

March 25, 2022

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault, Director  
Department of Culture & Lands Protection  
Tłı̨chọ Government  
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*Via Email*  
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Bruno Croft, Superintendent, North Slave Region  
Environment and Natural Resources  
Government of the Northwest Territories  
Email: [bruno\\_croft@gov.nt.ca](mailto:bruno_croft@gov.nt.ca)

**Re: Joint Management Proposal for Kòk'èetì (Bathurst) Ekwò Herd**

Dear Ms. Steinwand-Deschambeault and Mr. Croft:

On January 28, 2022 the Tłı̨chọ Government (TG) and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) submitted the “*Joint Proposal on Management Actions for the Bathurst Ƨekwò (Barren-ground caribou) Herd 2022 – 2024*” to the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) outlining proposed management actions for the Kòk'èetì Ekwò (Bathurst caribou) herd in Wek'èezhì. Following an initial assessment of the management proposal, the Board determined that a modified Level 1 review was appropriate. The proposal and supporting documents have been posted to the WRRB website for public review until April 15, 2022.

In its February 18, 2022, letter the WRRB outlined the process of the Level 1 review and requested additional information. On March 7, 2022, TG and GNWT provided a response to this initial request. To assist the Board in making its final recommendations in May 2022, the WRRB requests the following from GNWT and TG by no later than April 15, 2022:

- 1) The 2021 calving ground survey report for Kòk'èetì Ekwò. The WRRB expects that the calving ground report will provide crucial information regarding:
  - a. vital rates;
  - b. statistical power to detect change in the herd;
  - c. a technical rationale for the proposed additional calving ground survey in 2023; and
  - d. a possible explanation for the apparent increase in adult bulls, as suggested by the bull:cow ratio.

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- 2) Explain the role that cow herd switching may have played in the apparent stability of herd size. Provide the survival rates of the collared cows which have switched herds. Provide an explanation as to why there are no proposed management actions related to herd switching.
- 3) Explain the importance of refugia for ɁekwɁ currently, from the perspective of the TłıchɁ senior elders. The Board understands that senior elders have always said ɁekwɁ need to be left alone when the numbers are low and they retreat into an area of safety. How do the proposed management actions reflect this TłıchɁ Knowledge?

The Board staff may approach TG and GNWT staff with additional questions and clarifications prior to the May 2022 board meeting.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call our office.

Sincerely,



Joseph Judas  
Chair

Cc Michael Birlea, Manager  
Culture and Lands Protection, TłıchɁ Government

Heather Sayine-Crawford, Director, Wildlife  
Environment and Natural Resources