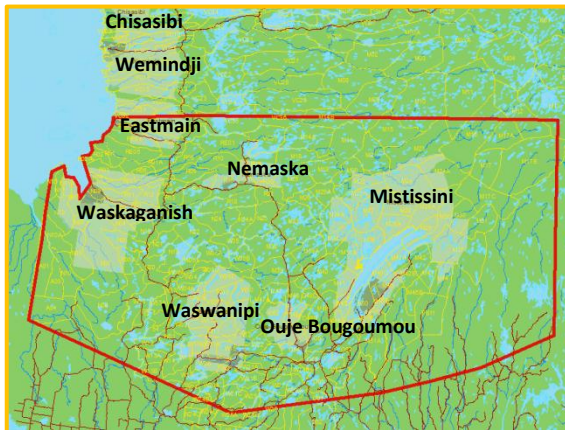


You can help the Woodland Caribou by adapting your hunting habits!

Hunting is a valuable traditional activity practiced since millenniums by the Crees, who always respected wildlife by hunting only what they needed. Nowadays, Woodland Caribou are scarce and you can give them a chance by avoiding hunting them in the sensitive area delimited by the red line on the map. By giving Woodland Caribou the chance to get better (reproduce and raise healthy calves), you help to ensure its future and its continued existence in the Cree territory and culture.



Woodland caribou high priority conservation area

347

DB44

Projet de ligne à 735 kV entre les postes
Micoua et du Saguenay

6211-09-072



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Woodland Caribou in Eeyou Istchee

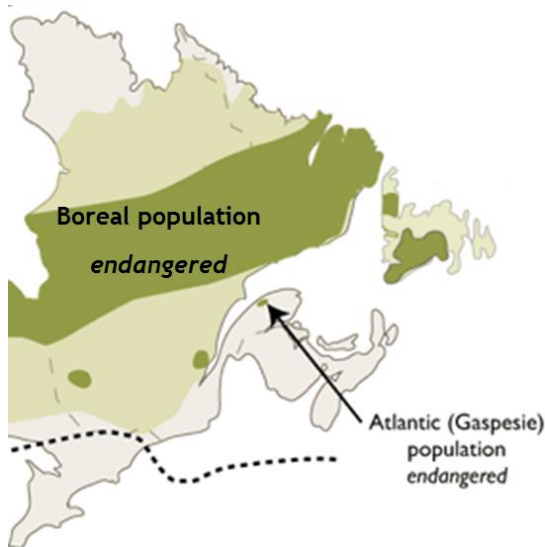


Let's care for them!

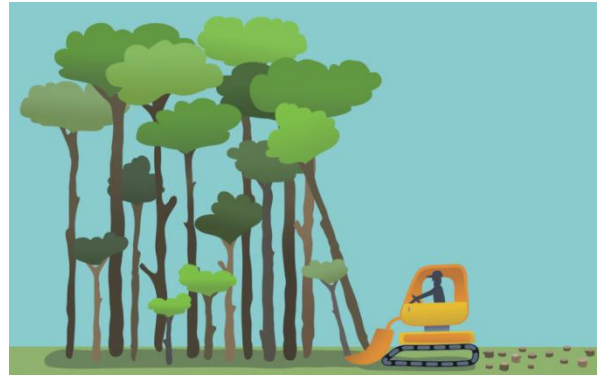
State of Woodland Caribou populations in Eeyou Istchee

A decreasing range

In the past, woodland caribou used to occupy all of Southern Québec Region. Now its range is decreasing to the North. This is explained by the dense network of roads and by the high level of forestry activity in this sector, which is pushing the Southern limits of Woodland Caribou range to the North, decreasing their area of distribution and their persistence probability at the same time.

