

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Grand Chief George Mackenzie, Chief Leon Lafferty , Mr. James Rabesca, Mr. Ernie Smith, Chief Charlie Jim Nitsiza Mr. Albert Nitsiza, Mr. Sonny Zoe, Chief Henry Gon , Mr. Alphonse Apples, Mr. Edward Chocolate, Chief Charlie Football, Mr. Joe Dryneck , Mr. William Quitte

**OPENING PRAYER**

The meeting will begin with a prayer; Fred Mantla from Gamètì will lead the prayer this morning.

**FRED MANTLA:** My friends, masi, let's say a prayer.

We are poor, lots of respected elders used to attend meetings with us long ago but now most of us are orphans, we don't see many elders these days at meetings.

We are doing what the elders did that came before us but most of them are gone but what we do see is lots of middle-aged men at meetings and we all have one goal which is very important us, it's our survival we are talking about and our unity will give us strength.

Our elders that came before us said the same thing long ago but we still remember their words. It was their determination that kept our ancestors alive and Tłıchq are well known for their determination. Our ancestors had that trait and I hope we can carry that through our lives. Unity is our strength and it will carry us through obstacles in our journey but we have to support each other.

Laughing and joking with one another is important and that characteristic was given to us by Our Creator. Its number one in our lives and it's been said that when a person smiles or laughs, that makes Jesus smile in heaven too.

Let's start the prayer but first, our families, children and our spouses are waiting at home, it takes vehicles, airplanes and ski doos to travel and the weather is cold but Our Creator, help us make it home safe and now I will start the prayer.

**APPLAUSE**

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, Good morning to all, masi, Fred for saying the prayer this morning.

Caribou was the focus of discussion at the workshops but concerns about the caribou has been around for sometime now. It's been talked about in past meetings and workshops, the most recent one was held in Sombak'e, another was in Behchokò, Inuvik and now in Whatì.

Lots of information came out yesterday about the caribou but the decision to resolve problem belongs to the leaders, elected members, chiefs, elders and young people at this meeting. The recommendations must come from the delegates but it's the leaders, chiefs and the MLA, who will be working on the problem at the political level.

The meeting started with group sessions yesterday. There were four groups and the today will be the same, Bertha Rabesca-Zoe will explain what the workshop will be about today. But before we get started, we would like to have two elders speak to begin the meeting this morning.

Whatì, NT

Elder Jimmy Rabesca of Whatì will talk first followed by Louie Zoe of Gametì, and then the delegates will break into four groups, Jimmy?

**JIMMY RABESCA:** It's been a nice meeting for the last few days and I want to thank the people for visiting. It's at meeting like this where the leader can help the members understand difficult issues, it's an educational process.

The entire membership must work together to try to understand what we believe is a complicated situation. This is how our elders used to work out their problems with non- Tłıchq even when they were at a disadvantage with the English language that could work for us, again if we work together.

We listened closely to the other members talk about the problems they have with the territorial government's caribou management plan and I know we are all saying the same thing. We learn from sharing information with each other. Like the lawyer that is sitting with us, it's like he's one of us because he believes in our cause to save the caribou. I'm glad he's at this meeting with us.

When we listen to each other talk and the other person's idea is different but it's something he said that you agreed with, then it's good because different ideas makes us learn from each other and that's how the relationship between our ancestors was like.

We talked about establishing a board yesterday to monitor the caribou and I think that's a good idea. I know the chiefs are busy dealing with complicated issues but a board could be set up by the chiefs and delegates responsible to the communities. The members of the new

board could be picked from the communities and the board could send reports to the chiefs so they know what the board is doing at all times. The chiefs wouldn't have to sit on it but I think everyone would be relieved if this board was set up immediately.

Take today for example, we spoke a lot about how our ancestors struggled but survived because they worked together so when we say we will work in unity we mean we will work together.

When groups work together in unity, complicated issues aren't so complicated anymore and there is a higher chance of succeeding.

These problems we are facing are an emergency situation and if a board was set up immediately, this board could concentrate on doing research on the problem with the caribou in the Tłıchq country. All I want the chiefs to do is establish the board with a mandate and the board could do all the work. But I think having a board to monitor the caribou is necessary.

We mentioned elders today at this meeting, but look around? Do you see many of them at this meeting? We see less and less of them.

We have an elderly lady in this community who is the oldest person in Whatì she never missed a church service on Sundays but she hasn't attended a service in the last three years because she is unable to go to church unassisted. All of us here will be in her place one of these days and that's the reason why urgent matters should be taken care of right away.

There are only six elders in our community who are past seventy and the

Whatì, NT

rest are not but this elderly lady I mentioned is the oldest person in Whatì.

The caribou situation I touched on briefly is not only for me but for the entire region and also for the future generation so it's important that this matter is looked into very soon.

Caribou is part of our culture and with their existence our culture and tradition will be alive long after we are gone and will be carried on into the future.

If we miss anything important at this meeting, we can remind each other and bring it up at the next meeting and revisit that topic and that's what working together is all about.

I am glad all of you are here in Whatì for this workshop.

The meeting begins with a prayer and closes with a prayer everyday since it started. The discussions have been good. It's been productive and we have accomplished quite a bit which is very good.

It's not a happy occasion when someone close to you passes away but I want to say Father Amorous is buried here in Whatì. Those of us who are looked up to as elders in Whatì are very thankful and grateful that Father Amorous who is almost a saint chose to be buried among our people in Whatì. Father Amorous will always be remembered.

