

Connector: Incredible Shrinking Island

To teach the concept of sharing the land with other interests and planning, use the following activity.

1. Place a large tarp or blanket on the floor and invite all the students in your class to stand on the tarp. It should be large enough that they have no trouble doing so.
2. Explain to the class that the tarp represents the entire available habitat to a caribou herd, including forest, eskers, tundra, wetlands, hills and valleys. (You may have to review the definition of "habitat" with the class.)
3. Tell them that someone just built a mine on their habitat. The class must get off the tarp and fold it in half. Ask them to stand on the tarp again. This time they should still all be able to stand but are closer together.
4. Ask them to name something else that could affect caribou habitat (such as a road, a number of exploration or hunting camps, a town, a pipeline or a new gravel pit). Again shrink their habitat and invite them to stand again.
5. Continue playing until their habitat has shrunk so much that they can no longer stand on the tarp. This will represent the capacity of the tarp (or habitat) to sustain the population. Some of the caribou will have to "die."
6. Ask students to name the essential components of habitat (food, water, shelter, space) and to note that when any of these components are affected, the caribou populations become stressed.



In any well-thought-out land use plan the region will ensure that critical habitat is protected first and that the other areas are open for development.

The Protected Areas Strategy is one tool that communities and regional organizations can use to reach their conservation goals.