

Norman Wells Renewable Resource Council Information Request 3 Response  
March 26, 2024

SRRB to Sahtu Communities:

1. How long does the land need to regenerate to sustain Caribou after a wildfire?

After a wildfire, there is immediate growth that starts to happen. The vegetation starts to grow back, but it can take years for it to fully start to restore to its true potential. From the smaller vegetation (Lichen, moss, etc) to the larger Shrubs (Tamarack, Spruce, Willow, etc.) The process of growth in the North can be slow, it can take years and years to regenerate to its full potential. When it comes to the caribou's food source Lichen, it can take 1mm per year to grow and it can depend on what other plant and shrubs are taking place growing around it.

Considering how much change has been happening in the North with climate change, the noticeable increase of fires, drought and human impact, it can be hard to fully answer this question today. With the increase of fires, drought and the impacts that this is having on the animals, it is hard to make that statement that the land can restore itself. There is too much happening to our land and not enough time in between catastrophic events of fires and drought (record levels in the last few years) to think that the land can restore itself properly. The future remains unknown and is scary because even if humans can adapt, the land and the animals will not be that fortunate.