



Pierre-Emmanuel Chpillon

HAVE YOUR SAY!

WOOD BISON

Should wood bison continue to be listed as a **Threatened** species in the NWT?

Threatened means wood bison are likely to become Endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to their extirpation from the Northwest Territories.



WOOD BISON

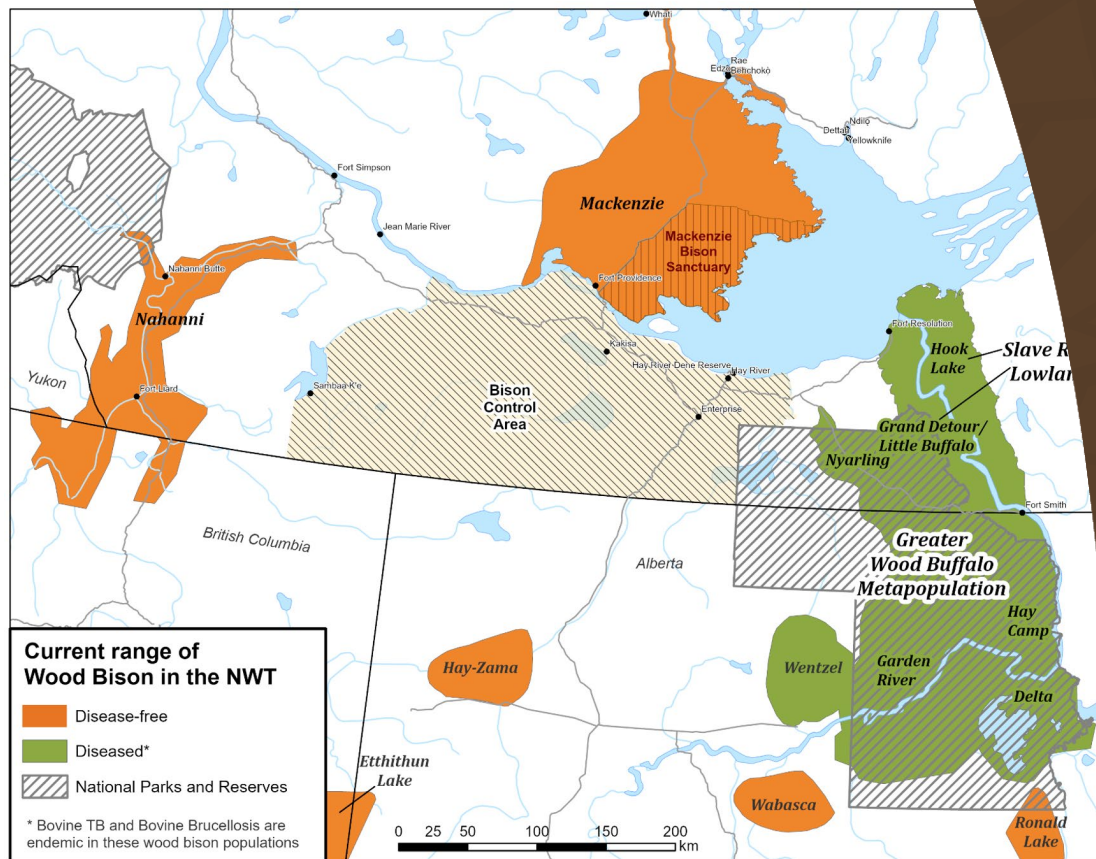
Wood Bison are the largest land mammals in North America. Once on the verge of extinction due to over-hunting, there are now three free-ranging populations of wood bison in the NWT: the Nahanni, Mackenzie and Greater Wood Buffalo metapopulation, which includes wood bison in Wood Buffalo National Park and the Slave River Lowlands.

In April 2026, the NWT Species at Risk Committee reassessed wood bison as **Threatened** in the NWT. Wood bison in the NWT have a small population size and low genetic diversity. They occur in three isolated populations that cannot mix with each other. These factors make wood bison especially vulnerable to threats such as disease (anthrax, bovine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis) and vehicle collisions.

The **NWT Species at Risk Committee** (SARC) is an independent group of experts who hold Indigenous and community knowledge, and/or scientific knowledge about species and habitat in the NWT. They assess species based on the best available information and objective biological criteria.

Read the assessment report and learn more about wood bison in the NWT:

www.nwt-speciesatrisk.ca



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Top: Current known ranges of NWT wood bison populations (Nahanni, Mackenzie, and the Greater Wood Buffalo metapopulation). Map courtesy of GNWT.

RE-LISTING WOOD BISON

Wood bison have been legally listed as **Threatened** in the NWT since 2017. If the listing of wood bison as **Threatened** is extended, implementation of the **Recovery Strategy for Wood Bison in the NWT** would continue, along with the management plans that guide the decision-making for the Nahanni, Mackenzie and Slave River Lowlands bison populations.

- Read the **Wood Bison Progress Report (2020-2024)**

WHY WERE WOOD BISON REASSESSED AS **THREATENED**?

The wood bison population in the NWT is relatively small and has declined over the last 15 years. Diseases that affect wood bison in the NWT, and the actions required to manage them, have serious implications for recovery.

Wood bison also face other threats including vehicle collisions, human-bison conflicts, habitat change, and potential overharvesting.

HOW DOES LISTING WOOD BISON AFFECT HARVESTING?

Adding a species to the NWT List of Species at Risk does not mean harvesting must stop—in fact, respectful and responsible harvest activities support cultural connections to the species. Keeping wood bison on the NWT List of Species at Risk will not result in any changes to quotas, by-laws or regulations already in place.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- Should wood bison remain on the NWT List of Species at Risk as a **Threatened** species? Why or why not?
- Wood bison were initially listed as Threatened in the NWT in 2017. How has the listing affected your community? Would extending the listing have positive or negative impacts?
- Is there new or missing information that was not considered in the status report? If so, can you provide it to us or tell us where to find it?

Visit www.nwt-speciesatrisk.ca or scan here:

