat will make suggested revisions to the Polar bear relisting press release and distribute to Management Authorities for review and approval by June 3.

14. Northern Mountain Caribou – led by Joslyn Oosenbrug (Secretariat) *Management plan progress update.*

Management Plan Update

During the February 2021 CMA meeting, Management Authorities agreed to adopt the federal *Management Plan for the Northern Mountain Population of Woodland Caribou (Rangifer tarandus caribou) in Canada* as a high-level umbrella plan covering the entire NWT range.

The Secretariat provided the first draft of the Northern Mountain Caribou Management Plan to the CMA on February 1, 2022. The Northern Mountain Caribou Management Plan consists of the federal management plan plus a short addition to include requirements from the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*. The Secretariat has addressed comments on the plan from two rounds of review and will be providing a third and final draft for Management



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Authorities to review on Monday, May 30. Comments or revisions are due to the Secretariat by Friday, June 18, 2022.

As per the workplan, a final draft of the management plan will be provided to Management Authorities in June or July 2022 to allow Management Authorities to meet with their respective boards to discuss the proposed draft. Management Authorities will carry out actions needed to approve the proposed management plan between August and November 2022. A public comment period will also occur at that time. A document outlining actions each Management Authority will take to prepare for a Consensus Agreement to accept the Management Plan is due June 9, 2022.

Secretariat will prepare the consultation/engagement material for the Northern Mountain Caribou Management Plan for July 2022.

The Secretariat will also provide supplementary information on where each caribou ecotype (e.g. boreal caribou, Peary caribou, northern mountain caribou) is in the various stages of the SAR process.

Timelines

- **April 29, 2021:** Consensus Agreement on Listing provided to the Minister of ENR.
- **July 29, 2021:** Northern mountain caribou legally listed.
- **June 9, 2022:** Identify and coordinate the actions each Management Authority agrees to undertake in preparation for a Consensus Agreement to accept the Management Plan.
- **June/July 2022:** Proposed draft management plan provided to Management Authorities.
- **August to November 2022:** Engagement period.
- **January 2023:** Final version provided to Management Authorities ahead of the February 2023 CMA Meeting.
- **April 29, 2023:** Consensus Agreement Accepting Management Plan.
- **July 29, 2023:** Management plan is finalized and made available to the public.
- **April 29, 2024:** Consensus Agreement on Implementation due.

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15. Barren-ground Caribou – led by Bruce Laurich, ECCC

Update on federal listing process.

Background:

In 2016, COSEWIC assessed barren-ground caribou in Canada as Threatened. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC)'s assessment looked at all Canadian herds together, including the Porcupine herd.

February 2022 Update on Federal Listing Process from ECCC:

In December, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) presented to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) asking for a formal motion from the board. At this time, they have not put forward their decision yet. When that process is done, the NWMB will put forward their decision. The HTOs were mixed, some supported, some did not. Unfortunately, we don't know the NWMB's stance. Once NWMB provides a formal decision, there is a 60-day window in which the Minister's response is due, but a response could be that the Minister asks for more time to consider.

There is a two-year timeline in the legislation to complete the federal listing process. Although ECCC tries to abide by that timeline, it really depends on consultation. For species like barren-ground caribou we want to ensure that the process is followed, and that Indigenous knowledge and community consultations are thoroughly completed. Covid-19 also had an effect and it added at least a year to our consultations.

May 2022 Update on Federal Listing Process from ECCC:

Currently there are no further updates from the February update.

Community consultations in Nunavut went well and ECCC has a combination of in-person and virtual meetings. Not all HTOs were supportive of a listing decision and ECCC is unsure how this will impact the NWMB's decision. The NWMB does not have a timeline for a decision at this time.

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The Minister considers the motion made by NWMB, however the decision to list by the Minister may not be in accordance with the NWMB decision. NWMB does not have a veto power. The Minister can also ask for an extension to respond to NWMB's motion or for the NWMB to reconsider. In that situation more consultation may happen as well. There is a 60-day period where the Minister will reply with a response to NWMB.

16. Dolphin and Union Caribou – led by Isabelle Duclos, ECCC *Update on federal listing process.*

Background:

Dolphin and Union caribou is currently listed under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) as a species of Special Concern (2011). In 2017, the species was reassessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as Endangered.

February 2022 Update on Federal Listing Process from ECCC:

ECCC started consultation in 2019. ECCC's process was delayed because of COVID, but they are still meeting with some partners. ECCC should be able to present to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) at their June 2022 meeting for the potential up listing. The process between the Minister and NWMB will be similar to where we are with barren-ground caribou.

ECCC is developing an addendum with partners but do not know when the addendum will be completed at this point. Once completed, the addendum will be provided to the NWMB as part of the consultation process (e.g., not for approval).

May 2022 Update on Federal Listing Process from ECCC:

Earlier this month ECCC submitted a package to NWMB for the status of Dolphin and Union caribou. On June 15, 2022, ECCC will be presenting to NWMB and the motion will be confidential until a final decision is made.

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17. Peary Caribou – led by Isabelle Duclos, ECCC

Update on federal recovery strategy.

Background:

Peary caribou were listed under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* in February 2014. For efficiency and to avoid duplication, the CMA anticipated adopting the applicable portions of the federal Recovery Strategy for Peary caribou once it was completed. Four extensions were granted (2015, 2017, 2019, and 2021). The current deadline is September 30, 2024.

Update on Federal Recovery Strategy from ECCC:

The proposed recovery strategy was posted on the Species at Risk Registry between August and October 2021. ECCC received a few comments that were not major or significant. As such, there were no major changes to the recovery strategy. ECCC is bringing the document to the NWMB in two weeks for a decision.

