

Tim Fullman, Wildlife Geographer

"EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION MEANS UNDERSTANDING THE PAST."

**GEOACTION
HEROES**

Tim Fullman is a senior ecologist with The Wilderness Society. He works in Alaska, studying the movements of Alaska's caribou. Caribou migrate twice a year in one of the world's great journeys. Yet their numbers are declining. Tim Fullman wants to understand how to stop that.



He tracks herd patterns as they move over Alaska's public lands. He works to predict the herds' pathways using spatial analysis and collaboration with partners. Many people rely on the caribou for their lives: Indigenous community leaders, hunters, tour guides, and land professionals. They all want to preserve the future of Alaska's caribou.

The stakes are high. Alaska's 32 caribou herds, with a population once over a million, probably number under 545,000 today. The Western Arctic Caribou Herd alone, which Fullman focuses on, has declined by as much as 69 percent since 2004. Many things create this impact, including construction projects, energy investments, and climate change.

"To do effective conservation means understanding the past so that we know why things are the way they are now," Fullman says, "and then using that information now to change the course of the future."

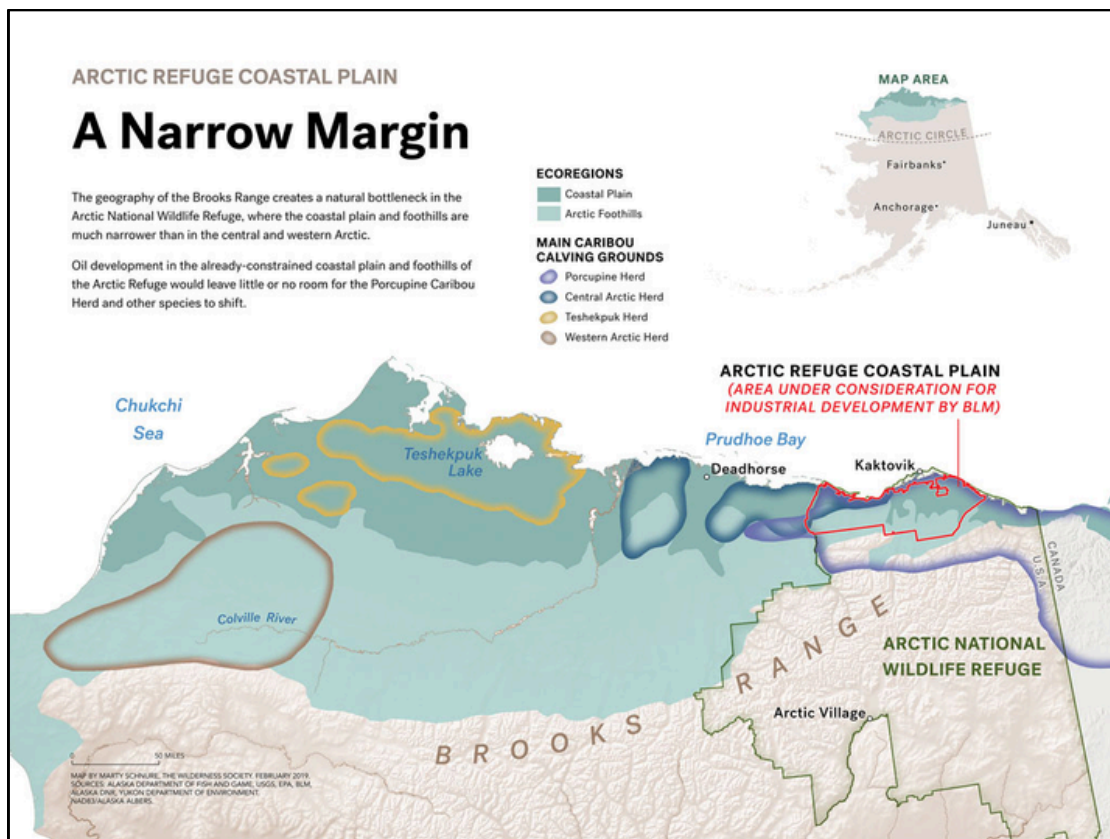


Read our full member profile of Tim Fullman at <https://bit.ly/3jLC3vL>

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Discussion Activity Questions

1. Examine the map below. Put yourself in the perspective of three different groups. Imagine you were an indigenous person, a resident in Katovik, Alaska, or across the border in Canada. How would perspective of caribou migration and industrial development impact these communities? How would international or indigenous treaties impact spatial experiences?
2. Why is it important for geographers like Tim Fullman to engage in activities outside of their research, and how might this influence their work?



The geography of the Brooks Range creates a natural bottleneck in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, where the coastal plain and foothills are much narrower than in the central and western Arctic; created by Marty Schnure.

About the American Association of Geographers (AAG)

The American Association of Geographers (AAG) brings together members of the global geographic community. As a non-profit organization, we provide students, educators, practitioners, and partners with the resources they need to enter the field, develop their careers, and form professional friendships that can last a lifetime.

Through annual and ongoing programs, events, and meetings, we aim to create a space in which all geographers—wherever they come from—will know they are valued, heard, and welcomed.



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