



Laberge 2023 Fall Composition Survey

Fall composition surveys are one of the primary monitoring tools for caribou management in the Yukon. From these surveys we get an index of fall recruitment (calves per 100 cows) and sex ratios (bulls per 100 cows), which are indicators of population trend when monitored over time. Except for 2022, these surveys have been conducted on the herd annually since 2011.

Summary of 2023 Results

Date: 13–14 October 2023

Hours Flown: 4.8

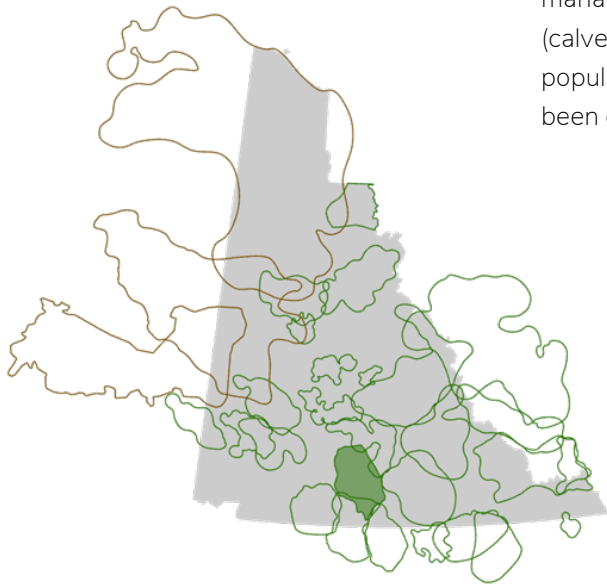
No. of Caribou Observed: 77

Calf:Cow ratio: unable to estimate **Bull:Cow ratio:** unable to estimate

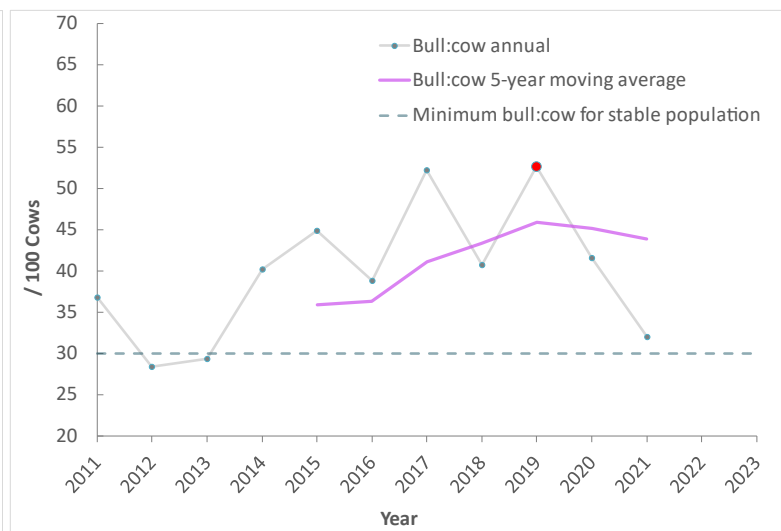
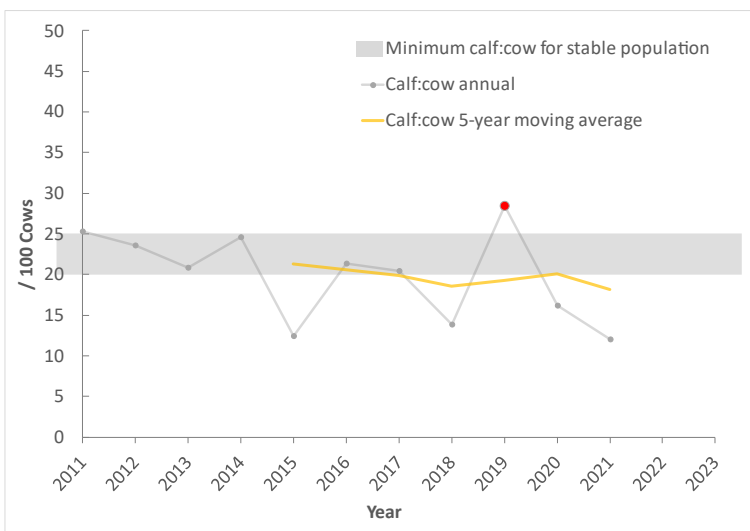
Population Trend: Stable (2019)

In 2019, composition survey results, anecdotal observations, and the 2019 population survey indicated that the herd was stable. In 2023, the number of caribou observed was lower than expected, possibly due to caribou having already descended from their high elevation rutting ranges at the time of the survey. We were unable to estimate calf:cow and bull:cow ratios because of the small sample size.

