

For immediate release

SRRB pleased with Minister's support for community-based caribou conservation in the Sahtú



February 27, 2017, Tulita, NWT – The Pehdzo Got'Ine Gots'ë Nákedí (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board, or SRRB) is pleased with the final decisions of Environment and Natural Resources Minister Robert C. McLeod concerning Bluenose East ɂekwé (caribou) in the Sahtú. The Minister is responding to the SRRB's final decisions following from the Sahtú Bluenose East ɂekwé Hearing in Délı̨nę last March.

Minister McLeod supports the SRRB's decisions in favour of a community conservation planning model for ɂekwé stewardship in the Sahtú. In his letter dated February 22, 2017, the Minister accepts the harvest proposed by the community of Délı̨nę and the spirit and intent of the community conservation planning process.

"The SRRB is encouraged by the Minister's acceptance of community-based approaches to conservation in the Sahtú and his recognition that important innovations in conservation can be achieved through a co-management model that respects regional differences," says Paul Latour, former vice-chair of the SRRB and now special advisor to the board.

The Minister had previously asked that the harvest of 150 ɂekwé proposed in Délı̨nę's conservation plan be lowered to 129, to be consistent with determinations put forth by the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) for their region following their own hearings on Bluenose East ɂekwé management. The Minister now accepts the harvest proposed by Délı̨nę.

The Minister has also agreed to support Délı̨nę's plan for a majority yárégo (smaller male) harvest with a small ceremonial tsída (female) harvest, despite the original GNWT proposal for a 100 percent bull harvest.

"The SRRB believes that there must be collaboration among regions and respect for varying regional needs," Latour says. "We are pleased to see the Minister accepting regional differences in approaches to conservation that will achieve shared goals."

The SRRB looks forward to continuing its conversation with the Government of the Northwest Territories around changes to regulations that will be required to reflect the final decisions of the Minister in support of community conservation planning.

Background documents pertaining to the 2016 Sahtú Bluenose East ɂekwé Hearing can be found in the SRRB's Public Registry at http://srrb.nt.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=139&Itemid=1225.

For more information, please contact:

Joseph Hanlon
867-588-4040 extension 203
info@srrb.nt.ca

Sahtú Bluenose East ɻekwé Hearing Timeline

- January 8, 2016: Déljnē submits Belare wíle Gots’é ɻekwé - Caribou for All Time community conservation plan for Bluenose East ɻekwé to the SRRB
- January 11, 2016: ENR presents its Management Proposal for BNE 2016-2017
- March 1-3, 2016: SRRB Hearings in Déljnē
- July 28, 2016: SRRB issues its final report (*ɻekwé hé Dene Ts’jlı: Sustaining Relationships*)
- September 26, 2016: The Minister gives an initial response, accepting a number of SRRB decisions and recommendations, and modifying others. Key contentious issues: harvest rate, male-female harvest ratio and conformity between the Tłı̨chǫ and Sahtú harvest
- October 26, 2016: SRRB provides its final decisions in response to the Minister’s September 26 letter
- December 14, 2016: SRRB writes follow up letter to Minister regarding the different ɻekwé management approaches recommended in different land claim regions
- February 22, 2017: Minister’s final decision letter