



Healthy Land, Healthy People

GNWT Priorities for the NWT Conservation Network

Territoire en santé, population en santé

Priorités du GTNO pour le réseau de conservation des TNO



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Executive Summary

The purpose of the *Healthy Land, Healthy People: GNWT Priorities for the Northwest Territories Conservation Network 2023-2028* (HLHP 2023-2028) work plan is to guide the Government of Northwest Territories' (GNWT) work on the establishment, planning, management, and operation of the Northwest Territories (NWT) conservation network, and associated conservation initiatives, from 2023 to 2028.

HLHP 2023-2028 was developed based on outstanding items from the previous *Healthy Land, Healthy People 2016-2021* work plan, new legislative requirements, engagement with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations, and input from a 2021 public survey.

Five priority outcomes, 19 objectives, and 27 milestones have been identified. Much of the work required to achieve the priority outcomes will be advanced collaboratively with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, and other partners. The five priority outcomes are:

1. Advance planning and decision-making on the establishment of protected areas.
2. Support the effective and equitable management of national, territorial and Indigenous protected areas and conservation areas.

3. Inform and educate the public about the conservation network.
4. Pursue sustainable, long-term funding for the establishment, planning, management, and operation of protected areas.
5. Support Indigenous-led conservation and stewardship initiatives.

The work plan also provides a comprehensive overview of conservation efforts in the NWT to date, including the significant leadership role Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations are taking to conserve and steward lands and waters and to secure sustainable, long-term funding for initiatives that contribute to international and national biodiversity targets.

A summary of existing protected area and conservation area designations in the NWT, candidate protected area nomination criteria, and a list of the conservation and stewardship interests identified by Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations for future consideration is provided in the Appendices.

Sommaire

Le plan *Territoire en santé, population en santé : Priorités du GTNO pour la planification du réseau de conservation de 2023 à 2028* vise à orienter le travail du gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (GTNO) quant à l'établissement, la planification, la gestion et la mise en œuvre du réseau de conservation des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (TNO) et des initiatives de conservation afférentes de 2023 à 2028.

Ce plan a été établi en tenant compte d'une évaluation des dossiers en suspens du plan de travail *Territoire en santé, population en santé de 2016 à 2021*, de nouvelles exigences prévues par la loi, des échanges organisés avec les gouvernements et les organisations autochtones et des commentaires d'un sondage réalisé auprès de la population au début de l'année 2021.

Cinq résultats prioritaires, 19 objectifs et 27 étapes ont été identifiés. Une grande partie du travail nécessaire pour atteindre les résultats prioritaires sera réalisée en collaboration avec les gouvernements autochtones, les organisations autochtones et d'autres partenaires. Les cinq résultats prioritaires sont les suivants :

1. planification et prise de décision concernant la création d'aires protégées;
2. soutien à la gestion efficace et équitable des aires protégées et des zones de conservation nationales, territoriales et autochtones;

3. sensibilisation et éducation du public sur le réseau de conservation;
4. recherche de financement durable et à long terme pour la création, la planification, la gestion et la mise en valeur des aires protégées;
5. soutien des initiatives de conservation et d'intendance dirigées par les Autochtones.

Le plan de travail fournit également une synthèse complète des efforts de conservation déployés à ce jour aux TNO, y compris le rôle de premier plan que les gouvernements et les organisations autochtones jouent dans la conservation et la gestion des terres et des eaux et dans la garantie d'un financement durable et à long terme pour les initiatives qui contribuent à la réalisation des objectifs internationaux et nationaux en matière de biodiversité.

Les annexes présentent un résumé des aires protégées et des zones de conservation existantes aux TNO, les critères de désignation des aires protégées proposées et une liste d'intérêts en matière de conservation et d'intendance définis par les gouvernements autochtones et les organisations autochtones en vue d'un examen futur.



Glossary of Terms

Biodiversity:

The full variety of life in a given region, including the biological and genetic diversity of plants and animals.

Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD):¹

A national database that Canadian jurisdictions provide spatial and attribute data of their marine or terrestrial protected and conserved areas to annually. The national database is managed by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and tracks progress towards Canada's area-based conservation targets. Data from the national database feeds into the World Protected Areas Database where progress towards achieving global area-based conservation targets is tracked.

¹ Government of Canada. (2022). Canadian protected and conserved areas database. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/national-wildlife-areas/protected-conserved-areas-database.html>

Candidate protected area under the *Protected Areas Act*:

A nominated protected area that is approved by the Executive Council as a candidate protected area under the *Protected Areas Act*.

Candidate protected area:

An area that has progressed to at least step four – consider/apply interim protection to candidate area – of the former *Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy*.

Climate:

The historical record and description of average daily and in seasonal weather events that help describe a region. Statistics are generally drawn over several decades. It differs from weather, which is concerned with short term or instantaneous variations in the state of the atmosphere at a specific time.²

² Government of Canada (2023). Historical climate data, glossary. Retrieved from https://climate.weather.gc.ca/glossary_e.html

Conservation area:

Defined by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) as a clearly defined geographical area that protects natural and cultural values, and contributes to the conservation network by providing complementary, but less restrictive, protection than protected areas. For example, these could include areas such as territorial parks that have no subsurface protection or conservation zoning in approved regional land use plans that are subject to periodic review and potential plan amendments. The Northwest Territories (NWT) reports conservation areas as other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD).

Conservation network:

The GNWT defines the conservation network as including protected areas and conservation areas. Collectively, these areas contribute more effectively to maintaining the integrity of ecosystems, biodiversity, and sustaining cultural continuity than individual sites could alone. The GNWT recognizes that the conservation network is one contributor to maintaining biodiversity in the NWT. Land use planning, Indigenous-led stewardship and Guardians programs, wildlife range planning, water stewardship initiatives, and the regulatory regime are other examples of the spectrum of tools for stewardship, landscape management and maintenance of biodiversity and connectivity in the land surrounding the conservation network.

Conservation zones:

One type of zoning within regional land use plans. They are areas of significant traditional, cultural, heritage and ecological importance in which specified land uses are prohibited and allowable land uses are subject to conditions laid out in the land use plans.³ Typically, land use plans are reviewed every five years.

³ The term conservation zone is used in the Sahtú and Gwich'in land use plans. The Tłı̨chǫ Land Use Plan does not use this language but has other names for zones with similar purposes.

Cultural continuity:

The evolving linkages and ongoing relationship between each Indigenous culture and the natural environment. This also encompasses the transmission of knowledge across generations through time.⁴

Ecological representation:

Protecting a representative sample of the full variety of habitats in a region to help ensure the long-term persistence of all species and ecosystems within a protected areas network.

