



Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 16-17 December 2025

Location: WRRB Boardroom, Denendeh Manor, Yellowknife, NT

Board Members:

Joseph Judas (Chair)
Steve Matthews (GNWT Appointee)
Janelle Nitsiza (Tł'chǫ Appointee)
Suzanne Carrière (GNWT Appointee)
Tom Lafferty (Tł'chǫ Appointee)
Eddie Chocolate (Tł'chǫ Appointee)
Stu Niven (Federal Appointee) (Zoom)
Isabelle Duclos (Federal Appointee) (Zoom)

Youth:

Guérin Zoe
Orie Simpson
Patsi Wetrade (Dec 16)
Skyler Adzin (Dec 16)

Staff:

Laura Meinert
Mary Drake
Aimee Guile
Jody Pellissey

Regrets:

Travis Washie (Tł'chǫ Appointee)

Guests:

Paul Cressman, TG
Crawford Young, Let's Plan Trees
Allicia Kelly, ECC-GNWT
Karin Clark, ECC-GNWT
Rhona Kindopp, ECC-GNWT
Lawrence Lewis, ECC-GNWT
Stephanie Behrens, TG
Paul Vesci, TG
Melaw Naheh K'o, NFB
Dylan Howard, NFB
Mike Code, NFB
Ramsay Bourquin, NFB
Madeline Judas

Call to Order: 9:21 a.m.

Opening Prayer: Joseph Judas

1.0 Agenda and Previous Minutes

1.1 Approval of Agenda

Motion #1002-16-12-2025 *To approve the 16-17 December 2025 agenda as presented*

Moved:

Suzanne Carrière

Second:

Steve Matthews

Motion Approved

1.2 Approval of Minutes

26-27 August 2025

Motion #1003-16-12-2025 *To approve the 26-27 August 2025 minutes as presented*

Moved:

Janelle Nitsiza
Tom Lafferty

Second:

Motion Approved

1.3 Review of Action Items

Tabled for review by the Board Members.

2.0 Business

2.1 Review & Approval of Reforestation on Tłı̨chǫ Land, Paul Cressman & Crawford Young

PowerPoint presentation, entitled *“Preserving Our Land: Preparing for the Future, Tłı̨chǫ Government Reforestation”*, tabled

Questions to presenters included: how may the project be impacted at the Federal level with cuts to the Tree Program? TG's understanding is that any projects committed to by the Feds will go forward; currently, nurseries are down south, are there plans to get nurseries created in the Tłı̨chǫ region? Part of the funding is earmarked for nurseries, near Edzo, proposal sent to Behchokǫ̨ Chief and Council for consideration; U of A report states that forests are not regenerating the same since 2014, report is difficult to follow, possible workshop in the future; why are these areas not naturally regenerating? Study states change in precipitation and temperature is the hypothesis that is causing struggle for the forests, another reason is wildfires are returning faster than normal sequence, less seeds available; the country is not the same around Wekweèti and Behchokǫ̨, collecting cones from around Wekweèti? How good is it for the animals to eat? TG and Let's Plant Trees is meeting with each community and the elders, walking the land together, noticing the differences in the landscapes around each community, planting prescription is created so can plant the best kind of trees for each area, they do not collect cones/seeds without permission; seedlings are not treated, no reason to be harmful to animals if browsing the seedlings or to humans if they eat the wildlife.

Over the five-year period (2026–2031), TG proposes to plant 12 million seedlings—including Black and White Spruce, Tamarack, Birch, and Aspen—using seed sources collected from within the seed zone of each planting site. This approach responds to concerns raised by Elders about genetic integrity and the risks associated with importing non-local species or pests. TG has also implemented sanitation protocols for contractors transporting seedlings across jurisdictions.

Priority planting areas identified for the first two years include fire-affected zones around Behchokǫ̀, west of James Lake, and burned caribou habitat near Wekweètì. Additional locations may be proposed by community leadership as new fires occur, including potentially around Whatì following the 2025 evacuation-related fire.