The meeting ran smoothly, the delegates were well looked after and there was no heated debate so on behalf of the elders in the community, I want to say masi to all the delegates and that is all I'm going to say, masi.

**APPLAUSE**

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, Jimmy Rabesca from Whatì. Louie Zoe from Gamètì will talk next.

**LOUIE ZOE:** Masi for giving me this opportunity to talk for a short while.

The task ahead is going to be a difficult one but this is for us and for our children, our ancestors lives we not easy as ours but they made it, just like Jimmy said before me.

To resolve a major obstacle in our path as one mind and determination could work for us. Jimmy Rabesca's suggestion to set up a board is a good idea. We could help the chiefs setup the board.

When I was a little boy, my parents didn't have lots of material things and our home was a tent frame. My family move around quite a bit and I spend many summers in the bush camps with my parents.

I remember my mother burning green wood until the smoke filled the tent just before bedtime to smoke the mosquito out because we didn't have a mosquito bar. I also remember my mother swapping the insects with branches to chase them out of the tent and close the tent entrance for the night and canvases were our blankets. That is where I come from.

We didn't get up in the morning to breakfast waiting for us. We didn't have any meat and we had to wait for someone to check the fishnets to have our first meal of the day. Life was hard and we were poor.

Caribou-hide moccasins were our only shoes but we didn't have moccasin rubbers to protect the moccasin from wearing thin and we didn't have socks to wear inside

Whatı, NT

the moccasin. We were very poor when I was little boy.

Caribou kept us alive because we had meat to eat when my father killed a caribou. So we grew up poor but caribou got us through the hard times. Tłıchǫ people my age were raised on caribou meat so we care and respect the caribou.

My parents and the rest of the family led a nomadic lifestyle when I was a little boy and we went to the barrenlands every fall to follow the caribou. Once were on the barrenlands, my father used to kill about five large bulls. That many caribou makes about ten parcels. But that was the only time my dad would kill bulls. The rest of the winter, he used to kill small caribou but never bulls.

We spoke about protecting the caribou for this generation and the others that will follow after us; our priority now is to begin protecting the bulls because they ensure the reproduction of caribou in the Tłıchǫ country. I think protecting the bulls should be on the list of recommendations from this meeting and I don't want to talk very long because I think there's more people behind me that want to talk so masi.

**APPLAUSE**

**BREAKOUT GROUPS – OPTIONS TO REDUCE IMPACTS AND IDENTIFY PRIORITIES**

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, Louie Zoe from Gametı.

The delegates will go back to the same four groups they were in yesterday, Tony Rabesca is here, Cecelia Rabesca and Terri Nasken are both here but I think Mabel

Huskey is in another meeting, and Bertha Rabesca-Zoe will explain what this workshop will be about.

**BERTHA RABESCA-ZOE:** The last time I spoke to you about the caribou management plan the territorial government send to the Wek'èezhii board. Several questions were included with it. So the group discussions will focus on the questions that were sent from the territorial government to our board.

Individuals in the four Tłıchǫ communities were allowed to sell caribou meat only if that person had commercial tags in the past and the policy is still in effect but it hasn't been enforced for some time now. But the option to use the tags is still open and the suggestion is to stop giving commercial tags to sell meat to others.

The outfitters were given 1,590 tags last year for the fall of 2007. Just over 700 hundred tags were used for caribou taken by the outfitters. The outfitters offered to take 300 for this year. We want feedback from the groups about the caribou tags proposal from the outfitters.

Non-aboriginals are issued two caribou tags by application each year and the territorial government said that will not be changed. But in their report, it 400 were taken by the non-aboriginal people last year. We like to have feed-back from the group on this one too.

The territorial government also wants Tłıchǫ people to report how many caribou they take on each hunt. It's called "compulsory reporting". So each time a Tłıchǫ comes home with a caribou or other wildlife, he or she must report it to the proper authority. We want the group to

Whatì, NT

talk about this and let us know what you think of it.

The territorial government wants to begin issuing tags to aboriginal people to hunt for caribou. Let us know what you think of this.

The territorial government claims that over 4,000 caribou were taken last year and these were the ones reported by the hunters. So the tags the territorial government wants to begin issuing to people is not only for the Tłıchq communities but includes Sǫmbak'e. Biologists, general hunting license holders, South Slave region, Renewable Resource officers and Hay River will get its own tags from the GNWT to issue to hunters with general hunting license in their region. The North Slave Métis Alliance will also get tags from the territorial government for its members.

This is the action plan send to us from the territorial government; let us know what you think of it.

The territorial government proposed this because they want to know how many caribou are taken each year.

They also want a no hunting corridor of two kilometers on either side of the winter road to Whatì,

Wekweètì and Gamètì. We would like to know what you think of this one too.

The territorial government said it wants to have a no hunting zone on the winter road to Gordon Lake so they will have to meet with the chiefs from Dettah and N'dilo about this.

The territorial government has a monitoring program for wolfs and caribou and they said that will change. So if the

group wants to talk about this, that's up to the group.

These are the questions the leaders want feedback on from the group session. The reason we are asking you all this is because Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board will meet in Behchokò on March 13-15. The lawyers working for the Tłıchq government will meet with the board at that time so we need directions from the Tłıchq citizens about what you want us to say.

The Department of Renewable Resources asked us lots of questions. Because they will be at the same meeting you need to prepare for it. The department asked us two questions and the department wants us to respond within the next two months, so the group should talk about in this session.

The territorial government asked us when groups hunt in the Tłıchq country, who should monitor the aboriginal harvesters and how should that be carried out. That was one of the questions the territorial government asked us and it should be included in the group session.

