

# NWT Caribou

**Objective:** To introduce students to the challenges for NWT caribou.

**Introduction:** Caribou herds have been declining in the NWT over the past decades in response to human activity including resource exploration and extraction, industrial development and climate change. This lesson aims to introduce students to some of the challenges caribou face and potential solutions for mitigating those challenges.

## Curriculum Connections:

Unit B – 1.1k, 1.4k, 1.1sts, 1.4s, 2.2k, 2.3s

## Supplies / Materials:

- Large tarp/sheet, sets of coloured cards (5 cards per student)
- Newspaper
- Construction paper
- Ribbons
- Barren-Grounds population graph

**Hook:** Have students create a mind map for what they know about caribou (can be a class or smaller group activity). Brainstorm potential pressures on caribou populations (roads, town sites, mines, oil and gas, fires, hunting, climate change, predation, illness etc.)



## SCIENCE FOCUS

### Lesson Subject

Biology 20

### Topic

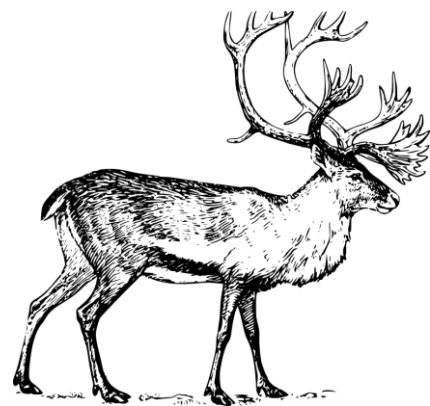
Ecosystems and Population Change

### Location

Classroom

### Length

1 period



**Intro Activity:** Caribou habitat pressures game (See “Bears of Banff” game described below).

**Main Activity:**

Project resource 2 on a screen. Have students break into small groups to talk about what information and/or conclusions they feel they can gather from this data and what questions they have of the data. Have them brainstorm what we can do as humans to protect vulnerable populations.

**Conclusion / Review:** Revisit the mind map and add in details.

**Homework:** Assign students to 3 groups to read and summarize one of the three reports in **resources** 2-4. Have them determine if there are other things to add to the mind map.

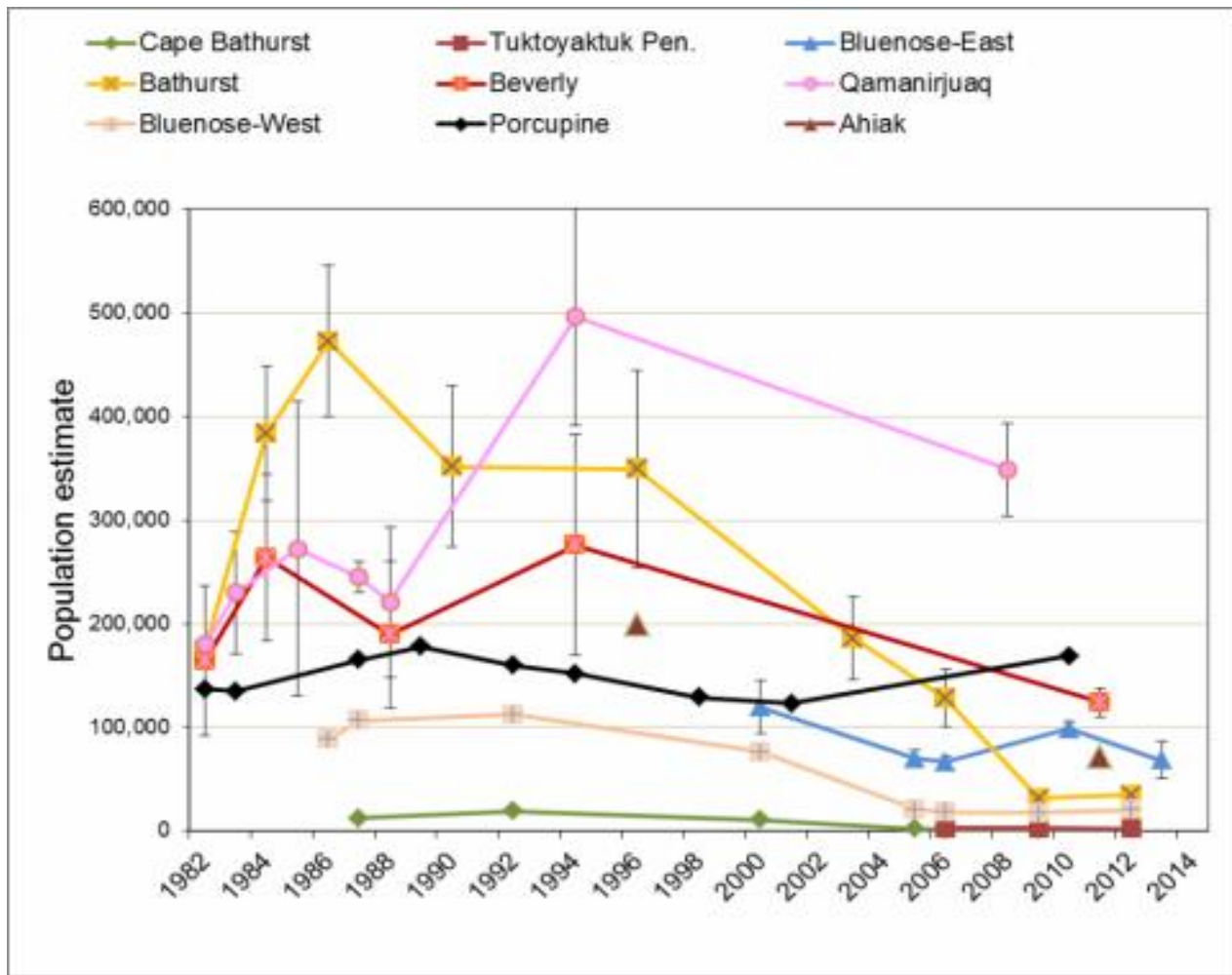
**Resources:**

1. Bears of Banff Game: [http://cpaws-southernalberta.org/upload/Bears\\_of\\_Banff.pdf](http://cpaws-southernalberta.org/upload/Bears_of_Banff.pdf)

Play this game as described above **except:**

- a) Substitute an area of the NWT for Banff (habitat of threatened species can be found at: <http://www.nwt-species-at-risk.ca>)
- b) Substitute caribou for bears – may want to add limits on movement due to prey behavior being different than predator behavior e.g. movement as a herd, novelty fear, presence of wolves in an area etc.) Alternatively discuss this difference post-game.
- c) Substitute Banff pressures for NWT pressures (see **resource** 2)

2. ENR depiction of Barren-Grounds Caribou Herds (<http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/fr/node/3167>)



3. Article about caribou responses to human activity (BC):

[http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cariboo/env\\_stewardship/wildlife/inventory/caribou/mtncar/harass/impacts.pdf](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cariboo/env_stewardship/wildlife/inventory/caribou/mtncar/harass/impacts.pdf)

4. CPAWS boreal caribou information and articles: <http://cpawsnw.org/campaigns/boreal-caribou>

**Extensions:** Find your school's copy of or contact you local ENR for the *Caribou and People: A Shared Future*. Follow those activities to learn more or assign some as homework.