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Allocation of Authorizations for Bluenose-East for the 2014-2015 Harvest Season

As you are aware, the 2014-2015 barren-ground caribou harvest season in the Northwest Territories (NWT) will officially end on June 30, 2015. However, the spring harvests that take place in March/April of each year usually represent the largest portion of each year's annual caribou harvest. As a result, the time has now come to determine an allocation of authorizations for the harvest of Bluenose-East (BNE) caribou for the remaining portion of the 2014-2015 harvesting season.

Background:

In 2010, the BNE herd was estimated at 100,000 adult animals, with 51,800 breeding females. A photo survey in June 2013 showed that the BNE herd had declined to 68,000 with 34,500 breeding females. This rate of decline amounts to 13 percent per year. The reconnaissance survey conducted in June 2014 on the BNE calving grounds suggests that the decline has continued and may have accelerated. Most significantly, this trend is similar to that experienced with the Bathurst herd between 2006-2009, when the decline accelerated to 23 percent per year as the herd fell to lower numbers.

.../2



The Department of the Environment and Natural Resource (ENR) has been consulting with affected Aboriginal governments since the results of the Bathurst and BNE reconnaissance survey became known in June 2014. The highlights of that consultation are set out in Schedule "A" to this letter. At the November 28th, 2014 political leaders meeting on Bathurst and BNE caribou, the leadership of Aboriginal governments advised ENR to work through the Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) with respect to management actions for the BNE herd. The ACCWM provided ENR with a final draft of a management plan called *Taking Care of Caribou: The Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan* ("the Management Plan"). The plan was accompanied by a Technical Report and Community Consultation report. The plan was the product of work that began in the fall of 2009 and was submitted to governments in the fall of 2014. The Management Plan sets out four levels of herd status and associated management actions. These four levels are similar to those set out in the Porcupine Caribou Harvest Management Plan. Based on the plan, the BNE caribou herd should currently be considered in the "orange zone" because of its rapidly declining trend. The management actions identified when the herd is in this state are:

- Recommend a mandatory limit on subsistence harvest based on a TAH (total allowable harvest) accepted by the ACCWM;
- Prioritize the collection of harvest information;
- Recommend no resident, outfitter or commercial harvest;
- Recommend a majority bulls harvest, emphasizing younger and smaller bulls and not the large breeders and leaders;
- Recommend harvest of alternate species and encourage increased sharing, trade and barter of traditional foods, such as the use of community freezers; and
- Recommend increased enforcement including community monitors.

By letter dated January 9th, 2015, the ACCWM provided recommendations for the short-term management of the BNE caribou herd, consistent with the direction in the draft Management Plan. The ACCWM recommended, and ENR accepted, a harvest target of 1800 BNE caribou for the NWT for the 2014-2015 harvest season, including an 80:20 bull-cow ratio. This recommendation was accepted by ENR in its letter of January 21st, 2015.

The Process Leading to Allocation:

By letter dated January 21st, 2015, we asked the ACCWM for their input on the allocation to be applied for the Sahtú and Wek'èezhii regions, keeping in mind that tags or authorization cards would have to be allocated to other Aboriginal harvesters of the BNE herd located outside those areas. By letter dated January 26th, 2015, the ACCWM indicated that it felt it was inappropriate to make any decisions on harvest allocation without input and approval from all Aboriginal harvesters of the BNE herd. Therefore, the ACCWM recommended that ENR host a meeting of all Aboriginal users as soon as possible to determine the allocation of the BNE herd and have clarity on the proposed regulations.

ENR responded to this suggestion as part of its letter of January 28th, 2015. In its letter, ENR advised that given the time frames involved, it was not possible to convene an in-person meeting, but it was willing to set up a telephone conference call for February 2nd, 2015. Many users had come together during the week of January 28th, 2015 to discuss caribou in Délı̨nę for a meeting entitled the *Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou*. ENR invited participants to provide an indication of their views by January 30th, 2015.

ENR received two pieces of information prior to the telephone conference.

- (i) An email from the ACCWM on January 29th, 2015; and
- (ii) A joint letter from the Sahtú Renewable Resources Board (SRRB) and the Délı̨nę First Nation which was received on January 31st, 2015.

ENR also received a letter from the North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA) on February 5th, 2015 setting out the rationale for its request for an allocation of 100 BNE caribou.

