



Mr. Joseph Judas, Chair  
Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board  
4504 49<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE  
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 1A7

August 21, 2019

Dear Mr. Judas:

**WRRB Reasons for Decision Final Report – Sahtì Ekwò Bluenose-East Caribou Herd**

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The Tłıchǫ Government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories have received the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) "*Report on a Public Hearing Held by the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board 9-11 April 2019 Behchokò, NT & Reasons for Decisions Related to a Joint Proposal for the Management of the Sahtì Ekwò (Bluenose-East Caribou) Herd*". The document was delivered to the parties on June 16, 2019.

Please find attached our joint response to the WRRB reasons for decisions and recommendations included in the Final Report. We look forward to working with the WRRB for the management of the Sahtì Ekwò Bluenose-East Caribou Herd.

Sincerely,

Grand Chief George Mackenzie  
Tłıchǫ Government  
Behchokò, NT

Robert C. McLeod, Minister  
Environment and Natural Resources  
Yellowknife, NT

## Attachment

- c. Mr. Gary Bohnet, Principal Secretary  
Executive and Indigenous Affairs

Mr. Mike Aumond, Secretary to Cabinet/Deputy Minister  
Executive and Indigenous Affairs

Ms. Shaleen Woodward, Deputy Secretary  
Indigenous and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Executive and Indigenous Affairs

Dr. Joe Dragon, Deputy Minister  
Environment and Natural Resources

Ms. Rita Mueller, Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations  
Environment and Natural Resources

Dr. Brett Elkin, Director, Wildlife  
Environment and Natural Resources

Mr. Bruno Croft, Superintendent, North Slave Region  
Environment and Natural Resources

Chief Clifford Daniels  
Community Government of Behchokò  
Tłıchq Government

Chief David Wedawin  
Community Government of Gamètì  
Tłıchq Government

Chief Charlie Football  
Community Government of Wekweètì  
Tłıchq Government

Chief Alfonz Nitsiza  
Community Government of Whatì  
Tłıchq Government

Ms. Laura Duncan, Tłıchq Executive Officer  
Tłıchq Government

Ms. Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault, Director, Culture and Lands Protection  
Tłı̄chǫ Government

Mr. Michael Birlea, Manager, Culture and Lands Protection  
Tłı̄chǫ Government

Chief Maurice Moses  
Pehdzéh Kí First Nation

Chief Edward Sangris and Band Council  
Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Detah)

Chief Ernest Betsina and Band Council  
Yellowknives Dene First Nation (N'Dilǫ)

Chief Darryl Marlowe and Band Council  
Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation

Ms. Ethel Liske, ADFN Negotiations Coordinator  
Akaitcho Dene First Nations

Grand Chief Gladys Norwegian  
Dehcho First Nation

President William (Bill) Enge  
North Slave Metis Alliance

President Garry Bailey  
Northwest Territory Metis Nation

President Clem Paul  
Mountain Island Metis

Ms. Jody Pellissey, Executive Director  
Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board

Mr. Michael Neyelle, Chair  
Sahtú Renewable Resources Board

Ms. Deborah Simmons, Executive Director  
Sahtú Renewable Resources Board

Mr. Jozef Carnogursky, Chair  
Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

Ms. Amy Amos, Executive Director  
Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

Mr. Larry Carpenter, Chairperson  
Wildlife Management Advisory Council-NWT

Ms. Jody Pellissey  
Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management

Mr. Vernon Amos, Chairperson  
Inuvialuit Game Council

Ms. Jodie Maring, Resource Coordinator  
Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)

Mr. Daniel Shewchuk, Chairperson  
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Ms. Aluki Kotierk, President  
Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

Mr. Larry Adjun, Chair  
Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization

Mr. Stanley Anablak, President  
Kitikmeot Inuit Association

Mr. Jimmy Noble Jr., Deputy Minister  
Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut

Mr. Drikus Gissing, Wildlife Director  
Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut

# Response to Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) Reasons for Decisions Related to a Joint Proposal for the Management of the Sahtì Ekwò (Bluenose-East Caribou) Herd

## DETERMINATIONS

**Determination #1-2019:** The Board determines a total allowable harvest of 193, bulls only, for all users of the Sahtì ekwò herd within Wek'èezhì is to be implemented by the Tłıchq Government and Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 harvest seasons.