TG also plans to undertake research and are in initial talks with researchers at Aurora College and Wildfred Laurier University, to compare natural versus planted sites. This *may* include establishing control sites, conducting vegetation surveys, and initiating wildlife monitoring. TG intends to provide regular updates to the WRRB as research progresses. TG did not commit to a timeline or details on any of this monitoring, however they did acknowledge that any research would have to be approved by the Board under a separate management proposal. Both a land use permit and water license for this project have been obtained from the Wek'eezhìi Land and Water Board.

The management proposal was posted to the WRRB website for public review October 31 – November 17, 2025. Public comments received supported the proposal with recommendations to make the project better. The following are recommendations for TG:

1. The existing Community Wildfire Protection Plans should be consulted for vegetation management around all Tłı̨chǫ Communities. Some high severity burn areas may require additional soil/moisture assessments to confirm species suitability.
2. The proposed planting units around Behchokǫ̀ are mostly around along the roadside. Presumably this is for ease of access. Our understanding of the zone of influence for linear features would suggest this is not prime habitat for tq̌dzı́ or ekwǫ̀. Consider moving planting areas further from roads.
3. More coniferous trees are being planted than deciduous. This seems counter to FireSmart practices mentioned in section 6. WRRB recommends that FireSmart practices be at the forefront of planting around communities.
4. Provide proposed planting units to the WRRB for Wekweètì and Whatì as soon as they are available.
5. Timber Transport Permits (TTPs) are required to export seeds and cones into, and out of the Northwest Territories. These will need to be secured through the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Environment and Climate Change.
6. Given the large area and effort required, the “snow track” surveys as proposed would be insufficient to gather effective information about wildlife presence and habitat use. WRRB recommends revisiting the proposed wildlife monitoring to increase the track survey effort and use additional or alternatives methods (such as a camera trap study) to enable monitoring of wildlife year-round.
7. Mitigating impacts to caribou calving: Tree planting operations are proposed for June/July in areas that burned in summer 2025 (west of James Lake, and west of Whatì respectively). These are remote areas that will require helicopter access. The calving season for boreal caribou is typically between May 1 and June 30, and collared boreal caribou have been observed to use the elevated plateau, just west of the James Lake burn perimeter, for calving. To minimize or avoid disturbance from helicopters and on-the-ground operations, WRRB recommends that the project team contact GNWT wildlife

staff prior to their June/July operations to determine if there are any collared caribou calving in, or adjacent to, areas of proposed planting operations. A reconnaissance flight to look for caribou should also be considered.

8. In addition to post-planting monitoring programs, WRRB recommends documenting pre-planting site conditions to compare against post-planting tree regeneration. These surveys should also include before and after planting monitoring surveys at “reference” sites within the burn perimeter, but that do not receive tree planting. Understanding where re-planting efforts were most effective will be valuable in informing other revegetation projects in the future.
9. Monitoring should more explicitly include drought conditions, water levels, and permafrost impacts on sapling survival.
10. The proposal outlines short-term monitoring of tree survival and growth; however, long-term monitoring is essential to determine whether reforestation efforts are benefiting caribou and other wildlife as intended. To ensure the project meets its habitat restoration goals, WRRB recommends developing a comprehensive wildlife monitoring framework that monitors species presence, habitat use, and movement through restored areas year-round. This approach would enable an assessment against the projects ecological objectives, as well as inform adaptive management going forward.
11. Desired outcome #2 on carbon sequestration is not addressed in the research or monitoring sections with regards to how this will be measured. WRRB recommends exploring a way to measure how much carbon has been sequestered through this project.
12. WRRB staff should be provided with TGs plan for the upcoming field season each spring. A project summary should be provided to the WRRB each winter.

