

Summer Student Opportunity: Investigating Causes of Caribou Mortality in the NWT

The Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC) Wildlife Health Program, in collaboration with the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Kutz Research Group is seeking a motivated student for a summer placement based in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories and Calgary, Alberta.

Position Overview:

The student will work under the supervision of Dr. Naima Jutha (GNWT Wildlife Veterinarian) and Dr. Susan Kutz (Professor, University of Calgary) to investigate causes of mortality in barren-ground and boreal woodland caribou, both *Species at Risk* in northern Canada. The role will combine field experience with laboratory and analytical work, providing a unique opportunity to contribute to caribou conservation and northern wildlife health.

Key Responsibilities:

- Support caribou health surveillance by compiling data and biological samples from collared caribou mortality investigations conducted across the territory
- Where possible, participate directly in field investigations of mortalities with ECC wildlife biologists and wildlife technicians
- Analyze field findings from mortality site investigations
- Produce and summarize diagnostic test results from collected specimens
- Investigate spatial and temporal trends in causes of death for caribou (e.g. predation, infectious and non-infectious disease, accidents, etc.)
- Contribute to development of best practices for wildlife mortality investigations to inform important indicators of caribou health and survival

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this placement, the student will have gained:

- Hands-on skills in wildlife health surveillance and post-mortem investigation
- Experience collaborating with ECC wildlife biologists, veterinarians, and academic researchers

- An understanding of the challenges of investigating disease and mortality in free- ranging wildlife in remote northern environments

Eligibility:

- Students enrolled in a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program will be preferred.
- Also eligible are undergraduate students in biological sciences, animal science, ecology, biomedical sciences, microbiology, or other related fields.

Desired Skills & Attributes:

- Strong organizational and data management skills
- Interest in wildlife health, ecology, and conservation
- Experience or interest in working in a laboratory environment with biological specimen and samples
- Ability to work both independently and part of a team
- Willingness to travel and participate in fieldwork, often helicopter-based and in remote environments

Duration & Location:

- Summer 2026 (~May 2026 through August 2026)
- Partially (~50%) based in Yellowknife, NT with opportunities for travel within territory
- Partially (~50%) based in NW Calgary, AB

How to Apply:

Please submit a CV, transcript (unofficial acceptable), and a brief statement of interest (maximum 1 page) outlining your relevant experience and motivation for applying.

Applications should be sent to:

Dr. Naima Jutha Wildlife Veterinarian



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF VETERINARY MEDICINE



**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**

Government of the Northwest Territories – ECC Wildlife Health Program Naima_Jutha@gov.nt.ca

AND

Dr. Susan Kutz Professor

University of Calgary – Faculty of Veterinary Medicine skutz@ucalgary.ca

Deadline to Apply:

Applications will be reviewed as soon as they are received with a final deadline of December 1, 2025. If a suitable applicant is found prior to then the competition will be closed early.