

Wolf (dìga) management

Update

Actions to support the recovery of Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou 2021-2022

Dec 2022

Tłıchq Government and the Government of the Northwest Territories are working together to implement management actions to reduce wolf predation on the Bathurst (Kòk'èeti) and Bluenose-East (Sahti) migratory barren-ground caribou (ekwò) herds because of ongoing conservation concerns.

Our approach

Support for wolf harvesters and the traditional economy to increase annual ground-based harvest of wolves, combined with a research, monitoring and assessment program for 5 years (2019-2024).

Wolf removal



- From Feb to Apr 2022, 69 wolves were harvested by ground-based hunters within the North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive Area.
- Harvesters received approximately \$52,800 under the Enhanced North Slave Wolf Harvest Incentive program this year.
- Knowledge-sharing workshops for harvesters were held in Dec 2022.

Measures of effort



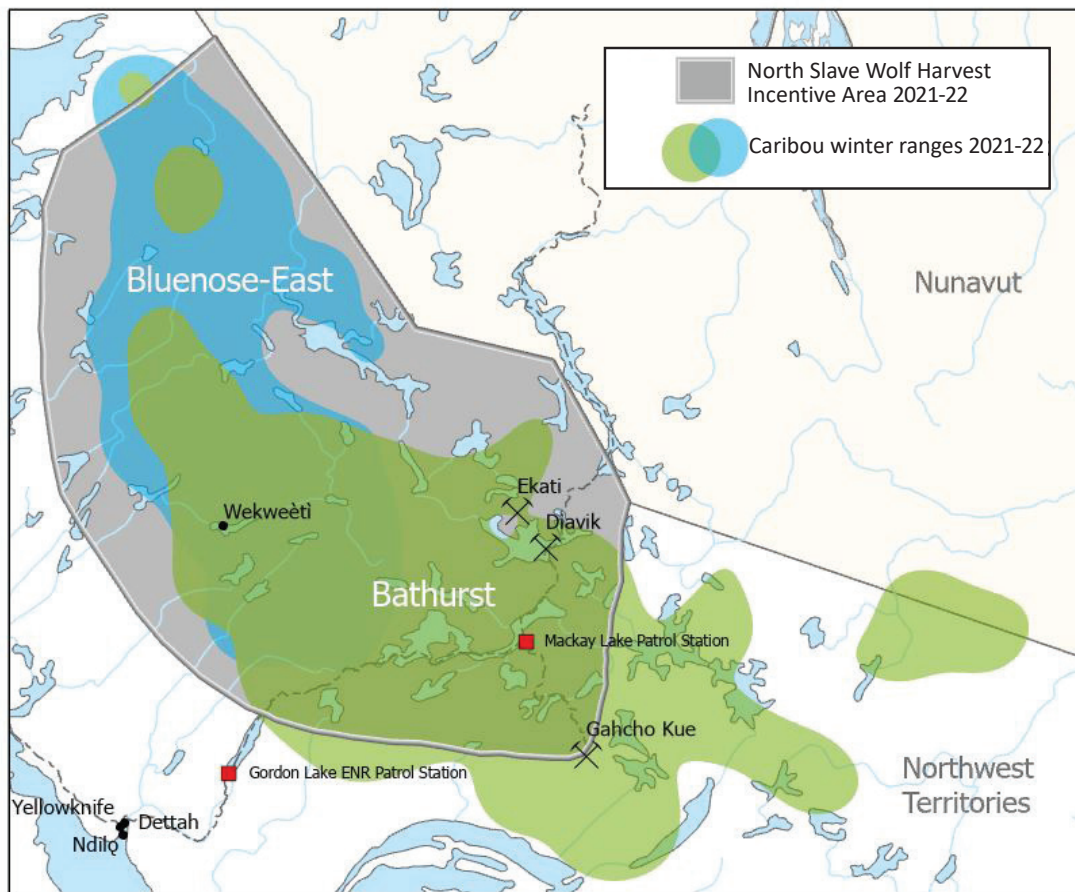
- Hunters provided information on the number of days spent hunting and distance travelled to find wolves.
- Harvesters traveled further to find wolves, but caught more wolves per day this year compared to last year.
- Survey crews saw fewer wolves per hour compared to last year.

Demographics and health



- Wolf carcasses were examined to learn about age, health, and diet.
- Harvested wolves were younger this year compared to last year.
- Wolves were in poorer body condition this year compared to last year and fewer wolves had recently consumed caribou.





Research and Monitoring

Learning more about wolf dynamics, movement, and interaction with caribou helps us inform our management actions.

- Seven GPS collars deployed on wolves in the North Slave Region.
- Aerial surveys helped estimate the number of wolves, but the detection of wolves was influenced by several factors.
- Wolf movements showed that wolves overlapped with caribou the most in the winter and spring time periods.
- Den site locations may help us understand wolf affiliation to a particular caribou herd.

How does reducing wolf populations help caribou?

Wolves are the main predator of barren-ground caribou. In combination with ongoing caribou harvest and habitat management, reducing the number of predators can help increase caribou survival rates and support population recovery.

Caribou winter distributions

High winter overlap among adjacent caribou herds makes implementation of the wolf management program challenging with respect to targeting wolves associated with a particular herd.