Board Discussions included: replant some trees in areas where burial sites, water levels have dropped, will drought impact on seedlings? Must consult with communities about what trees to plant, need to make sure the right kind for the area and for the wildlife; first time tree planting will be done in our area, sometimes may not be good for wildlife and the caribou, a lot of forest fires, the first tree to grow is pine tree, grow fast after a fire, really good for caribou, a lot of pine there is a lot of lichen; ground is really burned, all the lichen burned, transplanting growing lichen in nurseries in Russia, it is working but not very fast, something to look into? Planting in areas where burnt in 2025, seems early to be planting in these areas, look for burnt areas where regeneration has not happened? TG is hoping that they will skip the jack pine succession phase and jumped right to tamarack/spruce/aspen which is better caribou habitat, may have lichen return quicker, require long term monitoring (pilot project); reading audit, how many trees were planted? And how many trees died? This project is different from the south, this project is to create caribou habitat instead of timber for cutting, do we keep mentioning caribou reasons? Missing monitoring of the newly planted areas? Monitoring will create more jobs for Tłı̨chǫ people than tree planting, link with research (TK and SK), they have money for tree planting but for monitoring? Incorporate comments into recommendations from Eddie, Suzanne, and Joseph.

Motion #1004-17-12-2025 *To approve the management proposal, entitled “Reforestation on Tłı̨chǫ Land”, as presented with recommendations as noted*

Moved: Eddie Chocolate
Second: Tom Lafferty

Motion Approved

ACTION #714-17-12-2025 (ED): To write letter to TG to approve management proposal, entitled “Reforestation on Tłı̨chǫ Land” with recommendations.

2.2 Presentation of Survey Results from 2025 Kǫk’èetì and Sahti Ekwò Calving Ground Surveys, Allicia Kelly & Karin Clark

PowerPoint Presentation, entitled “2025 Bluenose-East and Bathurst Calving Ground Surveys – WRRB Update”, tabled

Board Discussions included: why hasn’t the population really increased, if good food for caribou, then will be healthy, healthy herd will have calves, lots of burnt areas, it is hard for the caribou to come to the treeline, stay on the barrens, don’t migrate the way they used to in the past, climate change affects wildlife and humans, things don’t grow, short winter, longer summer, wildlife is very important to us; surveys with planes, too fast? Mines have cameras out on the land, put some cameras out to do survey on the land instead of with plane; important role of caribou having enough food to grow the population, food and nutrition, reasons that are contributing to declines; is ECC still trying to collar caribou by boat? Less intrusive way to get a caribou collared, at Fry Inlet on Contwoyto Lake, caribou didn’t come there so unable to collar caribou, has been done successfully in other areas, don’t cross lake bodies consistently so may not be able to find caribou crossing in any predictable way, what are other ways to collar caribou other than in the winter?; ECC hasn’t had a lot of collar success in the past few years, do not understand how if a caribou moves from one calving ground to another that they are reassigned, if Tłı̨chǫ person moves to Łutsél K’é, they are still Tłı̨chǫ; in the 1980s, calving on the east side of Inlet, BEV calved east and south of where calving now, why jumping to herd declining instead of herd moving to other herds in the last 30 years? How other herds are growing but BATH are declining? Fluctuation of bears, lots of wolves, can’t support they are declining when some herds are growing and others are declining, BEV calving ground is where the BATH used to calve, why BATH only in small area now? Ferocious fires have burned all the lichen and it is difficult to travel on this burnt land; we haven’t have western science for a full caribou cycle, only have IK, calving ground moved east to west, BEV has moved calving ground as well, QAM herd has stayed relatively stable; if a BATH moves and calves somewhere else, then their herd assignment changes; in the past herd fidelity was very consistent, management framework developed over the period, not completely separate from one another, all herds were declining, the total number was going down, overlap in the winter now, conducting analysis using multi herd model, looks at all herds together and does a better job of understanding movement, BEV has gone up, more than could have come from BATH; Ahiak herd no longer talked about, is this the Queen Maud Gulf herd? Ahiak was 100K, why not gathering DNA information to confirm