Ecoregion:

Terrestrial ecoregions are large natural regions characterized by distinctive regional climate, physical features, types of vegetation and soil types.⁵

Ecosystem:

A complex of living organisms and the abiotic environment with which they interact in a specified location. In other words, it is a local network of interacting plants and animals, and the landscape in which they live.⁶

Ecological integrity:

The native components and conditions of the ecosystems that are characteristic of a region and that are likely to persist into the future.⁷

⁴ Auger, M. D. (2016). Cultural Continuity as a Determinant of Indigenous Peoples' Health: A Metasynthesis of Qualitative Research in Canada and the United States. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 7(4).

⁵ Government of Northwest Territories. (2016). Northwest Territories State of the Conservation Network. Retrieved from https://www.gov.nt.ca/sites/ecc/files/resources/state_of_conservation_network_report_web.pdf

⁶ United Nations. (1992). Convention of Biological Diversity. Retrieved from <https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf>

⁷ *Protected Areas Act*, SNWT 2019, c. 11

Ecosystem services:

Direct and indirect contributions of ecosystems to human well-being that have an impact on our survival and quality of life. These include provisioning services such as food and water; regulating services such as flood and disease control; cultural services such as spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; and supporting services, such as nutrient cycling, which maintain the conditions for life on Earth.⁸

Ethical space:

An approach to nurturing relationships between Indigenous and public governments on multiple levels – not just on a political level – and based on the principles of collaboration and mutual respect for multiple knowledge systems to achieve common ground.⁹

Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs):

IPCAs are lands and waters where Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations have the primary role in protecting and conserving ecosystems through Indigenous laws, governance, and knowledge systems. Culture and language are fundamental to these areas.¹⁰

Management plan:

A management plan guides the management of a protected area and includes conservation and cultural continuity objectives, indicators, management actions, and a review process that takes into consideration climate change impacts.

⁸ Millennium Assessment Reports. (2005). Retrieved from <https://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/index.html>

⁹ We Rise Together: Achieving Pathway to Canada Target 1 through the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the spirit and practice of reconciliation. The Indigenous Circle of Experts Report and Recommendations, March 2018

¹⁰ We Rise Together: Achieving Pathway to Canada Target 1 through the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the spirit and practice of reconciliation. The Indigenous Circle of Experts Report and Recommendations, March 2018

Regional land use plans:

Legally binding documents that balance a range of comprehensive interests to define where certain activities can take place. Regional land use plans include zoning for areas that permit all land use activities subject to regulatory processes and approvals, areas that permit specific land use activities while respecting cultural and ecological values, and areas where key land use activities are prohibited and are intended for conservation. Regional land use plans are reviewed regularly and amended to ensure plans are meeting interests and priorities.

Nature-based solutions:

Actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously benefiting people and nature. These societal challenges include climate change, disaster risk reduction, food and water security, biodiversity loss and human health, and are critical to sustainable economic development.¹¹

Nominated area:

An area nominated for the Minister's consideration as a protected area under the *Protected Areas Act*. An Indigenous government or Indigenous organization or the Executive Council may nominate to the Minister an area to be considered for approval as a candidate protected area.¹²

Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM):

As defined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and adopted by Canada an OECM is "A geographically defined area other than a protected area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services where applicable with cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values."¹³

¹¹ IUCN. (2020). IUCN global standard for nature-based solutions: A user-friendly framework for the verification, design and scaling up of nature-based solutions (1st ed.). Gland, Switzerland. Retrieved from <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49070>

¹² *Protected Areas Act*, SNWT 2019, c. 11

¹³ Accounting for Protected and Other Conserved Areas. Conservation 2020 Canada, July 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/accounting>

Project Finance for Permanence (PFP):

A comprehensive funding arrangement between partners including governments at all levels and investors, designed to sustain healthy land, protect areas of cultural and ecological importance while supporting and diversifying local economies.

Protected area:

A clearly defined geographical area, recognized, dedicated, and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.¹⁴

Protected areas registry:

A publicly available online repository containing all relevant information on candidate and established protected areas outlined in section 9(2) (a) to (0) in the *Protected Areas Act*.

Territorial protected areas:

Protected areas established under the *Protected Areas Act*.

Territorial wildlife conservation areas:

Conservation areas established under the *Wildlife Act*.



¹⁴ Dudley, N. (Editor) (2008). *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. x + 86pp. WITH Stolton, S., P. Shadie and N. Dudley (2013). *IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guidance on Recognizing Protected Areas and Assigning Management Categories and Governance Types*, Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 21, Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. xxpp