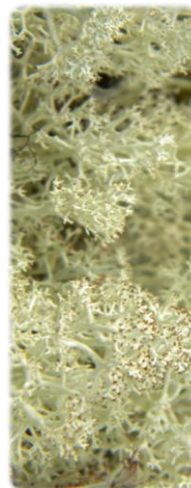


Woodland caribou (boreal population) Southern historical limit (dashed line) and actual distribution range (green area).



The Woodland Caribou at risk

Human-caused changes in Woodland Caribou habitat such as road building and tree cutting have also changed caribou behavior and their reproducing and survival rates have declined. For those reasons, Woodland Caribou is now an endangered species, and is very susceptible to any disturbance.



Woodland Caribou habitat

To be able to live a healthy and safe life, the Woodland Caribou needs suitable habitat. It prefers large old growth coniferous forests (eg. Jack pine, Black spruce) with a lot of lichens and peat lands. It avoids roads and disturbed habitats such as clear cuts.

Is a Caribou a caribou?

There are 3 types of Caribou in Canada, which show slight differences in size, fur and antlers (not easy to tell). They are mainly distinguishable by their behavior and spatial distribution :

1. **Migratory Caribou:** lives in large herds



of thousands of animals in tundra, makes important migrations of thousands of km

from Northern Québec to Northern Eeyou Istchee every winter. There are 2 herds in Québec, the Leaf River Herd in the West and the George River Herd in the East.

2. **Woodland Caribou:** lives mostly South



of Migratory Caribou range (although there is an overlap), does not make important migrations

and females disperse in the forest to give birth to their calf. There are 3 known Woodland Caribou herds in Eeyou Istchee: Nottaway, Temiscamie and Assinica herds.

3. **Mountain Caribou:** lives in herds on



high mountain tops, migrates to different altitudes depending on the season.

WOODLAND CARIBOU

In Eeyou Istchee

INFORMATION SHEET

IS A CARIBOU A CARIBOU?

There are three types of caribou in Eeyou Istchee, all three look the same, but they behave differently.

There are three types of caribou in Quebec that have different behavioral characteristics: the forest-dwelling caribou, the mountain caribou and tundra caribou. The forest-dwelling populations (also referred to as the Boreal population) live in the boreal forest and unlike the tundra (migratory) caribou, they do not migrate long distances but rather stay in the boreal forest all year round.

The **Migratory Caribou** lives in the tundra in large herds of thousands of animals and they make important migrations of thousands of km from Northern Québec to the South every winter. There are 2 herds in Québec, the Leaf River Herd in the West and the George River Herd in the East.

The **Mountain Caribou** lives in herds on high mountain tops, where it migrates to different altitudes depending on the season. It is not documented to be present in Eeyou Istchee although some Cree hunters interviewed in 2009 have reported seeing a third type of caribou (bigger and darker) that would live in the Otish Mountain.

The **Forest-Dwelling Caribou** lives mostly south of the Migratory Caribou range. It does not make important migrations but rather stay in the boreal forest all year round. Unlike the females of the migratory herds that gather in large group during the calving period, the forest dwelling female caribou disperse in the forest and isolate themselves to give birth to their calf.

WOODLAND CARIBOU (FOREST-DWELLING POPULATION) An Endangered Animal!

The forest caribou have been in decline for several decades and now are considered to be in a precarious state. Consequently it has been listed as threatened by the federal law since 2002 and vulnerable by provincial law since 2005, and many effort are being conducted throughout the country to preserve the populations. Several causes explain the decline of the specie.

In undisturbed ecosystems, these populations are naturally affected by predation, especially by wolf and black bear, and forest fires

which destroy its primary source of winter food: lichen. However, man-made causes are the primary cause of its decline.

Habitat loss and disturbances by forestry activity, and the development of extensive road networks to serve energy and mining development has a negative impact on the reproduction and survival of the population, and the chances of survival are further diminished by predation and hunting as access increases and shelters become less available.



Did you Know?

Caribou are unique in that both male and female caribou usually grow antlers. Male caribou will shed their antlers after the mating season is finished, while pregnant female will usually keep them longer and shed them shortly after they give birth in the spring.

