

December 17, 2019

**SRRB Public Listening: Sahtú Ragóʔa (Hunting Laws) and Approaches to Wildlife Harvesting Round 1 Information Requests to the Parties**

**Colville Lake Parties Response:**

- 1.1. Which kinds of caribou most concern you as a Party: ʔedə/ʔekwé (Bluenose West or Bluenose East barren-ground caribou), shúhtagəʔepé (Northern Mountain caribou), or ʔədzı (Boreal Woodland caribou)? Describe your main conservation concerns. (SRRB)

All caribou in the traditional territory of the Dehlá Got'ıne are of “most concern” to the Colville parties. The Colville parties do not name or group the caribou the same way as the GNWT or the SRRB, and consider issues like habitat loss/change as a result of climate change and industrial activities to be significant conservation concerns. Dehlá Got'ıne want to maintain our way of life. This way of life relies on caribou. Dehlá Got'ıne consider conservation to be an inherent part of our way of life.

- 2.1 Do you have concerns about regulation of caribou harvest? What are your concerns? (SRRB)

The Colville parties believe that caribou regulation is focused on harvest levels, instead of maintaining proper relationships between caribou and people. It has become a ‘numbers game’ managed by the GNWT, instead of by communities. The focus on numbers has diminished our own Dene laws and traditions. Our concerns about the regulation of caribou harvest are set out in significant detail in the Dehlá Got'ıne ʔədə Plan submitted to the SRRB on October 21, 2019.

- 2.2 How do you ensure that Indigenous harvesters that are not from your jurisdiction respect local hunting laws? How do you deal with visiting Indigenous harvesters that violate local hunting law? (SRRB)

The Colville parties are proposing to re-introduce traditional laws, protocols and practices which required hunters from outside of our territory to seek permission before harvesting. Our proposals for Indigenous Harvesters from outside of the Colville traditional territory are described in Appendix A of the Dehlá Got'ıne ʔədə Plan and the draft *Dehlá Got'ıne Ts'ıduweh ʔədə ʔeʔá, 2019*. We want the same level of respect for our laws in our territory as other communities expect for their laws in their territories.

- 2.3 In the North, each region has a wildlife management authority that works with communities to determine the approach to caribou conservation. Do you have concerns about the coordination of caribou hunting regulation across regions? How do you propose that these concerns be addressed? (SRRB)

This question requires a lot more discussion between the Sahtu parties, wildlife managers from neighbouring regions, and with grassroots harvesters from those regions. We want to ensure that

there is mutual accountability between regions, but we do not believe that everyone needs to do things the same way. We will seek a consensus on this issue at the January Public Hearing.

- 3.1 List three (or more) aspects of Indigenous country food systems and ways of life that most contribute to promoting caribou conservation. Do you have concerns about threats to these systems? (*SRRB*)

Under Dehlá Got'íne law and tradition, harvesters take only what is needed, and use everything they take. See the Dehlá Got'íne ʔədə Plan submitted to the SRRB on October 21, 2019 for details.

- 3.2 How are Indigenous country food systems changing? What impacts are these changes having on caribou? (*SRRB*)

We are seeing or hearing about major changes in the climate, in species distributions (muskox moving into caribou areas) and as a result of impacts from industry and development. See the Dehlá Got'íne ʔədə Plan submitted to the SRRB on October 21, 2019 for details.

- 4.1 Harvest monitoring is recognized as a key component in effective harvest regulation. What is the most effective way to monitor caribou harvest in your experience? (*SRRB*)

Our harvest monitoring proposals are described in the Dehlá Got'íne ʔədə Plan submitted to the SRRB on October 21, 2019.

- 4.2 Over the past year, Indigenous Guardian programs have come onto the national stage as part of Indigenous environmental governance systems. What role can Guardians play in harvest monitoring? (*SRRB*)

Colville is not currently participating in Indigenous Guardian programs. Colville wants to maintain and strengthen land users to manage and monitor our lands and our relationship with caribou by relying on our own Indigenous laws, culture and traditions as described in the Dehlá Got'íne ʔədə Plan submitted to the SRRB on October 21, 2019.

- 5.1 Discussions among Member Boards of the Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management emphasize education and communication as priorities in achieving effective harvest regulation. What are your priorities for education and communication? (*SRRB*)

The priorities for education and communication are described in the Dehlá Got'íne ʔədə Plan submitted to the SRRB on October 21, 2019.

- 5.2 The *Indigenous Discussion Paper and Calls to Action* presented at the 2018 North American Caribou Workshop notes that "all Indigenous people have roles to play in caribou stewardship – women, men, and those who define their gender in a more fluid way – just as caribou herds are structured according to the roles of individual animals.

We all depend upon each other." Please describe the importance of gender roles for you in harvest regulation, and any concerns about inclusion. (*SRRB*)

This answer is not something that can be provided quickly, and requires more discussion among participants. Responses will be provided at the January Public Hearing.

5.3 In its 2016 BNE Hearing Report, the SRRB found that that "there is strong consensus in the Sahtú Region that youth involvement is critical for the success of community ʔekwé [caribou] conservation plans." Describe your approach to involving youth in wildlife harvesting and harvest regulation. (*SRRB*)

Youth involvement is described in the Dehlá Got'ıne ʔədə Plan submitted to the SRRB on October 21, 2019. Colville wants to maintain and strengthen traditional skills, knowledge and understanding of our laws and way of life.

5.4 What materials or websites do you recommend for review as relevant for consideration by the Parties related to the central question of the Public Listening Session? (*SRRB*)

Recommended materials are listed in Appendix C of the Dehlá Got'ıne ʔədə Plan submitted to the SRRB on October 21, 2019.

6.1 All regions in the North with Comprehensive Land Claim Agreements conducted similarly designed Harvest Studies as a requirement of their claims and as an evidence base for protecting Indigenous harvesting rights. If you participated as a partner in a Harvest Study, what do you consider to be the current and future value of the study? If you are continuing to participate in Harvest Studies, are these differently designed? Are they being used differently? (*SRRB*)

Harvesting studies are of limited value if they only count things that are relevant to scientists and Western resource managers. They have not functioned to protect Indigenous harvesting rights. We expect further discussion of the limits of such studies, and better approaches to be considered at the January Public Hearing.