**Response:** ACCEPT

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government and GNWT accept this determination for Wek'èezhì and thank the Board for its strong focus on conservation and the need to limit harvest of this rapidly declining herd. ENR will amend regulations as needed to implement this determination in Wek'èezhì and in the associated caribou management zones as soon as practicable.

**Determination #2-2019:** The proportional allocation of the total allowable harvest of the Sahtì ekwò herd for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 harvest seasons shall be as follows:

Tłıchq Citizens: 39.29% (76 animals)

Members of an Indigenous people who traditionally harvest Sahtì ekwò (includes Nunavut): 60.71% (117 animals)

TG should determine distribution of the allocation with Tłıchq communities, and GNWT should determine distribution of the allocation to members of an Indigenous people who traditionally harvest Sahtì ekwò in consultation with those groups.

**Response:** ACCEPT

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government and GNWT accept this determination for Wek'èezhì. Consistent with s. 12.9 of the Tłıchq Agreement, Tłıchq Government will address the allocation of Sahtì Ekwò caribou among the Tłıchq communities. As recommended by WRRB, GNWT will allocate the remaining harvest among other Indigenous user groups of the Sahtì Ekwò herd.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation #1-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò):** Sahtì Ekwò Harvest Monitoring: To ensure that the total allowable harvest is being adhered to, and to utilize the expertise of harvesters, TG is to revise their approach to Sahtì ekwò harvest monitoring for the 2019/20, and 2020/21 harvest seasons to include:

- Data collected from harvesters which, at minimum, should include the number and location of ɾekwò harvested, sex, health, and body condition of the animals, and distance travelled by the harvesters;
- Harvest data should be provided weekly by TG to the WRRB, and the annual harvest and monitoring summary reports prepared by GNWT and TG should be made public by June 30 of each year; and
- Where necessary because of concentrations of ɾekwò near a community, up to four community monitors should be hired to be able to collect, and report on harvest data weekly

**Response:** VARY

Tłjchq Government varies ‘Recommendation #1-2019’ to say the following:

Recommendation #1-2019 (Sahti Ekwò): Sahti Ekwò Harvest Monitoring: To ensure that the total allowable harvest is being adhered to, and to utilize the expertise of harvesters, TG is to revise their approach to Sahti ekwò harvest monitoring for the 2019/20, and 2020/21 harvest seasons to include:

- Data collected from harvesters which, ~~at minimum~~, should include the number and location of ɾekwò harvested, sex, health, and body condition of the animals, and distance travelled by the harvesters;
- Harvest data should be provided ~~weekly~~ **monthly** by TG to the WRRB, and the annual harvest and monitoring summary reports prepared by GNWT and TG should be made public by June 30 of each year; and
- Where necessary because of concentrations of ɾekwò near a community, up to four community monitors should be hired to be able to collect, and report on harvest data ~~weekly~~ **monthly**.

**Reasons:** Tłjchq Government agrees that it can collect data and revise its approach to Sahti Ekwò monitoring. Tłjchq Government has carefully considered what resources it has to implement the WRRB recommendation for a weekly reporting and has concluded that in order to ensure that it can comply with the recommendation, chooses to continue to provide monthly reports. The WRRB recommends that data collected from harvesters, at a minimum, should include the number and location of ɾekwò harvested, sex, health, and body condition of the animals, and distance travelled by the harvesters. Tłjchq Government will strive to provide this information but Tłjchq Government cannot control what information harvesters might share after a harvest and as such cannot guarantee the proposed minimum requirements for data content.

**Recommendation #2-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Enhanced North Slave Dìga Harvest Incentive Program: To understand the success of the pilot year of the Enhanced North Slave Dìga Harvest Incentive Program, GNWT is to provide the location and number of dìga harvested, as part of the Program, to the WRRB by July 26, 2019.

**Response:** ACCEPT

**Reasons:** The GNWT is currently finalizing a report on the winter 2018-2019 Enhanced North Slave Dìga Harvest Incentive Program. A preliminary draft of the report was shared with the WRRB on July 15, 2019. A similar report will be produced annually by the GNWT.

**Recommendation #3-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Enhanced North Slave Dìga Harvest Incentive Program: To determine the future use of the Enhanced North Slave Dìga Harvest Incentive Program in managing Sahti ekwò and other ɤekwò herds, GNWT and TG are to develop a framework to evaluate the effectiveness of this Program in achieving ɤekwò conservation goals, for review and approval by the WRRB, by September 30, 2019.

