



## NWT CONFERENCE OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES

### CONSENSUS AGREEMENT RESPECTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOVERY STRATEGY FOR BARREN-GROUND CARIBOU IN THE NWT

The Conference of Management Authorities has reached consensus (hereafter referred to as the “Consensus Agreement”) respecting the implementation of the *Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou (Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus) in the Northwest Territories*.

Recognizing the ecological, cultural, and economic value of barren-ground caribou, the goals of this recovery strategy are to: (1) maintain or restore self-sustaining, resilient populations of each barren-ground caribou herd, such that no herd is lost, (2) support and maintain the caribou-people relationship, (3) promote conditions that allow caribou to move and migrate across their historic ranges without barriers, and (4) promote the conditions necessary for recovery. The recommended recovery approaches and the Management Authorities’ intent to undertake them are summarized in this Consensus Agreement. Further information can be found in the *Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou (Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus) in the Northwest Territories*.

Implementation is subject to appropriations, priorities and budgetary constraints of the Management Authorities.

The processes for developing the recovery strategy and this Consensus Agreement are outlined in Annex B.

#### GNWT Statements

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) makes the following statements about its intentions to implement the recommended approaches in the recovery strategy, subject to appropriations, priorities, and budgetary constraints.

- A. **Implementation Underway** – The GNWT is actively implementing a number of the recommended approaches in the recovery strategy in whole or in part. Additional resources may be needed to fully implement these approaches. Many of these actions are long-term and progress is made gradually over time. The actions are being implemented with co-management partners as part of ongoing management, monitoring, research, conservation planning, and environmental assessment programs. The recommendations in the recovery strategy provide advice to help guide these programs. This statement applies to recommended approaches 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 5.1, and 5.3.
- B. **Resources Required** – This recommended approach in the recovery strategy is important but implementing it would require additional resources and/or re-allocation of existing resources. The GNWT intends to pursue implementation of this approach as resources and capacity allow. The GNWT will seek additional resources and may consider re-allocation of existing resources to implement this approach. Re-allocation of existing resources could affect other commitments. This applies to recommended approach 4.9.
- C. **Best Led by Other Partners** – Some approaches in the recovery strategy are more appropriately led by co-management partners other than the GNWT, including partners that are not signatories to this agreement, and some approaches are not currently a high priority for the GNWT to implement given other priorities and resource constraints. The GNWT does not intend to actively pursue implementation of these approaches at this time. This does not prevent the GNWT from participating in implementation if opportunities arise and/or when other management partners take a lead role. This applies to recommended approaches 1.3, 2.5, 5.2, and 5.4.
- D. **If Necessary** – The GNWT intends to pursue Approach 1.8 if and when barren-ground caribou are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

### Tłıchq Government Statements

Tłıchq Government staff have been involved in and supported the development of the *Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou in the NWT*. The Chief's Executive Council of the Tłıchq Government approved the recovery strategy. With respect to the recovery strategy and subject to appropriations, priorities, and budgetary constraints, implementation will be a collaborative effort of the co-management partners. The Tłıchq Government identified and set out in Appendix A the recommended approaches that will

be implemented by the Tłıchq Government to assist in the achievement of recovery objectives for barren-ground caribou in Wek'èezhìı and Mqwhì Gogha Dè Nıttèè.

#### Wek'èezhìı Renewable Resources Board Statements

With respect to the *Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou in the NWT*, the Wek'èezhìı Renewable Resources Board will implement the conservation and recovery approaches identified in Annex A for barren-ground caribou in Wek'èezhìı.

#### Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT) Statements

WMAC (NWT) acknowledges it is a responsible Management Authority for barren-ground caribou under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*. WMAC (NWT) intends to work with partners to move forward on implementation of the objectives and approaches identified in the *Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou in the Northwest Territories* and Annex A.

#### Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board Statements

GRRB is a Management Authority for barren-ground caribou and therefore is committed to the management and recovery of the species, as outlined in the *Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou in the NWT*. GRRB will implement the management approaches as identified in Annex A, subject to appropriations, priorities, and budgetary constraints.