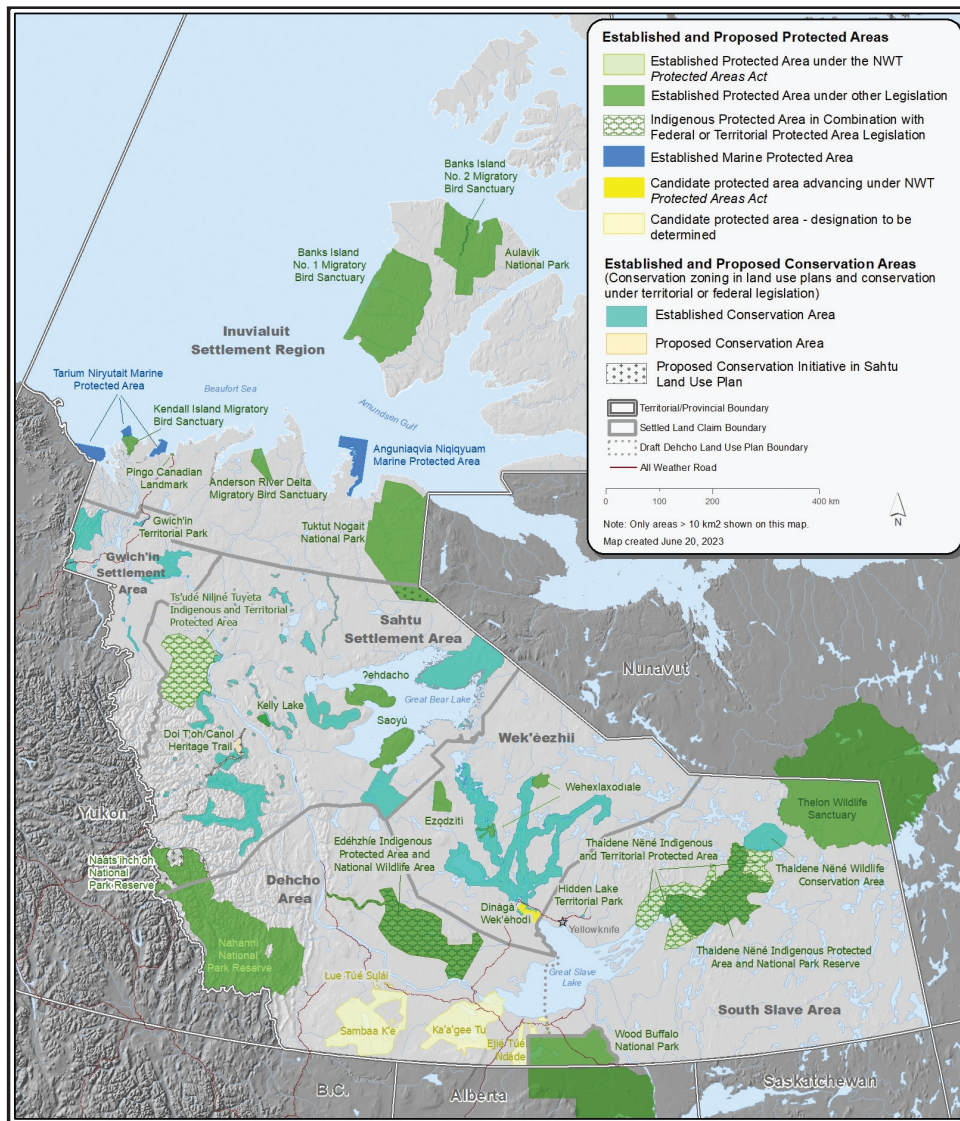
Introduction

The Northwest Territories (NWT) is a vast and largely undisturbed landscape that is rich with biodiversity and diverse, sensitive, and unique species and ecosystems. At the same time, these are also culturally significant landscapes where people have lived and prospered for generations, creating deep relationships and connections to the land. Recognizing the value of these landscapes, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is committed to ensuring the land and waters of the NWT are managed for the long-term health of the natural environment, cultural continuity, and sustainable economic development for current and future generations.

Central to the goal of protecting biodiversity and a healthy landscape is the development of a robust conservation network. In the NWT, the conservation network is made up of protected areas and conservation areas (see Map 1 below and Appendix A), that work together to protect biodiversity, ecological integrity, and the ways of life of the people of the NWT. Other forms of land and natural resource management, including provisions in land claim agreements, conformity requirements in regional land use plans, wildlife co-management, wildlife range planning, environmental assessment, and regulation of land and natural resource uses, also complement the conservation network.

Beyond the role the conservation network plays in protecting lands, waters, and livelihoods in the territory, the network also serves as a key driver for sustainable economic land-based diversification, community health and well-being, food security, ecosystem services, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.





Map 1: NWT Conservation Network, Candidate Protected Areas,¹⁶ and Proposed Conservation Areas

The GNWT is dedicated to a northern approach to conservation network planning to ensure these values are maintained into the future by strengthening existing partnerships and establishing new relationships with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations. This includes a commitment by the GNWT to explore how the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples can be implemented within the constitutional framework of Canada and to work in partnership with Indigenous governments on this priority. The GNWT is committed to working on a government-to-government basis to make changes that reflect the principles set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Indigenous Circle of Experts, a group of Indigenous leaders that was formed to support and advise the Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative,¹⁵ provides a useful approach called ethical space, for Indigenous and public governments to work together in a collaborative and respectful manner.

Ethical space is co-created through mutual recognition and adoption of Indigenous cosmologies, philosophies, worldviews, and methodologies. The GNWT strives to create ethical space through establishment processes and management board operations.

To ensure that the values and potential held by the NWT conservation network are realized and integrated into broader territorial government, Indigenous government and Indigenous organization initiatives, this work plan guides the GNWT's priorities and work on the establishment, planning, management, and operation of the NWT conservation network and associated conservation initiatives over the next five years.

¹⁵ Pathway to Canada Target 1 was a partnership of federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments that came together to meet Canada's area-based conservation target of protecting at least 17% of terrestrial areas and inland waters, and 10% of marine and coastal area of Canada by 2023. <https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/home>

¹⁶ For clarity, Map 1 depicts established protected areas under federal and territorial legislation, candidate protected areas, and areas that GNWT reports to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) as effective area-based conservation measures. The GNWT notes there is a suite of land protection mechanisms in place across the NWT, including interim protections of land, which restrict and impose conditions on land use activities but are not depicted on Map 1 as they do not directly contribute to GNWT's reporting to CPCAD. It is also noted that Map 1 is not intended to depict conservation or other land protection or land management initiatives in progress or under discussion in the NWT, including areas listed in Appendix C and regional land use plans.



Conservation in the Northwest Territories

For decades, the GNWT, Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, communities, and other planning partners in the NWT have worked together to develop the conservation network.

In 1999, the finalization of the *Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy* formalized a collaborative planning process involving communities, governments, environmental non-governmental organizations, and industry. Through this community-led process, the Saoyú-?ehdacho National Historic Site was established, several areas of interest were identified across the territory, and a series of assessments were conducted for each area to provide the information necessary to work towards formal designation. In addition to a suite of other tools that provide land protections and impose conditions on land use activities, currently 17.3% of the NWT has been established as protected areas or conservation areas.

Building on the *Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy* and preparing for a more active role in land management resulting from the 2014 devolution of authority from the federal to the territorial government, the GNWT developed *Healthy Land, Healthy People* in 2016, the first five-year work plan to advance conservation network planning in the territory. This work plan set out two overarching priority outcomes:

1. Conclude the planning and decision-making processes for each of the existing candidate protected areas.
2. Develop a renewed strategy for conservation network planning in partnership with Indigenous governments and other partners.



Significant progress was made to advance the conservation network over this period. One of the central achievements was the 2019 enactment of the *Protected Areas Act*, which the GNWT developed collaboratively with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, and regulatory boards, and through engagement with non-government organizations, industry representatives, and the public. The *Protected Areas Act* provides a new uniquely collaborative means to protect, conserve, and maintain the biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural continuity of the territory through the creation of territorial protected areas, which are cooperatively planned, established, and managed with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations.

Through the *Protected Areas Act*, and financially supported by the Canada Nature Fund, two new Territorial and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs), Thaidene Nënë and Ts'udé Niljné Tuyeta, have been established, significantly expanding the conservation network. In addition, connected to Thaidene Nënë, the GNWT also established a Wildlife Conservation Area and collaborated with Parks Canada and Indigenous government partners on the establishment of a National Park Reserve. The GNWT also worked with Indigenous and federal partners on the establishment of the Edézhíe Dehcho Protected Area and National Wildlife Area.