The group will have one hour to talk about these questions and then we will wrap up the meeting after some of the elders talk to us.

The same delegates will go with the same facilitator they had yesterday and Mabel Huskey's group can join the other groups.

## REPORT

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** There will be three groups instead of four and the delegates will go with the same facilitators.

Whatı, NT

Group Two will read its report from the session. Chief Leon Lafferty will report for Cecilia Rabesca's group, Leon?

**CHIEF LEON LAFFERTY:** Masi, Peter, there were over ten people in our group.

Top of our list is tags that are issued to sell caribou meat for profit, we want that stopped.

Number two discussed is tags issued to outfitters for antlers. The operators use to get over 1,250, then it was cut to 750 this year and it will be cut again to 350 next year. We talked about this for quite a while and we agreed on keeping the tags at 350 a year for the outfitters. The outfitters hire our people that are not working at the mines and it's the same in Nunavut so we couldn't leave the outfitters with much less.

The other recommendation about this is, we want tags issued only to aboriginal-owned outfitters but during our session, one of the elders said get rid of all the tags for the outfitters. We talked about it more and some said our people work for outfitters and they send home meat from camps. We can not stop giving tags to some operators so we agreed that only aboriginal-owned outfitters will get tags and they might need only about half of the 350 tags.

Number three on our list is Caucasians and Métis living in the Northwest Territories, they are given tags for caribou. Before they used to get five tags but it's down to two tags a year. The group said not to change that because some are living with our people and some have been living among us for a long time. Our group was referring to these people living in the

communities, they have to be a two-year resident of a Tłıchq community before they become eligible for caribou tags.

The territorial government had the same discussion and they said people that have lived in the north for the past six months will be entitled to tags. We, the Tłıchq people, are saying a person has to live in a Tłıchq community for two years before tags are issued to supplement their groceries.

Number four discussions; our group said caribou monitoring program has to stay because eventually the Tłıchq government will take over the care of wildlife in the region. The information compiled now will become useful to the Tłıchq people when they take over the management of wildlife in the future. We also talked about Tłıchq taking control of wildlife management in Wek'eezhii.

We talked about how the territorial government wants to distribute tags to the Tłıchq government, Akaitcho Territory, biologists, North Slave Métis Alliance in Yellowknife and allow these people to hunt in the Tłıchq Territory and count how many caribou are taken from the region based on tags, our group said no to that.

We are the only group in the Northwest Territories that has settled a claim so why should we let Métis in Yellowknife issue tags to their members so they can hunt on our land. It's the same with the renewable resource office in Yellowknife; they are not the ones with a landclaim agreement. So why should they have the right to issue caribou tags so these people can hunt in the Tłıchq Territory.

Whatı, NT

Akiatcho is negotiating their own claim with the federal government and I'm sure they don't want other organizations to issue tags so non-members can hunt on their land. Our reason is this, if we give 100 caribou tags to a Métis organization, they could give it to a Métis visiting from south and let that person hunt for caribou. That is like opening doors to let strangers hunt on our land. It's something to avoid from happening in the Tłıchq country. We don't want the territorial government to issue tags to different organizations for us.

Our group talked about the two kilometer no hunting corridor on both sides of the winter road which will ban everyone from hunting on it in the Tłıchq country including the Tłıchq citizens.

We talked about it in our group and we all agreed that this is Tłıchq country; Tłıchq people won't allow someone to forbid Tłıchq from hunting on the road or on the side of the road in Tłıchq land. But, we said when this law comes into effect; it should apply only to those that are not Tłıchq citizens.

When the no hunting corridor on winter roads comes into effect, we want Tłıchq to patrol the winter road since it is in the Tłıchq country. Money that goes to the Department of Renewable Resources for this particular program can go to the Tłıchq government budget to hire and train Tłıchq people to do the job.

Nunavut has its own monitoring program for Bathurst caribou when the herd migrates north to have their calves, The Nunavut government counts the caribou and send the information to the Wek'eezhii board and to the territorial

government. We want to continue sharing information with other organizations but we would like the Tłıchq government to run the caribou monitoring program. Nunavut monitors and takes care of the herd once the caribou arrive in the Arctic and the Tłıchq want to do the same when the herd is in the Tłıchq country.

What we would like to do is take a biologist from the territorial government with us and let that individual count the caribou for territorial government and we will do the same for the Tłıchq government. Then we can compare the information with the other governments to ensure accuracy in the caribou count.

The decision either to reduce the number of caribou taken each year or to be protected depends on the present population of the herd. The Tłıchq government could take over that program and the Wek'eezhii board could look after the file for us. We would instruct the Wek'eezhii board to reduce or increase the number of caribou tags given to individuals but before that is done, the board's intentions will be announced to the public.

We don't want the territorial government to tell us where to hunt and how many caribou we can take each year. The responsibility to save and protect the caribou begins with the Tłıchq Nation so we also want to take over the program that goes with it. We also said at our group session that many of the young Tłıchq are now educated in different fields so it shouldn't be a problem to find people to run the programs for us.

The last thing we talked about was the wolf population growing rapidly in the

Whatı, NT

Tłıchq country. Since we are going to reduce the amount of caribou tags that will be distribute among the outfitters, it might be a good idea to give them more tags to kill wolfs during their hunting trips to help the caribou.

We discussed many other issues at our session and we listened to the elders when they spoke at the larger workshop so after we are finish here. The Tłıchq government leaders, the lawyers and the chiefs will go over the recommendations from the delegates and draft a motion.

