

Fact Sheet: Bowater and Caribou protection in Ontario and Quebec

General

- Bowater's forestry operations in Ontario and Quebec occur primarily on publicly owned land. They are governed by stringent environmental standards and regulations designed to ensure healthy, sustainable forests, balancing environmental, social and economic values.

Planning

- On government-owned land, as required by provincial legislation, Bowater prepares 20 or 25-year forest management plans, which are revised every five years. Public participation is a critical part of the process and Bowater encourages local community groups, individuals and First Nation's communities to participate in the planning process.
- Strategic planning in the forest means addressing large scale concerns such as minimizing forest fragmentation, and enhancing the protection and sustainability of important forest values, including wildlife habitats, water quality, cultural heritage and recreational opportunities.
- Specific government rules apply to our operations to enhance the protection of the life cycles of numerous wildlife species, including salmon, marten, moose and caribou.

Woodland Caribou

- Woodland caribou, forest-dwelling ecotype, are commonly found in large tracts of coniferous forests where there is abundance of terrestrial and arboreal lichens.
- Over the past century, the boreal population of forest-dwelling woodland caribou has declined due to habitat loss and fragmentation, human disturbance, hunting, poaching, disease and increased predation by wolves and black bear.

Bowater in Action

- ***In Ontario***, to accommodate woodland caribou habitat requirements, the landscape is divided into blocks of at least 10,000 hectares in size. Each area in the mosaic is treated as a separate unit while at the same time, maintaining travel corridors between blocks. Operations within designated blocks are carefully planned to maintain caribou habitat requirements.

- Disturbance to winter caribou habitat is minimized through Area of Concern (AOC) prescription planning. AOC prescriptions are specific to calving sites and winter habitat areas. They place reserves around calving lakes to ensure that continuous forest cover is maintained around those lakes at all times, and to minimize road construction and disturbance within prime winter habitat.
- ***In Quebec***, a multi-disciplinary team, consisting of Bowater employees, government wildlife and forest resource managers, research scientists and First Nations people, has developed a macro-mosaic harvesting plan designed to protect and restore woodland caribou populations.
- The recovery plan aims at reducing the impact of harvesting operations by protecting large blocs of 10,000 to 25,000 hectares in size designed to promote caribou movements. Harvesting done between the protected areas is in line with the macro-mosaic harvesting model. The objective of this harvesting pattern is to reproduce the characteristics of landscapes resulting from natural disturbances in spruce-moss forests.
- In addition, variable retention harvesting is applied to at least 15% of the harvested areas. This entails leaving a maximum number of small commercial stems in place, or if no such stems are available, leaving groups of trees of varying sizes amounting to about 5% of the volume of commercial timber.
- These special measures are designed to lessen the impact of harvesting on woodland caribou habitat. To confirm these assumptions, GPS radio collars have been attached to a number of caribou. Their movements are then monitored to ensure they continue to frequent the territory and find a suitable habitat for feeding and reproducing naturally.

Research

- Bowater supports research on caribou and other wildlife through membership in the Partner's Council of the Northern Wildlife Fund of the *Fondation de la Faune du Québec*.
- Since the early 1990s, Bowater has partnered with the Ontario government on caribou research and policy initiatives.

For More Information

- Bowater's Sustainability Report (available in hard copy or on our web site at www.bowater.com) and an educational environmental video describe many environmental initiatives undertaken by our company. If you have questions, please contact your Bowater sales representative.