



2012 Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan

Progress Assessment Report

October 2022





What is a progress assessment?

A routine part of performance management for any plan is to assess its implementation.

The 2012 Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (the 2012 Plan) was created for and with Yukon communities. At the time, the plan review committee held public meetings in 14 Yukon communities and two workshops with First Nations governments and wildlife management boards and councils. To assist in plan implementation, ongoing collaboration and communication between governments, boards, and councils with responsibilities for wolf conservation and management is required. This document is part of information sharing between management agencies, communities, and others interested in how wolves are managed in the Yukon. The progress assessment occurs under the guiding principles and values expressed in the existing plan.

What does the plan say?

The 2012 Plan includes recommendations to reach several goals, including:

- promote research, education programs and information sharing;
- use wolf harvest as a management tool to reduce predation rates of moose and caribou in local areas;
- manage wolves in recognition of their social, cultural and economic importance to all Yukoners and in recognition of Yukoners appreciation in experiencing wolves in the wilderness; and
- address human-wildlife conflict.

The 2012 Plan expresses the values that Yukoners have for wolves: those of respect and the recognition that wolves are an integral part of complex, self-regulating ecosystems. The values inform a set of principles that are still used to guide wolf





conservation and management today. The importance of the progress assessment is to make sure that those with a role to play in wolf management are implementing the recommendations, and that the outcomes of those actions are upholding the values and principles of the plan.



The 2012 *Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan* recognizes the diverse priorities, interests and concerns throughout the Yukon for the conservation and management of wolves and prey species. The plan relies heavily on collaboration and communication between the Government of Yukon, First Nations governments, Inuvialuit and wildlife management boards and councils to effectively implement many of its recommendations.





What did the 2012 plan accomplish?

Implementation summary

The 2012 *Wolf Conservation and Management Plan* includes seven goals with 27 recommended implementation measures. Some measures are completed once or with regularity, while others require ongoing or progressive actions. The joint review of the progress assessment with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board found that:





Detailed assessment

For further details on the current status of any of these measures and actions, please contact fish.wildlife@yukon.ca

Measure 1: Amend the Wildlife Act and regulations to enable Renewable Resources Councils to establish bylaws.

Actions Taken	The Government of Yukon consulted on a draft framework in 2012; however, it did not proceed as there was not agreement from all Parties on some key principles.
Status	This measure requires attention as a mandate is required to amend the Wildlife Act. A future mandate will be sought.

Measure 2: The Government of Yukon should retain responsibility for issuing Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) permits and input into and completion of Non-Detrimental Findings.

Actions Taken	The Government of Yukon retains this jurisdictional authority as the territorial government.
Status	This measure is complete.

Goal 1 Measure 3: Continue to collect and share traditional, local and scientific knowledge on wolf numbers, ecology, and predator-prey ecosystems in areas where there have been collaborative decisions about management priorities. Specifically, traditional and local knowledge should be gathered and shared. Scientific knowledge will continue to be gathered and needs to be communicated in plain language and should be made easily accessible.

Actions Taken	Numerous Yukon studies have documented aspects of local and traditional knowledge about wolves; however, these accounts are not formally reviewed or collected in one
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document. As part of the wolf program, trapper information and logbooks do contain information.

Status This measure is in progress. Ongoing efforts to systematically collect data is a challenge but it is occurring in some regions.

Goal 1 Measure 4: Provide input to land use planning and environmental assessment processes to protect known dens and mitigate disturbances to wolves during the period of pup rearing.

Actions Taken Historic wolf den location data gathered and mapping in progress to be incorporated into Wildlife Key Areas database, however, current den location data is limited or non-existent. Den location and mitigations for impacts to wolves are not currently incorporated into environmental assessment or land use planning.

Status This measure requires the Department of Environment’s attention.

Goal 2 Measure 5: Governments and the affected boards and councils must address the many issues related to access to traplines.

Actions Taken Trapper utilization guidelines exist, including minimum usage requirements, and are reviewed by the relevant Renewable Resources Council or District Officer. A Trapping Concession Administration Manual is in progress. The Government of Yukon, Renewable Resources Councils and First Nations are collaborating to resolve issue of trapline ownership and use in overlap area.

Status This measure is in progress. Increase awareness of Assistant Trapping License or Seasonal Trapping Permits.





Goal 2 Measure 6: *Ensure accurate, timely and verifiable wolf harvest information is collected in as consistent an approach as possible throughout Yukon.*

Actions Taken	Many improvements to the collection of harvest data and the databases developed for data management have been made and the Government of Yukon continues ongoing measures to improve data collection and information management.
Status	This measure is complete. The current system receives ongoing improvements and meets the requirements of the measure.

Goal 2 Measure 7: *Amend regulations for hunters and trappers to report wolf harvest within 15 days after the end of the hunting/trapping season.*

Actions Taken	Approved by cabinet and implemented as of 2014. http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/regs/oic2014_009.pdf
Status	This measure is complete.