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HERDS IN EYYOU ISTCHEE

In Eeyou Istchee there are three known herds travelling through the Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou, Nemaska, Waswanipi, Waskaganish and Eastmain territory. In the west portion of the territory there is the Nottaway herd; at the center the Assinica-Broadback herd; and the east part is occupied by the Temiscamie herd. The latest survey conducted 10 years ago estimated a population containing as few as 600 caribou, but increase in disturbance in the last 10 years suggests that the number of animals may be fewer. According to a recent assessment of these three herds the future of these herds is very uncertain. This assessment found that habitat disturbance was in excess of what the herds could tolerate and that survival of the young was low. Consequently, the Temiscamie and Assinica-Broadback herd was considered to be “not-self-sustaining” which means that the herd was predicted to decline further. The Nottaway herd was considered to be more stable with a slight decline trend; however less

data is available for this herd. Unfortunately, since the listing of the species in Quebec as a “vulnerable species”, very little actions, a part from knowledge acquisition, has been put in place to preserve the herds in Eeyou Istchee.



Disturbance within the range of the Assinica, Nottaway and Temiscamie herds.



Photo credit: Gaston Cooper, 2012

*"Caring for the land is
caring for our people."*

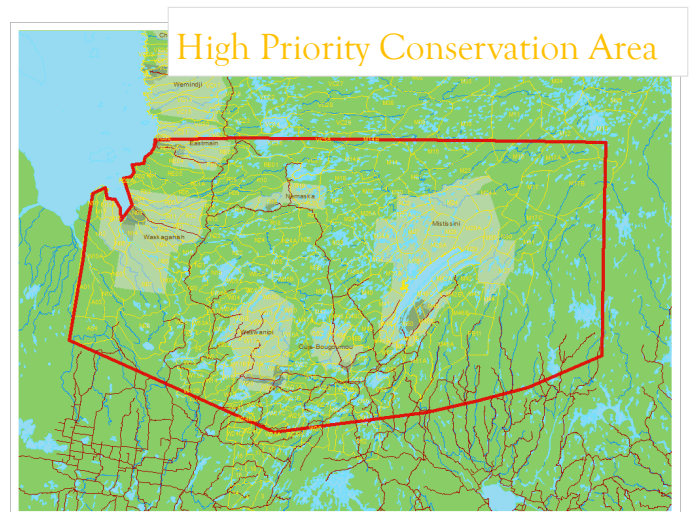
**You can help by adopting these conservation
actions within the high priority area:**

- Limit the harvest of woodland caribou so the population may rest and grow
- Build awareness by informing friends and family on the sensitive state of these herds
- Inform the CTA and the CRA if you observe threats or abnormal situation that may affect the forest caribou
- Inform the CTA and the CRA if you observe forest caribou, and note their approximate location, the number of animals and the presence of calves.

CONSERVATION ACTION

The Cree Regional Authority/Grand Council of the Crees and the Cree Trappers Association would like to encourage collaborative efforts with the communities to inform the population on the threatened forest-dwelling caribou and work with the communities to encourage people to limit their caribou hunting in the southern portion of Eeyou Istchee, until the population has recovered to a sustainable level.

The high priority sensitive area delimited by the red line has been proposed as a conservation area where hunting of caribou could be avoided. This area is preliminary and might change as a result of further consultation and works with the Cree communities.



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WOODLAND CARIBOU

LET'S TAKE CARE OF THEM !

Woodland Caribou populations of the boreal forest have been in decline for several decades and are considered to be in a precarious state throughout Canada. In Eeyou Istchee the population was last estimated 10 years ago to number at approximately 600 caribou. Today the population continues to decline with low calf survival and continued disturbance on the land. These boreal forest caribou are known to occupy and travel within the Eastmain, Waskaganish, Waswanipi, Nemaska, Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini territory.