that one is from what herd? Only had Ekwò, now have named herds, caribou are doing what they do, they go where they go, they will stay away from areas where they shouldn't be, have not heard an answer that qualifies the information, not saying should hunt every caribou, there is over hunting, wastage, and poaching, IK is not just stories and rumors, it is science, amalgamating the information, one information shouldn't be more important than the other, need more DNA and collar information, want more data; happy to sit down with more information, DNA cannot tell the herds apart as they are one species only, management tool that has developed, in the future if change enough it may not be the right tool, what is the right way to look at caribou and what is the right tool? 100% apparent that the Ahiak herd was created on DNA evidence, science can't discriminate between herds, want clear and concise answers, troubling that people are not seeing the data that is giving the reason for the decline, a lot of proof that the caribou went somewhere else, no proof that 300K have died, no carcasses; more access to data? What does that look like? How can provide better access? Mobile zone ban based on collars, ban area is larger because not able to put out collars, people aren't been consulted, people not being involved in the discussion, if info is being kept from us, we need to know, we share information and want the same sharing back; information presented correlates with the information collected at ENK program, a lot of posts on news media that is very alarming, frustrating when negative things being posted, feels like a scare tactic from GNWT, people feel like they need to defend why they harvest, May 2025 Caribou Gathering, emphasized that we need to speak positivity into caribou, caribou are smart, they can hear us, if negative, then that is the trend they will follow; will there be caribou bans? YKDFN want to do a ban, TG wants to hear from communities before discussing a ban, we must be accountable for our actions; went to Cambridge Bay, the Gray's Bay Port and Road meeting, building highway on calving ground, should change where building to avoid calving grounds; look at using cameras or satellites instead of planes? Better way to take care of animals, do it the right way, need to teach each other to move forward; ECC involved in EA, concerned about impacts to caribou of the projects, hoping products from Bathurst Caribou Range Plan will be useful such as mobile caribou protection measures, best practices for road developments, advice on offsetting impacts to caribou and habitat.

*** Special Presentation – Thank You Gift presented to Steve Matthews as he retires from 15 years with the WRRB at the beginning of January 2026.*

2.3 Review & Approval of Proposed Statuses for Sahtì, Bluenose-West, and Cape Bathurst Ekwò Herds – ACCWM

The ACCWM met on November 18-20, 2025 in Yellowknife and via Zoom video conferencing for the 10th Annual Status Meeting to discuss community-based monitoring and scientific information for the Cape Bathurst, Bluenose-West, and Sahtì Ekwò herds. Based on the information provided, the ACCWM proposed the following statuses for each herd: Cape Bathurst herd is in the YELLOW zone, the Bluenose-West herd is in the ORANGE zone and the Sahtì Ekwò herd is in the YELLOW zone.

Specifically, for the Sahtì Ekwò herd, the ACCWM noted that the community and scientific observations presented have not changed significantly from 2024. This

decision reflects that the herd population has experienced a gradual and sustained increase since 2018, with monitoring criteria highlighting several positive factors that support the likelihood of this growth being maintained.

Community knowledge from the Kugluktuk Hunters & Trappers Organization and the Tłı̨chǫ Government's Ekwò Nàxoède K'è program at Deèzàatì (Point Lake) indicated that they are still seeing a lot of calves, and the ekwò are healthy and in good condition. The 2025 photo estimate for the herd is 28,759, though lower than 2023, it is statistically significant from the 2021 estimate. Demographic information such as adult survival, pregnancy rates, and calf survival rates suggests a slow recovery. Based on the available information, the ACCWM Member Boards felt that there was sufficient evidence that the status for the herd should remain as YELLOW.

Board discussions included: does the ACCWM take into account herd switching? How to look at in the criteria? May be an impact on Sahtì Ekwò increase? To be discussed during 10-year management plan review; in general, the Bluenose-West are also increasing? Based on thresholds, no, primary manager, WMAC (NWT), said ORANGE, stable, increase not statistically significant; how does ACCWM look at herds in the future? Arctic Security Corridor impact? Discussed in Nov 2025 and expect will be part of discussions well into the future, BCAC makes status decisions about BATH.

Motion #1005-17-12-2025 *To approve the proposed statuses for the Sahtì (Yellow), Bluenose-West (Orange), and Cape Bathurst (Yellow) Ekwò Herds as presented*

Moved:
Second:

Suzanne Carrière
Janelle Nitsiza

Motion Approved

ACTION #715-17-12-2025 (ED): To write letter to the ACCWM to approve the proposed statuses for the Sahtì (Yellow), Bluenose-West (Orange), and Cape Bathurst (Yellow) Ekwò Herds.

