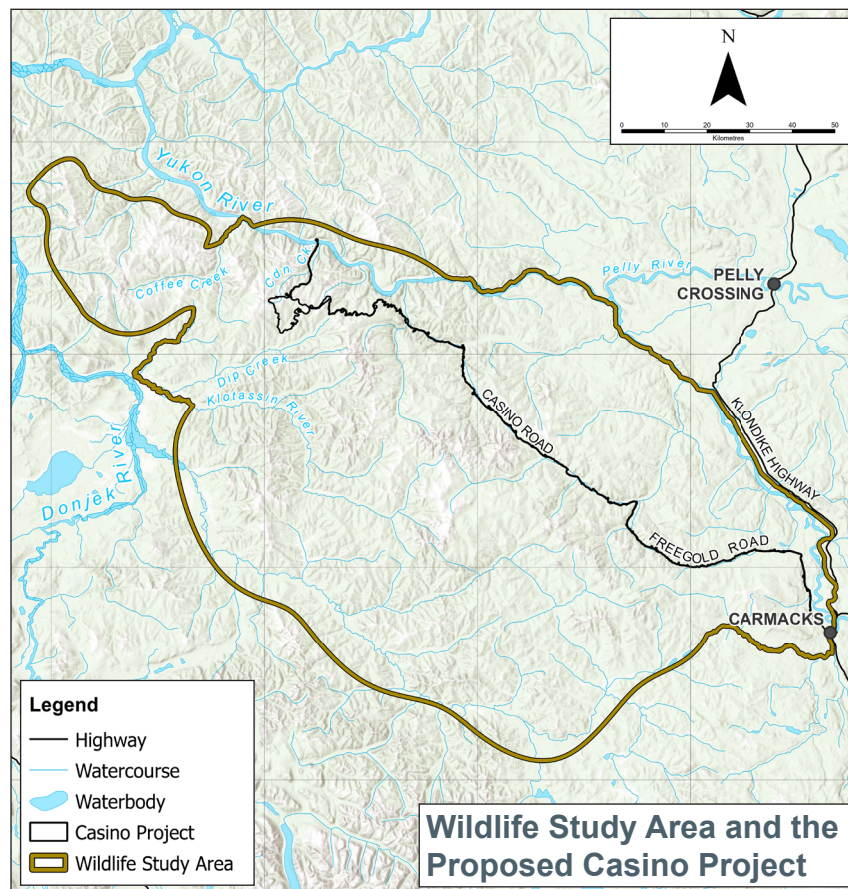## Wildlife Baseline Studies

There are many different types of wildlife in the Yukon, and they are all are important to the cultural fabric of the North. Casino hired Environment Dynamics Inc. to research wildlife for the proposed Casino Project and prepare Project-specific wildlife studies to inform the Environmental and Socio-Economic Effects Statement.

Project wildlife studies summarize information about wildlife populations, locations, and habitat that overlap with Casino's Wildlife Study Area. Licensed harvest information (reporting of big game hunts), population estimates, airborne surveys, animal collar data tracked via satellite, habitat studies, draft range management plans (plans discussing the management of animals), independent field studies, and Traditional Knowledge have informed Casino's wildlife studies.
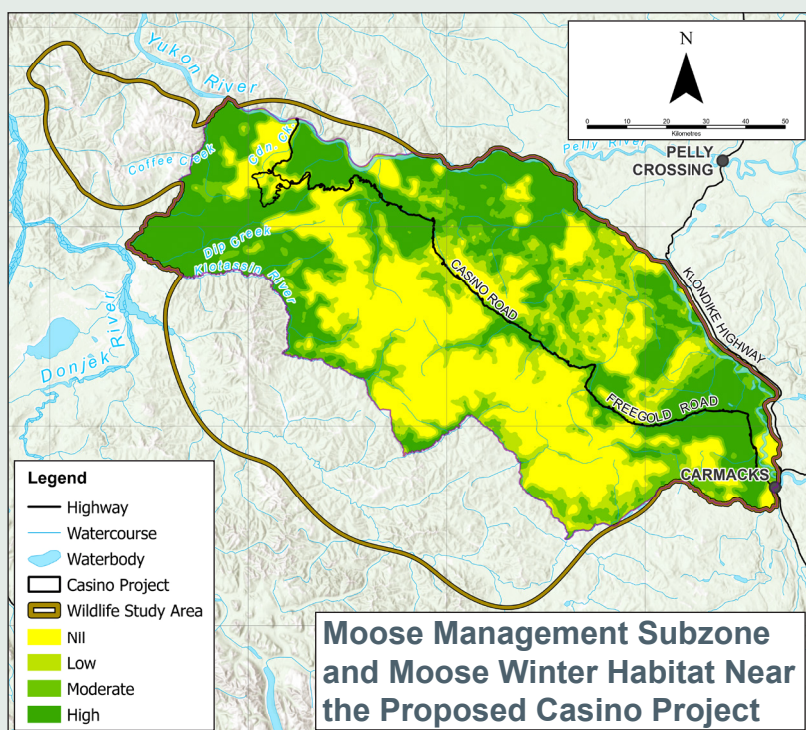
There are several wildlife species in the Wildlife Study Area. Casino is studying those species most likely to interact with the proposed Casino Project and those identified as high-importance to First Nations, local community members, and land users.