Goal 2 Measure 8: *If the marking of wolf pelts remains the key harvest reporting method, options that include a metal tag, tattoo or other tool should be explored. The YFWMB and RRCs can recommend to the Government of Yukon the most appropriate form of identification. For administrative and enforcement purposes one common method throughout Yukon is best.*

Actions Taken	Currently no alternative method requested by the YFWMB or RRCs and the system meets the requirements of the Government of Yukon.
Status	This measure is complete.





Goal 2 Measure 9: Remove the sealing fee for wolves harvested by licensed hunters.

Actions Taken	Approved by cabinet and implemented as of 2014. http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/regs/oic2014_009.pdf
Status	This measure is complete.

Goal 2 Measure 10: Amend regulations to enable the Minister to vary bag limits for wolves under an adaptive management framework.

Actions Taken	Approved by cabinet and implemented as of 2014. http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/regs/oic2014_009.pdf
Status	This measure is complete.

Goal 2 Measure 11: Amend wolf trapping and hunting seasons in regulation to enable an adaptive approach to management. Seasons should be coordinated to the extent possible to facilitate enforcement, but must be closed during the birthing and rearing period.

Actions Taken	Approved by cabinet and implemented as of 2014. http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/regs/oic2014_009.pdf
Status	This measure is complete.





Goal 2 Measure 12: For the purposes of wolf trapping, replace the obligation to complete the current trapper training program with a program specific to trapping wolves. This program could consider separating mandatory (e.g. regulations and legal obligations) and optional (e.g. fur and pelt handling) training requirements. An option to allow for a person to challenge the exam should be considered. As well, the ability for a person to acquire a specific wolf-only trapping authorization should be provided.

<p>Actions Taken</p>	<p>The Government of Yukon has shortened the certified trapper course as well as wait times for training opportunities in communities, which likely reduced these concerns. Due to overall improvements to the whole trapper training program, few requests are heard for a certified wolf-specific training course or trapping authorization. Further ways to use community expertise and enable wolf trapping are being reviewed.</p>
<p>Status</p>	<p>This measure is complete and ongoing (improvements being made to program delivery, especially where regional priorities may differ).</p>

Goal 2 Measure 13: The Government of Yukon should maintain its membership with the Fur Institute of Canada and continue to provide financial support to the national trap research program.

<p>Actions Taken</p>	<p>The Government of Yukon continues to be a member of the Fur Institute of Canada, which manages humane trapping research and sets the standards for certified traps used across Canada.</p>
<p>Status</p>	<p>This measure is complete.</p>

Goal 2 Measure 14: Continue to promote more humane methods of wolf trapping through training and ensure regulations reflect best available technology.

<p>Actions Taken</p>	<p>The Government of Yukon developed a new wolf trapping training curriculum – focused on humane trapping practice and respectful fur handling and skinning technique.</p>
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Collaborations between Yukon Trappers Association, RRCs, FNs, local instructors and the Government of Yukon have resulted in the delivery of wolf trapping workshops across a number of communities including Burwash, Teslin, Haines Junction, Whitehorse, Mayo and Carcross.

Status This measure is complete and ongoing (new methods are periodically reviewed).

Goal 3 Measure 15: Continue to incorporate opportunities in the Environment Yukon Wildlife Viewing Program to learn about wolves and their ecological role, and provide outreach materials for use by the wilderness tourism industry and recreationalists.

Actions Taken Continuing work includes annual Wildlife Viewing “Wild Discoveries” public outdoor talks and wolf talks to educate and inform Yukoners and visitors about wolves. The Wildlife Viewing wolf website information was also reviewed and updated. Opportunities to see wolves are rare.

Status This measure is complete. Continuous options are explored for additional events and outreach opportunities or materials for tourist industry.

Goal 4 Measure 16: Subject to the criteria listed in Goal 4, collaboratively identify priority areas to manage wolves to increase moose and caribou numbers.

Actions Taken The Government of Yukon and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations collaborated on a community-based moose management program for three moose management units in the Alsek area. In 2017, the program entered the final year of a three-year collaborative moose enhancement program involving an intensive community base wolf trapping program (this program is now concluded). Community-driven initiatives that contribute to wolf harvest are of interest in other regions. Meeting the criteria listed in Goal 4 may determine what projects become priorities.

Status This measure requires attention. The Government of Yukon will support community-driven initiatives that contribute to wolf management according to prioritization.





Goal 4 Measure 17: Subject to the criteria listed in Goal 4, collaboratively develop and implement a study design in priority areas which considers local, traditional and scientific knowledge. A program evaluation should take place and determine the impact on wolves, moose and caribou.

Actions Taken	The Government of Yukon, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Alsek RRC and community members collaboratively developed a wolf trapping strategy and scientific study design to monitor wolves and moose for the Alsek community-based moose program. Lessons learned during the evaluation of the Alsek program should be used to guide any future programs. Future programs will require collaboration to determine the scope of wolf, moose and caribou harvest plans and develop community-specific study design prior to program initiation.
Status	This measure requires attention. The Coordinator of the Wolf Management Program prepared an evaluation summary, provided, upon request.

Goal 5 Measure 18: Research and monitoring of ungulate populations should be ongoing to provide information on status and trends.