2.4 Review & Approval of COSEWIC Species Designation for Grizzly Bear, Western population (*Ursus arctos*)

Sahcho populations appears to be stable or increasing throughout much of its range, with approximately 12,490 – 13,447 mature animals in Canada. There have been no documented, inferred, or suspected declines of sahcho in any province or territory since 2012.

The primary causes of past, and potentially future decline, are human-caused mortality and habitat loss. Given the life-history traits of the species, decline could occur across portions of the Canadian range if mortalities due to human-bear conflict, as well as bear-vehicle collisions, increase.

Sahcho is currently listed as *Special Concern* under the Canadian *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). Sahcho is scheduled to be reassessed by COSEWIC in December 2025. On October 15, 2025, the WRRB provided an in-principal support of *Special Concern* status. If listed as *Special Concern* under SARA, a management plan will be required.

Motion #1006-17-12-2025 *To approve the designation of special concern for Grizzly Bear as presented*

Moved:
Second:

Janelle Nitsiza
Suzanne Carrière

Motion Approved

ACTION #716-17-12-2025 (ED): To write letter to the COSEWIC Mammal SSC to approve the designation of special concern for Grizzly Bear.

2.5 Review & Approval to Post Transverse Lady Beetle Management Plan to SARA Registry

The transverse lady beetle was listed as *Special Concern* under the *Species at Risk Act* in 2021. As such, a management plan must be developed. A draft management plan for the transverse lady beetle was reviewed by WRRB staff.

The management objectives of the plan are: 1) To maintain a stable or increasing population within its current range, by addressing key threats, and 2) To the extent possible, restore the Transverse Lady Beetle within its former range in Canada by regaining its representation.

Environment and Climate Change Canada would like to post the Draft Management for broader public review prior to finalizing the document.

Board discussion included: Tehtsà dek'oa – lady bug; How does it live? Impacted by burned area? Climate change and invasive species? Eat other small bugs (aphids), good to have around to eat small pests that wreck havoc on gardens.

Motion #1007-17-12-2025 *To approve the posting of Transverse Lady Beetle Management Plan to SARA registry as presented*

Moved:
Second:

Stu Niven
Steve Matthews

Motion Approved

ACTION #717-17-12-2025 (ED): To write letter to the ECCC to approve the posting of Transverse Lady Beetle Management Plan to SARA registry.

2.6 Review & Approval of Increased Harvest of Mackenzie Wood Bison

The Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for Mackenzie Ejie is currently 40 bulls a year. On November 28, 2025 the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Tłı̨chǫ Government submitted a Joint Management Proposal to the WRRB for increasing tags on the Mackenzie Ejie in response to their population increase. A population survey in 2023 estimated the herd at 1945 animals (95% CI 1327-2849, CV = 20%), up from 1468 in 2019. It is recommended that the TAH increase to 60 tags per year, either sex, from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2030. The increased tags (and their allocation) are based on recommendations in the Mackenzie Bison Management Plan, which the WRRB has previously approved. The Management Plan was created by the Mackenzie Bison Working Group (MBWG), which the WRRB is a member of and whom supported this TAH change.

On November 17, 2025, WRRB Staff attended a meeting of the MBWG in Behchokǫ. Discussions included an update on monitoring activities, updates from communities and government partners, harvest updates, and a presentation from the Bison Integrated Genomics project. MBWG members were asked to review the updates to the Mackenzie Bison Management Plan with their leadership and seek comments or approvals before the next MBWG meeting, so that the Plan can be finalized, before it undergoes public review and submission to the WRRB for final approval.

Board discussions included: did forest fires impact bison? Only one bison burned during 2025 fires; why harvesting bulls and cows if wanting to increase? Based on harvest table in the management plan, pesty bison harvested would be included in a community tag allocation; any commercial outfitted harvest allowed? MBWG only proposed increase for subsistence and resident harvesters.

