

THREAT LEVEL

IDAHO FISH & GAME

Critically Imperiled:
Species is rare or declining



US ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Threatened



CANADA SPECIES AT RISK ACT

Not at Risk



CALL TO ACTION

- ▶ Protect key habitats
- ▶ Monitor populations
- ▶ Expand research areas



Canada Lynx

Lynx canadensis

Photo Credit: Pixabay

OVERVIEW

The Canada Lynx in Northern Idaho is found mostly at elevations above 4,000 feet. They are imperiled due to habitat loss and climate change. Seeking opportunities to expand and connect protected lands will help conserve larger, continuous tracts for lynx. Reducing the impacts from logging activities and sprawling development must be a key part of conservation efforts. Coordinated efforts across states and with Canada is important for understanding the broader picture for lynx, which can travel great distances. The U.S Endangered Species Act and Canadian Species at Risk Act are laws that require actions to recover and restore lynx.

CONSERVATION CONSIDERATIONS

VULNERABILITY RANKING

CLIMATE

High

NON-CLIMATE

High

CONFIDENCE

High

Physiological, phenological, or ecological factors to consider when planning conservation projects:

- ▶ Lynx have a relatively large range and movement capability, which can help them find food and suitable habitat
- ▶ Lynx are specially adapted to living in snow, meaning that their available habitat is limited to land at high elevations

Vulnerability Rankings Methodology

These priority species have been assessed for climate and non-climate vulnerability using a process adapted from the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's Methodology for ranking the Climate Change Vulnerability of Species. WDFW's approach includes rating each species' climate sensitivity and exposure. These two rankings are then averaged for a climate vulnerability ranking. The Tribe developed a non-climate vulnerability ranking to capture species' relative risk and adaptability to factors such as human-caused development, predator/prey relationships, or low population numbers. Confidence rankings were assessed based on the availability of scientific research.

KEY THREATS

Habitat Degradation & Loss

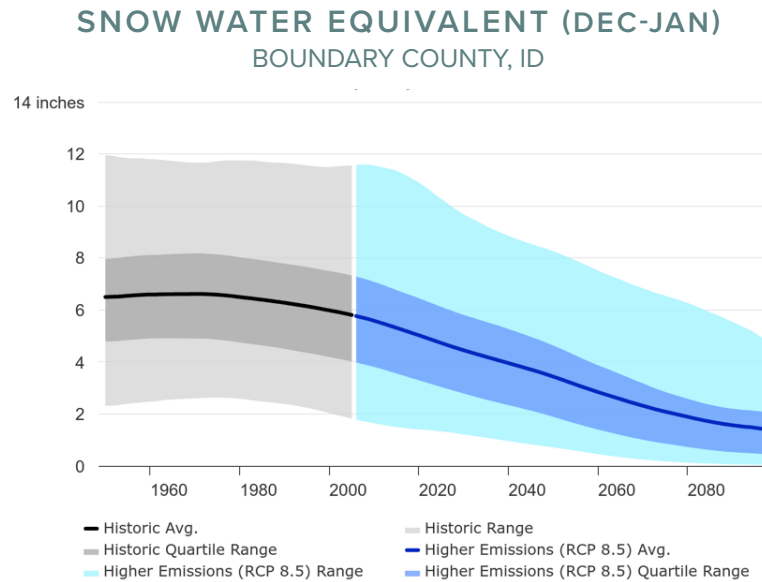
Poor forest management practices, loss of diverse tree age structure, road building, urbanization, and increased outdoor recreation are limiting the availability and reducing the connectivity of important habitats. This degradation and loss can isolate populations, limit food availability, and increase competition with other species.

Climate Change

- ▶ Snowpack is projected to decrease in the Selkirk, Cabinet, and Purcell ranges, which may force lynx to move to higher elevation, makes it difficult for lynx to hunt, and increases competition as other predators reach higher elevations.
- ▶ Unnatural wildfire regimes fragment populations, reduce habitat, and threaten food sources, such as the snowshoe hare.
- ▶ High heat causes stress for lynx, as they have warm coats typically suited for snow and cold weather.

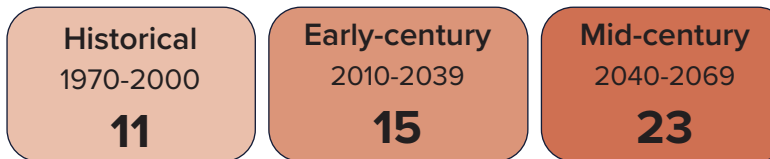
Exploitation & Slow Population Recovery

Lynx have not recovered from overexploitation (regulated and unregulated) in the 1970s and 80s.



Source: Climate Toolbox. Accessed April 23, 2025

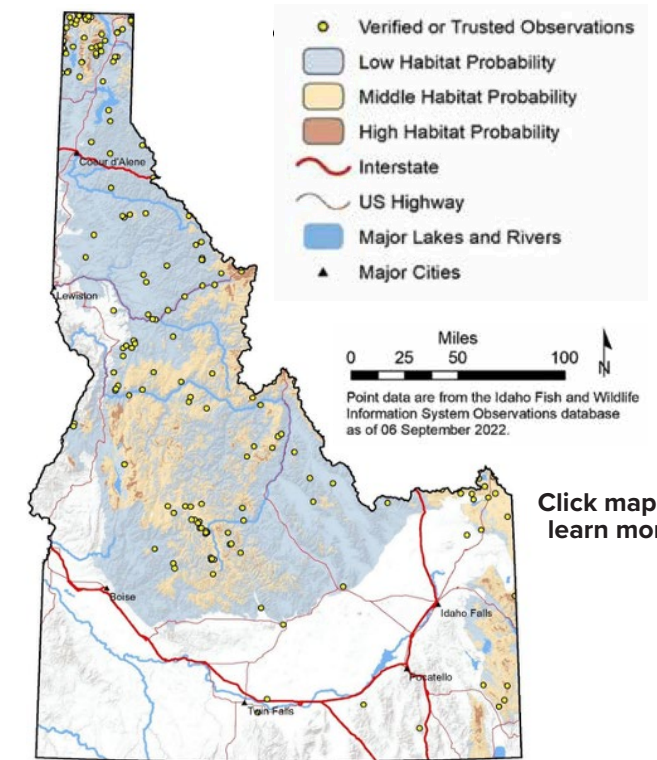
“EXTREME” FIRE DANGER DAYS (RCP8.5) KOOTENAI BASIN



Source: Climate Toolbox. Accessed November 18, 2025



Photo Credit: Natalia Melnychuk



Source: Idaho Fish & Game

Click map to learn more

REFERENCES

Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife. *Canada Lynx*. <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/species/lynx-canadensis>.

Idaho Fish & Game. (2023). *Management plan for the conservation of fisher, wolverine, and Canada lynx in Idaho*. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise, USA.

Earth Justice. (2013). *Protecting Habitat for the Rare Canada Lynx*. <https://earthjustice.org/case/canada-lynx-critical-habitat-intervention>.

Environmental Conservation Online System. *Canada Lynx*. <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652>

Wildfire chart: Source: Hegewisch, K.C., Abatzoglou, J.T. *Tribal Climate* web tool. Climate Toolbox. <https://climatetoolbox.org/>. (Accessed November 18, 2025).

Snowpack chart: Source: Hegewisch, K.C., Abatzoglou, J.T. *Future Time Series* web tool. Climate Toolbox. <https://climatetoolbox.org/>. (Accessed April 23, 2025).

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PRIORITY AT-RISK SPECIES

KOOTENAI TRIBE OF IDAHO