Beyond the expansion of the network and innovations in the legislative framework for conservation, the GNWT has dedicated considerable effort to increasing the understanding and awareness of, as well as capacity to support, conservation

efforts in the NWT. Territorial government staff and leadership made significant contributions to national projects, such as the Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative,¹⁷ the Indigenous Circle of Experts, the Canadian Parks Council, and the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas. Within the territory, ongoing work has focused on building a network of conservation practitioners by bringing experts in to provide training, share insights from other jurisdictions, and study the challenges facing northern conservation efforts. Recent highlights of this work include the May 2021 NWT Conservation Network Gathering in Yellowknife that brought together practitioners from across the territory and experts from around Canada to learn and share from each other, and in early 2021, a series of training sessions on Healthy Country Planning, an Indigenous-led conservation planning tool developed in Australia. Both projects demonstrate the extent to which territorial interest and capacity in conservation has grown over the past five years.

While much progress has been made on the two priority outcomes from *Healthy Land, Healthy People 2016-2021*, some items from the original work plan are outstanding. The GNWT outlines priority outcomes to address these in this work plan and looks forward to continued progress on the NWT conservation network.

¹⁷ Pathway to Canada Target 1 was a partnership of federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments that came together to meet Canada's area-based conservation target of protecting of at least 17% of terrestrial areas and inland waters, and 10% of marine and coastal area of Canada by 2023. <https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/home>



Protecting What's Important

Recent years have seen great innovation and progress in conservation initiatives across the country. Building upon decades of effort and invention, the conservation field has grown and matured.

Key to the growth and momentum of conservation in Canada are two factors: a commitment to engage with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, and communities as partners and leaders in protecting land and waters, and a renewed commitment to robust national and international biodiversity targets.





Indigenous leadership

There is a growing recognition of the important role of Indigenous leadership and stewardship in conservation, as well as the often-damaging history of conservation efforts on Indigenous communities. Research from the United Nations suggests Indigenous lands make up only around 20% of the Earth's territory but contain as much as 80% of the world's remaining biodiversity – a sign Indigenous peoples are effective stewards of the environment.¹⁸ Indigenous peoples, employing land management practices that have stewarded their territories for generations, continue to ensure socio-ecological systems are protected, and their ways of life are sustained. For Canada, and the world, to meet its conservation targets, it is essential to learn from, support and work with Indigenous peoples.

In Canada, a central focus of the discussion around Indigenous leadership in conservation has been the concept of IPCAs, which was developed and adopted by the Indigenous Circle of Experts, a group of Indigenous leaders that was formed to support and provide advice to the Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative. The final report of the Indigenous Circle of Experts, *We Rise Together*, describes these areas as having a spectrum of governance structures and management objectives and sharing three key elements:

- They are Indigenous-led conservation initiatives that reflect the objectives and needs of their respective nations or governments and emerge through transparent negotiations.
- They represent a long-term commitment to conserve lands and waters for future generations, as aligned with Indigenous peoples' multi-generational view of stewarding their territories; and
- They elevate Indigenous rights and responsibilities and ensure Indigenous peoples' continued relationship with and authority over the land and water is assured.¹⁹

IPCAs not only provide for long-term conservation and stewardship but do so while promoting respect for Indigenous knowledge systems, protocols, and ceremony, supporting the revitalization of Indigenous languages, building economic opportunities, protecting food security, and employing holistic approaches to management planning.

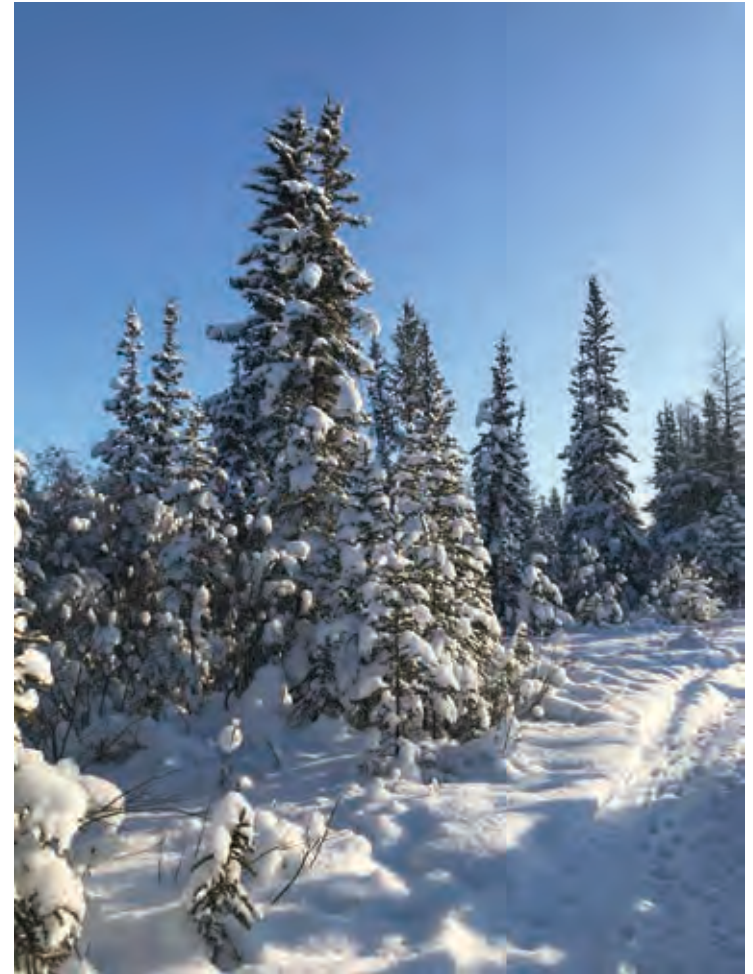
¹⁸ Government of Canada. (2022). Partnership with Indigenous peoples, provincial, territorial governments is key to progress and protection of nature. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/news/2022/12/partnership-with-indigenous-peoples-provincial-and-territorial-governments-is-the-key-to-progress-and-protection-of-nature.html>

¹⁹ *We Rise Together: Achieving Pathway to Canada Target 1 through the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the spirit and practice of reconciliation. The Indigenous Circle of Experts Report and Recommendations*, March 2018

As described in the report of the Indigenous Circle of Experts, IPCAs can vary in terms of their governance and management objectives. IPCAs can be entirely governed by an Indigenous government or Indigenous organization, or Indigenous governments or Indigenous organizations may choose to partner with federal, provincial or territorial governments by adopting shared decision-making or joint management mechanisms defined by agreements. It is up to each Indigenous government or Indigenous organization to identify which governance and management approach is most appropriate to them.

There are a range of models for IPCAs. On public land an IPCA designation, on its own, does not add legal protection to an area; however, if co-designated with a territorial, provincial, or federal protected area or conservation area designation it does. On Indigenous owned land, an IPCA designation may, on its own, provide legal protection. As a result, some IPCAs will contribute to the NWT conservation network and national and international conservation targets, while others might not. IPCAs that meet the criteria for protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) are reported to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD). Currently, this includes IPCAs that have been co-designated with territorial, provincial, or federal protected areas legislation. IPCAs on Indigenous owned lands that meet the criteria for protected areas or OECMs can also be reported to CPCAD if supported by Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations.