**Response:** VARY

Tłıchq Government and GNWT vary 'Recommendation #3-2019' to say the following:

**Recommendation #3-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Enhanced North Slave Dìga Harvest Incentive Program: To determine the future use of the Enhanced North Slave Dìga Harvest Incentive Program in managing Sahti ekwò and other ɤekwò herds, GNWT and TG are to develop a framework to evaluate the effectiveness of this Program in achieving ɤekwò conservation goals, for review and approval by the WRRB, by ~~September 30, 2019~~ **January 10, 2020**.

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government and the GNWT suggest that development of a framework to assess effectiveness of the Enhanced North Slave Dìga Harvest Incentive Program be done as part of a larger dìga management proposal under development, which can inform the adaptive management framework considered in Recommendation #9-2019. In order to comply with the Recommendation and given the other tasks to be accomplished in a short period, Tłıchq Government and the GNWT suggest that the proposal and framework in Recommendation #3-2019 would not be completed by September 30, 2019, and would vary the completion date to January 10, 2020. The GNWT also notes that a number of approaches to wolf reduction are under consideration in the larger dìga management proposal. The enhanced incentives program would form a part of this proposal and it is the larger program's effectiveness that should be assessed using wolf-focused and caribou-focused indicators.

**Recommendation #4-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Nògha (wolverines): To determine the current population trends and distribution of the Sahti ekwò predator, GNWT and TG are to monitor nògha populations in Wek'èezhì, beginning April 1, 2020. Monitoring information should be shared with the WRRB as available.

**Response:** VARY

Tłıchq Government and the GNWT vary 'Recommendation #4-2019' to say the following:

**Recommendation #4-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Nògha (wolverines): To determine the current population trends and distribution of the Sahti ekwò predator, GNWT **is to undertake a review of existing monitoring of wolverine abundance and distribution in the NWT and, where available, from relevant regions of Nunavut by** and TG ~~are to monitor nògha populations in Wek'èezhì, beginning April 1, 2020. This will be used to consider potential future monitoring of wolverines. Any existing~~ monitoring information ~~should will~~ be shared with the WRRB ~~as available~~.

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government supports the principle behind collecting monitoring information concerning Nògha. Tłıchq Government does not have the resources to undertake a wolverine monitoring study, and at this time chooses to implement the other priorities set in the 2019 Recommendations as well as completing the previous recommendations of WRRB. Tłıchq Government suggests that time be spent on the development of a collaborative framework between the GNWT and WRRB to advance this recommendation.

The GNWT notes that scientific evidence to date does not identify wolverines as a major predator of barren-ground caribou. Wolverines are primarily scavengers and current evidence suggests that their abundance on the Bathurst herd's range has declined as the herd has declined. The standard method of monitoring wolverine abundance and distribution has been DNA Mark-Recapture Sampling; the GNWT has conducted monitoring in the Daring Lake area and the diamond mines have had similar programs in their areas. ENR can provide a summary of relevant wolverine monitoring in the NWT to date, including results from Nunavut if available, as a basis for consideration of future monitoring.



**Recommendation #5-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Predators on the Calving Grounds : To increase the birth rate of Sahti ekwò, GNWT and TG are to work cooperatively with the Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut to protect the calving grounds of Sahti ekwò from dìga, sahcho, det'qcho, and nògha. Starting in 2020, calving ground protection could take the form of monitors on the perimeter and should begin one week prior to calving.

**Response:** VARY

Tłıchq Government and the GNWT vary 'Recommendation #5-2019' to say the following:

**Recommendation #5-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Predators on the Calving Grounds: To increase **early survival of newborn calves and adults of the** ~~the birth rate of~~ Sahti ekwò, GNWT and TG ~~are to work cooperatively with~~ **should continue to engage** the Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut **to explore methods that may be used to reduce predation on** ~~to protect~~ the calving grounds of Sahti ekwò from dìga, sahcho, det'qcho, and nògha. ~~Starting in 2020,~~ Calving ground protection could take the form of monitors on the perimeter and should begin one week prior to calving.

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government and the GNWT note that the calving grounds of the Sahti Ekwo are found in Nunavut which is outside of Tłıchq lands and Mqwhì Gogha Dè Nıttèè and outside of GNWT's jurisdiction.

