

Feb 26 2009

Distribution List

The Department Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) has maintained a steady relationship with the Northwest Territories (NWT) Barrenground Outfitters Association, engaging in annual meetings to discuss operational issues, responding to questions and requests, and participating in topic-specific meetings. In addition to this, and in an attempt to address the ongoing debate around the collection and interpretation of barrenground caribou data, the Minister of ENR committed to an independent peer review in January 2008.

This review was conducted by the Alberta Research Council (ARC). It assessed ENR's definition of barren-ground caribou herds and the techniques used to count and assess trends in the NWT. The terms of reference for the review were provided to the NWT Barren-ground Caribou Outfitters' Association in February 2008 and comments were incorporated. Members of the Association, as well as their consultant, Mr. Mark Fraker, met with the ARC and appeared satisfied that a thorough review would be conducted. Several association members indicated they would accept the results of this independent peer review.

The recently released ARC report identifies that:

- Defining caribou herds by calving ground affiliation is consistent with current practice;
- ENR's caribou survey methods have been consistent with common practice;
- Existing data supports a decline in the Bathurst, Bluenose-East, Bluenose-West and Cape Bathurst herds; and
- Managing these herds on the basis of decline is a sound precautionary conservation measure.

The ARC report also made numerous recommendations, including:

- Substantially increase collaring efforts for all caribou herds;
- Creating a standardized, regularly scheduled monitoring program to improve long-term planning and reporting on caribou research;
- Increasing the focus on obtaining demographic data on caribou herds;
- Incorporating population modeling into caribou management programs;
- Providing internal or external peer reviews for all survey reports;
- Publicly reporting survey and research results immediately and transparently;

.../2



- Developing a Territory-wide, consistent and strategic approach to ENR's caribou research program with centralized coordination;
- Formulating caribou management decisions within an adaptive management framework;
- Forming partnerships to increase resources dedicated to caribou research.

The Minister of ENR has accepted the ARC report and has made a public commitment to act upon its findings and recommendations.

While the Department plans to incorporate the recommendations of the ARC review, our work must not stop there. Over the upcoming summer months, ENR will be undertaking additional herd surveys and will be reviewing results with co-management partners in the fall of 2009. In addition, the Department will work with the Tł'chǫ Government to develop a joint proposal on management options for consideration by the Wek'eezhli Renewable Resources Board (WRRB). ENR anticipates this proposal will be ready by the fall of 2009. Barring a drastic need for action, any future changes to the number of tags available for outfitted hunts of caribou will take into consideration any recommendations and decisions made by the WRRB. Finally, and in attempt to provide Unit R Outfitters with market security, ENR will maintain the current allocation of 750 tags for outfitted hunts in Unit R until the 2010 hunting season.

We believe these actions and plans show the Departments commitment to, and support of, the NWT Barren-ground Outfitters' Association. We also believe that with the ARC report completed, we can move forward and develop actions aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of this resource. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources stands ready to undertake this work and hopes that all members of the NWT Barrenground Outfitters Association will work with us towards that goal.

Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister

Distribution list

c. Mr. John B. Zoe
Tł'chǫ Government

Distribution List

Mr. Boyd Warner
Bathurst Inlet Developments (1984) Ltd.
PO BOX 820
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N6

Mr. Barry Taylor
Arctic Safaris
PO BOX 1294
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N9

Mr. John Andre
Caribou Pass Outfitters Ltd.
PO BOX 520
1555 SKALKAHO HIGHWAY
HAMILTON MT 59840

Mrs. Amanda Peterson
J Group (Peterson's Point Lake Lodge)
PO BOX 447
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N3

Mr. John Andre
Quavvik Ltd.
PO BOX 520
1555 SKALKAHO HIGHWAY
HAMILTON MT 59840

Mr. & Mrs. Moise Rabesca
Rabesca Resources Ltd.
PO BOX 309
BEHCHOKÔ NT X0E 0Y0

Mr. Gary Jaeb
True North Safaris Ltd.
132 ENTERPRISE ROAD
PO BOX 26
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N1

Tłîchô Community of Wekweèti
PO BOX 69
WEKWEÈTI NT X0E 1W0

Mr. Greg Robertson
Aurora Caribou Camp
PO BOX 1266
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N9

Gameti Development Corporation
PO BOX 19
GAMETI NT X0E 1R0

Mr. Ragnar Wesstrom
Enodah Wilderness Travel Ltd.
PO BOX 2382
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2P8

Deton'Cho Corporation
PO BOX 1287
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2P8

OCT 27 2009

Mr. Walter Bayha
Chairperson
Sahtu Renewable Resource Board
MAIN OFFICE
PO BOX 134
TULITA NT X0E 0K0

Dear Mr. Bayha:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

- the potential reduction of commercial tags, outfitter tags, resident tags and aboriginal harvest;
- the potential of a bull only harvest or harvesting of other herds;
- the need to increase monitoring and compliance; and
- the need to increase information of caribou to the communities.