In the NWT, several IPCAs have been established through Indigenous law (e.g., band council resolutions, regional assembly resolutions, ratification votes, or through a law of a self-government agreement) and three of these, Ts'udé Niljné Tuyeta, Thaidene Nënë and Edézhíe, have been co-designated as federal or territorial protected areas, resulting in legal protection. There is significant interest in IPCAs in the NWT and for associated Guardians and stewardship programs. In some cases, Indigenous governments or Indigenous organizations may also be interested in further legal protections through GNWT legislation or land use plan zoning. GNWT decisions to support IPCA designations and associated stewardship initiatives are independent of GNWT decisions regarding further legislative protection. While the GNWT may support an IPCA designation by an Indigenous government or Indigenous organization, decisions on whether to support further legislative protection will be made case-by-case.





Long-term funding for conservation

The establishment of a conservation network is only one part of the broader conservation effort. Ensuring that a protected area, and the conservation network generally, are effectively managed and operated to support ecological and cultural goals is crucial. Achieving these goals requires ongoing and sustainable financing to support the establishment, planning, management, and operations of protected areas.

One approach to long-term funding is a Project Finance for Permanence (PFP). These comprehensive funding arrangements between partners, including governments and philanthropic donors, have been used to secure a large amount of funding for conservation and stewardship initiatives. This tool has been used in Canada and internationally to achieve the dual purpose of protecting areas of cultural and ecological importance while supporting and diversifying local economies. For example, the Great Bear Rainforest PFP agreements in 2006 resulted in significant funds that led to the creation of new permanent jobs, research projects, businesses, and established regional capacity.²⁰

The potential opportunity of an NWT PFP was brought forward by PEW Charitable Trusts and the process is being coordinated by the Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI), with the International Boreal Conservation Campaign (IBCC). They are facilitating the NWT PFP Working Group, which includes representatives from Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, the GNWT, the federal government, and the PEW Charitable Trusts. The Working Group will jointly develop a framework agreement that outlines how the PFP, if successful, will be used and managed. This may include conservation, Guardians programs, healing and on the land programs, and sustainable economic development.

On December 7, 2022, at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (COP15), Canada announced up to \$800 million in funding, starting in fiscal year 2023-2024, to support four Indigenous-led PFP initiatives, including the NWT PFP. This means a portion of the \$800 million fund could be directed to NWT conservation initiatives if an agreement is secured.

²⁰ Coast Funds. (2022). Sustaining people and place: 15 years of conservation finance in the Great Bear Rainforest and Haida Gwaii 2007-2022. Retrieved from <https://coastfunds.ca/news/sustaining-people-place/>

International and national biodiversity targets

The most globally recognized way to protect biodiversity is through national and global targets to conserve land and water. Both the global (Aichi Target 11) and national (Canada Target 1) targets in the 2011-2020 global and national biodiversity strategy aimed to protect 17% of Canada's lands and freshwater and 10% of marine and coastal areas by 2020.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) developed a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which was adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP15) meeting in December 2022. Target 3 of this framework is the area-based conservation target that builds on the previous target and aims to protect 30% of global land, freshwater and marine and coastal areas by 2030. Following the release of global biodiversity targets, member countries to the Convention on Biological Diversity, including Canada, are expected to develop their own national biodiversity strategies to reflect their regional actions to achieve the global framework.

To achieve the 2020 global and national terrestrial area-based conservation target, the multi-partner Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative, which included local, provincial, territorial, federal governments, national Indigenous representatives, developed a plan for how jurisdictions could reach Canada's Target 1. The resulting *One with Nature* report provided broad guidance for this effort including best practices and indicators for making and measuring success.²¹ In addition, the federal government invested significant funding through the Canada Nature Fund to support projects that add to Canada's conservation target and has announced complementary funding for nature-based solutions as part of its most recent budget.

Beyond the Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative, the federal government has committed to conserve and protect 25% of Canada's land and 25% of Canada's oceans by 2025, and work towards 30% of each by 2030,²² and has committed considerable funds to achieve these goals. While the GNWT will continue to engage in national conservation discussions, decisions on the expansion of the conservation network in the NWT will continue to be made in collaboration with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, and stakeholders as part of a broader discussion on land management. This work will contribute to, but is not based on, these federal targets.



²¹ One with Nature: A Renewed Approach to Land and Freshwater Conservation in Canada 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.conservation2020canada.ca/home>

²² A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy. Government of Canada 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/climate-plan/climate-plan-overview/healthy-environment-healthy-economy.html#tc8>



Amidst discussions of more ambitious targets and engagement with Indigenous peoples, territorial and federal governments continue to strive to work to address various conservation concerns. Central to this pursuit are questions around how to leverage protected areas and conservation areas to mitigate the impacts of climate change, ensure that the conservation network remains well-connected, manage these remote areas effectively and efficiently, and build and maintain diversified local economies. The NWT is facing each of these challenges, but through collaboration with Indigenous, territorial, and federal governments, there is opportunity to find innovative and effective solutions.

Protected areas and conservation areas are a nature-based solution to climate change

In the NWT, as in all northern regions, climate change will continue to have a significant impact on the landscapes and ways of life that have evolved to thrive in a cold climate. The conservation network offers a nature-based solution as part of a broader set of solutions by providing refuge for increasingly threatened species and ecosystems, protection from human industrial disturbance, and provides monitoring opportunities to better understand the scope of change in the NWT.

Connectivity

Increasingly it is understood and acknowledged that a conservation network cannot be a collection of protected ecological islands. Instead, the network needs to be well-connected to counter the impacts of ecosystem fragmentation and provide greater resilience in the face of a changing climate. However, climate change and ongoing development can create a challenge for future connectivity. To ensure connectivity is maintained, the conservation network planning needs to be complemented by broader land management efforts, including regional land use planning, wildlife range planning and other land and water stewardship initiatives. The 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework, NWT Water Stewardship Strategy, GNWT Land Use and Sustainability Framework, and *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* also set out an overarching vision for a healthy landscape. The GNWT is committed to ensuring lands in the territory remain healthy and sustainably managed. This vision is set out in the government's Land Use and Sustainability Framework.

Supporting Indigenous Guardians

Increasingly, Indigenous communities are championing, developing, and implementing Guardians programs. Guardians are often described as the ‘boots-on-the-ground’ and the ‘eyes and ears’ of the territory. These programs employ Indigenous community members to act as stewards on the land, patrolling, monitoring, collecting data, and providing technical assistance to conservation officers and scientists while also educating visitors about proper land use. Moreover, Guardians programs have a direct link to strengthening culture by educating Indigenous youth on cultural values and conservation laws, building opportunities to share Indigenous worldviews with visitors and other land users, and creating sustainable livelihoods. In the NWT, Guardians programs are increasingly central to the management of protected areas and IPCAs as well as for land, water and wildlife outside of protected areas.

