

Finlayson caribou herd late winter census – 2017

The size of the Finlayson caribou herd was estimated six times between 1982 and 2017. A two-phase population survey was done in late winter 2017. The purpose of the survey was to estimate abundance, distribution, calf recruitment (survival) rates, and adult sex ratios. These measures, when monitored over time, are indicators of herd population trends.

Population trend

Since 1990, this herd has been slowly declining; however, the population high in 1990 was a result of an intensive recovery measure. Although this long-term trend has continued, the rate of decline from 2007 to 2017 has slowed compared to the decline observed from 1999 to 2007.

Management

The Finlayson caribou herd is part of the Northern Mountain population of woodland caribou. In response to community concerns that the herd was declining, an intensive population recovery program began in 1983. As a result of these recovery efforts, the herd reached a peak population size of nearly 6,000 animals in 1990. Fall composition surveys have been conducted annually since 1982. An updated population estimate will be conducted in February to March 2022. For more information about the Finlayson herd, view the full survey report at Yukon.ca/woodland-caribou.

Summary of results

Date: March 7 – 10 (stratification)

March 15 – 19 (census)

Hours flown: 17 (stratification)

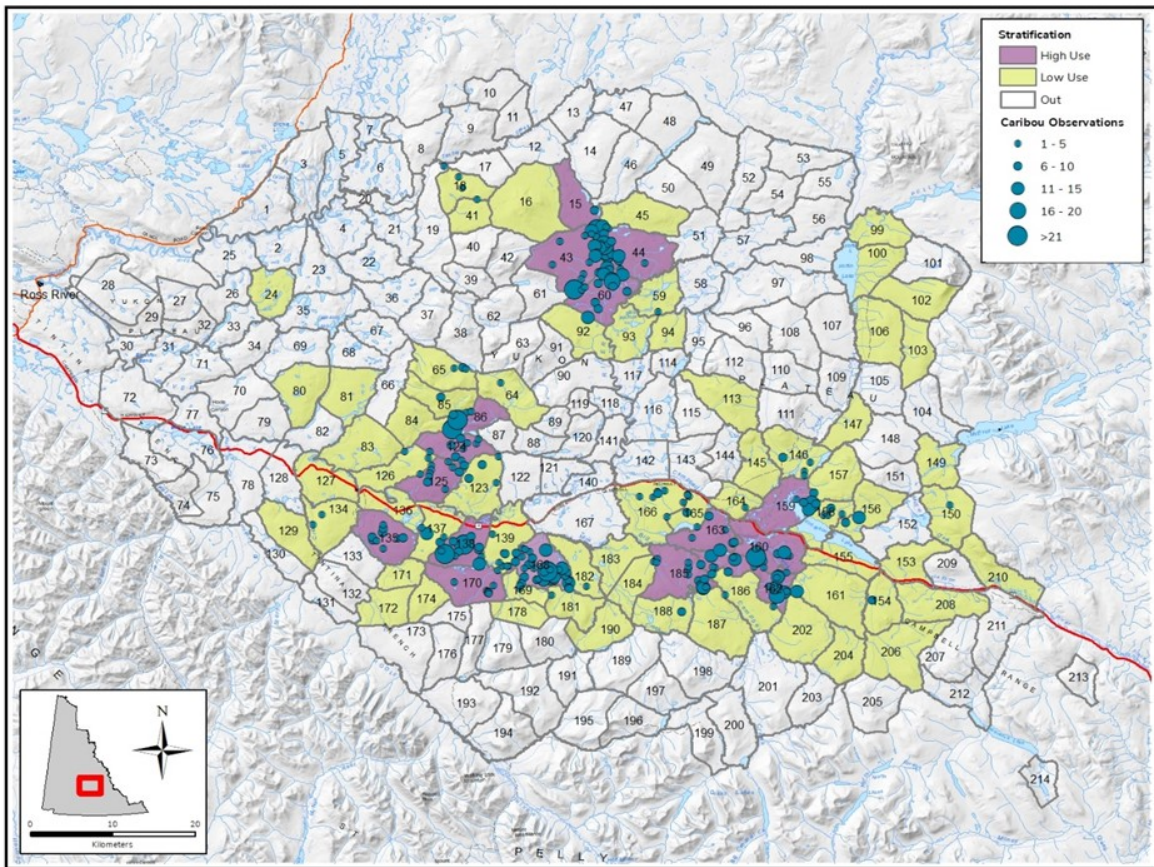
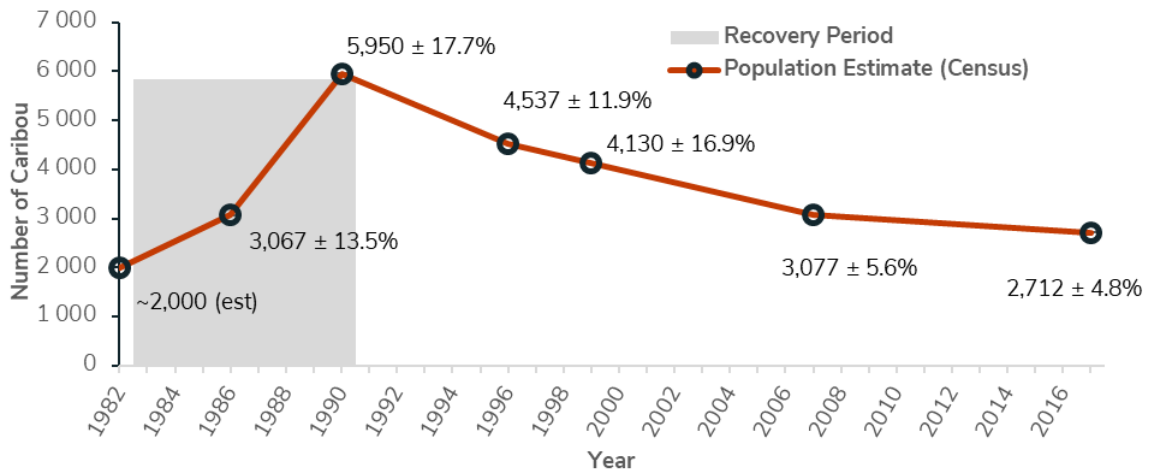
45 (census)

Population estimate:

2,712 (95% CI: 2,454–2,970)

Calf:Cow ratio: 31:100

Bull:Cow ratio: 42:100



Caribou locations and group sizes from the 2017 census.

For more information, please contact

Kelsey Russell, caribou program biologist
Kelsey.Russell@yukon.ca

