



Response to WRRB Request for Information

Prepared by Tłıchǫ Government

December 21, 2009

Transcripts from Barren Ground Caribou Regional Workshop in Whatı, Feb 2007

- See Attached

Transcripts from Barren Ground Caribou Regional Workshop, Gametı, Oct 2009

- We do not currently have these recordings transcribed.

List of all community meetings since 2003, during which your government discussed the barren ground status.

- These records do not exist. Other than the Regional workshops listed above, there have been no caribou specific meetings put on by the Tłıchǫ Government with community members on the status of the Barrenground caribou.

List of community hunts conducted by Tłıchǫ communities since 2000. Please include the general location of these hunts, barren ground caribou harvest numbers and cost where available

- Since 2005, the Tłıchǫ Government has supported its community members with a subsidy to go on community hunts. Sources of funds vary from year to year, but in general the subsidy comes from the Tłıchǫ Government and ENR. We do not have information for each year, however we do have it for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 (See Table 1 and 2). This is indicative of the fact that monitoring and harvest information collection methods must be improved jointly by the Tłıchǫ Government and ENR.

Table 1: Fall Hunt 2006-2007

	Number	% Total
Cows Harvested	88	20%
Bulls Harvested	349	79%
Calfs Harvested	6	1%
Total	443	100%

Table 2: Fall and Spring Hunt 2007-2008

	Number	% Total
Cows Harvested	75	22%
Bulls Harvested	263	77%
Calfs Harvested	4	1%
Total	342	100%

- From 2000-2007 the fall and spring hunts cost about \$90,000. In 2008-2009 approximately \$ 230,000 was spent on the community hunts.
- In 2007-2008 hunters from Behchokò went to Courageous, Jolly and Grizzle Bear Lake. Whatì hunters went to Grenville Lake. Gameti hunters went to Mesa Lake. This would be the same general location of the community hunts each year.

Copies of motions by the Tłıchǫ Government (TG) where caribou collars were considered.

- *The Elders Advisory Council made the following recommendation to the Assembly:*

As per the 19th Session Directive, the Elder's Advisory Committee has met to discuss the request from ENR to review the continuation of existing collars at 20 and increase collared caribou from 20 to 30. The Elders Committee met with representatives of ENR and WRRB to better understand why they have requested to continue the 20 existing collars and to increase the number of collared animals and to review the collaring process, including viewing the actual collars. Based on these meetings and discussions, the Elders make the following recommendation:

The caribou collars should remain at the existing 20 and not be increased to 30 until such a time as the collars are redesigned.

The Tłıchǫ Assembly accepted the recommendation provided by the Elders Advisory Committee.

Appendix A: Proposed Management Actions to help the Bathurst, Bluenose East and Ahiak herds recover.

Issue 4 and 5, Reduce Harvest Pressure:

a) TG has recommended that there be no restriction on female harvest and no restriction on male harvest. Please provide some rationale to answer the following questions:

1. Why, from the Tłı̨chǫ perspective, are both male and female caribou important to the survival of the barren land caribou?

2) How do cows contribute to the social and physical well-being of the herd? What do they do for the males and calves? What role do the cows have in leading the herd or portions of the herd?

3) How do the bulls contribute to the social and physical well being of the herd? Do bulls assist females and calves in any way? Do they lead the herd or any portion of the herd?

4) How do bulls and wolves interact? How do cows and wolves interact? How are calves protected from the wolves? How are cows/pregnant cows protected from the wolves?

Why from a Tłı̨chǫ perspective, should caribou be harvested and used in appropriate ways? How should caribou be used after being harvested?

- These questions are best answered by elders during the public hearing.

b) ENR has recommended 'mobile harvesting zones' without TG's support. Please provide TG rationale for opposing 'mobile harvesting zones'?

- The Tłı̨chǫ Government does not agree with any restriction on harvest and therefore mobile hunting zones are not relevant to the discussion.

