



# **NORTH SLAVE MÉTIS ALLIANCE**

- ∞ The North Slave Métis have an Aboriginal Right to self-determination, including management of wildlife, and wildlife harvesting.
- ∞ The North Slave Métis have Aboriginal Titles to lands and resources in their traditional territory, which extends from Great Bear Lake to Great Slave Lake, and from the Mackenzie River to the barrenlands.
- ∞ The North Slave Métis have Treaty Rights to “live as formerly”, throughout their traditional territory.
- ∞ The North Slave Métis Rights are protected by the Canadian Constitution.
- ∞ Infringement of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights cannot be justified without adequate Crown Consultation and Accommodation.
- ∞ The Crown (and its delegates) is responsible for ensuring First Nations have the capacity to participate in regulatory regime, if relying on that participation to fulfil the Duty to Consult.
- ∞ There is a serious doubt that the WRRB process has the jurisdiction to affect North Slave Métis Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, since the Tlicho Agreement specifically can not.
- ∞ In any case, adequate Crown Consultation has not occurred.

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- ∞ Adequate Crown Consultation involves three essential components:
  - ∞ Adequate time.
  - ∞ Adequate information.
  - ∞ Adequate opportunity to formulate and present community consensus view.
- ∞ Neither Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories nor the Tlicho Government have provided adequate Crown Consultation.
- ∞ Therefore, no infringement of North Slave Métis rights can be justified.

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- The information provided by the GNWT is completely inadequate, and is little better than speculation.
- The NSMA does not endorse the distinctions between herds as practiced by ENR.
- Barrenland caribou should be managed as a metapopulation. They are not genetically, behaviorally, or spatially distinct.
- Calving ground surveys must be done on all “herds” or “populations” at the same time in order to provide a credible total population estimate.



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- The NSMA has not had the time or resources to review all the information on the public registry.
- The NSMA has not had the time or the resources to review the caribou movement data.
- The NSMA has not had the time or resources to make our own caribou population estimates.



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- The NSMA has not had an opportunity to prepare or present its views.
- The NSMA traditionally practices consensus decision making, and at the very least requires a democratic process.
- Resources are needed to educate the members, to engage independent expertise to review information, and to perform the activities required to build and state the community consensus views.



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- We do know, however, that we do not want to take chances with our caribou.
- We have voluntarily restricted our harvest for at least 5 years now, while asking Government to gather better information, and take precautionary measures.
- Government has continued to allow non-aboriginal harvesting – in conflict with the obligation to give priority allocation to Aboriginal Rights holders.

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## **The NSMA supports the following proposed Management Actions:**

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

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**The NSMA does NOT support the following  
proposed management actions:**

- elimination of all commercial meat tags held by aboriginal communities,
- elimination of all female caribou harvesting by aboriginal people.



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## **The reasons the NSMA cannot support these management proposals are:**

- There has not been adequate consultation with the aboriginal communities that have constitutionally protected rights to harvest caribou commercially, and domestically, specifically the North Slave Métis community.
- We have seen no acceptable justification (scientific data or Traditional Knowledge information showing the Caribou are in danger of extinction.
- The Traditional Knowledge of the North Slave Métis community has not been sought out, gathered, or used, in the preparation of this proposal.
- It is not equitable for Métis harvesting to be restricted while the Inuit continue to harvest the same animals.
- Aboriginal harvesting must take precedence over all other harvesting.
- Biologists' failure to find, see and count caribou is not the same thing as an absence of caribou.

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**Despite the inadequate Crown Consultation, just in case the caribou are actually in serious trouble, the NSMA urges these precautionary management actions be taken, which would not infringe our rights:**

- Working with Canada, and using whatever emergency funds are necessary, conduct caribou calving ground surveys using air photo census methods for ALL known caribou calving areas, whether collared caribou are known to be there or not, at once (during one calving season), throughout ALL of northern Canada.
- Encourage Aboriginal People to harvest alternative game with healthy populations by providing adequate funds for transportation and shipping to each First Nation.
- Resume forest fire control in caribou habitat.
- Reinstate the Special Aboriginal Harvesters Assistance Program to encourage more Aboriginal (including Métis) People to maintain their traditional land based life styles, including especially the harvesting of fur and the observation of caribou health, behavior, and abundance.
- Establish (or re-establish) the Bathurst Caribou Management Committee with support for the participation of representatives of all directly affected First Nations. The Government of Nunavut must be involved, and all governments must be committed to implement the recommendations of the re-constituted BCMC.