We didn't write down everything from our group session but it will be part of a presentation to the larger group later, masi.

**APPLAUSE)**

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, Chief Leon Lafferty. That report came from Group Three; Tony Rabesca is doing the report for Group One, Tony?

**TONY RABESCA:** Our group doesn't want commercial tags to sell caribou meat. They said to get rid of it for the aboriginal people and for the non-aboriginal people; some of the members said Tłıchq don't sell caribou meat so there is no need for it.

Outfitters were given one 1,500 caribou tags last year, 727 tags were used, so our group said to freeze the outfitters tag permits for three years but they also said tags for wolfs and bears can still continue to be issued to the outfitters because their population is growing.

The group also said outfitters are partly responsible for caribou population declining because they have the tags to take caribou. So they said to suspend

issuing the tags to outfitters for three years.

Two tags per a person for non- Tłıchq harvesters can continue. But elders in the group said Tłıchq shouldn't report how many caribou they take because no one kills the same number of caribou. Some could take about ten and another person could take more so the elders said they shouldn't report how many an individual takes.

The group said they don't want quotas on caribou for Tłıchq citizens because they are experienced hunters and they know how many caribou will feed their family. But the elders in the group said don't take more than you need for your family.

Under the territorial government's proposed management action plan, it's compulsory to report every caribou taken. Tłıchq citizens do not accept the action plan on compulsory reporting of every caribou taken. They want to get rid of it but they said that it should only apply to Caucasian and non- Tłıchq hunters.

Caucasians and non- Tłıchq have to report how many caribou they take to the proper authorities under the territorial government compulsory regulation. Tłıchq citizens do not want to report how many caribou they take but they will report a diseased caribou to the Renewable Resource officer if they take one.

Tłıchq do not want a two kilometer no hunting corridor on either side of the winter road imposed on them in Tłıchq country. Tłıchq people said they will not be forbidden to hunt on the winter road in Tłıchq Nation. They will continue to



Whatı, NT

exercise their rights under the Tłıchq constitution.

Elders in the group said hunters should butcher their caribou away from the road because people do at times leave messes behind.

Tłıchq citizens want their government to work with the territorial government and the Department of Renewable Resources to save the caribou.

The territorial government releases a report annually on how many caribou are taken. That report can be used by Tłıchq government and territorial government to make decisions jointly to set quotas or ban killing either cows, calves, young bulls or full grown bulls.

Tłıchq harvesters could be monitor by Tłıchq government.

That's all from Group One, masi.

## APPLAUSE

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi. Tony Rabesca, that's the report from Group One, Johnny Simpson will read the report from Group Three.

**JOHNNY SIMPSON:** This report is from Group Three. We were in Mabel Husky's group but she's not here so we joined other groups. We wrote all the concerns that were raised by the members in our group and some that we forgot to mention yesterday are included.

The first question asked was; how should the Tłıchq monitor the caribou and by who? Outfitters are causing the caribou

population to deplete rapidly so stop issuing caribou tags to the outfitters.

At present one tag a year for non- Tłıchq resident is sufficient instead of the two they are receiving now.

Three hundred and fifty tags should be allocated to outfitters because their guests come north for antlers and not the caribou meat.

Commercial outfitters have permits to take other wildlife like wolves or bears beside caribou. It's important to Tłıchq people to have caribou meat because that's our main diet and we depend on it to survive so hunting wildlife to stay alive is not a sport to us but it's different for Caucasians. We need to save the caribou.

Packs of wolves usually follow caribou herds because they're part of the food chain for wolves so we need a good monitoring program for both animals. Wolves can get aggressive when they are hungry and they have had human contact many times so they're not easily frightened.

How can we prevent wolves from getting near the communities and who can take care of that for us, that's one of the questions from our session?

Wek'eezhii has many different kinds of animals living in Tłıchq country, what should we do when we take a diseased animal? Who do we turn it to? Who do we report it to? Tłıchq Citizens should report a diseased animal to the Tłıchq government office immediately.

Tłıchq people are unique and they have their own tradition and culture that was

Whatì, NT

passed down from one ancestor to the next and our tradition and culture is still being practiced. How can we protect our tradition and culture and what can we do to keep it? Who should look after it for us? What can we do to monitor wolves in the Tłıchq country? The wolf packs always follow the caribou herd but sometimes the wolf population seems to increase, do we understand why? We probably don't know much about that. We should hire people to do research on wolves to understand the animal much better. We know they are dangerous but they also have to be protected.

It's important because wolves keep the caribou moving around. Are wolves healthy? Why do they travel great distances with their cubs? We need to know.

Commercial outfitters run their camps all year round but they hunt for caribou only during the summer months so the caribou tags they receive should be good only for summer seasons.

Tłıchq citizens want the caribou collar program discontinued in the Tłıchq country. Collars could cause discomfort, loss of appetite, it could cause poor sleeping patterns, and caribou might develop illness from the collars so the group wants it stopped.

Tłıchq citizens of Behchokò, Gamètì, Whatì and Wekweètì want to hunt, fish and trap like they always have in the Tłıchq country without quotas. They don't want restrictions set for them by someone else.

Tłıchq Citizens don't want the two kilometer no hunting corridor on the winter roads to apply to them in their own

country. They want to be able to hunt wherever possible but the law should be enforced for non- Tłıchq hunting on the winter road.

Tłıchq citizens from Group Three have said motions or laws introduced by other political organizations that could have a negative impact on the Tłıchq people will be disregarded or ignored but Tłıchq citizen will abide by the laws or motions made by the Tłıchq government.