Tłıchq Government agrees with the goals of 'Recommendation #5-2019' and will welcome the opportunity to engage with Nunavut on these issues. Tłıchq Government would be supportive of any plan in Nunavut to protect the calving grounds by the use of monitors on the perimeter one week prior to calving. This support is predicated on agreement from Nunavut. Notwithstanding this support TG cannot assure a 2020 implementation date.

Any wildlife management actions in Nunavut would need to follow appropriate processes in that territory and work through organizations there, including the Government of Nunavut (GN), the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), and regional and local organizations. The GNWT will continue to collaborate with the GN.

**Recommendation #6-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò):** High Priority Habitat Identification: To work towards protecting Sahtì ekwò habitat, TG should work with communities to identify high priority habitat for protection. High priority habitat should include habitat used by Sahtì ekwò at low population densities. Once identified, the high priority habitat should be shared with the WRRB.

**Response:** ACCEPT

**Reasons:** Work is being done presently by Tłıchq Government staff related to Tataa and water crossings. Tłıchq Government brought elders together in Yellowknife to discuss high priority habitats for caribou, based on current fire history (maps); Tłıchq Government will share information with GNWT to prioritize key winter habitat for fire suppression and will submit this information to the WRRB by December 1, 2019.

**Recommendation #7-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò):** Legal Protections: Following identification of high priority habitat for Sahtì ekwò, and to ensure this habitat remains intact, legally enforceable habitat protection measures should be implemented by GNWT under the Wildlife Act or Species at Risk Act (NWT). In the interim, Mobile Caribou Conservation Measures should be implemented by GNWT and TG by September 2020.

**Response:** VARY

The GNWT varies 'Recommendation #7-2019' to say the following:

Recommendation #7-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò): Legal Protections: Following identification of high priority habitat for Sahtì Ekwò, and to ensure this habitat remains intact, legally enforceable habitat protection measures should be **explored** ~~implemented~~ by GNWT under the Wildlife Act or Species at Risk Act (NWT). ~~In the interim, Mobile Caribou Conservation Measures should be implemented by GNWT and TG by September 2020.~~ **In addition, GNWT will explore a pilot project to test Mobile Caribou Conservation Measures.**

**Reasons:** While the new *Wildlife Act* and the *Species at Risk Act* include the potential for creation of conservation areas for wildlife, these provisions are largely untested. Given that caribou use of the landscape is dynamic, flexibility will be required in considering the use and applicability of habitat conservation tools.

Mobile Caribou Conservation Measures are included in the Bathurst Caribou Range Plan as an approach to limiting disturbance that is flexible and can be applied where the caribou are during a portion of the year. However, as noted in the Range Plan, this approach is largely untested and a pilot project would be the appropriate next step. Given the extent of development on the Bathurst herd's range compared to the very limited development on the Sahtì Ekwò range and that Mobile Caribou Conservation

Measures are a recommendation of the Bathurst Caribou Range Plan, a pilot project would most likely be planned for the Bathurst range. However, the outcomes and learning gained from such a pilot project would inform barren-ground caribou management across the NWT.

**Recommendation #8-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Alternative Wildlife Species: To help people thrive within dè, including having food security, and in light of a limited harvest on Sahti ekwò, the WRRB recommends that TG and GNWT encourage Tłıchq citizens to harvest alternative country foods, starting in September 2019.

**Response:** ACCEPT

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government will report to the WRRB, starting in September 2019, what efforts Tłıchq Government made to encourage Tłıchq citizens to harvest alternative country foods, but notes that it cannot guarantee the outcomes of the encouragement. This recommendation may also be addressed through implementation of 'Recommendation #1-2019', where monitors could ask for, and provide information on what alternative country foods are used by Tłıchq citizens.

The GNWT will continue to support the Tłıchq Government through funding that is provided for alternative sources of country food including, but not limited to, moose hunting, Beverly caribou hunting, fish nets, etc. This recommendation will also be addressed in part through the implementation of ENR's Sustainable Livelihoods Action Plan in collaboration with many partners. This Action Plan outlines actions related to country food research, development of harvesting mentorship and training programs, opportunities for youth, and community food systems planning, all of which can include focus on alternative foods. The GNWT would be happy to meet with Tłıchq Government and the WRRB by the end of 2019 to discuss development and implementation of programs for Tłıchq citizens under this Action Plan.

**Recommendation #9-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Adaptive Management Framework: WRRB, TG and GNWT to collaborate to develop a herd-specific adaptive management framework with the thresholds linked to specific management actions by January 2020.