#### ʔehdzo Got'ıne Gots'è Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board – SRRB) Statements

SRRB currently has a mandate with respect to stewardship of ʔehdaıla ʔekwé (Bluenose-East caribou) and ʔədə (Bluenose-West caribou). The SRRB remains committed to participating in the consensus-based Advisory Committee for Cooperation on Wildlife Management (ACCWM) and supporting implementation of the spirit and intent of the *Taking Care of Caribou* plan through consensus processes of the ACCWM. SRRB has undertaken a five-part hearing (referred to as Public Listening Sessions - PLS) on the central question, “What is the most effective way to conserve caribou?” The PLS series is scoped to include the three ecotypes of caribou within the Sahtú region, including shúhta goʔepé/shíhta goʔədə (northern mountain caribou) as well as barren-ground and boreal caribou.

The first PLS, entitled *Sahtú Ragóʔa (Hunting Laws) and Approaches to Wildlife Harvesting*, was convened in Colville Lake on January 21-23, 2020, and addressed caribou status as well as the “hot topic” of harvest regulation. Considerable support was provided for Sahtú community Parties to prepare submissions to the Colville 2020 PLS,

including two regional workshops and local preparation sessions. In the October 30, 2020, report on the Colville PLS, the SRRB made a finding of fact that “precautionary conservation measures are required for all three caribou ecotypes in the Sahtú, and measures are also required to conserve Dene ts’ı́ı́ (ways of life), including Dene béré (country food systems).” With respect to barren-ground caribou, the report noted that “ʔehdaı́la ʔekwé (Bluenose-East barren-ground caribou) are designated łalak’óonq xae kúhye wı́le adə gha sóqı́ı́ (might disappear within a hundred years; threatened) and red zone (low population). ʔədə (Bluenose-West barren-ground caribou) are designated líla horéno xai egúhyé behúle rágudı́ (might disappear within a hundred years; threatened) and orange zone (intermediate and decreasing). Barren-ground caribou harvest is closed to resident and non-resident hunters.” The Colville 2020 report contains a number of decisions and recommendations pertaining to barren-ground caribou and harvest regulation, in particular with respect to Colville Lake’s *Dehlá Got’ı́nə ʔədə Plan* and *Ts’ı́duweh ʔədə ʔeʔá (Ancient Caribou Law)* and Délı́nə’s *Belare Wı́le Gots’é ʔekwé (Caribou for All Time)* plans. The decision-making process as outlined in the *Sahtú Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* is ongoing. The SRRB expects the resolution of outstanding issues may require gathering additional evidence through the five-part PLS process.


Future PLS sessions will provide Parties with opportunities to present components of planning work addressing the following “hot topics”: Predators and Competitors (2021); Knowledge about Caribou and Landscapes (2022); Wildfires and Climate Change (2023); Caribou and the Mixed Economy (2024). A final hearing report will review outcomes of the five PLS combined. The SRRB plans to work closely with co-management partners throughout to support implementation of conservation plans and consensus-building among harvesting groups.

## INTERPRETATION

For greater certainty, terms and processes in this Consensus Agreement are as defined and described in the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*.

For greater certainty, the Management Authorities for barren-ground caribou (*Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus*) in the Northwest Territories are: Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT), Gwich’in Renewable Resources Board, Sahtú Renewable Resources Board, Tı́chq Government, Wek’èezhı́ Renewable Resources Board, and the Government of the Northwest Territories.

WE THE UNDERSIGNED, having reached this consensus, provide this Consensus Agreement on this 9<sup>th</sup> day of April 2021 to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT), Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, Sahtú Renewable Resources Board, Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board, and the Tłıchǫ Government.