Tłıchq Citizens from the group said laws made by other government agencies for the Tłıchq country will affect each individual. But each person should decide if they want to abide by that law or not and the ultimate choice should belong to each individual.

Renewable resources officers working in the Tłıchq country have to work closely with the new board and the renewable resource officers will report directly to the new board once it established. Tłıchq hunters and trappers will report how many animals they take on each hunt.

The monitoring program will have to be enforced by the board and money has to be made available to hire people to constantly watch the caribou movements until they reach their destination in Nunavut. The new Tłıchq monitoring board will also keep records on wolves, bears and other wildlife in the Tłıchq country which is important to the Tłıchq citizens for clothing, foods and tools.

The members in Group Three said the new board has to be established only by the Tłıchq. New policies have to be developed

Whatı, NT

by the Tłıchq and the new board has to be run by the Tłıchq citizens.

The new board has to research and compile information on other herds in different parts of the north.

Group Three also acknowledges the fact that the territorial government and Tłıchq government don't work well together. The territorial government makes decisions then notifies the Tłıchq government after the fact so this new board needs to function from Tłıchq perspective.

Some of the Tłıchq citizens sell raw caribou meat and drymeat to other people and to one another. This creates a negative portrait of Tłıchq citizens in general so that causes some tension.

Some items from yesterday's group session weren't mentioned because of the time. But I will mention them now. The territorial government makes laws for native women without talking to them first and this include Tłıchq women in the Tłıchq Country. Some Tłıchq women hunt and trap for a living. They were not supposed to be forced not hunt and trap on the land because a territorial government law prohibits them to do so. Tłıchq women said the Tłıchq government law will precede all other government laws for them.

Tłıchq women have an important job preparing caribou meat for storage. They clean and cut and dry the meat. Preparing wildlife to feed the family is important to them,

Tłıchq women will abide by the Tłıchq government law and the other

government's law is secondary. They do not want another government to impose laws on them that will prohibit them from hunting, trapping, fishing and carrying on the Tłıchq lifestyle in the Tłıchq country.

Caribou is a treasure to Tłıchq women and they never take more than is needed to feed the family. Caribou is a very important commodity in raising a healthy family and they don't want restrictions on caribou for them in the Tłıchq country.

Tłıchq women are aware of the territorial government's caribou management plan to save the caribou but they know putting effort and energy into working together is important to help their own government.

How can they help to save the caribou? What are the obstacles and what does the female population of the Tłıchq Nation think of the tension created by the territorial government's proposed caribou management plan. They are aware of the problem and are very concerned. They are worried about the Bathurst caribou herd and its future. They will put all their effort to help the Tłıchq government save and protect the Bathurst caribou herd. The female population of the Tłıchq Nation will stand behind the decision their government makes to save the caribou and they will not support proposals made by the other government to save the caribou. Tłıchq women will not support a plan from the territorial government that imposes laws on the Tłıchq citizens without evaluating the consequences it will have on the Tłıchq people.

Johnny Simpson said: I work at Ekati mine; I see lots of different nationalities

Whatì, NT

employed at the mine, I see lots of thing happening at the mine all the time.

We have lots of young Tłıchq in schools and having our own renewable resource policy for the Tłıchq country. It is very important and so is education to run our boards.

Biologists have been to school to look at marine life, plants, animals, shoreline and water. Naturalist in the same capacity look at animals and their behavior, diets, appetite and adjustment to changes. Geologists are important in the north so I have been thinking about our children that are in schools. I have seen lots of young educated Caucasian in the fields I just mentioned but I have never seen an aboriginal person working in these fields.

Tłıchq children are going for higher education every year and I think we should encourage our young people to enter these fields. Having young educated Tłıchq in these fields will help us in the future. Look at all the money coming out of our land. Some day they might find oil and gas and if we have resources on our land, it will one day benefit all the Tłıchq citizens.

We have a landclaim call Wek'èezhli, if we start talking to our children now, it will help them when they find more minerals or oil and gas on our land. Training in renewable resources is a very important job too.

This all I wanted to say and I want to say masi to my group members for bringing all these point forward, masi.

**APPLAUSE**

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, all the delegates had something positive to say about how the caribou can be saved and who should manage it, who should monitor the caribou, which caribou should be protected, all areas of concern have been covered by the entire delegation at this meeting.

Your leaders are not here now but they were here to ask for your instructions and you gave them your answers. They are going over the minutes that were taken from the meeting,

Rick Salter and Bertha Rabesca-Zoe will be back this afternoon to talk to you about what will happen next and Grand Chief George Mackenzie will speak last before we close the meeting.

Take a half hour lunch break, Eddie Weyallon will talk before we take a break.

**EDDIE WEYALLON:** I arrived on Wednesday and I wanted to say this to Chief Leon Lafferty yesterday I told him this morning that I have been here since Wednesday and he said your name is not on the list. Jimmy Martin sat in this meeting without saying a word and Chief Leon Lafferty said to him, "you will get paid for sitting in the meeting for the last two days." All of the chiefs are here today, is he the only one in charge? I paid ninety dollars to come to Whatì with my own vehicle.

I want to get paid and I want answers from him today, that's what I'm talking about. He said my name is not on the list but before I left Behchokò, most of the names on the list were young people and he hasn't said a word since I have been here, nothing.

Whatı, NT

When your name is on the list, you have to speak at meetings. Your name is on the list because you you're not afraid to speak in public. That's why you say yes when they ask you to go with them.