Please contact either Mr. lance Schmidt, superintendent, North Slave Region, ENR, at (867) 920-6114, e-mail: Lance.Schmidt@gov.nt.ca, Mr. Bruno Croft at (867) 920-6265, e-mail: Bruno.Croft@gov.nt.ca, or Mr. Fred Mandeville at (867) 920-7019, e-mail Fred.J.Mandeville@gov.nt.ca to let us know if you will be able to provide us with a date to visit you in November.

Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 27 2009

Mr. Paul Harrington
President
Hay River Metis Council
10E GAGNE STREET
HAY RIVER NT X0E 1G1

Dear Mr. Harrington:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

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Sincerely,

Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister




Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 27 2009

Mr. Garry Bailey
President
Fort Resolution Metis Council
BOX 1921
FORT RESOLUTION NT X0E 0M0

Dear Mr. Bailey:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 26 2009

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Bathurst Barren Ground Caribou and Outfitting

As you are aware, the preliminary results of the most recent survey data for the Bathurst Barren Ground Caribou herd showed a steady and rapid decline to what is considered critical levels (32,000 animals). For the past 2 years and more urgently in the last 2 months, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) and the Tlicho Government have been working on a joint management proposal for the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) as is required by the Tlicho Land Claim and Self Government Agreement. This proposal is scheduled for delivery to the WRRB by the end of October 2009. It is open to the WRRB to call for public hearings in response to this proposal, and if so, you may wish to make a formal presentation or provide submissions.

While preparing the proposal, ENR held a number of community meetings and workshops. During these meetings, as well as the recent Dene Nation meeting held in Dettah this past week, ENR heard a consistent message requesting the Minister to eliminate all outfitting tags for barren ground caribou in Unit R.

At our July 23, 2009 meeting between ENR and the outfitters, I indicated that the elimination of all outfitting tags for barren ground caribou in Unit R was a possible outcome. While the final recommendation has yet to be delivered by the WRRB to the Minister, it is clear from the steady and rapid decline of the herd that the Minister will have to limit harvesting. Based on this, I am recommending that all Unit R outfitters exercise caution in accepting reservations for outfitted hunts for the 2010 season until the WRRB has provided its recommendations and the Minister has made a final decision.

Sincerely,

Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister

c. Mr. Peter Vician, Deputy Minister
Department of Industry, Tourism and
Investment




Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

Oct 23 2009

Chief Frieda Martselos
Salt River First Nation
BOX 1899
FORT SMITH NT X0E 0M0

Dear Chief Martselos:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

ST 20109

Chief Steven Nitah
Lutesl K'e Dene Band
BOX 28
LUTSEL K'E NT X0E 1A0

Dear Chief Nitah:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

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Sincerely,

Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



OCT 20 2009

Mr. Harry Flaherty
A/Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
BOX 1379
IQALUIT NT X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Flaherty:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



ECT 21 2009

Chief Fred Daniels
Smith Landing First Nation
BOX 1470
FORT SMITH NT X0E 0P0

Dear Chief Daniels:

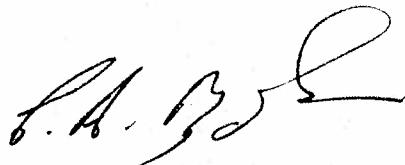
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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Chief Eddie Chocolate
Community Government of Gameti
BOX 1
GAMETI NT X0E 1R0

Dear Chief Chocolate:

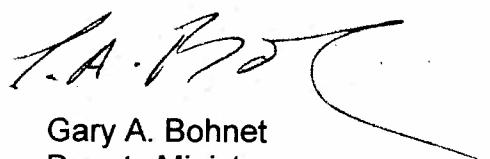
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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



ST 23 2009

Chief Bill Erasmus
Dene Nation
BOX 2338
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2P7

Dear Chief Erasmus:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Chief Charlie Football
Community Government of Wekwëtì
BOX 69
WEKWEETI NT X0E 1W0

Dear Chief Football:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister




Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Chief Ted Tsetta
Yellowknives Dene First Nation
BOX 2514
N'DILO NT X1A 2P8

Dear Chief Tsetta:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 20 2009

Chief Edward Sangris
Yellowknives Dene First Nation
BOX 2514
DETTAH NT X1A 2P8

Dear Chief Sangris:

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Sincerely,

Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



001 20 2009

Chief Clifford Daniels
Community Government of Behchokò^o
BOX 68
BEHCHOKO NT X0E 0Y0

Dear Chief Daniels:

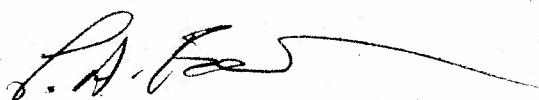
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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



OCT 23 2009

Mr. Bill Enge
President
North Slave Métis Alliance
BOX 2301
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2P7

Dear Mr. Enge:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



ACT 23 1000

Acting Chief Louis Balsillie
Deninu K'ue First Nation
BOX 1899
FORT RESOLUTION NT X0E 0M0

Dear Acting Chief Balsillie:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Ms. Betty Villebrun
President
Northwest Territories Métis Nation
BOX 720
FORT SMITH NT X0E 0P0

Dear Ms. Villebrun:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

- the potential reduction of commercial tags, outfitter tags, resident tags and aboriginal harvest;
- the potential of a bull only harvest or harvesting of other herds;
- the need to increase monitoring and compliance; and
- the need to increase information of caribou to the communities.

