

Study: Canada's Yellowstone too small

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A Wildlife Conservation Society report says Canada's Northwest Territories' Nahanni National Park Reserve is too small for its wildlife.

The New York-based WCS says a four-year study indicates the park cannot maintain its nearly pristine population of grizzly bears, caribou and Dall's sheep.

The park needs to expand from its current size of less than 3,100 square miles to include the entire South Nahanni River watershed and the adjacent Nahanni Karstlands, an area totaling more than 23,000 square miles -- four times larger than Yellowstone National Park, the report says. The park, located near Fort Simpson, was designated as the United Nations' first World Heritage Site in 1978.

Report author John Weaver said the park's narrow boundaries are too small to contain grizzlies, caribou and Dall's sheep, all of which occupy much larger ranges than the park currently provides. Unless the boundaries are expanded, those species will decline due to development pressures looming outside of the park.

"Canada has a unique opportunity to create one of the largest and most wild national parks in the world," Weaver said.

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