



VAN DER MEER LAB

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Community-defined and Monitored Indicators of Recovery in Barrenground Caribou

NWT CUMULATIVE IMPACT MONITORING PROGRAM
PROJECT DESCRIPTION – JULY 2024

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

Wildlife health and sustainability in the Arctic are increasingly threatened by cumulative stressors of climate warming. Many barrenground caribou herds have sustained major declines, yet the exact contributors to these have not been defined. There is a need to understand the status and trends of caribou populations and to identify factors that are proactive indicators of change.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We are working with **three communities** that interact with the **Bluenose East (BNE) caribou herd** to:

◆ Conduct **Traditional Knowledge-focused interviews** on BNE caribou in Kugluktuk, NU and Délı̄ne and Wekweèti, NWT to document historical trends for **population size, demographics, and health indicators** (e.g., body condition, stress, nutrition, diseases).

◆ Implement and expand a **community-based surveillance program using harvester-collected sample kits** across all three communities.

◆ Develop and deploy **new diagnostic tests** to identify and assess trends of key **viruses** in caribou.



Bluenose East Caribou Range

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Traditional Knowledge, Inuit-driven science, and Western science together provide the most comprehensive guidance for caribou management. This project unites these sources to derive and define specific indicators that will enable proactive timely management of the BNE caribou herd and other caribou populations.



Environment and Climate Change Canada / Environnement et Changement climatique Canada



Polar Knowledge Canada / Savoir polaire Canada



NWT CIMP
Northwest Territories Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program