Issue 7, Compliance:

a) A recommendation came from GNWT that states: ENR to conduct weekly patrols during fall and winter in Wek'èezhii with more wildlife officers. TG did not agree with this action. Please explain the rationale behind rejecting this recommendation.

- It is not that Tłıchq Government disagrees with this action but that ENR will be taking the lead role. The Tłıchq Government believes this should be a collaborative approach with ENR. We feel that first and foremost the Tłıchq Government and ENR must embark upon a very intensive education outreach program in order to ensure that harvesters - both young and old are well informed and understand the true implications of any management decisions that are made regarding the caribou. We cannot begin patrolling and enforcing as has been done in the past. First we must educate and adapt before we move forward with enforcement. In addition, the details of how monitoring and enforcement still need to be worked out, so as to ensure that it is done by local people, trained by ENR. These people must be there to not only monitor and enforce but educate and learn from harvesters.

b) States that a 200 meter-wide no-hunting zone on either side of the winter road should be imposed. The rationale states ,Respect for animals and no carcasses/gut piles on the winter road. Please explain what 'respect' means in this case. For example, why is spreading and leaving blood and guts on the road unacceptable?

- This question is best answered by elders during the public hearing.

Issue 11, Caribou collars: GNW T recommended that 30 more collars should be put on female caribou in March 2010.

a) Tłıchq harvesters and elders have stated that collaring caribou is disrespectful. Please tell us from the Tłıchq perspective what will happen to the caribou and the Tłıchq people if caribou are disrespected by putting collars on them?

- This question is best answered by elders during the public hearing.

Additional information

How were caribou managed – or people managed – in times of declining caribou in the past?

- This question is best answered by elders during the public hearing.

Although your joint proposal does not recommend zero harvest of all herds, what would be the impact of zero harvest on Tłıchq people?

- The impact of zero harvest of all herds would impact the culture, self-identity, health, social, economic, environmental and political consequences. The impact would have wide implications that may not be mitigated.
- This question is best answered during the public hearing.

On page 3, the proposal states ,to minimize hardship on Aboriginal hunters...ENR's preferred option is to allow a bull harvest only on adjacent herds.

a) What does the TG think about this?

- The health and abundance of the other herds must be considered as well, as we do not want to export the problem from the Bathurst to the Bluenose East or Ahiak herds. If these mobile hunting zones are the final solution, we expect further studies in order to ensure these herds are still healthy and abundant.

In several places where TG and GNWT are proposing different recommendations, the GNWT has rationalized their recommendation by stating that it is a conservation measure and under the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement'.

a) Does TG consider the Bathurst caribou herd numbers to be a conservation or a stewardship concern?

1. Please explain what 'conservation' means to the Tłı̨chǫ people and how this is different than 'stewardship'.

Conservation – cutting back leading to further erosion of a people's connection and linkage to the land. By going on the land hunting and exploring, the Tłı̨chǫ connection to the land is maintained. Going to these places keeps our placenames and consequently our history and culture alive. Conservation by ENR standards, could lead to the erosion of our own history.

Stewardship – managing the people in order to preserve and protect wildlife for future generations. Rethinking actions and changing behaviour for the long term.

The Bathurst caribou herd numbers are a stewardship issue and must be dealt with in an adequate manner in order to ensure the herds sustainability.

2. Please provide a rationale – if necessary - for Tłı̨chǫ to be stewards and have responsibility for management of Tłı̨chǫ people in relation to the caribou.

- In order for the Bathurst herd to recover, the Tłı̨chǫ people must play a key role in their recovery through stewardship principles. We are the stewards of our land and the caribou. We have lived in harmony and coexistence with these and all other animals since time immemorial. We understand these animals - their migration paths, their needs, their habits and their spirit. The Tłı̨chǫ way is to respect the animals and they will always return to us. If this mutual respect has been disrupted, with the forces of the global market and modernization upon us, it is up to us to re-establish traditional laws of respect and knowledge about this great animal – to both our people and others. As stewards of this land and the animals, we have a significant role to play in the recovery of this animal.