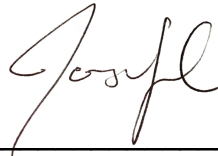
Witness



Larry Carpenter, Chair  
Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT)



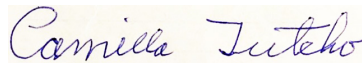
Witness



Jozef Carnogursky, Chairperson  
Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board



Witness



Camilla Tutcho, A/Chair  
ʔehdzo Got'ıne Gots'ę Nákedi  
(Sahtú Renewable Resources Board)



Witness



Joseph Judas, Chairperson  
Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board



Witness



Grand Chief George Mackenzie  
Tłıchǫ Government



Witness



Brett Elkin, Assistant Deputy Minister -  
Operations  
Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources  
Government of the Northwest Territories

## ANNEX A

### RECOMMENDED APPROACHES TO ACHIEVE RECOVERY OBJECTIVES FOR BARREN-GROUND CARIBOU IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Management Approach	GNWT Statements <sup>1</sup>	Partners intending to implement <sup>2</sup>
<b>Objective #1: Partners collaborate on the development and implementation of management, monitoring, guardianship, and conservation plans for barren-ground caribou in the NWT.</b>		
<b>1.1</b> Implement herd-specific management plans for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, Bluenose-East, Beverly, and Qamanirjuaq caribou herds to promote recovery and conserve habitat.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>1.2</b> Complete and implement herd-specific management plans for the Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula and Bathurst caribou herds to promote recovery and conserve habitat.	Implementation Underway	WRRB, WMAC (NWT) , TG
<b>1.3</b> Continue working with partners in Nunavut on effective conservation of the Ahiak herd.	Best Led by Other Partners	
<b>1.4</b> Review and update herd-specific management plans as required.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>1.5</b> Support community-based barren-ground caribou monitoring, guardianship, and conservation plans.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB

<sup>1</sup> This column refers to the GNWT Statements found on page 2 of this Consensus Agreement.

<sup>2</sup> The co-management partners in this column intend to undertake the approach indicated, subject to appropriations, priorities, and budgetary constraints.

<p><b>1.6</b> Continue working to secure adequate resources and ongoing support from governments and other partners (including industry, co-management and regulatory boards, and non-government organizations) for the implementation of this recovery strategy and the management, guardianship, and conservation plans noted in approaches 1.1 to 1.5.</p>	<p>Implementation Underway</p>	<p>GRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB</p>
<p><b>1.7</b> Increase capacity among communities and Indigenous partners to participate equally and meaningfully in the conservation of barren-ground caribou, and share tools and ideas to support their participation.</p>	<p>Implementation Underway</p>	<p>GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB</p>
<p><b>1.8</b> If barren-ground caribou are listed under the federal <i>Species at Risk Act</i>, cooperate in the development and implementation of the national barren-ground caribou recovery strategy, including identification and protection of critical habitat, and defining population and distribution objectives, in accordance with the federal <i>Species at Risk Act</i>.</p>	<p>If Necessary</p>	<p>GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB</p>
<p><b>Objective #2: Monitor barren-ground caribou, their habitat, and key factors and threats that may be affecting the status and health of herds in the NWT.</b></p>		
<p><b>2.1</b> Collect information on the size, trend, and health of all NWT barren-ground caribou herds.</p>	<p>Implementation Underway</p>	<p>GRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB</p>
<p><b>2.2</b> Monitor predator populations that may affect barren-ground caribou, and assess predator-prey relationships and predation rates.</p>	<p>Implementation Underway</p>	<p>GRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB</p>
<p><b>2.3</b> Monitor the impacts of other key factors affecting barren-ground caribou and their habitat, including, for example, diet, contaminants, disease, parasites, insects, and climate change.</p>	<p>Implementation Underway</p>	<p>GRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB</p>