Chief Leon Lafferty picked people himself and he didn't pick any elders. This meeting was planned at the meeting in Behchokò. Leaders from Behchokò called ahead to tell Whatı they were going to bring lots of elders to this meeting. But I don't see my friend, Francis. Harry is the only elder at this meeting. I'm close to seventy-three years old. What are the leaders going to tell me, will I get paid today? If he's says I'm not getting paid, I'm not getting paid.

People said delegates are going to talk about caribou for the next three days. I was going to say this yesterday. Tell me if I'm getting paid or not, four other chiefs are sitting with you. If I don't get paid, I'll say Chief Leon Lafferty said this to me. I will broadcast this on the radio. Tell me before lunch if I'm getting paid or not, I just want a straight answer. If I don't get paid, I can talk about this on CBC, if you tell me I will get a cheque that will be alright with me.

I have been here since Wednesday and I talked at the meeting sometimes. I want to know what you will tell me, that is why I'm saying this.

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, they hear you, they will give you the answer soon, we're here to talk about caribou and when there's too much discomfort people go home feeling awful. But the decision is up to the chiefs, the chiefs are here somewhere and it's up to them if you get paid.

Delegates take half hour lunch break and the lawyers will talk to you first after lunch then the grand chief will be the last speaker before the meeting wraps up.

## LUNCH

## GENERAL DISCUSSION AND NEXT STEPS

**BERTHA RABESCA-ZOE:** We'll start working on a caribou management long-term plan; we hope to have a policy in place by this fall. We have to send a report to the Wek'èezhii board and we have one more workshop after this one.

The next one is on how could we save the caribou? We still have to talk about this because we are not the only ones with boards, other groups have their own boards and there's another board for Beverly herd. Each organization has a separate board for caribou but the Bathurst caribou doesn't have a board.

We can form a board for the Bathurst but we have to sit with the territorial government and federal government to set one up but it is possible to establish a board. It could take a while and we have to talk to them about the mandate of the board. The calving grounds are here on this side of Nunavut and we have to sit with them and talk about partnership in monitoring the caribou.

We have to draft a memorandum of understanding with the Nunavut government; it could take a while before we have an agreement to work together. So we will assess all the options and the Tłıchq government executive council will make the final decision.

Whatı, NT

The territorial government drafted a Bathurst management plan which the government was going to use to implement the monitoring program. We have to look at that plan again since we have our own government. There might be issues in there that we don't like and maybe those we like. But we didn't go over it well enough so we have to go over it again.

There were lots of people and elders involved when the draft was put together and that included all the groups around us. But the Tłıchq government didn't go through the draft quite well enough so we have to do that first.

This is our first workshop on the territorial government's proposed caribou management plan. We are going to give this report to the board when they meet next month. Gahcho kwe mine will open soon. They will have a hearing on caribou so we need to work with them. Next we have to write a report and go over the other board's policy which we will begin working on right away.

All of you have been with us for the last three days; we thank you for sharing all this information with us.

Some of you have never attended a meeting like this one before and they are right. I want to thank all of you for letting us work for all of you, masi.

We are going to send our report south and that's the first step. The others will fall into place but that's a separate work, so I want thank all of you, masi.

**APPLAUSE**

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, Bertha Rabesca-Zoe, lawyer, Rick Salter will speak next.

**RICK SALTER:** Masi, Mister Peter Chair Speaker.

I'm really glad I was here for this workshop, this was the best workshop I ever been to. The information that came from the groups is very, very useful as Bertha said,

. We will take this information and make sure it gets to Week'ezhii Resource Board, the other governments and the aboriginal people. This is your information, one moment; we're just figuring out about the interpreting, Eddie, do you want to do it? Does everybody have an earpiece? Okay. You understand me? Alphonse, wake up. I'll just repeat.

I said this is one of the best workshops I ever been to, the information was really useful and we'll take that information and make sure it gets to the board and to the government and to other aboriginal organizations.

What made me really happy about this workshop was that because you have the Tłıchq agreement you no longer just have to react to what government does. They have to do what you tell them to do because of this agreement. So it was really good to see people talking like a government and acting like a government and we will make sure that you are given the respect that you deserve. Your chiefs will be speaking after this and they'll talk to you about that.

Bertha touched on some very important points and I won't repeat them. I have to say that it makes me proud that Bertha is

Whatı, NT

able to carry on and help you people the way she does. For me it's a dream come true that you have your own Tłıchq lawyer who's out there fighting for you everyday. I'm so proud that she's part of our firm and that I was her teacher, you're lucky.

The Tłıchq agreement is very clear and you all said it during the workshop. You have the right to harvest all species of wildlife anytime of the year all over Mqwhı Gogha Dè Nıttı'èe unless you decide to put any control on that. You're a self-government and as Bertha pointed it Mqwhı Gogha Dè Nıttı'èe goes into Nunavut.

I think it's really important for people to remember that, I know that Chief Charlie Football reminds us of this all the time. The boundary for Nunavut, you never agreed to it and we never agreed that your harvesting would be limited by that border, it's in your agreement, your harvesting is throughout Mqwhı Gogha Dè Nıttı'èe that means that you can harvest inside Nunavut, what they call Nunavut on the other side of Mister Parker's line.

I think you as Tłıchq have to remember that because you still have to complete a negotiation with the Inuit about how your interest in Nunavut are going to be respected and that's important because you need co-operation from Inuit to protect the caribou.