Actions Taken	Ongoing moose and caribou surveys occur every year including population censuses and composition surveys. The number and type of surveys conducted varies by species, year, and region based on priority areas and as conditions allow.
Status	This measure is ongoing. For a complete list of surveys completed in your region, please contact the regional biologist for the area or the species biologist.





Goal 5 Measure 19: Develop collaborative harvest management plans that include harvest reporting for all users for ungulates in accessible areas. These plans should reflect the best available knowledge on population status and trends, and consider the draft Coordinated Harvest Monitoring Model for the Yukon and the Porcupine Caribou Herd Harvest Management Plan.

Actions Taken	A Harvest Management Plan agreement is a requirement of any local wolf harvest program. A Wildlife Harvest Data Collection and Release Directive and a Template Harvest Data Agreement are in internal review stage.
Status	This measure requires attention. The aim of harvest data collection is that all parties have the data required to undertake their respective responsibilities in collaborative harvest management planning.

Goal 5 Measure 20: Recommendations to local and regional land use planning and environmental assessment processes must address the effects of access, the combined effects of multiple developments on ungulate populations, the identification, management and protection of important ungulate habitats, and goals of guiding ungulate management plans (e.g., federal management plan for Northern Mountain Caribou).

Actions Taken	In 2019, the Government of Yukon hired a cumulative effects biologist in response to demands like this one. The position is intended to build capacity to address these issues, for example working on cumulative effects monitoring within the Beaver River watershed and examining predator-prey interactions. On a broader scale, there is work towards some cumulative effects management tools.
Status	This measure is in progress and is ongoing through local area and regional plans and forest resource management plans.





Goal 6 Measure 21: Working from the existing human-wildlife conflict directive, develop a protocol to address human-wolf conflicts that includes prevention, communication, protecting human life and property and timeliness.

Actions Taken	The human-wildlife conflict guidelines were reviewed and are consistent with the plan. The Government of Yukon continues to monitor and address potential local human-wolf conflict situations. Work includes camera trap monitoring at waste transfer sites and wolf snaring in circumstances deemed as a potential threat to human life or property.
Status	This measure is complete as the conflict directive receives continuous updates and the Government of Yukon continues to monitor and address conflict issues where issues arise.

Goal 6 Measure 22: The 2006 Yukon Agriculture Policy should be reviewed to ensure steps are taken by livestock owners to protect livestock from wolf predation.

Actions Taken	The Agriculture Branch completed a review of the Agriculture Policy in 2019, however wolf predation did not emerge as a specific concern from farmers. The Policy was finalized in 2020 and includes a provision to “develop species-specific standards for fencing that supports livestock containment and minimizes interactions between livestock and wildlife”
Status	This measure was in progress; however, as no specific inclusion of wolf predation measures were included in the 2020 Yukon Agriculture Policy.

Goal 7 Measure 23: Share collective local, traditional and scientific knowledge to be more responsive and address local wolf management issues.

Actions Taken	The Government of Yukon has ungulate and wolf survey reports publically available and shares them with RRCs and First Nations. Our Technical Reporting Program has a developed reporting structure and is improving accessibility to research and report information for the public, boards and councils. Collecting and sharing of local and traditional knowledge is ongoing and occurs through regular contacts between
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government staff and the public, and through several formal programs development by the Government of Yukon's staff, RRCs, and First Nations.

Status

This measure is in progress. Collection and sharing of local and traditional knowledge varies among regions.

Goal 7 Measure 24: Develop and share information that leads to a better understanding of hunting and trapping as legitimate land uses. At times, this information even needs to be shared between hunters and trappers. For example, the conflicts that arise between bison and elk hunters and local area trappers.

Actions

Aspects of this are now incorporated into the hunter and trapper training courses. The Government of Yukon has a communication strategy, which includes trapline signage program and is aimed at reducing multi-use conflicts.

Status

This measure is complete and ongoing.

Goal 7 Measure 25: To facilitate improved communication about wolf management, publish wolf hunting and trapping statistics in Yukon hunting and trapping regulations summaries.

Actions

Hunting Regulations include wolf hunt stats as of 2014-2015. The Government of Yukon is planning for future Trapping Regulations to include sealed fur stats.

Status

This measure is in progress. Until recently, there was poor validation of trapping data and therefore the Government of Yukon was unable to produce statistical outputs but it is anticipating doing so next year.





Goal 7 Measure 26: Work with the Government of Yukon Department of Education to update and promote *Wolves: A Yukon Learning Resource*.

Actions Taken	This resource has not been regularly used in Yukon classrooms or part of the curriculum, since alignment with the Government of British Columbia's curriculum. The resource needs updating with participation from the Department of Education.
Status	This measure requires attention as the new education and outreach program is developed.

Goal 7 Measure 27: Work with the Government of Yukon Department of Education, First Nation governments and the Inuvialuit to develop experiential learning programs that teach wolf conservation and management and harvesting practices.

Actions Taken	The Coordinator of the Wolf Management Program delivered talks on wolf biology and management to camps, schools, trapper education courses and to public audiences.
Status	This is in progress as the new education and outreach program is under development.

