

NUNAVUT

Canada's Boreal Forest is one of the world's greatest treasures. Stretching over 5,000 kilometres (3,000 miles) from Newfoundland to the Yukon, the boreal region's nearly six million square kilometres (2.3 million square miles) make up one of the world's largest intact forest ecosystems – even larger than the remaining Brazilian Amazon. It is a diverse region of forests, peatlands, lakes and rivers.

Canada's Boreal Forest holds massive stores of carbon; immense populations of birds, mammals, and other wildlife; and much of the world's freshwater in its millions of lakes and ponds and hundreds of thousands of kilometres of streams and rivers. The forest's intact nature makes it a refugia for species that have disappeared from other parts of their range and that are forced northward by climate change. It is also home to hundreds of aboriginal communities, which depend on the ecosystem for their livelihoods.

Protecting and maintaining these valuable resources is one of the world's last great conservation opportunities. Today's best science shows that to do so will require at least 50% be excluded from industrial development in a system of interconnected protected areas, and that sustainable development practices be used in areas where development occurs.

BOREAL SCENES



Photos clockwise from top left: Cree children picking blueberries © Natasha Moine, Running caribou bull © Wayne Sawchuk, Water near Chibougamau, QC © Garth Lenz, Osprey in flight © Ashley Hockenberry



FAST FACTS

Nunavut's Boreal Forest:

- is 107,000 km² (26 million acres) in size – larger than the state of Maine.¹
- comprises 2% of Canada's Boreal Forest.
- is the breeding ground for millions of birds of approximately 85 species, including Yellow-billed Loon, Short-eared Owl and Harris's Sparrow.
- supports 1 million Barren ground caribou and large populations of other wildlife, including Grizzly bear, muskox, wolf, fox, lynx, moose and wolverine.²
- features the Thelon, the largest river in Nunavut, which flows into Hudson Bay, a boreal-Arctic oasis that supports a rich and diverse concentration of wildlife, including Musk ox, Grizzly bear, Tundra swan and Canada goose. Important fish species include Lake trout, Arctic grayling, Northern pike, Arctic char and several kinds of whitefish and cisco.
- features 106,000 km² (26 million acres) of intact forest, peatland and wetland habitat free from industrial development, making up 99% of the province's boreal region.³

¹ Canadian Boreal Initiative. 2003. Canada's Boreal Region.

² The CircumArctic Rangifer Monitoring & Assessment Network. Accessed August, 2009. www.carmanetwork.com

³ Global Forest Watch Canada. 2009. Canada's Forest Landscape Fragments: A Second Approximation.

