

NWT Species at Risk

Threatened in the NWT

Boreal caribou:

- Population size in NWT is small.
- Declines in population are documented in part of the southern NWT.
- The species needs large areas of intact habitat so animals can spread out to avoid predators.
- Main threats are habitat loss and fragmentation from human-caused disturbances (i.e. seismic lines and roads) and natural disturbances (i.e. forest fires).
- Continuing decline in the amount of secure habitat and the number of boreal caribou is expected.
- Management Authorities are the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT), Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, Sahtu Renewable Resources Board, Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board, Tłı̄chǫ Government and Government of the Northwest Territories.
- Listed as Threatened under federal *Species at Risk Act*.

Peary caribou:

- Most northerly group of caribou found in North America.
- Found only on the Arctic Islands of NWT and Nunavut.
- Peary caribou experienced an extreme decline since the 1960-80s and have not recovered to their historic high numbers.
- Population size is small and varies between years, making the population susceptible to random catastrophic events.
- Management Authorities are the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT) and Government of the Northwest Territories.
- Listed as Endangered under federal *Species at Risk Act*.

Hairy braya:

- A rare flowering plant found only on the Cape Bathurst Peninsula and Baillie Islands in the NWT.
- Currently about 15,000 to 20,000 plants restricted to an area that remained ice-free during the last ice age.
- Plants need bare soil to become established and do not compete well with other plant species.
- Declining along the coast because of rapid coastal erosion and salt spray.
- Erosion is expected to increase as water levels rise due to melting sea-ice and climate change.
- Hairy braya plants found in more stable habitats are vulnerable to random events such as flooding from storm surges.
- Management Authorities are the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT) and Government of the Northwest Territories.

Media requests for interviews with Members of the Executive Council may be directed to:

Office of the Press Secretary • Premier/Cabinet
Government of the Northwest Territories • PO Box 1320 • Yellowknife • NT • X1A 2L9
Tel: (867) 669-2302 • Fax: (867) 873-0111

Special Concern in the NWT

Polar bear:

- Found throughout the circumpolar north.
- Polar bears are constantly moving and cover large ranges.
- Polar bears hunt seals from the sea ice.
- About 2,000 animals in the NWT at any given time.
- Numbers seem to be stable or increasing in some parts of the NWT but are probably declining in other parts.
- NWT harvest is well-managed and sustainable.
- Main threats are impacts of climate change on sea ice, which changes access to seals, as well as industrial development and exploration.
- Management Authorities are the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT) and Government of the Northwest Territories.
- Listed as Special Concern under federal *Species at Risk Act*.

Next Steps

- Management Authorities to complete NWT Management Plan for polar bears and NWT Recovery Strategies for boreal caribou, Peary caribou and hairy braya within two years.
- Addition to NWT List of Species at Risk does not result in any automatic prohibitions or protections for the species or habitat. It does not change harvest regulations and land management already in place.
- Addition to NWT List of Species at Risk does not change any listing or protection under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

More information on the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* and the species listed under the Act is available online at: www.nwt-speciesatrisk.ca

Media requests for interviews with Members of the Executive Council may be directed to:

Office of the Press Secretary • Premier/Cabinet
Government of the Northwest Territories • PO Box 1320 • Yellowknife • NT • X1A 2L9
Tel: (867) 669-2302 • Fax: (867) 873-0111