



Northwest
Territories Environment and Natural Resources

FEB 17 2010

Mr. Floyd Kaitak, Chairperson
Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association
Hunters' and Trappers' Organization
Angoniatit Niovikvia Ltd.
PO BOX 309
KUGLUKTUK NU X0B 0E0

VIA FACSIMILE: (867) 982-5912

Dear Mr. Kaitak:

**Decision to Allow Caribou Hunting of Other Herds
(Due to Decision on Harvesting Ban of the Bathurst Caribou Herd)**

Thank you for your letter of February 12, 2010 regarding hunting of caribou herds shared with Nunavut. Like your organization, Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) is also greatly concerned about the welfare of all the herds shared with Nunavut.

With respect to the Bluenose-West herd, a Total Allowable Harvest was established by the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtu wildlife co-management boards and tags are required in the Northwest Territories (NWT). The allocation is shared among these three regions and there will be no diversion of other hunters to this herd.

With respect to the Bluenose-East, Bathurst and Ahlak herds, on January 1, 2010, ENR implemented regulation changes to conserve the Bathurst herd, which has declined to about 32,000 caribou. These Interim Emergency Measures will remain in place until recommendations are received from the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB), on the joint proposal submitted by the Tłı̄chǎ Government and ENR in November 2009, and a decision is implemented. As these regulation changes are for the NWT, consultation was only undertaken with the directly affected Aboriginal groups. As these were emergency measures, there was limited time for consultation.

The measures include eliminating all resident and outfitted harvest in the North Slave region and establishing a no hunting zone where the majority of the Bathurst herd is wintering. On either side of the no hunting zone are two zones where general hunting licence holders may still hunt.

ENR is aware of the Sahtu Renewable Resource Board recommendation for a voluntary 4 percent harvest for the Bluenose-East and we are working with North Slave communities to monitor the harvest in those areas.

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- 2 -

A community hunt was undertaken with Wha Ti and about 100 animals were harvested from the Bluenose-East herd, with the majority being males. Two other community hunts are being organized with Gameti and Behchokö and these will occur within the Tłı̄chō settlement region. We also understand that Deline will take a small harvest this winter. All these communities traditionally hunt Bluenose-East caribou, just as Kugluktuk does. The satellite collars from the Bluenose-East herd are quite distant from any winter roads or communities in the North Slave Region and so we believe the total harvest will remain lower than in previous years. To date, hunts are occurring by snowmachine and by plane. Helicopters will not be used. Harvesters from the South Slave have indicated they will not harvest caribou this year in the North Slave region in an effort to aid recovery.

As weather prevented completion of a survey to obtain a new population estimate of the Bluenose-East herd this summer, surveys are planned for next summer. When a new estimate is obtained, it will be important to have a process in place that involves all users of this herd in the sharing of information and developing management recommendations. ENR will work through the existing Bluenose caribou management planning process, which Nunavut harvesters and management authorities are involved in.

For the Bathurst herd, once recommendations are received from the WRRB, ENR will consult with NWT groups on actions in the NWT. ENR will also provide the recommendations to Kugluktuk Hunters' and Trappers' Organization for review. Again, a process is required to bring all groups together. Under the Tłı̄chō Agreement, there is a provision to establish such a process for the Bathurst herd. ENR and the Tłı̄chō Government have started work on this issue. It is ENR's understanding that Kugluktuk currently harvests Bluenose-East caribou but does not harvest the Bathurst herd.

For the Ahlak herd, Nunavut is leading the survey to obtain a population estimate for this herd. Again, a process is required to bring together the various user groups and management authorities to consider survey results and possible management actions.

I understand a presentation on the status of caribou herds was provided by ENR staff in Kugluktuk on December 7, 2009 and Kugluktuk has made recommendations for actions in Nunavut. We are looking forward to working co-operatively with the Nunavut users and management authorities on recovery actions for our shared herds. Caribou are very important to all people and everyone has a role to play.

Sincerely,



J. Michael Miltenberger

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