**Response:** VARY

Tłıchq Government and the GNWT vary 'Recommendation #9-2019' to say the following:

**Recommendation #9-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Adaptive Management Framework: WRRB, TG and GNWT to collaborate to develop a herd-specific adaptive management framework with the thresholds linked to specific management actions by January 2020, **with the**

WRRB taking a lead role. The framework will take into consideration existing management plans and decisions and recommendations from boards and governments.

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government and the GNWT are highly supportive of the establishment of an adaptive co-management framework and the potential for increased direct collaboration between the Tłıchq Government, the GNWT and the WRRB that such an undertaking requires.

The GNWT notes that there has been in effect a cycle of adaptive management on a three year interval. This has now been reduced to two years with the latest joint management proposal, where new information has been used to re-visit management and monitoring of this herd. The GNWT also notes that the management plan Taking Care of Caribou includes the Sahti Ekwò herd and that the Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) meets annually to assess the status of three caribou herds and updates action plans for each herd. This plan and the annual meetings also can be considered a form of adaptive management.

Given this context, Tłıchq Government and the GNWT suggest that the two governments and the WRRB collaboratively develop an adaptive management framework for the Sahti Ekwò herd, and that the WRRB take a lead role in developing this adaptive co-management process. This could include development of a meeting schedule and work plan by October 30, 2019.

**Recommendation #10-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Population Surveys: To ensure timely adaptive management, GNWT should conduct population surveys for Sahti ekwò every two years. The next population survey should thus take place June 2020.

**Response:** ACCEPT

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government and the GNWT thank the WRRB for supporting the proposal to move to conducting population surveys every two years.

**Recommendation #11-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Pregnancy Monitoring: To better understand the health of the Sahti ekwò herd, GNWT and TG should implement Sahti ekwò pregnancy monitoring through fecal pellet collection in the winter months, starting January 2020. Methodology for this program should include community-based sampling.

**Response:** VARY

Tłıchq Government and the GNWT vary 'Recommendation #11-2019' to say the following:

**Recommendation #11-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Pregnancy Monitoring: To better understand the health of the Sahti ekwò herd, GNWT and TG should **continue to explore** ~~implement~~ Sahti ekwò pregnancy monitoring through fecal pellet collection in the winter months, starting in ~~January 2020~~ **March 2020 during a late-winter composition survey by helicopter**. Methodology for this program may include community-based sampling.

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government believes that fecal pellet collection may be possible through community-based collection but cannot guarantee that harvesters will implement such a program. Caribou fecal pellet collection is something harvesters usually do not do. Tłıchq Government notes that because the caribou harvest is a bull only harvest, community based fecal pellet sampling will be a project in and of itself. Tłıchq Government will continue to rely on the GNWT Sahti Ekwò pregnancy monitoring through fecal pellet collection that is done in conjunction with helicopter-based late winter composition surveys. If, in the future, the Ekwò Nàxoède K'è (Boots on the Ground) program is expanded to the Sahti Ekwò herd, a specific community-based caribou fecal pellet sampling program may be undertaken as part of winter field activities.

The GNWT will continue to collect fecal samples during late-winter caribou composition surveys of the Sahti Ekwò herd, beginning in March 2020, with an emphasis on obtaining a sufficient number of samples and adequate spatial coverage. If in future Tłıchq Government is able to collect fecal samples through community-based methods, those could be used to augment samples obtained during late-winter surveys by helicopter.

**Recommendation #12-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Reconnaissance Surveys: In an effort to leave the ɔekwò alone, and only cause disturbance that is necessary, GNWT should cease the annual reconnaissance survey for Sahti ekwò.

**Response:** ACCEPT

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government and the GNWT believe that the recommendation should refer to calving ground reconnaissance surveys - see the WRRB narrative comments at p. 61 of the WRRB Reasons for Decision. Tłıchq Government and the GNWT note that the rationale for discontinuing the calving ground reconnaissance surveys is not about caribou disturbance, but rather that the usefulness of the data is debatable.

**Recommendation #13-2019 (Sahti Ekwò):** Collars: To have a better understanding of herd distribution, movements, and switching, GNWT should increase the number of collars on the Sahti ekwò herd from 50 to 70. Additional analysis gathered from the collars should be provided to the WRRB from GNWT annually including but not limited to:

- 1) Dispersal at calving in relation to historic data;
- 2) Timing of calving in relation to historic data;
- 3) Calf:cow ratios; and,
- 4) Rates of herd switching and rutting locations.