The January 29th email from the ACCWM clarified that the ACCWM appreciated ENR supporting the recommendation to discuss harvest allocation with all Aboriginal users; but indicated that this discussion should also include the wildlife management authorities for each affected region. The ACCWM expressed that the SRRB, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT) (WMAC) and the Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) should be involved with any harvest allocation discussions. Representatives of the SRRB, WMAC, the WRRB along with the Grand Chiefs of the Tłı̄cho and the Dehcho, the Chiefs of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN), the President of the Northwest Territory Métis Nation (NWTMN), the President of the North Slave Métis Alliance, Chief Kenny of Délı̄ne and Ms. Blondin-Andrew of the Sahtú Secretariat Incorporated (SSI) were also copied on the invitation to the meeting. In its email, the ACCWM also advised that the idea of harvest allocation for the BNE Caribou herd had been discussed by user groups in late 2010 and early 2011 and provided ENR (and copied all other invitees to the meeting) with a copy of a draft harvest allocation, dated May 9th, 2011. It was made clear to ENR that the draft being provided reflected the time and context of the discussion, i.e. not all Aboriginal users were involved in 2010-2011 and, therefore, are not listed in the draft. It was also noted that while the draft was prepared as a discussion piece, future meetings of the group fell through and no formal discussion or support for the draft allocation had happened.

ENR also received a letter on January 31st, 2015 from the SRRB and the Délı̄ne First Nation. This letter confirmed that ENR's Assistant Deputy Minister, Mr. Jack Bird had provided an overview on the issues to be considered regarding harvest allocations for the BNE caribou. The letter also advised that representatives from the five Sahtú communities, the Renewable Resources Councils, Sahtú Youth Network, and the Délı̄negot'ı̄ne community; representatives from other jurisdictions included the WMAC, the Inuvialuit Game Council (IGC), Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association, Tłı̄cho Government, and Parks Canada were present. The meeting identified seven areas of consensus. A copy of the letter of January 31st, 2015, is attached as Schedule "B".

On February 2nd, 2015, Deputy Minister, Mr. Ernie Campbell convened a conference call of affected Aboriginal organizations and co-management boards to discuss allocation. This telephone conference call represented the culmination of our consultations with all users on how to conserve the BNE caribou herd, and how to allocate the harvest target, consultations which began over five months ago. The call was attended by representatives from the WRRB, SRRB, WMAC, NSMA, IGC and Chief Kenny of Délı̄ne. The Tłı̄cho Government, YKDFN, NWTMN, Dehcho First Nations, and SSI did not participate in the call, nor did they otherwise respond to the invitation to participate in the call.

During the course of the conference call, the following points were among the comments expressed:

- Most participants on the call indicated they were not comfortable supporting an allocation or criteria for allocation without all the traditional users of the herd participating in the discussion.
- That one of the elders said that no one has ever told him not to harvest caribou and that it is difficult to change an elder's way of life.
- That there is a need to work with Nunavut and come to an agreement with Kugluktuk on how many animals they will take from shared herds like the BNE.
- That people want the status quo maintained until new caribou population survey numbers come out in the fall and authorizations should not be allocated among groups but should be available upon request. Under this approach, the harvest would be monitored by communities and who would take actions to reduce their harvest on their own. Given the ACCWM recommendations for the BNE harvest, this would mean that once the 1800 authorizations are allocated or harvest monitoring indicates the harvest has reached 1800 animals; all harvesting would be shut down.

These points are consistent with the contents of the Community Consultation Report outlined in the *Taking Care of Caribou: The Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan* and particularly, the points expressed in the chapters on meeting needs and sharing, on harvest regulation and on the results of the community engagement sessions.

The Need for Allocation:

I have given consideration to the comments expressed during the conference call, and the seven consensus points in the letter from the SRRB. I cannot accept the recommendation to not take steps to allocate the harvest amongst user groups for the balance of the 2014-2015 harvesting season. Despite the verbal assurances from my co-management partners that harvesters will only take what they need, I am still concerned that such an approach comes with a high risk of further decline in the caribou herd and the potential for creating unreasonable hardship for many users of the BNE barren ground caribou herd. As of January 7th, 2015, approximately 553 BNE caribou had been harvested, 308 of which were cows and 245 were bulls. As of the date of the conference call on February 2nd, that number had increased to 593 animals. The harvesting of 308 cows means that the remainder of the harvest will need to be a bull only harvest. I note that most of the harvesting to date has taken place in Wildlife Management Zones S/BC/03 and R/BC/01. This is a substantial harvest from this herd and many communities have not started their annual harvest yet. Communities that harvest later in the year will now not have access to cows.