Motion #1008-17-12-2025 *To approve the increase in total allowable harvest for Mackenzie Wood Bison as presented*

Moved:
Second:

Tom Lafferty
Suzanne Carrière

Motion Approved

ACTION #718-17-12-2025 (ED): To write letter to the GNWT and TG to approve the increase in total allowable harvest for Mackenzie Wood Bison and reiterate that while harvest is open all year for bulls, cow tags can only be used from September 1 to March 31 annually.

2.7 Review & Approval of Wolf Harvesting Program – Amendment

The Tłı̨chǫ Government submitted a management proposal to the WRRB in January 2025 to continue Tłı̨chǫ efforts to reduce dı̨ga (wolf) numbers sufficiently to enable an increase in survival rates of both calf and adult ɂekwǫ (barren-ground caribou) and continue contributing to the recovery of the ekwǫ herds. The proposal was for January 1, 2025 to January 1, 2026. The Board approved the

management proposal, noting that, while there may not have been any significant impact to ekwò recovery as the number of dìga removed would be too few and too localized, the benefits of an on the land experience with a transfer of knowledge and skills from elders to youth was a worthwhile program.

In December 2025, TG submitted an extension request from January 1, 2026 to June 1, 2026 to continue implementing the program for this coming winter. The extension request was added to the Board's Management Proposal page with a two-week deadline for comments. The GNWT-ECC and TG plan on submitting Joint Management Proposals for the Sahtì and Kòk'èetì Ekwò later in 2026. Prior to the submission, TG plans to consult with Tł'cho communities to identify priority objectives that will hope to help the recovery of the herds.

On December 10, 2025, the North Slave Metis Alliance (NSMA) submitted a letter to the WRRB. The letter was posted to the Board's Management Proposal page. NSMA is concerned about the Tł'cho program and have noted their concern about lack of consultation by the Board with them. They feel the Board has not followed their process as noted in the Rule for Management Proposals. They have requested that the Board direct TG to meet in-person with the NSMA to discuss the extension. Board staff had Julie Abouchar and John Donihee, WRRB Legal Counsel, review the matter.

Board discussion included: typically don't harvest wolf and caribou at the same time due to cross contamination; program gives harvested wolves to a Skinner, unfortunately the majority of hides that went to auction were spoiled, waited too long to skin, don't want to waste the animals; meetings should include both caribou and wolf, want to save as many animals as we can, wolf health and stomach contents, caribou are still declining, why?

Motion #1009-17-12-2025 To approve the extension request for the Wolf Harvesting Program as presented

Moved:

Tom Lafferty

Second:

Janelle Nitsiza

Motion Approved

ACTION #719-17-12-2025 (ED): To write letter to the TG to approve the extension request for the Wolf Harvesting Program.

ACTION #720-17-12-2025 (ED): To write letter to the NSMA to respond to concerns noted about the amendment to the Wolf Harvesting Program.

2.8 Update on Section 15 Wildlife Act Meeting

The 10th Annual Section 15 meeting was held November 13, 2025 in Yellowknife. The focus of the agenda was sessions on the status and monitoring updates for Barren-ground, Boreal, Dolphin and Union, Northern Mountain and Peary caribou as well as updates from several Guardian programs. Presentations from the meeting are available upon request. The meeting ended with a roundtable discussion about future relevant topics.

Board discussion, included: would this be a good forum to request the review of the WMMP process? WRRB staff is currently working with GNWT, LWBs, MVRB to review and update guidelines outside of this annual meeting.

2.9 Update on 2025 International Wildlife Conference and The Wildlife Society Conference

Tabled to February 2026 meeting.

