

THE LAKE SUPERIOR CARIBOU

Update - 21/01/19

STATUS

Mainland Populations:

- **North Shore** - Rossport to Marathon
~ < 10 caribou extremely low and declining
 Critical immediate danger of extirpation
- **Northeast Shore** - Pukaskwa National Park and east to Michipicoten Bay
 Extirpated 2011
- **East Shore** - Lake Superior Provincial Park
 Extirpated 2009

Off Shore Island Populations:

- **Slate Islands**
~ 30 caribou low but increasing
 Of Concern low population security and genetic diversity
- **Caribou Island**
~ 15 caribou very low but increasing
 Of Concern low population security and genetic diversity
- **Michipicoten Island**
 Extirpated 2018
- **Leach Island**
 Extirpated 2000s
- **Montreal Island**
 Extirpated 1994

Note: Status is for recent populations. All other mainland and island populations around Lake Superior have been previously extirpated.

CONSERVATION ACTION PRIORITIES

- North Shore - Rossport to Marathon

- Action: Rescue - Move remaining caribou to a wolf-free island. Slate Islands or Michipicoten Island would be recipients.
- Rationale: Genetic Diversity - Retain last of mainland genetics. Best stock for future restorations.
- Urgency - It is too late for other actions to conserve in place.
-  Timing: URGENT - Must be done early this winter to save as many animals as possible.
- Plan: None - The Ontario Government is not acting on this.

- Michipicoten Island

- Action: Restoration - Move caribou back from Slate Islands and Caribou Island.
- Rationale: Population Security - Restart main anchor population for Lake Superior.
-  Timing: Soon - As soon as caribou become available
- Plan: In Preparation - For winter 2022. Part of overall benefit agreement for caribou related to power line twinning project north of Lake Superior.
- Note: Wolves - There were still 2 wolves in the island in spring 2020. The island must be wolf free before caribou can be restored.

- Caribou Island

- Action: Supplementation - Add at least 1 new adult male and ideally a female.
- Rationale: Genetic Diversity - Founding population was extremely low at 4 females and only 2 males.
-  Timing: Soon - As soon as caribou become available.
- Plan: None

- Slate Islands

- Action: Supplementation - Add at least 1 new adult male.
- Rationale: Genetic Diversity - Founding population was very low at 8 females and only 3 males at most.
-  Timing: Soon - As soon as caribou become available.
- Plan: None - But could be accomplished by rescue of north shore caribou.

- Other Extirpated Populations

- Action: Restorations
- Rationale: Population Security - Increase caribou numbers and range occupancy.
- Timing: Near Future - As soon as caribou become available.
- Plans: None - But proposed by First Nations for their traditional areas.

WHAT CAN I DO?

URGENT: If you want the last of the Lake Superior mainland caribou conserved...

- **Write In** - Take a few minutes right now to write notes to each of Ontario Premier Ford and Minister Yurek of the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks and to your MPP. Ask them to rescue the last of the mainland caribou on the north shore of Lake Superior right away.

Short notes are great - they just need to know that a lot of people care about this.

- **Get Others to Write In** - Over the next few days, get as many other people to write in as you can, and ask them to get as many people as they can to write in.

Email Addresses:

Premier Ford premier@ontario.ca

Minister Yurek minister.mecp@ontario.ca

MPPs <https://www.ola.org/en/members/current/contact-information>

Note: Politicians won't act unless they think the majority of people want them to.

They count these notes, so your voice does matter.

NEXT: If you want to start the restoration of the Lake Superior caribou...

- Write to Premier Ford and Minister Yurek and ask them to start restoring the Lake Superior caribou - particularly on the mainland.
- Get as many other people to write in as you can, and ask them to get as many people as they can to write in.

Population loss and range recession is the process of species extinction.

Population restoration and range re-occupancy moves towards sustainability.

CARIBOU STORIES

If you have a story about caribou in the Lake Superior area, we would love to hear it. Send us anything, but we really want to hear about any recent sightings on the mainland. Historical sightings, particularly of groups of caribou, are also very interesting. These can be your stories or ones you've heard from your older relatives and elders.

Send them to lakesuperiorcaribou@gmail.com

We'll keep them to ourselves unless you want us to print them here for others to read.

As someone said - the way to preserve oral history is to write it down.