The other major risk that makes this option unworkable is that it leaves open a significant potential for exceeding the target of 1800 animals. A harvest in excess of 1800 animals is likely to create even more pressure on the BNE caribou herd. Applying the precautionary principle, it is necessary for me to take action to limit the potential for further negative consequences on the herd. Moreover, as Minister, I have an obligation to ensure, to the extent possible, that Aboriginal harvesters who harvest in the other affected Wildlife Management Zones have a fair and equitable ability to harvest to meet their subsistence needs. To implement the ACCWM harvest target recommendation of 1800 animals with a majority bull harvest, there must be an effective mechanism in place to monitor the harvest and ensure it can be halted once the target has been reached. The mechanism is the requirement for authorization cards to be allocated amongst all users.

Factors Affecting Allocation

At the outset, I wish to emphasize that the allocation being put forward is to be considered an interim, one time only measure and will apply only to the 2014-2015 harvest season. This will allow the ACCWM and Aboriginal governments to take the time that will be needed to put a longer term plan into place to determine how the herd should be shared if management actions limit the harvest of caribou. It is unfortunate that the Management Plan does not include short term measures that could be used to address harvest allocation for the rest of this season.

In coming to this allocation, I have looked to the principles set out in the draft Management Plan. I have also been guided by a desire to make a decision which reflects this government's long-term commitment to co-operative wildlife management, recognizes the need for communities to be involved in management, the need to strike a balance so that the needs of all users with rights to harvest are met, and the need to think about the future of the caribou and manage actions accordingly.

As a preliminary starting point, I have considered the draft allocation discussed by the ACCWM in late 2010-2011 and compared it against three years of past harvesting patterns in order to come to an average. These calculations are attached as Schedule "C". However, in my assessment, the decision on allocation requires many more factors to be considered and those factors mean that further modifications to the allocation need to be made.

For clarity, I have also taken into account a number of additional considerations, including:

- Past harvesting patterns based on reported harvests from the Bluenose-East herd on both a regional and community level for the 2011-2014 harvesting seasons;
- In considering prior year harvests, I have recognized that there are some user groups who did not harvest and who have asserted rights to harvest caribou and must be taken into account in the allocation;
- The draft BNE allocation discussed by the ACCWM in late 2010-2011 but recognizing and accepting its limitations as a draft document which did not proceed further and which did not include all users who have to be considered at the present time;
- The management actions set out in the *Taking Care of Caribou: The Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan* when the herd is in the orange zone;
- The *Taking Care of Caribou: The Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan* notes that the BNE herd usually migrates through settlement areas/regions in the NWT and that the herd is typically harvested by nine communities: Wrigley, Norman Wells, Tulita, Délı̄ne, Whati, Gameti, Behchokò, Paulatuk and Kugluktuk.

- The comments and recommendations contained in the community consultation report on the *Taking Care of Caribou: The Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Bluenose-East Barren Ground Caribou Herds Management Plan*;
- That the reported harvest to date is 593 Bluenose-East caribou and 308 of those animals are cows;
- Consideration of traditional harvesting patterns and practices;
- The migration patterns of the BNE herd and their typical availability within traditional harvesting areas of each Aboriginal organization;
- The proximity and access to the BNE caribou herd this year in relation to the location of communities and the distance to be traveled in order to harvest;
- The provisions of settled land claim agreements, along with obligations to groups who have asserted rights and the obligations created by the findings of courts as set out in the case law;
- The availability of other barren ground caribou herds including the Beverly Ahiak barren ground caribou herds, which have no limits on Aboriginal harvesting for the 2014-2015 harvesting season and the availability of Bluenose-West caribou herd or some users;
- The availability of other populations of wildlife that can be readily accessed to meet the need for subsistence food;
- The populations of each user group based on statistics maintained by government and in some cases provided by user groups, including the report from the NWT Bureau of Statistics entitled *Community Population by Ethnicity, 2001-2014*;
- Statistical information on the number of Aboriginal persons who Hunt & Fished During 2008 on a Community Basis as published by the NWT Bureau of Statistics;
- Personal consumption needs for people who have harvesting rights in these areas.
- During the October 2014 Technical Meeting and the November 2014 Leaders Meetings on caribou, there were a few concrete suggestions put forward:
 - Mr. Bailey on behalf of the NWT Métis Nation indicated that they could hunt from the herds in the south and that it was important that the Tłı̄cho, YK Dene and the Métis north of the lake could hunt this winter.