2.10 Party Updates

a) Environment & Climate Change, GNWT

i) Update on 2025 Forest Fire Season and Wood Permitting, Lawrence Lewis

PowerPoint Presentation, entitled "*North Slave Region WRRB Engagement 2025*", tabled

Board Discussions included: was the forest health survey done in the NWT? Will check to see when report will be available; Tłı̨chǫ people know how to fight fires, have to train really hard to carry hoses, if attack fire right away won't burn all our country, not much green in the Tłı̨chǫ lands, all green area should be safe for animals and people to travel, meetings in early year prior to fire season, explain to people clearly before the season starts, that when there is a fire, this is how we work; national standard for fire crews, contracts with TG to provide firefighters, challenging to meet fitness standards, if don't meet the standards, they do mop up work and don't go to the front lines; impossible to put out every fire, bad fire seasons happening all across Canada, impacting on the NWT, protecting communities and cabins, lack of resources as well as safety issues, can't fly in smoke, no nighttime firefighting, focus on where to put resources, 15-20 fires in a couple of days, have to prioritize; commit to meeting with communities throughout the winter, review community protection plan and fire response plan, explain the fire dynamics with elders.

ii) ECC Update, Karin Clark & Rhona Kindopp

Round Table Introductions, and ECC Wildlife Management Division Headquarter Update – November 2025 tabled

b) Tłı̨chǫ Government

i) Update on Tłı̨chǫ Wolf Harvesting Program & Ekwǫ Harvest Monitoring Program, Stephanie Behrens

PowerPoint Presentation, entitled "*Ekwǫ Harvest Monitoring Program*", tabled

Board Discussions included: mines are going to be closing, what is going to happen on the road this winter and next? Safety, difficult to use road if not kept plowed, monitoring people should show a map of the mobile zone, esp. for elders, and tell them they cannot harvest in zone, 3km no shooting corridor, need to be monitoring everyone not just Tłı̨chǫ harvesters; out of respect and safety for

monitors stick to only Tłı̨chǫ harvester, don't want to cause any animosity with other groups, GNWT is setting up check station at Gordon Lake to track number of people traveling on the road; 3km no shooting corridor is a really good approach, encouraging people to harvest in traditional ways, respectful harvesting campaign, leadership focus on fall hunts instead of winter hunts; people are aware of the map, job of the monitors, Tłı̨chǫ elders wanting to know about the map, strive to have guardians and monitors speak Tłı̨chǫ so can speak with elders, hasn't always happened as well as hoped but graph showing the reduced number of harvests in the zone; fall hunt, different kind of hunt from winter hunt, hunter's gathering to discuss how to do it, need to engage with the people if going to stop harvest for awhile to allow caribou to recover (5 years), elders should get together to discuss in a quiet place; community tour in January 2026, get input and determine plan for the winter, two day workshop at end of January 28-29, 2026; recommendation to add 3km buffer on map, GPS coordinates from Gordon Lake and up, advantageous for those who use GPS, bring up during BGCTWG meeting.

PowerPoint Presentation, entitled "*Dı̨ga Harvesting Program 2025*", tabled

Board Discussions included: what are they doing with wolf pelts? They are sent off to fur auction; need to have a combined meeting about *ekwǫ* and *dı̨ga*, *dı̨ga* taking care of lots of our animals, just wanted to slow it down, too many *dı̨ga* being killed in a year, are we doing the right thing? Need to talk about it more, how it was in the past, how are we going to do it? TG workshop to talk about wolf harvesting program, want to go back to the communities first about whether to continue the program and whether should be own program.

ii) Update on Tłı̨chǫ Aquatic Monitoring Program, Paul Vesci

PowerPoint Presentation, entitled "*2025 Interesting Results: Tłı̨chǫ Community-Based Monitoring Program*", tabled

Board Discussions included: finding jumbo whitefish in Rae Lakes, there were jumbo whitefish in Lac La Marte, report written in the past, are the jumbo fish still in Lac La Marte? Bond report, brief commercial fishery at Lac La Marte (4 years), good range of fish caught, elders noticed that heading to exploitation, despite a lot of time to recover, no jumbo fish have been caught again, lesson to us to what could happen in Rae Lakes, unregulated heavy netting or fishing, largest fish are usually harvested in the biggest number, Lac La Marte over fished, was it a genetic anomaly? How much pressure can the fish stocks handle, how much netting and how much catching? Looking at standing stock in a lake, how fast it can replace itself from fishing based on spawning events?; do you catch the round whitefish? Yes, catch round whitefish, go unnoticed in 4.5 to 5" mesh, but catch in experimental 2" net; talk about the difference in size of the fish in Gamèti and Wekweèti, smaller in Wekweèti, fish are smaller but really tasty, the fish is close to treeline, ash falling into lake, sediment into the water, inland lakes, a lot of currents run through them, colder water, Gamèti has larger open water, warmer water, good nutrients, make fish bigger, notice that fish stock is not that fat, if catch a fish in a gill net and it is healthy and alive, get bear fat and put in fish mouth to swallow, fish will get fat; Wekweèti, closer to treeline, not as productive

