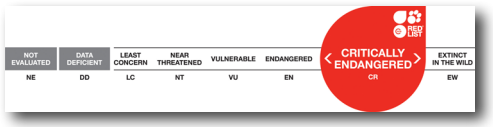
Vancouver Island Marmot *(Marmota vancouverensis)*

The Vancouver Island marmot (*Marmota vancouverensis*) is the rarest of the six species of North American marmots and is limited to the mountainous regions of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. It is one of the top priority species of conservation concern in Canada and is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

A Recovery Plan for the Vancouver Island marmot (VIM) was first published in 1994 in response to severe decline in the wild to around 30 marmots in 2003. Captive releases and translocations bolstered the wild population to over 300 by 2013. Questions about the long-term viability of the wild population and the future role of the captive population led to a Population and Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA) workshop held at the Calgary Zoo on 3-6 March 2015. The workshop report and recommendations within it are considered advisory to the Vancouver Island Marmot Recovery Team to guide actions promoting long-term survival of the Vancouver Island marmot in Canada.



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Key Goals

This multi-stakeholder workshop included over 40 participants representing a diversity of expertise and perspectives, including field researchers, wildlife modelers, and representatives from zoological breeding facilities, conservation NGOs, government, and local timber companies. The workshop participants reviewed existing recovery plan goals and progress towards reaching these goals. It identified further management actions needed and explored intensive population management strategies necessary over the short and intermediate term. **Click on the text in the table below to learn more details about each action.**

Maximize existing biological information as a foundation that can guide science-based wildlife management and financial investment.
Accurately determine the size, trend, and drivers of Vancouver Island marmot populations in the wild.
Understand the relationship among landscape changes, human presence, and predator/prey relationships.
Ensure that the captive population is of a sufficient size and genetic diversity to support the growth of wild marmot populations and to act as a safe-guard for wild populations in the long term.
Achieve financial stability, without which all recovery actions are threatened and the sustainability of the species may be compromised.

Within the above goals two were deemed critical at this point in time:

- Existing and future data must be recorded in a consistent manner so that they are easily accessible and usable for population management.
- In order to meet this and other goals, the project must achieve financial stability now and into the future.

Population simulation modeling completed after the workshop yielded the following recommendations:

- Maximize population size, reproduction, and survival to promote growth and guard against decline.
- Support at least two large VIM populations, either in the wild and/or captivity to increase viability and provide reinforcement options.
- Improve data collection and management to better inform management decisions.

Full workshop report available at: http://www.cbsg.org/content/vancouver-island-marmot-phva-report-2015

Workshop organized by: *Calgary Zoo, Marmot Recovery Foundation, IUCN SSC Reintroduction Specialist Group, and IUCN SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG)*

Workshop sponsors: *Calgary Zoo and Marmot Recovery Foundation*