- It was noted that one community had muskox which could be shared.
- At the Technical Working Meeting in October, there was an indication that the Sahtú were willing to limit their harvesting in the Hottah Lake area to reduce pressure on BNE and Bathurst.
- The ability of ENR to assist with and facilitate community hunts;
- The impact of earlier harvest restrictions on the Bathurst herd and other wildlife populations on Aboriginal harvesters;
- The input received during the course of our in-person meetings on November 7th, 2014, November 28th, 2014, the information received from our in-person meetings with users in December 2014 and January 2015, the information and input received through the written exchange of correspondence and the input received during the conference call on February 2nd, 2015.

Taking all of these criteria into consideration, I am suggesting the following allocation for the balance of 2014-2015:

	Allocation	Number of Caribou Harvested To Date	Remaining Available Harvest
Tłjcho	1100	246	854
Sahtú	480	311	169
Dehcho	45	36	9
Inuvialuit Settlement Region	25	0	25
NWT Métis Nation	40	0	40
Akaiicho Territorial Government	60	0	60
North Slave Métis Alliance	50	0	50
Total	1800	593	1207

As harvesting is ongoing, we are enclosing each user groups' share of the authorization cards for the Bluenose-East (Green Cards) herd. With respect to the Beverley Ahiaik herds (Red Cards), there are no harvest limits on that herd and you should contact the North Slave Regional Office of ENR and they will provide you with the authorization cards needed for the Beverley Ahiaik herds.

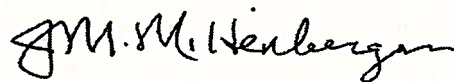
While some users may be disappointed, I am hopeful that we can be guided by the spirit of compromise and a recognition that these measures are being proposed on an interim basis and will apply only for the 2014-2015 harvest season. They are put in place to ensure that all subsistence harvesters have the ability to harvest and to minimize the impact of the hardship caused by the limited harvest. This is not an easy task or decision for any of us but the alternative could mean a further decline in this herd, which could mean more eventual hardship for your communities. We know that the health of all Aboriginal people depends on health of the caribou.

ENR is not focused on caribou harvest measures only. As of January 30th, 2015, we have implemented the increase in the wolf incentive program payment to \$800.00. We are also preparing to implement a full package of approaches including predator management measures, monitoring actions, compliance and enforcement measures, enhanced education and communications activities relating to harvest management and responsible harvesting practices, "sight in your rifle" events and working with land use planners and industry to address impacts of disturbance on caribou herds. We are also working with our neighbours in Nunavut to address their caribou harvests from shared populations. A copy of the list of agreed upon actions arising out of the November, 2014 meeting is attached to this letter as Schedule "D".

I am hopeful that over the coming months we will be able to continue to work with our co-management partners to achieve a consensus on mechanisms for respectful harvesting and sharing so that when the results of the 2015 photographic surveys planned for the Bathurst and BNE herds are received, we will have a plan to manage the caribou for future harvesting years.

In advance, I want to thank you all for your leadership and commitment to working together on this difficult matter. I look forward to continuing to do so as we find our way forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.M. Miltenberger". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

J. Michael Miltenberger

Attachments

- c. Mr. Eugene pascal, eugene_pascal@hotmail.com
Ms. Amy Amos, aamos@grrb.nt.ca
Mr. Larry Carpenter, wmac-c@jointsec.nt.ca
WMAC. wmacnwt@jointsec.nt.ca
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Ms. Lynda Yonge, Lynda_Yonge@gov.nt.ca

SCHEDULE "A"