Development of Healthy Land, Healthy People 2023-2028

This plan was developed based on a review of outstanding items from the original *Healthy Land, Healthy People 2016-2021* work plan, operational changes resulting from new legislative requirements, input from a public survey in early 2021 on the next steps for the NWT conservation network, and engagement with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations throughout 2022. The public survey highlighted several key sentiments including a desire to see the existing priorities from the original work plan carry forward, further focus on partnerships and collaboration, an emphasis on maximizing the value of conservation to northerners by supporting economic development interests, and additional support for capacity building among conservation partners. Further details about the feedback received through this public survey can be found online at the Department of Environment and Climate Change website.





Priority Outcomes for the Territorial Conservation Network and Conservation Initiatives 2023-2028

Recognizing that conservation is a key part of maintaining a healthy landscape for current and future generations, it is important to continue looking ahead. This section of the document outlines the GNWT's priority outcomes and work plan objectives for developing, managing, and operating protected areas and conservation areas, and supporting broader NWT conservation and stewardship initiatives over the next five years. These aim to capture the expectations of respondents, meet the GNWT's legislated responsibilities, advance the conservation network, and support related conservation initiatives. Some of the priorities and activities outlined are not tied to protected areas and conservation areas directly, rather they support conservation initiatives that are part of an effective land management regime.

Priority Outcome 1:

Advance planning and decision-making on the establishment of protected areas.

Objective	Description and Milestones
1.1 Conclude Dinàgà Wek'èhodi negotiations towards decision-making on the establishment of the candidate protected area under the <i>Protected Areas Act</i> .	<p>In 2008, on the recommendation of Elders, the Tłı̨chǫ Government identified Dinàgà Wek'èhodi for protection. Currently, Dinàgà Wek'èhodi on the North Arm of Great Slave Lake is listed as a Candidate Protected Area under the <i>Protected Areas Act</i>. Negotiations with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations as well as the involvement of the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board are ongoing and will continue to work towards decision-making on establishment.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Finalize establishment agreements with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations.

1.2 Conclude decision-making on candidate protected areas under the former *Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy* in the Dehcho region.²³

The *Healthy Land, Healthy People 2016-2021* work plan set out five areas that were identified and assessed through the former *Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy* in the Dehcho region. In 2019, Edézhíe National Wildlife Area and Dehcho Protected Area was established. The remaining four candidate protected areas – Ka’a’gee Tu, Łue Túé Súlá, Ejié Túé Ndáde, and Samba K’e continue to be a priority focus going forward. The GNWT will work with local and regional Indigenous governments to determine conservation mechanisms for each of these areas.

Milestones:

- Collaboratively determine the conservation mechanisms for each area.
- Negotiate establishment agreements for areas where the *Protected Areas Act* is determined as the protection mechanism.

**Priority Outcome 2:
Support the effective and equitable management of national, territorial, and Indigenous protected areas and conservation areas.**

Objective	Description and Milestones
<p>2.1 Develop regulations for Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) and Territorial Protected Area and implement regulations for Ts’udé Niljné Tuyeta IPCA and Territorial Protected Area.</p>	<p>Territorial protected areas are created through protected area-specific regulations that give force to the terms of each establishment agreement signed with Indigenous governments. The GNWT will work with its co-management partners to finalize regulations for Thaidene Nënë and associated policies and processes to implement the regulations for Thaidene Nënë and Ts’udé Niljné Tuyeta.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize regulations for Thaidene Nënë and draft policies for both Ts’udé Niljné Tuyeta and Thaidene Nënë.
<p>2.2 Assist with the responsibilities of protected area and conservation area management boards.</p>	<p>Management authority for protected areas and conservation areas under GNWT jurisdiction may be delegated to protected area-specific management boards. These boards are responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of protected area management plans and ongoing authorizations within the protected area. These boards also work with regional and local boards, committees, and councils to achieve their goals and objectives. The GNWT will support both Ts’udé Niljné Tuyeta and Thaidene Nënë Management Boards to develop the first management plans by 2024 and 2025 respectively, as well as assist Edézhíe with wildlife and forest management.</p> <p>Milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the first management plans for both Ts’udé Niljné Tuyeta and Thaidene Nënë. • GNWT administrative processes are in place to implement the regulations and establishment agreements.



²³ Final decisions on these areas are linked to land use planning and land selection.

<p>2.3 Work with territorial protected area management boards to monitor protected areas to establish a current baseline.</p>	<p>The GNWT will work with management boards, government staff, Guardians, Elders, and land users to develop and deliver monitoring programs to establish a current baseline based on scientific and Indigenous knowledges. The purpose of establishing a baseline is to measure progress towards meeting the objectives in the management plan for the specific area.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver monitoring programs for each established protected area.
<p>2.4 Support the development and implementation of Guardians programs.</p>	<p>Guardians programs for protected areas and conservation areas are an increasingly central part of Indigenous conservation efforts. Several programs currently exist in the NWT, operating throughout the respective community's traditional territory. The GNWT will work with its partners to support the continued development and implementation of Guardians programs through training and funding programs, as well as facilitating the sharing of knowledge and innovation.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding, training or other in-kind support for Guardians programs in protected areas and conservation areas when requested and as available.

Priority Outcome 3: Inform and educate the public about the conservation network.	
Objective	Description and Milestones
<p>3.1 Undertake research and monitoring to support individual protected areas and conservation areas and the conservation network.</p>	<p>In partnership with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, boards, academics, non-governmental organizations, and others, the GNWT will lead and support locally relevant research and monitoring that answer research questions put forth by the protected area management boards and the GNWT.</p> <p>The GNWT will continue to collaborate with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, and academics to design and deliver a territory-wide biodiversity monitoring program.</p> <p>The GNWT is collaborating with the Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership and several Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to develop biocultural indicators to monitor how the conservation network contributes towards Indigenous and community health and well-being. The GNWT is also working with a group of academics and consultants to develop indicators to monitor how well the network helps communities adapt to climate change. Together, these and other indicators will be compiled every five years in the State of the Conservation Network Report as required under the <i>Protected Areas Act</i>.</p> <p>Milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with protected area management boards to identify locally relevant research and monitoring needs. • Develop a territory-wide biodiversity monitoring program. • Develop biocultural and climate change indicators.

