

NORTH SLAVE MÉTIS ALLIANCE

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January 20, 2010

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Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board
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Re: Intervention of the North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA)

The North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA) represents the indigenous Métis community which experienced ethnogenesis in the Northwest Territories during the 18th century (late 1700's). (see attachment #1 and #2).

This Métis community was recognized by Canada as having aboriginal rights and title to the lands in the area of Treaty 11 between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake, and between the Mackenzie River and Contwoyto Lake, and this is why Treaty Commissioner Conroy estimated, in 1920, that about seventy-five Métis families could be convinced to "take treaty", while another fifteen old, respected, and even historic Métis families in this area would have to be offered scrip instead. The historic Métis families mentioned included the Camsells, Gaudets, Beauvieu (Bouvier and Beaulieu), Lafferty (Lafferte) , McDonald, Smith and Firth, among others. (see attachment #3).

When Treaty 11 was signed in Fort Rae, in August of 1921, a number of Métis were named as counselors. Old Germain was first counselor, representing the barren land or Snare Lake band. Josue Beaulieu represented the people of Lac La Martre, and Susie the old prophet was one of the counselors representing Yellowknife. (see attachment #4, #5, and #6).

The mandate of the NSMA is to assert, protect, and implement the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the North Slave Métis, including their inherent right of self-determination, and the right to continue harvesting caribou for subsistence and commercial use. The goal of our participation in this hearing is to achieve meaningful involvement in wildlife management in our homeland, and an equitable allocation of resources over the long term.

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With regards to the joint ENR and Tlicho Proposal, **the NSMA supports the following proposed Management Actions:**

- ∞ Eliminate all outfitting tags for all NWT barrenground caribou.
- ∞ Eliminate all (non-aboriginal) resident hunting all NWT barrenground caribou..

The NSMA does NOT support the proposed elimination of all commercial meat tags held by aboriginal communities, or the elimination of all female caribou harvesting by aboriginal people. The reason we cannot support these management proposals is, first of all, that there has not been adequate consultation with the aboriginal communities that have constitutionally protected rights to harvest caribou commercially, and domestically, and there is also no acceptable justification for infringement of constitutionally protected rights.

Adequate consultation, in the opinion of the NSMA, would involve provision of adequate information, and the provision of time to digest and discuss the information between community members so that they could formulate and present their views. The volume of information provided in this hearing has been large, but the answers to the questions have not been clear or adequate. Also, without financial resources to fund community meetings or to fund staff time to review, research, summarize and present the information to the community, there is no mechanism provided to distribute the information, and therefore no opportunity provided. The consensus decision making process requires wide participation, and sufficient discussion time. As well, infringement of constitutionally protected aboriginal rights must be done in the manner with the least interference, and the aboriginal people need to be involved in determining which method of achieving the conservation or other regulatory goal causes the least interference. (see the Sparrow, Haida, Taku and Powley cases in Supreme Court of Canada, and attachment #7, #8, #9, 10 and #11.)

In conducting its research on the management of caribou, ENR should be following appropriate guidelines for the ethical conduct of research involving Aboriginal Peoples and their lands and/or resources. (see attachment #12)

We have reason to believe, based on traditional knowledge, and on our ongoing heritage research, that the caribou have shifted their range south and east , towards York Factory, as they did in 1889. (see attachment # 13)

Sincerely,

Sheryl Grieve

Environment Manager

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With Attachments 1-13