Chronology of Consultation Bathurst & Bluenose East Caribou 2014-2015

Date	Action	Outcome
August 27, 2014	An in-person meeting was held with affected Aboriginal political leaders and co-management boards to discuss potential management actions for both the Bluenose-East and Bathurst caribou herds.	Establishment of a technical working group to review information available on the herds and provide recommendations to leaders on management actions for the herds.
October 9-10, 2014	1 st Technical Working Group Meeting	Development of an initial set of management actions.
October 22-23, 2014	2 nd Technical Working Group Meeting	Meeting focused on refining the list of possible actions and agreeing upon a package of recommended actions and their implementation for the leader's meeting
November 5, 2014	Letter from ACCWM to Minister Miltenberger	BNE Caribou Herd Recommendations
November 7, 2014	Second meeting with Aboriginal political leaders and co-management boards to discuss potential management actions for both the Bluenose-East and Bathurst caribou herds.	Draft recommendations on management actions for the two caribou herds
November 17, 2014	Letter from Grand Chief Erasmus to Minister Miltenberger	Tłı̄cho position on caribou management and herd recovery
November 19, 2014	Letter from ACCWM to Minister Miltenberger	ACCWM's position on emergency measures
November 19, 2014	Letter from SRRB to Minister Miltenberger	SRRB input on management actions related to Bathurst & BNE caribou herds
November 28, 2014	Third meeting with Aboriginal political leaders and co-management boards to discuss potential management actions for both the Bluenose-East and Bathurst caribou herds.	Agreement in principle on multiple actions for the caribou herds, but no specific agreement on Aboriginal harvest from the two herds.

December 2 & 5 2014	Meetings between Deputy Minister Campbell and other ENR officials & Chief Betsina and Chief Sangris	Meeting to discuss the status and potential management actions on the BNE & Bathurst herds
December 4, 2014	Letter from ACCWM to Minister Miltenberger	Request to remove the BNE discussions from the continued caribou meetings
December 5, 2014	Meeting between Deputy Minister Campbell and other ENR officials & Grand Chief Erasmus of the Tłı̄cho Government	Meeting intended to keep the dialogue open between the GNWT & Tłı̄cho Government in order to explore possible solutions to minimize hardship on Tłı̄cho citizens as a result of conservation measures contemplated on the Bathurst herd
December 12, 2014	Letter from Deputy Minister Campbell to Chief Betsina & Chief Sangris	Follow up to the December 2 & 5 meetings
December 12, 2014	Letter from Minister Miltenberger to Grand Chief Erasmus	Confirmation of proposals for management for the Bathurst & BNE caribou herds for the winter of 2014-2015
December 15, 2014	Meeting between Deputy Minister Campbell and other ENR officials & President Enge of the NSMA	Discussion on proposals for management for the Bathurst & BNE caribou herds for the winter of 2014-2015
December 15, 2014	Letter from Deputy Minister Campbell and to President Enge of the NSMA	Follow up to meetings & providing proposal for overall management of the Bathurst BNE harvest for winter 2014-2015
December 16, 2014	Letter to all Aboriginal Leaders	Follow up to meetings & providing proposal for overall management of the Bathurst BNE harvest for winter 2014-2015
December 17, 2014	Letter to ACCWM	Proposal for overall management of the BNE harvest for winter 2014-2015 & seeking advice of the ACCWM to refine & improve the approach

December 18, 2014	Letter to All Aboriginal Leaders	Advance Copy of Minister's Press Release updating on management actions for the Bathurst & BNE caribou herds
December 18, 2014	Letter to Deputy Minister Campbell from Chief Sangris & Chief Betsina of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation	Support for management actions on Bathurst caribou herd
December 22, 2014	Letter from President Enge of the NSMA to Deputy Minister Campbell	NSMA position on management proposal for Bathurst & BNE caribou herds
December 22, 2014	ENR Officials Meeting with Michael Cheeks, CEO of YKDFN & Rachel Crapeau, Director of Lands with YKDFN	Follow up on Mobile Core Bathurst Caribou Conservation Zone and issues relating to a community hunt
January 9, 2015	Letter from ACCWM	Provided a recommendation on harvest target of 1800 BNE caribou for the 2014-2015 harvest season, including an 80:20 bull-cow ration
January 13, 2015	Meeting between Deputy Minister Campbell & Chief Betsina & Chief Sangris	Continued Follow up meeting on Bathurst & BNE management actions
January 14, 2015	Meeting between Deputy Minister Campbell & Grand Chief of Tłı̨cho	Continued Follow up meeting on Bathurst & BNE management actions
January 20, 2015	Letter from Deputy Minister Campbell to Chief Sangris & Chief Betsina	Follow up to December and January meetings
January 20, 2015	Letter from Deputy Minister Campbell to Grand Chief Erasmus	Follow up to December and January meetings
January 20, 2015	Letter from Deputy Minister Campbell to President Enge	Follow up to NSMA's December 22, 2014 letter
January 20, 2015	Letter to All Aboriginal Governments	Progress update on short term management actions for the Bathurst & BNE for the balance of the 2014-2015 harvest season
January 20, 2015	Letter to WRRB & Management Proposal for Bathurst	Submission of Management Proposal on Mobile Core Bathurst Caribou Conservation Zone