The Wildlife Study Area was created by combining the range of the Klaza Caribou herd and the wildlife game management subzones (areas managed by the Yukon Government for big game animals) that overlap the proposed Casino Project. Please see the caribou poster for more information on caribou.

Legend
— Highway
— Watercourse
▢ Waterbody
▢ Casino Project
▢ Wildlife Study Area

Wildlife Study Area and the Proposed Casino Project

Legend
— Highway
— Watercourse
▢ Waterbody
▢ Casino Project
▢ Wildlife Study Area
▢ Nil
▢ Low
▢ Moderate
▢ High

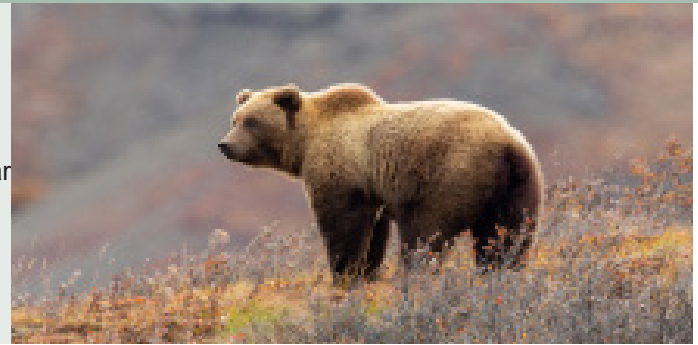**Moose Management Subzone and Moose Winter Habitat Near the Proposed Casino Project**

Moose

Moose are a species of interest because they are an important harvest (hunting) species. Moose have been sighted in lower elevation areas, along water courses in the Wildlife Study Area, and in lower densities than other habitats (160 moose / 1000 km2). Habitat models suggests that about one-third of the Wildlife Study Area provides excellent late-winter habitat for moose. The map's dark green shows habitat that moose like to use. Moose like to use low-elevation, flat habitat with lots of vegetation, including wintertime food. The yellow area in the map shows habitat that moose do not like to use.

Grizzly Bears

Yukon's grizzly bear population makes up 25% of Canada's grizzly bear population. Grizzly bears are vulnerable to human disturbance. Grizzly bear population density is considered low in the Wildlife Study Area (15 bears / 1000 km2). Casino has used den (where bears spend the winter) surveys, hunting data, and winter denning habitat models for Project-specific bear studies.

Wolverine

Wolverine are vulnerable in the Yukon and are considered of special concern across Canada. This means the Wolverine population is not, but may become, threatened or endangered across the country. Populations are monitored using fur harvest (hunting) data and trapper surveys. Casino developed a natal denning (locations where wolverines are born and raised) and habitat model. Most of the Wildlife Study Area is not considered good natal denning habitat. Overall, wolverine density in the Yukon is thought to be relatively low.

Collared Pika

Collared pika are at risk due to climate change and the possible loss of habitat due to climate change. Collared pika have been found in the Wildlife Study Area in rocky (or "talus") alpine areas. Collared pika have not yet been seen within the proposed Casino Project area.

Bats

Four species of bats including little brown myotis, northern myotis, long-legged myotis, and big brown bat were detected in the Wildlife Study Area in 2022. Bat studies have been ongoing for several years using acoustic (noise) recorders at different locations within the Wildlife Study Area. Bats were found at lower elevations in the Wildlife Study Area and were not found at higher elevations. No bats have yet been found at the proposed Casino Project area.

What's Next?

Knowing how animals use habitat and which habitats are important is key for Casino to know so they can manage the disturbance of a mining operation. Casino is continuing Project-specific wildlife studies by continually adding shared Traditional Knowledge, and reviewing different modeling approaches to better understand where moose, grizzly bears, caribou, and other wildlife are using the Wildlife Study Area and proposed Casino Project area.

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