You can do everything possible within Week'ezhıı and on your own lands to protect the caribou. But their calving grounds are in Nunavut and the calving grounds are absolutely crucial to the future health of the caribou, of the Bathurst caribou herd.

So that means you are going to have to work closely with the Inuit to make sure that they're doing everything they can to protect the calving ground and because you have this outstanding issue with them about your rights in Nunavut, it's makes it easier to work with them on that. So as Bertha pointed out that's more long term but the only way you are going to end up protecting is to: (A) Do a short term thing and (B) Do the long term because the caribou aren't here for this year and next year, they're here for the next thousand of years and so as you move forward.

You have to deal with the issues that have been raised by Environmental Resources and the Government of the Northwest Territories with their proposals. You have to deal very up-front and, I think in a way we never been able to before, with what Alexis Arrowmaker warned us about.

What is the impact of the mines on the caribou, when you look at these maps on the wall, on the chart here, you'll see that the intensive area use by the caribou is right around all those mines but you know that already. But with the upcoming hearings on the Gahcho Kwe project we're going to get to deal with what impact diamond mining is having on the caribou. I don't know what the Tłıchq word is for coincidence but for me it's too big of coincidence that the caribou declines as all the diamond mines come on stream. Something is wrong there and the other thing that we'll do is just what I spoke about is long term work with the other groups to develop a good plan. Management plans and land use plans and control plans for developments that could hurt the caribou in the future like in the calving grounds.

Whatì, NT

Your agreement gives you the ability to do this legally, you're not just watching from the side-lines anymore. As they say, you're a player, you're not just in the stand watching the hockey game, and you're out there with the puck.

The agreement gives you that power and the other thing the agreement gives you is it gives you a government to carry out your wishes. Your chiefs, your grand chief, your chiefs, your assembly are there to protect you, the constitution says so. Your government will go and do that and you make sure that they do and that's why they call this workshop. So we're off to a good start, masi-cho.

## **APPLAUSE**

### **CLOSING REMARKS BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, Rick Salter, the meeting will wrap after the chiefs make their presentations, Chief Henry Gon from Gamètì will talk first, Chief Charlie Football from Wekweètì will talk second, Chief Leon Lafferty from Behchokò will speak third, Grand Chief George Mackenzie will be forth and then host chief Charlie Jim Nitsiza will speak last then we will wrap the meeting. Chief Henry Gon from Gamètì?

**CHIEF HENRY GON:** My friends, I would like to thank the host community for taking good care of us, the cooks, organizers, interpreters, staff, Mister Chairman, Mister Speaker Peter Arrowmaker.

I want to thank all of you for participating in the workshop today because the chiefs alone couldn't solve complicated issues like this one alone. We need unity to get

through this; it's the only way to make it work. Our people have talked about caribou for years so the problem isn't new.

There were workshops on the caribou in Yellowknife, Inuvik and Behchokò. We have to resolve this problem. We can do it since we have our own government; the constitution in the agreement is for our protection. We have to see what is in the agreement so we can use it to resolve this problem.

I know most of you are not with us everyday but there are days when we are overwhelmed with work. Work was different when we were negotiating with the governments. We had large delegations coming with us to meetings when we were still negotiating because none of us had any experience in negotiating. We travelled extensively to get the agreement and now it's just a matter of letting it fall into places.

There is so much more to do and sometimes it's impossible to get home. I am aware that some of the members are not happy with our leadership but we will do a community tour in April.

That's to give you an opportunity to raise any concerns you have at that time and the leadership will report to the members on our government.

Bertha talked to us today about long and short term plans for what we have to do to save the caribou. But caribou is not the only item on our agenda, lands is another issue that we have to work out with, with the territorial government.

We are short of people so it's sometimes hard to finish all the projects the Tłıchq community leaders started; it takes people



Whatì, NT

and hours of commitment to finish a project.

We had an excellent meeting, people shared lots of information with the leaders, some people didn't speak but the lawyers will write a report then send it the Week'ezhii board and other organizations.

There's going to be a hearing on caribou in Behchokò on March 13th, the leaders will be there and at that time the leaders will have some news to report to the Tłıchq citizens.

We made a fast trip to Tulita and we just got home then we took off to the meeting here in Whatì. Once we have all the seats filled on the all the boards Tłıchq government has, the chiefs should have a little time to spend on community issues but right now there aren't enough bodies for all the boards so the chief are filling vacant seats and that's the reason why we are busy.

After this, we're taking trips to our people employed at the mines to see how they're doing. The leaders were thinking about what Tłıchq citizens were thinking of about the territorial government's caribou management plan. Now we know, we can begin working on it. The leaders said we have to meet with the Tłıchq people before we do anything so we held two different workshops and it's good to know how people feel about the management plan.

My friends, I'm glad to see all of you here, have a safe trip home, masi.

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, Chief Henry Gon from Gamètì, Chief Charlie Football from Wekweètì will speak next.

**CHIEF CHARLIE FOOTBALL:** Masi-cho, my friends and families came from other communities and Whatì was a good host to my family. They ate and slept well and people were kind and generous to them and to me.

I hope our children will work for our people like we are doing now if they are given the opportunity. This work that we're doing is a learning experience for us and educational for our children.

Each one of us is glad to see each other when we travel and meet up and now we have a goal which to set up a board for caribou. Let's not lose sight of that until we can see the board up and running. I would be happy to see that.

Why do we say we love the caribou? But that is true. There's a magazine called True Story and we have our own true story, it's the same for wildlife and human beings.

We get our knowledge from our parents and ancestors. Once long ago, our people were starving, the children were weak and not one was in sight playing and you didn't hear a child's voice.