as Gamètì, Lac La Marte, Russell Lake, North Arm, Marian Lake, warm, shallow lakes, less fish than Gamètì.

3.0 Financial

3.1 Review & Approval of Financial Statement as of 31 October 2025

Motion #1010-17-12-2025 *To approve the financial statement as of 31 October 2025 as presented*

Moved: Steve Matthews
Second: Stu Niven

Motion Approved

3.2 Review & Approval of 2026 North American Caribou Workshop Sponsorship

The 20th North American Caribou Workshop (NACW) will be held in Yellowknife from June 15 to 19, 2026. The conference will be hosted by the Government of the Northwest Territories and local wildlife co-management partners to bring together international managers, researchers, Indigenous and Local Knowledge holders, and other interested parties to share their knowledge of caribou. The conference theme, *“United by Caribou,”* represents our joint interest in and concern for caribou as researchers and stewards.

In addition to placement of logos on the NACW website (www.nacw2026.com), program, and signage, sponsors will also have the opportunity to attach their sponsorships to specific event components, giveaways, and entertainment. The sponsorship value associated with each conference component is based on the cost and value of the item.

Motion #1011-17-12-2025 *To approve \$15,000 sponsorship to the 2026 North American Caribou Workshop*

Moved: Steve Matthews
Second: Suzanne Carrière

Motion Approved

ACTION #721-17-12-2025 (ED): To write letter to the GNWT to provide \$15,000 sponsorship to the 2026 North American Caribou Workshop.

4.0 Operations

4.1 In-Camera Session

Motion #1012-17-12-2025 *To go in-camera at 12:27 pm*

Moved: Suzanne Carrière
Second: Steve Matthews

Motion Approved

Motion #1013-17-12-2025 *To come out of in-camera at 12:41 pm*

Moved: Suzanne Carrière
Second: Steve Matthews

Motion Approved

Motion #1014-17-12-2025 *To approve Jody Pellissey's 2025 performance appraisal and approve a 2% merit salary increase*

Moved: Steve Matthews
Second: Suzanne Carrière

Motion Approved

ACTION #722-17-12-2025 (ED): To send salary information to NEBS as of January 1, 2026.

5.0 Information Items

5.1 Working Group Table

Tabled for review by the Board Members.

5.2 Permit Tracking Table

Tabled for review by the Board Members.

5.3 Communications Update

Document, entitled "*Communications Officer Update –* ", *tabled*

6.0 Other Items

6.1 Round Table

Board Members thanked one another, youth, interpreters, PIDO, and staff for a good meeting. Members appreciate learning from and sharing with one another, each member has a different perspective, different education and experiences but still come together to make good decisions on behalf of wildlife and conservation of habitat. Members are very respectful of one another, good team with great working relationships. Members are encouraged to see more young people involved in the Board; their presence strengthens us all. The Board wished Steve Matthews the best as he retires from the Board, thanking him for his knowledge, guidance, and all the years served. Everyone wished a safe and warm holiday season.

Youth were appreciative of the opportunity to attend the meeting, learn, and be active observers. They liked Janelle's message about positivity. We are losing

elders so we need youth to be a part of conversations so they can take over in the future.

6.2 Next Meeting

The next meeting dates are:

- February 10-11, 2026, Yellowknife
- May 5-6, 2026, Gamèti
- August 15-19, 2026, Deèzaatì (Point Lake)

Closing Prayer: **Joseph Judas**

Adjournment: **1:29 p.m. (Motion #1015-17-12-2025)**

Minutes Approved:

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Chairperson

February 10, 2026

Date