<p>3.2 Provide the public with timely and relevant information on the Protected Areas Registry and website.</p>	<p>Key to the long-term success of the conservation network is strong public support. Ensuring the public is supportive of conservation requires understanding and awareness of what is happening and why. To this end, the GNWT will work to ensure the public has up-to-date and relevant information compliant with the Protected Areas Act legislation, through the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Registry, and improved website materials.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Protected Areas Registry quarterly.
<p>3.3 Provide robust public education about territorial protected areas and the conservation network.</p>	<p>Beyond the protection of biodiversity and ecological integrity, the conservation network provides a unique opportunity for the public to learn about the lands and waters of the NWT and the ways of life of Indigenous peoples. Robust public education is important for building support for conservation and improving the well-being of all residents. The GNWT will work with its partners and the management boards to develop public education materials for territorial protected areas and the conservation network broadly.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update website content and other communication material as needed.
<p>3.4 Communicate visitor rules for each territorial protected area to the public and the role of Renewable Resource Officers.</p>	<p>The establishment of territorial protected areas creates new restrictions around what can and cannot be done within an area. Regulations are essential to ensure management goals are met and the key features of an area are protected. Visitors' rules will be posted on the GNWT website. Renewable Resource Officers play an important role in compliance, enforcing regulations, permitting, monitoring, supporting Guardians programs as requested, and ensuring that visitors are aware of the rules and regulations.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <p>Update website content and advertise new permits to the public.</p>

<p>3.5 Continue to report on the state of the conservation network for gaps in ecological representation, cultural continuity, and connectivity.</p>	<p>Section 97 of the <i>Protected Areas Act</i> requires the GNWT to report every five years on the overall state of the conservation network, as well as the status of candidate protected areas and protected areas established under the Act. The next state of the conservation network report will be released in 2024.</p> <p>Recognizing the importance of connectivity and ecological representation to a robust and effective conservation network, it is important to understand what needs exist prior to seeking opportunities to fill the gaps. The GNWT will work with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, non-governmental environmental organizations, academics, and others to undertake an assessment of the conservation network to understand these gaps, in turn providing more detailed information to support conservation network planning.</p> <p>Milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps in ecological representation. • Release the state of the conservation network report in 2024.
<p>3.6 Report to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD).</p>	<p>With support from relevant Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations partners, report annually to CPCAD on areas that contribute to Canada's national conservation target.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to report areas that meet the protected area and OECM criteria to CPCAD.

Priority Outcome 4: Pursue sustainable, long-term funding for the establishment, planning, management, and operations of protected areas.

Objective	Description and Milestones
4.1 Develop a plan for long-term, sustainable financing for the conservation network.	<p>The GNWT will continue to work with partners from Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, the federal government, the philanthropic sector, non-governmental organizations, and other jurisdictions to find an appropriate mechanism to ensure the conservation network is sustainably funded over the long-term. The GNWT will continue to participate in the NWT Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) Working Group to work towards an NWT PFP framework agreement which will outline the core activities, financial expectations, funding conditions and fund structure setting the basis for the completion of a successful PFP agreement. The GNWT will continue to work with the federal government to identify long-term funding for protected areas in the NWT.</p> <p>Milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize the PFP framework agreement. • Finalize the PFP agreement.



Priority Outcome 5: Support Indigenous-led conservation and stewardship initiatives.

Objective	Description and Milestones
5.1 Create criteria for the nomination of new candidate protected areas under the <i>Protected Areas Act</i> .	<p>The GNWT will work with its partners and internally to create appropriate criteria to determine the eligibility of land to be considered as a candidate protected area. See draft criteria in Appendix B, which provides an initial set of criteria GNWT would consider.</p> <p>Milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post nomination criteria for new candidate protected areas under the Protected Areas Act on the website. • Support Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to ensure nomination packages are complete.
5.2 Provide information on the various conservation designations.	<p>Territorial protected areas, wildlife conservation areas, IPCAs and land use planning are important avenues for Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to further promote Indigenous knowledge systems, protocols and ceremony, support the revitalization of language, build economic opportunities, protect food security, and employ holistic approaches to management planning. The GNWT will work with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to ensure a shared understanding of how various designations and processes work, including how they could contribute to the NWT conservation network and national and international targets.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon request, meet with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations interested in conservation and stewardship initiatives.

<p>5.3 Conclude partnership agreement for the future Sahtú K'aowe (Great Bear Lake watershed) IPCA with the Déłjñę Got'jñę Government and consider options for counting Great Bear Lake (Tsá Tué) as an OECM.</p>	<p>In 2022, the Déłjñę Got'jñę Government completed a feasibility study for the Sahtú K'aowe (Great Bear Lake watershed) IPCA. At COP15 the GNWT signed a Letter of Intent with the Déłjñę Got'jñę Government and the federal government to advance Sahtú K'aowe as an IPCA and consider options for counting Great Bear Lake (Tsá Tué) as an OECM. The Déłjñę Got'jñę Government and GNWT will begin discussions on a partnership agreement for Sahtú Kaowe to improve and coordinate stewardship of the area.</p> <p>Milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft a partnership agreement with Déłjñę Got'jñę Government. • Work with Déłjñę Got'jñę Government, Sahtú Secretariat Incorporated and the Sahtú Land Use Planning Board to determine how Great Bear Lake could be counted as an OECM. 	<p>5.5 Continue to work with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to identify areas for possible future caribou habitat protection.</p>	<p>Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations are investigating areas for possible future barren-ground caribou habitat protection through their participation in the Taking Care of Caribou, Bathurst Caribou Range Plan, and Bathurst Caribou Management Plan implementation processes. Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations are also participating in the development of five regional boreal caribou range plans in the NWT. A variety of conservation tools could be used to protect caribou habitat, such as wildlife conservation areas, protected areas, and conservation zoning and conformity requirements in approved land use plans.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the GNWT Wildlife Unit, Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to identify future caribou habitat protection areas.
<p>5.4 Work with the Tulít'a IPCA Steering Committee to understand their interests regarding Nío Nę P'ęńę and Willow, Kelly, Lennie and Mahoney Lakes area IPCAs in the Tulít'a District.</p>	<p>The Tulít'a IPCA Steering Committee is leading work on conservation, stewardship, and Guardians programs in the Tulít'a and Norman Wells District. The GNWT will work with the Steering Committee to develop a memorandum of understanding to conduct a feasibility study for Willow, Kelly, Lennie and Mahoney Lakes and wetlands. Based on the memorandum of understanding, a feasibility study will be conducted for this area.</p> <p>The GNWT will engage with the Tulít'a IPCA Steering Committee to better understand their conservation interests for Nío Nę P'ęńę.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a memorandum of understanding for a feasibility study by the Steering Committee for the Willow, Kelly, Lennie, and Mahoney Lakes area, and meet with the Steering Committee to discuss Nío Nę P'ęńę. 	<p>5.6 Respond to other conservation and stewardship interests identified by Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations.</p>	<p>Upon request the GNWT will engage with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to understand their interests in conservation and stewardship. Current and possible future initiatives were identified through Healthy Land, Healthy People 2023-2028 engagement, the NWT PFP opportunity and correspondence with the GNWT. A list of Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations conservation and stewardship interests is included in Appendix C. For these and any new areas that might arise an internal review process would be required to decide on GNWT's position and next steps.</p> <p>Milestone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon request, meet with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to understand their interests and next steps.