**Response:** VARY

ENR varies 'Recommendation #13-2019' to say the following:

Recommendation #13-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò): Collars: To have a better understanding of herd distribution, movements, and switching, GNWT should increase the number of collars on the Sahtì ekwò herd from 50 to 70 (50 cows and 20 bulls). ENR Reports that include analyses based on collar data will be provided to the WRRB when completed.

~~Additional analysis gathered from the collars should be provided to the WRRB from GNWT annually including but not limited to:~~

- ~~1) Dispersal at calving in relation to historic data;~~
- ~~2) Timing of calving in relation to historic data;~~
- ~~3) Calf:cow ratios; and,~~
- ~~4) Rates of herd switching and rutting locations.~~

**Reasons:** Caribou collar data are used for many applications by the GNWT and by other organizations for research or for applied management. For example, mines use collar data to be aware of times when caribou may be in their vicinity and mitigations may be needed. For the Bathurst herd, the Ekwò Nàxoède K'è program uses daily collar locations to plan their field operations in July and August. The GNWT notes the following, however:

- The June 2018 survey report on the Sahtì Ekwò herd from Boulanger et al. (2019) includes an updated assessment of the herd's demographics to 2018. It includes, for example, an assessment of calving ground fidelity of Bluenose-East collared cows and rates of switching with the two neighbouring herds, an assessment of the likely peak of calving in the herd based on movement rates of collared cows, a summary of recent calf-cow ratios in the herd, a summary on collar-based and model-based cow survival estimates, and a spatial analysis of recent consecutive June locations on the calving grounds (i.e. how far one year's collared cow locations were from the following year's). The GNWT will continue to provide these detailed assessments in years of calving ground photo surveys.
- If the WRRB would like to undertake additional analyses of collar data, the GNWT can make the data available through a data-sharing agreement.
- Any other completed reports from the GNWT that make use of Sahtì Ekwò collar data can be made available to the WRRB. One example is a brief field report that is usually developed by the GNWT when winter collar deployments on caribou have been completed. Summaries of caribou composition surveys in June, October and March/April include maps showing collar distribution during the surveys, and these can also be made available to WRRB.

Boulanger, J., J. Adamczewski, J. Nishi, D. Cluff, J. Williams, H. Sayine-Crawford, and L. M. LeClerc. 2019. Estimates of breeding females & adult herd size and analyses of demographics for the Bluenose-East herd of barren-ground caribou: 2018 calving ground photographic survey. Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada. Manuscript Report 278.

**Recommendation #14-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò):** Collars: Relative to the views of elders and to clarify what analyses require a larger sample size, TG and GNWT should present a detailed rationale for the collar increase to the WRRB. This will be completed using the collars on an annual basis as part of adaptive management.

**Response:** VARY

TG and ENR vary 'Recommendation #14-2019' to say the following:

**Recommendation #14-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò):** Collars: Relative to the views of elders and to clarify what analyses require a larger sample size, TG and GNWT should present a detailed rationale for the collar increase to the WRRB. ~~This will be completed using the collars on an annual basis as part of adaptive management.~~

**Reasons:** The GNWT provided the WRRB with a detailed rationale for an increase in numbers of satellite collars on the Bathurst herd (Adamczewski and Boulanger, 2016). The rationale provided in the report is also applicable to the Sahtì Ekwò herd. This report recommended an increase to 65 collars on the Bathurst herd, taking into consideration a number of key uses of satellite collars and recommended numbers of collars for those applications. In 2015 the Tłı̄chǫ Government approved an increase in Bathurst collar numbers to 30 cows and 20 bulls (50 total), and in 2019 the joint management proposals for the Bathurst and Sahtì Ekwò herds from Tłı̄chǫ Government and the GNWT included an increase to 70 collars (50 cows and 20 bulls) on each of the two herds. The 70 collars (50 and 20) were in part based on the assessment in Adamczewski and Boulanger (2016) and also recognized the importance of continuing to monitor the bulls in these herds. The GNWT suggests that an annual assessment of collar numbers needed for management applications is not needed, however the GNWT can provide annual summaries of the numbers of collars on the two herds, and periodic re-assessment of the adequacy of collar numbers can be considered under an adaptive management framework ('Recommendation #9-2019').