January 21, 2015	Letter from Minister Miltenberger to the ACCWM	Accepted ACCWM recommendation & requested input on allocation of harvest authorizations
January 23, 2015	Letter from WRRB to Minister Miltenberger	WRRB Support for the Mobile Core Bathurst Caribou Conservation Zone and corresponding amendments to the regulations
January 26, 2015	Letter from ACCWM to Minister Miltenberger	Confirmation of the ACCWM's support of ENR's proposal & request for draft regulations to review. Suggested meeting on the issue of allocation
January 23, 2015	Letter from Grand Chief Erasmus to Deputy Minister Campbell	Clarification Letter
January 27, 2015	Email from Director of Wildlife to all ACCWM Members	Provided a draft of proposed amendments to the Big Game Hunting Regulations and the Mobile Core Conservation Area regulation
January 26, 2015	Letter from NSMA to Deputy Minister Campbell	NSMA support for Mobile Core Bathurst Conservation Area & support for the BNE harvest target and bull only harvest
January 28, 2015	Letter from Deputy Minister Campbell to ACCWM	Invitation to conference call on allocation on February 2, 2015
January 28, 2015	Press Release from Minister Miltenberger	Update on management actions & consensus points
January 29, 2015	Email from ACCWM	Identified additional participants for the conference call and provided a copy of the 2009 draft allocation
January 29 & 30, 2015	Assistant Deputy Minister Bird attended the Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou meeting	Provided participants with an overview of the request for feedback on the issues to be considered regarding harvest allocations
January 31, 2015	Letter received from SRRB &	Identified 7 points of

	Déline First Nation	consensus from the <i>Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou meeting</i>
February 2, 2015	Conference Call with Aboriginal organizations and co-management board	Consultation on options for allocation of the BNE for the remainder of the 2014-2015 harvest season
February 5, 2015	Letter from President Enge of the NSMA to Deputy Minister Campbell	Rationale for NSMA's request for 100 BNE caribou

Evan Walz

From: Jack Bird
Sent: Saturday, January 31, 2015 3:01 PM
To: Ernie Campbell
Cc: Evan Walz; Bruno Croft; Sarah Kay; Simone Tielech; Lynda Yonge; Jan Adamczewski; Judy McClinton
Subject: Fwd: Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou response to Minister's request for feedback
Attachments: ATT00001.htm; L2015-021.6 SRRB - ENR Minister - Sahtu Caribou Gathering Consensus 15-01-30.pdf; ATT00002.htm

This just in.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Deborah Simmons <director@srrb.nt.ca>
Date: January 31, 2015 at 2:28:43 PM MST
To: <michael_miltenberger@gov.nt.ca>
Cc: 'David Little' <ssi_exec_director@gov.deline.ca>, Ethel Blondin-Andrew <ebamountaindene@theedge.ca>, 'Jozef Carnogursky' <jozefcarn@hotmail.com>, 'Amy Amos' <aamos@grrb.nt.ca>, 'Kristen Callaghan' <KCallaghan@grrb.nt.ca>, 'Larry Carpenter' <wmac-c@jointsec.nt.ca>, 'WMAC' <wmacnwt@jointsec.nt.ca>, 'Frank Pokiak' <jgc-c@jointsec.nt.ca>, 'Steve Baryluk' <jgc-js@jointsec.nt.ca>, 'Jennifer Lam' <tech-rp@jointsec.nt.ca>, "'Tom Nesbitt'" <tom.nesbitt@telus.net>, 'Pete Sinkins' <peter.sinkins@pc.gc.ca>, 'Maya March' <maya.march@pc.gc.ca>, 'Attima Hadari' <attima@hadlariconsulting.com>, 'Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board' <krwb@niws.ca>, "'Dean, Bert'" <BDean@tunnigavik.com>, "'Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association'" <kugluktukhto@qiniq.com>, 'Grant Pryznyk' <jgp@theedge.ca>, 'Sarah Spencer' <sspencer@nwmb.com>, 'Ben Kovic' <receptionist@nwmb.com>, <grandchiefediiwa@tlicho.com>, <davidwedawin@tlicho.com>, <johnnyarrowmaker@tlicho.com>, <alfonznitsiza@tlicho.com>, 'Jack Bird' <Jack_Bird@gov.nt.ca>, Walter Bayha <dlc_lands@gov.deline.ca>, Walter Bayha <Nihtla321@gmail.com>, 'Leonard Kenny' <leonard_kenny@gov.deline.ca>, "Sarena Kaskamin" <rrcfgh@gmail.com>, Ruby McDonald <nwrrc@nwlc.ca>, <trrc@northwestel.net>, "Manager, DRRC" <drrc_manager@gov.deline.ca>, "Owen, Catarina" <catsilveira@gmail.com>, <josephkochon@behdziahda.com>
Subject: Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou response to Minister's request for feedback