May 2022 Update Federal Recovery Strategy from ECCC:

Public consultation on the proposed federal Recovery Strategy for Peary caribou was started in 2021. ECCC submitted the proposed federal Recovery Strategy to NWMB and they presented to the board in March. As of May 16, the NWMB approved the recovery strategy. The recovery strategy is currently going through approval process in Ottawa. ECCC will be translating part of the recovery strategy into French, and ECCC is talking about translating the recovery strategy into Inuktitut – however, this may take a while.

Action item 20220524-12: Secretariat to work with Management Authorities on the workplan to adopt the federal Recovery Strategy for Peary caribou and work on the adoption piece while the federal Recovery Strategy is being translated and finalized for publication. Secretariat to keep in contact with ECCC on progress towards finalizing the federal recovery strategy.

18. Progress Reports and Reviews – led by Joslyn Oosenbrug (Secretariat)

Update on progress reports and reviews as per the Species at Risk (NWT) Act sections 73 and 74.



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Update on Progress Reports and Reviews

Progress reports and reviews are required every 5 years under section 73 and 74 of the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* after an implementation agreement is signed. Boreal caribou and amphibians are due in November 2022 while polar bear is due in March 2023. However, at the September 2021 CMA meeting, the CMA agreed to prepare the Polar Bear Progress Report and Review under the same timeline as boreal caribou and amphibians to facilitate future progress reporting and reviews.

Polar bear

The Polar Bear Progress Report and Review are being developed collaboratively with partners from the Inuvialuit Settlement Region Polar Bear Joint Management Plan, which includes the Wildlife Management Advisory Councils (NWT and NS), Inuvialuit Game Council, Government of the Northwest Territories, Government of Yukon, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and Parks Canada.

The Review of the *ISR Polar Bear Joint Management Plan* and Implementation Table took place on April 20. A summary of the Review and the second draft of the Progress Report were circulated to partners for comment on April 26 with a May 18 deadline. Comments have been incorporated and a third draft of the Progress Report and a second draft of the Review are slated to go out to partners for review in early June.

Boreal caribou

The Review of the *Recovery Strategy for Boreal Caribou in the NWT* took place on March 31. A summary of the Review and the first draft of the Progress Report were circulated to partners for comment on April 19. No comments were received by the May 20 deadline.

Amphibians

The Review of the *Management Plan for Amphibians in the NWT* took place on March 31. A summary of the Review and the first draft of the Progress Report were circulated to partners for comment on April 19. No comments were received by the May 20 deadline.



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Participation in Progress Reports and Reviews

The *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* does not prescribe who should participate in the progress reporting or review of a management plan or recovery strategy every five years. To date, participation in drafting and review of both the Progress Report and the Review has been included only the Management Authorities for the species. Going forward, the CMA would like to include CMA participants in this process. For polar bear, boreal caribou and amphibians (where the process of drafting and review has already begun), CMA participants will be looped in to allow for their actions undertaken to implement the management plan/recovery strategy to be included in the Progress Report, and their input on the current management plans/recovery strategy will be incorporated into the Review. Participants will also have an opportunity to review and comment on the Progress Report prior to approval by Management Authorities.

Action item 20220524-13: Secretariat to provide current drafts of Boreal Caribou and Amphibians Progress Reports to CMA participants for review and solicit comments as part of 5-year Reviews. Deadline to provide input on these drafts extended (for everyone) to June 10.

Timelines (Polar Bear, Boreal Caribou, Amphibians)

- **April 2022:** First drafts provided to CMA.
- **June 10, 2022:** Comments on draft due to Secretariat from the CMA (Boreal caribou and Amphibians).
- **June 2022:** Secretariat revises draft based on comments and provides a second draft for review.
- **July 2022:** Secretariat finalizes Progress Reports and Reviews.
- **September 2022:** Final version provided to Management Authorities.
- **September 2022:** Final approval for final progress report/review provided at September 2022 CMA meeting.
- **November 2022:** Progress Report made public.

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19. Climate Change and Species at Risk – led by Dr. Brad Woodworth, ENR
Presentation by ENR's Climate Change Ecologist.

20. Next Meeting – led by Jody Pellissey (Chairperson)
Overview of upcoming meetings.

- **September 27, 2022:** in preparation for consultation/engagement (listing/mp/rs) with management authorities
- **December 9, 2022:** to review consultation/engagement results from fall
- The week of **February 20, 2023** in Inuvik



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Species at Risk Workplan – At a Glance

The table below outlines the CMA/SARC workplan and includes type of activity and species.

Year	Activity	Species
2022	Listing	Polar bear (add another 10 year term)
		Peary caribou (re-assessment)
		Boreal caribou (re-assessment)
		Peregrine falcon
	Progress Reporting and Review	Boreal caribou
		Amphibians (Northern leopard frog and Western toad)
		Polar bear
2023	Assessment	American White pelican
		Dolphin and Union caribou (re-assessment)
	Progress Reporting and Review	Dolphin and Union caribou
2024	Assessment	Northern mountain caribou (management plan)
		Hairy braya (re-assessment)
2025	Management Plan/Recovery Strategy	Red-sided garter snake
		Peary caribou (adoption of Federal recovery strategy by September 30, 2024)
2026	Assessment	Northern leopard frog (re-assessment)
		Western toad (re-assessment)
		Canadian Toad (assessment)
2026	Progress Reporting and Review	Wood bison
	Assessment	Wood bison (re-assessment)

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		Common Muskrat
		Rock cranberry (lingonberry)
	Progress Reporting and Review	Northern myotis (re-assessment)
		Little brown myotis (re-assessment)
		Barren-ground caribou (re-assessment)
2027	Assessment	Northern myotis (re-assessment)
		Little brown myotis (re-assessment)
		Barren-ground caribou (re-assessment)

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