Adamczewski, J., and J. Boulanger. 2016. Technical rationale to increase the number of satellite collars on the Bathurst caribou herd. Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada. Manuscript Report 254.

**Recommendation #15-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò):** Climate Change: To collect on-the-ground climate change observations, TG's Ekwò Nàxoède K'è program should be expanded to the post-calving and summer ranges of Sahtì ekwò by October 1, 2019. Results of the monitoring program should be designed to feed into an adaptive management framework.

**Response:** VARY

Tłıchq Government varies 'Recommendation #15-2019' to a start date of Summer, 2020.

**Reasons:** Tłıchq Government thanks the WRRB for its recognition of the Tłıchq Government's Ekwò Nàxoède K'è (Boots on the Ground) program. Tłıchq Government works in a deeply consultative way in the development of a program like the Ekwò Nàxoède K'è program. Tłıchq Government has considered the time, logistical issues, resources and training involved in implementing an Ekwò Nàxoède K'è program into the post-calving and summer ranges of Sahtì Ekwò, and has concluded it is not feasible to implement this year. Initial preparations for undertaking an Ekwò Nàxoède K'è program on Sahtì Ekwò post-calving and summer ranges are underway with a target date of Summer, 2020. Tłıchq Government notes that field implementation is subject to logistic challenges, favorable weather along with boat and ground access to Sahtì Ekwò. Part of the success in the Bathurst initiative is that ground access to the caribou herd by the field team is enabled by boat travel along the length of Contwoyto Lake, which is located in the heart of the Bathurst caribou post-calving and summer ranges.

In addition to engaging elders who know the Sahtì Ekwò range, a useful task would be to conduct an assessment of Sahtì Ekwò collar movements (post-calving and summer/fall) to understand what lakes may be suitable for placing field crews to observe caribou.

Tłıchq Government will engage with the WRRB about the possibility of the WRRB's ability to provide some of its biologist staff resources to assist in the expansion the Ekwò Nàxoède K'è program on the post-calving and summer ranges of Sahtì Ekwò.



**Recommendation #16-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò):** Tłıchq Research & Monitoring Program: To ensure that both ɤekwò and ɤekwò habitat monitoring and realistic harvesting numbers are recorded in a culturally appropriate manner, the Tłıchq Research and Monitoring Program should be implemented by TG, starting in September 2019 (See Appendix I).

**Response:** VARY

Tłıchq Government varies 'Recommendation #16-2019' to say the following:

**Recommendation #16-2019 (Sahtì Ekwò):** Tłıchq Research & Monitoring Program: To ensure that both ɤekwò and ɤekwò habitat monitoring and realistic harvesting numbers are recorded in a culturally appropriate manner, **Tłıchq Government will revisit the original 2007 report by A. Legat titled "Tłıchq Research and Monitoring Program" for the purpose of determining whether aspects of it not already implemented might be useful.** ~~should be implemented by TG, starting in September 2019 (See Appendix I).~~

**Reasons:** The "Tłıchq Research & Monitoring Program" was considered by Tłıchq Government between 2010 and 2012 and this resulted in the creation of the Tłıchq Research and Training Institute (TRTI) or Dedats'eetsaa. Dedats'eetsaa refers to a large culturally significant rock on Tłıchq Lands where people had traditionally used to cache and retrieve materials/supplies while traveling to and from the barrens. The name was adopted for the TRTI because it signified a way of storing, retrieving and later using the Tłıchq knowledge. Dedats'eetsaa (Tlıcho Research and Training Institute) is the result of the consideration of the "Tłıchq Research & Monitoring Program". Ms. Legat's work provided a foundation to the current program (TRTI), and in the time since the creation of Dedats'eetsaa, it has evolved. Therefore, Tłıchq Government is of the view that it is not necessary to conduct a full assessment of the "Tłıchq Research and Monitoring Program", because it has already largely taken place.

<https://research.tlıcho.ca/> *Under the direction of the Chiefs Executive Council of the Tłıchq Government, the mandate of the Dedats'eetsaa: Tłıchq Research and Training Institute (TRTI) is to advance the study of Tłıchq lands, language, culture and way of life. This will be done through the promotion of research, and its use for training, education and monitoring Government commitments and responsibilities, with a Tłıchq cultural framework.*

Tłıchq Government will revisit the original report "Tłıchq Research and Monitoring Program" for the purpose of determining whether aspects of it not already implemented might be useful.