Dear Minister Miltenberger, Attached please find a letter co-signed by the SRRB and Chief of the Délı̨nę First Nation regarding the consensus reached at the Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou regardin caribou harvesting allocations.

Máhsi,

Deborah Simmons, PhD
Executive Director
Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
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Minister Michael Miltenberger
NWT Environment and Natural Resources
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Delivered via email

November 19, 2014

**RE: *Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou consensus – Minister's request for feedback on
Bluenose East caribou harvesting allocations***

Dear Mr. Miltenberger:

On January 27-29, the ʔehdzo Got'ı̄ne Gotsé Nákedı sponsored the *Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou*. The meeting included representatives from the five Sahtú communities, including Renewable Resources Councils, Sahtú Youth Network, and Délı̄negot'ı̄ne community; representatives from other jurisdictions included the NWT Wildlife Management Advisory Council, the Inuvialuit Game Council, Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association, Tı̄chq Nation, and Parks Canada. At that meeting, Assistant Deputy Minister Bird provided an overview of the your request for feedback on the issues to be considered regarding harvest allocations for the Bluenose East caribou.

There was considerable discussion about this request during the Gathering, and the participants requested that we share seven points of consensus as presented to Mr. Bird. These points are listed below, along with our understanding of Mr. Bird's preliminary response during the meeting.

Consensus of the Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou	Preliminary ENR response
1. Decisions are needed about how to share the caribou.	This is a common starting point for discussion.
2. ENR has invited Aboriginal leaders and wildlife management authorities to a teleconference to discuss Bluenose East caribou harvesting allocations on Monday, February 2; there was strong direction that such important matters require an in-person meeting of the parties.	This message will be conveyed to the Minister.
3. Timelines for discussions and decisions should not be imposed by the Minister; rather, they need to be agreed upon by the parties. Allocations should be arrived at and implemented for the 2015-2016 harvesting season; it is not feasible to accomplish this for the current harvesting season.	This message will be conveyed to the Minister.
4. According to the best available information, the current status of the Bluenose East caribou does not constitute an emergency.	Agreed.
5. The health of the caribou depends on the health of the aboriginal peoples, their ability to “Be Dene” (Dene Ts’ı́ıı).	Did not respond.
6. The full range of actions, as presented by the Aboriginal Caucus at the November 28 meeting with the Minister, and as outlined in the Bluenose Caribou Management Plan, is needed to address declining trends.	Did not respond.
7. Education is needed in the communities to prepare the ground for any decisions that will be made.	ENR is committed to working collaboratively to support development of education and communication materials.

The Sahtú Secretariat Incorporated/Déłıne First Nation and ʔehdzo Got’ıne Gotsé Nákedı will be present at the teleconference on Monday to discuss these points and other contributions from the parties in response to the Minister’s request. The Board thanks you for your department’s participation and valuable contributions to the Gathering for the Caribou.

Máhsı cho,



Paul Latour
Interim Chair



Chief Leonard Kenny

cc. Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Sahtú Secretariat Inc., parties present at the Sahtú Gathering for the Caribou, Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM)

SCHEDULE "C"

Proposed Interim Allocation of Bluenose-East Caribou for NWT Harvest for Winter 2014-2015:

Numbers from draft allocation discussed in 2011 for Bluenose-East herd (based on winter 2009-2010 harvest data & related information) & ENR Bluenose-East harvest data (recorded via community monitors, check-stations and wildlife patrols, based on winters 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014)