One elder walked away into the bushes and on his way back home about two lakes away, he heard someone talking, this voice said, "that man has treated us with respect; he never let our blood drip and now he's pitiful. Let's offer ourselves to him so they can survive". The man looked around and wondered where that voice was coming from. He continued walking again, when he was near a small lake, a herd of caribou ran onto the lake.

That story was repeated over and over again in Wekweètì.' Since the caribou offered themselves to the man and he took

Whatì, NT

all the caribou on that lake everyone in his camp survived. That story was passed down to us and there's a wolf poster on the wall, there is a story about a wolf.

An elderly lady got lost near Wekweètì years and years ago when a group was moving from the barrenland back to Great Slave Lake. She was walking behind a dogteam when there was a snow storm and she got lost.

She walked and walked trying to find her people but she didn't. Eventually, she dropped in her tracks weak from starvation when a wolf approached her. The wolf said to her, "granny, what are you doing way out here?" "The old lady said "I was walking behind the sleds when I got lost, now I don't know where my family are, I can't find them so I wandered and got lost"

The old lady told the wolf, and the wolf said, "um huh". Then the wolf told the old lady, "let me pack you on my back and maybe you can walk once in a while when you feel a bit stronger".

The wolf had a front quarter of a caribou in his mouth and once in a while the wolf stopped and gave a little piece of meat to the old lady. She felt like this was the first meal she had had and the old lady felt rested for the first time in a long time.

She told her family that the wolf would stop and feed her as they kept going and when the wolf and she made it to the lake where her family was camping, the wolf asked her, do you know what lake this is? And old lady said "no".

The wolf told her, your family is close to this lake so sit and wait for them. They will find you and now it's time for me to go back to the tundra. My children are

waiting for me and I'm worry about them, the wolf told the old lady.

This is another story that has been told many times in Wekweètì. No one wants to abuse an animal but no wants to see an animal suffer so you do what is necessary to help stop the suffering. Now this story is referring to that.

We didn't create the Tłı̨chǫ traditions and culture. They were passed down to us from our ancestors and they survived because of the wildlife. The skills to hunt and trap were passed on to us.

We invited all of you here because we needed to hear what the Tłı̨chǫ people had to say about the proposed caribou management plan.

All of you elected us because you thought we could do the job and we will work on this for all of you. I know we are all heading home but concerns that were raised at this meeting have been written down and the work will continue on it.

One of my friends said we hardly spend time at home but that is what we chose and now we had come this far and it won't be the first time we are away from home.

We have lots of boards and anytime there is a meeting, a chief needs to be there for now. But after everything is running smoothly, the board members can start taking on more responsibilities and make decisions on their own. But for a major issue like this one, we need all of us to be there. When the boards meet to make decisions that aren't major like this one, they can take care of it on their own and we can start spending more time at home. We need to be with the boards when they are dealing with major issues but when

Whatì, NT

they are dealing with concerns that aren't too big then the boards can make decisions without us.

Now we are dealing with a concern that needs all of us so we won't be spending too much time at home until this issue is resolved. We're going to spend less time at home now until it's dealt with. That's why the chiefs have been talking about delegating responsibilities to others but even so we don't spend too much time at home. We are doing this so one day it will give the children a better chance at dealing with foreigners who have settled here. We were here first but the foreigners are acting like they are in charge. But one day that will soon disappear so let them talk.

We are going home but lots of issues were brought to the table which the chiefs have pack into their sacks that will be send off to the governments. They will review our decision then our lawyers will tell us what the governments have decided to do. That information will be passed on to the Tłıchq people in the communities so friends, let's have a safe trip home, it's up to the Creator but if he takes pity on us we will make it home safe. Let's keep that in our prayer for one another, masi-cho.

#### **APPLAUSE**

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi-cho, Charlie Football of Wekweètì', Chief Leon Lafferty is next.

**CHIEF LEON LAFFERTY:** Masi, Mister Chairman, welcome everyone and thank you.

This is a very important issue that has to be dealt with but we didn't want to make a decision on it quickly so we decided to

talk with the people first which we are doing now.

We couldn't bring lots of people and time didn't permit us to visit all four communities so we chose two communities with larger populations to visit.

We heard lots of good ideas at this meeting and many of you have said this is for the children and their future, none of you is wrong about that. The chiefs will get together after this meeting and review the minutes taken by our staff and talk about different solutions and then send a report to Wek'eezhii board.

The chiefs will meet with the government next month on the thirteenth and talk to them on your behalf. The solutions to problems are easy to find when you bring groups of people together and talk about it. Take a look at all the papers around you; there are some on the floor and some on the walls.

Times are changing because when we use to meet in the past, we turned to non-Tłıchq for advice and they were the ones who organized and ran our meetings. But it's not like that anymore; the lawyer is the only person that is different from us at this meeting. Tłıchq are the ones working for the Tłıchq government and that's what self-government is about.

I would like to thank the organizers, the lawyers, interpreters, chairman, the cooks and the community of Whatì. Lots of good ideas came out of this meeting and there is nothing more to add to it so once again, I would like to say, masi.

#### **APPLAUSE**

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Whatì, NT

**PETER ARROWMAKER:** Masi, Chief  
Leon Lafferty of Behchokò, Grand Chief  
George Mackenzie will speak next,  
George?

(Grand chief George Mackenzie, Chief Charlie Jim  
Nitsiza and closing prayer were not documented  
due to the rest was not included with the rest of  
caribou workshop tapes).