Please contact either Mr. Lance Schmidt, Superintendent, North Slave Region, ENR, at (867) 920-6114, e-mail: Lance_Schmidt@gov.nt.ca, Mr. Bruno Croft at (867) 920-6265, e-mail: Bruno_Croft@gov.nt.ca, or Mr. Fred Mandeville at (867) 920-7019, e-mail Fred_J_Mandeville@gov.nt.ca to let us know if you will be able to provide us with a date to visit you in November.

Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister




Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Chief Alfonz Nitsiza
Community Government of Whati
BOX 71
WHATI NT X0E 1P0

Dear Chief Nitsiza:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



OCT 23 2009

Mr. Albert Lafferty
President
Fort Providence Métis Council
BOX 319
FORT PROVIDENCE NT X0E 0L0

Dear Mr. Lafferty:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister




Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

Oct 23 2009

Mr. Peter Taptuna
Manager
Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association
Hunters' & Trappers' Organization
BOX 309
KUGLUKTUK NT X0B 0E0

Dear Mr. Taptuna:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) completed a Bathurst calving ground photo census in June 2009. The results of this survey confirmed that the Bathurst caribou herd has declined at an accelerated rate. The population of the herd is estimated at 31,897 caribou. ENR Staff would like to visit your community to discuss these results to obtain guidance in managing the herd to assist in its recovery. ENR Minister Miltenberger has stated "tough decisions will have to be made for the herd to recover". In this regard we would like to discuss with your community:

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



OCT 23 2009

Chief Joachim Bonnetrouge
Deh Gah Gotie Dene Council
BOX 200
FORT PROVIDENCE NT X0E 0G0

Dear Chief Bonnetrouge:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Chief Raymond Tutcho
Deline First Nation
BOX 158
DELINE NT X0E 0G0

Dear Chief Tutcho:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,

Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Mr. Ken Hudson
President
Fort Smith Métis Council
BOX 1107
FORT SMITH NT X0E 0P0

Dear Mr. Hudson:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,

Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Ms. Jody Snortland
Executive Director
Sahtu Renewable Resource Board
BOX 134
TULITA NT XOE 0K0

Dear Ms. Snortland:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

OCT 23 2009

Mr. Garry Bailey
President
Fort Resolution Métis Council
BOX 1921
FORT RESOLUTION NT X0E 0M0

Dear Mr. Bailey:

Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,

Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister





Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

Oct 23 2009

Grand Chief Joe Rabesca
Tłı̨chǫ Territory Government
BOX 412
BEHCHOKO NT X0E 0Y0

Dear Grand Chief Rabesca:

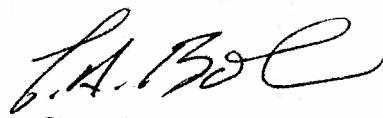
Bathurst Caribou Decline

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Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister



SEP 9 2009

Mr. Grant Pryznyk
Interim Chair
Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board
102 A 4504 49TH AVENUE
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 1A7

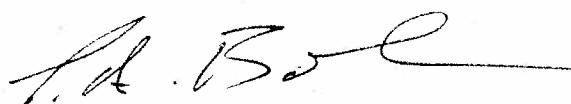
Dear Mr. Pryznyk:

Information Request – Bathurst Caribou Monitoring Reports

Thank you for your recent request for information on recent Bathurst caribou monitoring and reports. We understand the importance of Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board (WRRB), having all available information for the Bathurst herd, given its current status. However, it may be difficult to meet your September 30, 2009 deadline as some of the material, such as modeling the most recent decline of the herd, is still in progress. Mr. John Boulanger has been contracted to carry out a number of follow-up analyses, but a number of those analyses will not be done until we have the final population estimate for the June 2009 survey. That requires the calving ground photos to be counted, and we do not yet have those results. We will make available as much of the material you requested as possible by September 30, 2009 and at that time we will, as you requested, provide an update on any remaining material and when it will be available.

In addition, I would like to point out there is a technical meeting scheduled for September 26 - 27, 2009 in Calgary, Alberta, to which Ms. Karen Clark, the WRRB Management Biologist, has been invited. The intent of this meeting is to review the available information on the herd's decline, including the follow-up analyses Mr. Boulanger is carrying out. We will use the meeting to work toward a peer reviewed technical report that will contain a substantial portion of the information requested in your letter. We will make that report available as soon as it is completed. Environment and Natural Resources staff will compile, analyze and write summary reports covering the other topics you inquired about.

Sincerely,



Gary A. Bohnet
Deputy Minister