Aboriginal Group	A Draft Allocation discussed by ACCWM in 2011 as %	B ENR Harvest Data for Three winters (2011-2014) Harvest as %	C Average of Column A & B	D Proposed Interim Allocation as %	E Proposed Interim Allocation as share of Harvest Target of 1800
Tjicho	61	72.7	66.9	61.1	1100
Sahtú	31	21.3	26.2	26.7	480
Deh cho	3	1.2	2.1	2.5	45
Inuvialuit Settlement Region	2	0*	1.0	1.4	25
NWT Métis Nation	2	1.3	1.6	2.2	40
Akaiicho Territorial Government	1	3.5	2.2	3.3	60
North Slave Métis Alliance	0*	0*	0*	2.8	50
Total	100	100	100	100	1800

*No harvest recorded

Approach Used:

- Draft Bluenose-East Allocation from 2011 and 3 last winters of harvest data (2011-2014) given equal weight (used average of % values).
- Allocation adjusted to consider factors as outlined in attached letter
- Percentages translated to share of 1800 harvest limit recommended by ACCWM in Jan. 2015.

Reported NWT Winter Harvest of Bluenose-East Caribou (February. 4, 2015)

Aboriginal Group	Bulls	Cows	Sex Unknown	Total
Tijcho	38	57	151	246
Sahtú	129	182	0	311
Dehchoé	21	15	0	36
Inuvialuit Settlement Region	0	0	0	0
NWT Métis Nation	0	0	0	0
Akaiicho Territorial Government	0	0	0	0
North Slave Métis Alliance	0	0	0	0
Total	188	254	151	593

Key Areas of Action where consensus was reached by the Aboriginal Caucus at the November 28th meeting of political leaders and renewable resource board chairs.

1. Land Use

i. Prioritize land use planning.

GNWT response –Yes, including range planning, and need everyone at the table.

ii. Implement interim moratorium on development in key caribou habitat.

GNWT response –Step 1: Identify key caribou habitat and thresholds as strong advice; commitment to sustainable development.

iii. Send strongly worded letter to Nunavut Environment and NWMB –management planning, land use planning, commercial harvesting and face-to-face meeting.

GNWT response –committed to working with Government of Nunavut.

iv. Complete report on range management plan and cumulative effects program by March 31, 2015.

GNWT response –yes and making sure momentum keeps going.

2. Long term management and action planning

i. Continue and prioritize the long term planning process for the Bathurst herd and finalize terms of reference for a Bathurst caribou management board as soon as possible.

GNWT response –yes; intent to establish a mechanism to make recommendations and develop plan.

ii. Continue ACCWM (Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management) process, including action planning.

GNWT response – the action planning to be based on standards not in crisis mode.

iii. Establish working group to identify key caribou habitat for priority fire management in 2015.

GNWT response –need to determine how best to do this.

3. Environmental Monitoring

i. Develop vegetation mapping and monitoring protocols and partnership agreements.

GNWT response –yes, longer term.

ii. Conduct TK and science literature review on the potential impacts of insects on caribou and insect control methods.

GNWT response –yes, longer term.

4. Education and communication

i. Organise voluntary "sight in your rifle" events.

GNWT response –yes, can work on community by community and on a regional basis.

ii. Collaboratively develop communication tools to promote reducing harvest.

GNWT response –yes; appropriate communications tools to be determined in consultation with communities.

iii. Continue and increase meetings and activities in the communities and on the land to encourage responsible harvesting practices.

GNWT response – can do together with all organizations and communities.

5. Predator control

i. Increase the wolf incentive program payment to \$800, reinstitute the carcass collection program.

GNWT response –yes to increasing incentive. Need to review carcass collection idea with respect to information gathering.

ii. Form a Working Group and Terms of Reference with Input from Aboriginal groups to develop approach to wolf control.

GNWT response –might be quite different from region to region.

iii. Coordinate program with Nunavut Environment.

GNWT response –continue to discuss.

iv. Develop a method to immediately report and record wolf sightings\caribou sightings and interactions.

GNWT response - Have a system in place; need to communicate this better.

6. Harvest management

i. Prioritize collection of harvest information; no resident, outfitter or commercial harvest.

GNWT response – always a high priority; need to work with regions to determine best method.

ii. Majority bulls harvest, emphasizing young/small bulls, not big breeders.

GNWT response –most important; explore how to accomplish.

iii. Recommend harvest of alternate species, encourage sharing and barter of traditional foods.

GNWT response – everybody needs to work on this.

iv. Increased enforcement, including community monitors.

GNWT response – area for further discussion.