Elders are asking you to encourage traditional hunting values and practices. A common conservation strategy already used by hunters when a species is low in number is to avoid hunting it until the population is stable. As tradition dictates, hunters kill only what they need and only what the herd can handle.

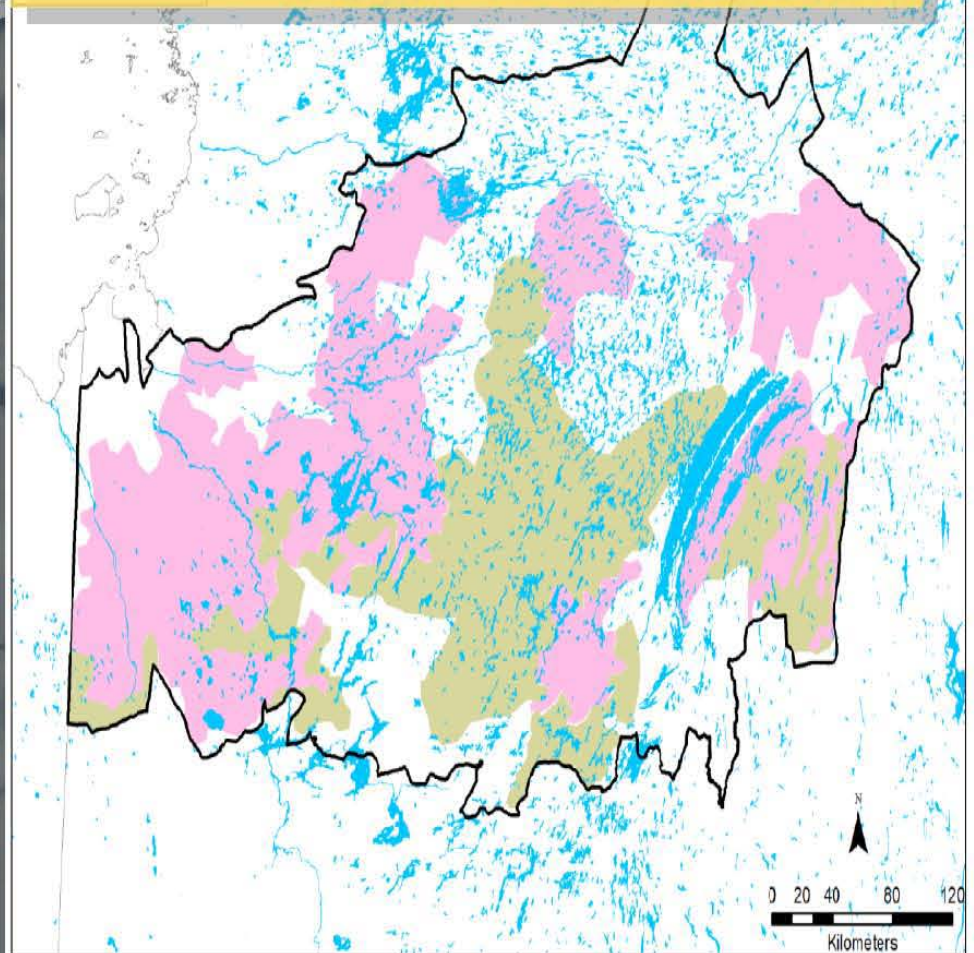
Many hunters have already voluntarily stopped hunting the woodland caribou in order to encourage the growth of the population.



The Cree Regional Authority and the Cree Trappers Association is seeking your collaboration in the efforts to preserve the Woodland Caribou;

- ◆ **Avoid killing or disturbing the boreal forest caribou population so they may rest and grow**
- ◆ **Build awareness by informing friends and family on the precarious state of this population in Eeyou Istchee**
- ◆ **Inform the CTA and the CRA if you observe threats or abnormal situation that may affect the population**

NO CARIBOU HUNTING AREA
We are asking hunters to avoid killing caribou in this area.



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