

2026 Thinhorn Sheep Survey: Primrose, Rose Lake, Skukum and Gray Ridge



In late June 2026, a minimum count aerial survey of thornhorn sheep was flown in four Sheep Management Units (SMUs). The survey provided a minimum count of thornhorn sheep, evaluated distribution and estimated lamb recruitment and adult sex ratios. These measures, when monitored over time, are indicators of sub-population trends.

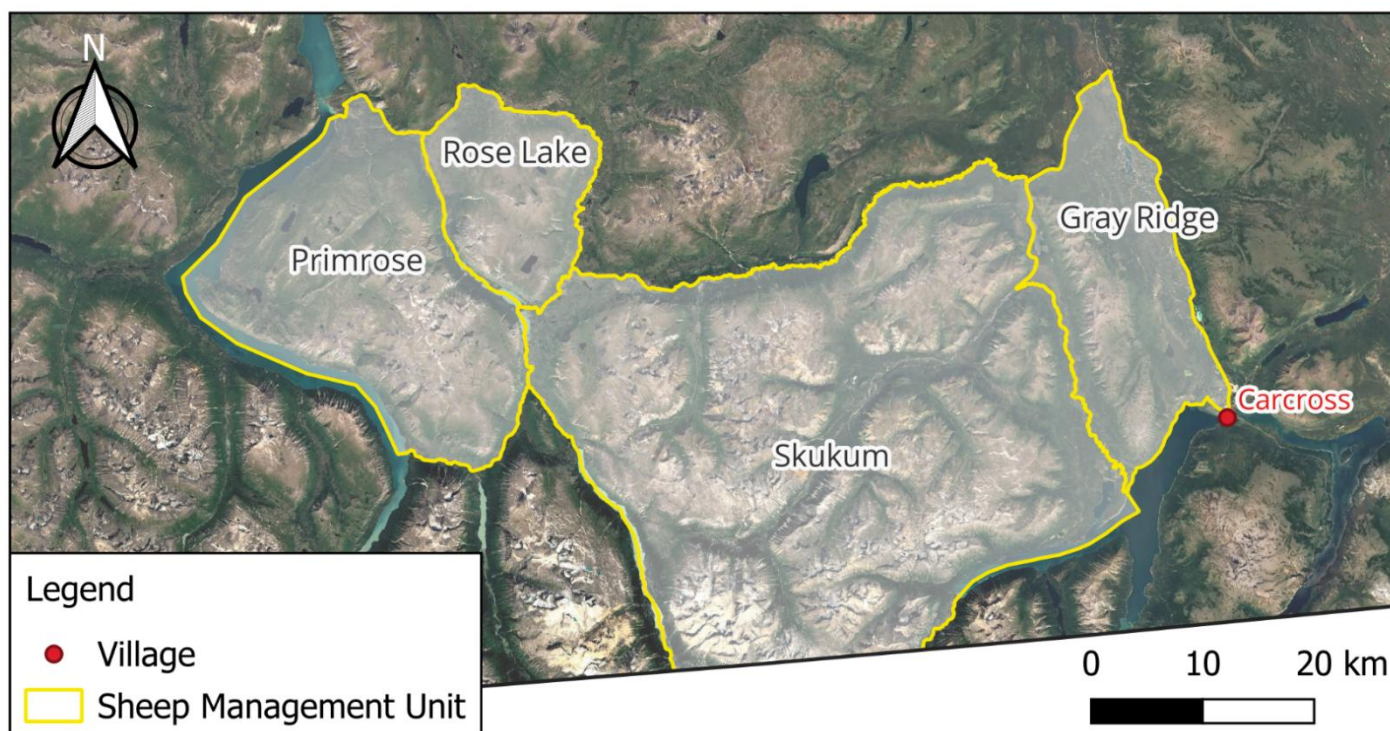


Figure 1. Map of the Sheep Management Unit surveyed in June 2026 in the Southern Lakes region, Yukon.

Summary of results

Date: June 28 to 30, 2026

Hours flown: 21

Minimum counts (non lamb)

Primrose: 177
Rose Lake: 95
Skukum: 508
Gray Ridge: 108

Lamb: Nursery

Primrose: 29:100
Rose Lake: 49:100
Skukum: 34:100
Gray Ridge: 37:100

Ram: Nursery

Primrose: 37:100
Rose Lake: 38:100
Skukum: 46:100
Gray Ridge: 26:100

Results: In comparison to the previous surveys completed between 2015 and 2017, results from the 2026 survey found that the non-lamb count for Primrose greatly declined (-49%). The count for Skukum increased slightly (+9%) and Gray Ridge (-3%) and Rose Lake (-5%) remained stable.

Over time, an average lamb recruitment of 25 lambs per 100 nursery sheep is considered necessary for a stable population; smaller ratios suggest a decline. The recruitment rates for all SMUs were above the level in 2026 suggesting a healthy lamb recruitment.

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