Note: 77 caribou observed is a minimum count of the herd, not an estimate of the total population. The low number of observations is indicative of poor survey conditions and timing, rather than a population decline.



Caribou herds of Yukon (Laberge Highlighted)



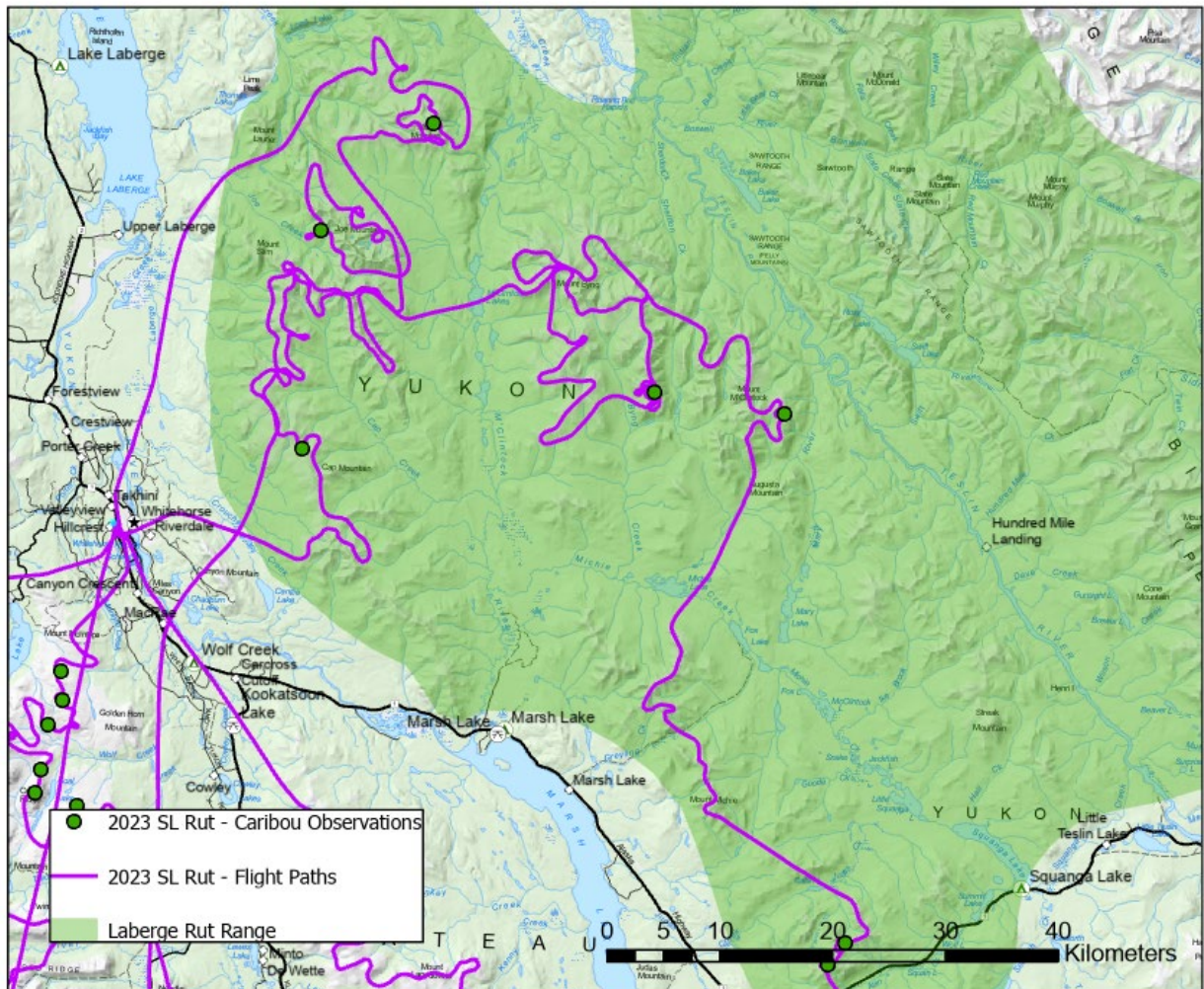
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Kelsey Russell, Caribou Biologist, Kelsey.Russell@yukon.ca





Management: The Southern Lakes Caribou Recovery Program began in 1993 as a cooperative effort to recover the Carcross, Ibex, Laberge and Atlin caribou herds from historic declines. The Southern Lakes Caribou Steering Committee is currently developing a Relationship Plan for Southern Lakes Caribou (expected completion in 2024). For more information about the North Carcross/Laberge herd, visit yukon.ca/en/woodland-caribou or www.southernlakescaribou.com.



Map 1. Flight paths and caribou observations from the 2023 Laberge/North Carcross composition survey in the Yukon

Acknowledgements

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