Appendices

Appendix A

NWT Conservation Network: Existing Protected Area and Conservation Area Designations

Various mechanisms exist to establish protected areas and conservation areas in the NWT. The table reflects the total areas reported to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) in the NWT (as of December 2022).²⁴

²⁴ An Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) is another type of designation that can be implemented by Indigenous governments and Indigenous organization. An IPCA does not require federal or territorial legislation, however developing partnership agreements with other mechanisms such as those outlined in this appendix can be beneficial in obtaining the desired level of protection.

Protected Areas	Protection Mechanism	% NWT Land and Water within Protection Mechanism	Adjustments to be made to CPCAD as of September 2023 ²⁵
Territorial Designations			
Territorial Protected Area	<i>Protected Areas Act</i>	1.43	
Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary	<i>Wildlife Act, Northwest Territories Lands Act</i>	1.58	
Federal Designations			
National Parks/ National Park Reserves	<i>Canada National Parks Act</i>	6.57	
National Historic Site	<i>National Historic Sites of Canada Order</i>	0.41	
Migratory Bird Sanctuaries	<i>Migratory Birds Convention Act</i>	1.64*	
National Wildlife Area	<i>Canada Wildlife Act</i>	1.06	
Protected Through Land Claim Agreements	Land Claim Agreement	0.12	
Protected Through Tłı̄chǫ Land Use Plan for Tłı̄chǫ Lands	<i>Tłı̄chǫ Agreement</i>	0.07	
Protected Areas Total		12.88	12.88

²⁵ This column is a snapshot in time and is subject to change.

* 0.09 of Migratory Bird Sanctuaries are marine.

Conservation Areas (Other Effective Conservation Measures)	Protection Mechanism	% NWT Land and Freshwater within Protection Mechanism	Adjustments to be made to CPCAD as of September 2023 ²⁵
Territorial Designations			
Territorial Parks	<i>Territorial Parks Act</i>	0.01	0.009
Wildlife Conservation Area	<i>Wildlife Act, Northwest Territories Lands Act</i>	0.23	
Conservation Zoning in Regional Land Use Plans	Regional Land Use Plans such as those through the <i>Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act</i> or other legal planning mechanisms.	2.68 ²⁶	0.10 ²⁷
	Conservation Areas Total	2.91	3.019
	Total Protected Area and Conservation Area Designations	15.79	15.90



²⁶ Conservation zoning in the Tłı̄ch̄q land use plan for Tłı̄ch̄q lands has not yet been reported to CPCAD and would add 1.66% at this time.

²⁷ This change is due to the amendments to the Sahtú Land Use Plan 2021 that were approved during the drafting of this document.



Appendix B

Candidate Protected Area Nomination Criteria

Nomination criteria under the *Protected Areas Act*

To be considered for approval by Executive Council as a candidate protected area under the *Protected Areas Act*, as a minimum, an area must meet the following criteria:

- Be supported by an Indigenous government or by Executive Council
- Meets the purpose of the Act (*Protected Areas Act* 11(1)(a))
- Made up exclusively of public land, or any portions of the nominated area that are settlement lands or other private lands are either excluded from the boundary or included with the consent of the private landholder (*Protected Areas Act* 10(2)(a) and 11(1)(d))

Additional information required for a nomination package

A nomination package would be submitted to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on behalf of the GNWT. The nomination package would include, at minimum:

- A summary of known values of the area which should include the best available information including Indigenous traditional knowledge and values, local and community knowledge, and scientific knowledge
- A description of how the area meets the purpose of the Act and the criteria identified in this work plan
- A map of the area being nominated, indicating any portions of the area that are settlement lands or other private lands
- If the area includes settlement lands or other private lands, an indication of the private landowners' consent to be nominated

Additional criteria for areas to be nominated under the *Protected Areas Act*

An area nominated under the *Protected Areas Act* will also be reviewed against additional considerations. These additional considerations will be further developed as work is done to complete Objective 5.1 in this workplan. A preliminary list of considerations is included below:

- Whether the area has been identified for protection in a final land claim agreement
- Whether the area has been identified for protection in a draft or approved land use plan or planning process
- How conservation and other land uses in the region are balanced
- How the area would contribute to the following NWT conservation priorities:
 - (1) ecological representation in the ecoregion
 - (2) cultural continuity
 - (3) climate change resilience
 - (4) conservation of areas of importance to biodiversity or critical habitat for species at risk
 - (5) connectivity between other areas within the existing conservation network

Appendix C

Other Conservation and Stewardship Interests Identified by Indigenous Governments and Indigenous Organizations

Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations have identified conservation and stewardship interests through feedback on the draft Healthy Land, Healthy People 2023-2028, the Project Finance for Permanence opportunity, or official correspondence with the GNWT. These include areas to be advanced as potential future IPCA or protected area proposals and areas of significance to be highlighted for future consideration.²⁶



Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations	Conservation and stewardship interests
Deninu K'ue First Nation and Fort Resolution Métis Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slave River Delta and portions of the Taltson watershed
Fort Resolution Métis Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Fort Resolution Métis Government potential sites
Yellowknives Dene First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying areas of ecological and cultural significance to the First Nation: • N'qdihati (MacKay Lake area) • Wiilideh (Yellowknife River Area) • Edàala (White Beach Point Area) • 11 YKDFN potential sites
Akaiicho Territory Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional land use planning • Great Slave Lake
Nah'q Dehé Dene Band	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nah'q Dehé (Ttenaago and Little Butte)
Gwich'in Tribal Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen Canyon (Peel River watershed) • Teetshik Goghaa, Tsiiehnjik (Arctic Red River) • Teetl'it njik
Tłı̄chų Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nàlłı̄ (Whati Falls) • Hozı Ekwò • Tqdzı
Inuvialuit Regional Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in joining the NWT-wide biodiversity monitoring program and investigating the potential creation of protected areas or conservation areas on private lands in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region
Pehdzeh Ki First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh
Ka'a'gee Tu First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tathlina Lake
Smith's Landing First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ttheba yághe nué (Islands in the Rapids)

²⁶ This workplan and appendix are a snapshot of current conservation initiatives and interests in the NWT in 2023. The GNWT recognizes that additional interests might arise that are not captured here.