<b>2.4</b> Monitor changes in habitat quality, quantity, and availability for caribou resulting from natural and human-caused landscape changes.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>2.5</b> Monitor the status of the relationship between people and caribou as an indicator of caribou well-being.	Best Led by Other Partners	GRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>Objective #3: Fill knowledge gaps, using traditional, community, and scientific knowledge, to enhance responsible and respectful barren-ground caribou conservation.</b>		
<b>3.1</b> Update or develop population models using current information.	Implementation Underway	
<b>3.2</b> Promote the collection and exchange of information on caribou ecology, movements, health, status, and threats.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>3.3</b> Promote the collection and exchange of information on the relationships among barren-ground caribou, predators, competitors, and their wider environment.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>3.4</b> Assess cumulative impacts of natural and human-caused landscape change on barren-ground caribou and their habitat.	Implementation Underway	WMAC (NWT)
<b>3.5</b> Promote the collection and exchange of information on barren-ground caribou habitat, including the identification of key areas and habitat features.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>Objective #4: Conserve and protect barren-ground caribou populations and their habitat.</b>		
<b>4.1</b> Work with industry, governments, and co-management and regulatory boards to develop and implement best practices to minimize impacts of human land use on barren-ground caribou.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB



<b>4.2</b> Consider responsible predator management options that may benefit barren-ground caribou recovery.	Implementation Underway	WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>4.3</b> Develop consistent, accurate, and complete reporting of barren-ground caribou harvest across the NWT along with estimates of unrecovered kills and wounding losses.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>4.4</b> Promote respectful harvest of caribou, including respect for traditional laws and protocols, and compliance with harvest management measures.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>4.5</b> Develop range-level approaches for management of cumulative impacts on barren-ground caribou and their habitat from natural and human-caused landscape change.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>4.6</b> Prioritize important caribou winter habitat when making decisions about how to respond to a wildfire.	Implementation Underway	TG
<b>4.7</b> Conserve integrity of barren-ground caribou habitat through participation in key environmental assessments, land use planning processes, and conservation planning initiatives, and by ensuring that barren-ground caribou habitat is a key value that is integrated into these decisions, in the NWT and in other jurisdictions where proposed decisions/initiatives may affect NWT herds.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>4.8</b> Identify and protect essential and important barren-ground caribou habitats such as calving grounds, post-calving ranges, and important water crossings.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>4.9</b> Conserve migratory routes to allow barren-ground caribou to move across their historic range without barriers.	Resources Required	GRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB

<b>Objective #5: Provide education and promote respect for barren-ground caribou, their habitat, and conservation initiatives.</b>		
<b>5.1</b> Develop and implement hunter education programs to share information on barren-ground caribou and promote hunter excellence.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), SRRB
<b>5.2</b> Support barren-ground caribou programs that bring elders and youth together in schools and on the land.	Best Led by Other Partners	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>5.3</b> Promote educational programs for diverse audiences to increase understanding of conservation initiatives and management of threats to barren-ground caribou.	Implementation Underway	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB
<b>5.4</b> Educate all people about the importance of maintaining the people-caribou relationship.	Best Led by Other Partners	GRRB, WRRB, WMAC (NWT), TG, SRRB

## ANNEX B

### DEVELOPMENT OF RECOVERY STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

On July 11, 2018, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), acting on the direction provided by the Conference of Management Authorities in their *Consensus Agreement on Listing Barren-ground Caribou (Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus)* (April 2018), added barren-ground caribou to the NWT List of Species at Risk as a Threatened species. A recovery strategy was developed by the Conference of Management Authorities to address the recovery requirements of barren-ground caribou in the NWT. The recovery strategy includes appropriate recommended objectives and approaches for the conservation and recovery of barren-ground caribou in the NWT, as well as descriptions of threats and positive influences, as required under section 61 of the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*. The recovery strategy was completed on July 9, 2020, in accordance with subsection 60(1) and sections 65-68 of the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*.

This *Consensus Agreement Respecting Implementation of the Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou (Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus) in the Northwest Territories* was informed by discussions of the Conference of Management Authorities, the recovery strategy, the *Consensus Agreement on Listing Barren-ground Caribou (Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus)*, the *Consensus Agreement on Accepting the Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou (Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus) in the Northwest Territories*, the Species at Risk Committee's assessment and reasons for assessment, and the approved species status report. It was also informed by public input (solicited by the Management Authorities) and the results of Crown consultation duties performed by the GNWT during the listing process and the development of the recovery strategy. No information was provided to the Species at Risk Committee by the Conference of Management Authorities or a Management Authority under paragraph 31(1)(c) of the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*.