

Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board (WRRB)

Work Plan for Bathurst Caribou Herd Joint Management Proposal

Dated: February 1, 2016

Purpose of the Work Plan

To outline the processes and timelines to be followed for the Bathurst caribou herd joint management proposal. The Work Plan may be subject to revision.

Background

In June 2015, aerial reconnaissance, composition and photo surveys were conducted on the Bathurst caribou herd. The final breeding female and population estimates, available on September 3, 2015, indicate that the herd has continued to decline in population. On December 15, 2015, Environment & Natural Resources (ENR), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Tłı̨chǫ Government (TG) submitted a joint management proposal, entitled *“Joint Proposal on Caribou Management Actions for the Bathurst herd: 2016-2019”*.

Scope of the Proceeding

The primary objective of this Proceeding is to determine and/or recommend management actions for the Bathurst caribou herd in Wek'èezhìi, including a total allowable harvest and harvest allocation.

Guiding Principles

The following principles will guide the Work Plan throughout this Proceeding:

- The Board will act in the public interest (Sections 12.1.2, Tłı̨chǫ Agreement), including subsistence, resident, non-resident and commercial harvesters;
- The management proposal process shall have regard for the principles and practices of conservation and the importance of wildlife and its habitat to the Tłı̨chǫ First Nation well-being, way of life and land-based economy (Sections 12.1.5.a and 12.1.1, Tłı̨chǫ Agreement);
- The management proposal process shall take steps to acquire and use traditional knowledge as well as other types of scientific information and expert opinion (Section 12.1.6, Tłı̨chǫ Agreement);
- The management proposal process shall be carried out in a timely manner;
- The Board will review the joint management proposal and consider potential management actions based on evidence and rationale submitted by ENR, TG or any other Party; and,
- The Board will review the joint management proposal and consider potential management actions in order to meet the Board’s mandate (mission) and applicable policies, and to ensure that management of the Bathurst caribou herd is as consistent and effective as possible.

Work Plan Objectives

The Work Plan is to achieve the following objectives:

- Compile a broad range of focused input through the Proceeding;
- Ensure adequate information is gathered to complete the management proposal process;
- Facilitate a thorough, inclusive and timely management proposal process; and,

- Determine and/or recommend management actions to conserve the Bathurst caribou herd.

Opportunities for Community Engagement

- The Board required ENR and TG to inform and engage with communities and Aboriginal organizations regarding the joint management proposal submission;
- The Board will include a notification(s) regarding the management proposal process in the newspaper, community radio (CBC, CKLB, CJCD, Taiga), Board website, including public registry and social media (Facebook);
- The Board will coordinate a technical session(s), if required, to address specific issues that require more focused review and discussion;
- The Board will hold a public hearing; and
- The Board will hold any other consultation or engagement activity that the Board considers appropriate.

Materials Circulated for Comment by Parties

During the course of this Proceeding, the Board, along with Staff assistance, will review all evidence filed by the Parties. These efforts are intended to identify issues or concerns which must be addressed in the joint management proposal and to resolve them, if possible, before the close of the Proceeding. This process allows Parties to address the proposed management actions for the Bathurst caribou herd in their presentations to the Board and to prepare arguments setting out their positions with respect to these provisions at the close of the Proceeding.

The Board is not bound by the contents of any of these draft materials and will make its decision at the close of the Proceeding on the basis of all evidence and arguments filed by all Parties.

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date (Date Completed)
Management Proposal Submitted	ENR & TG	(December 15, 2015)
Management Proposal deemed complete & Proceeding called	WRRB	(January 14, 2016)
Notice of Hearing	WRRB	(January 18, 2016)
Call for Intevenor Status	WRRB	(January 18, 2016)
Round #1 Information Requests (Board only)	WRRB	(January 18, 2016)
Deadline to respond to Round #1 Information Requests	ENR & TG	(January 26, 2016)
Deadline for Intervenor Status	All Parties	(January 26, 2016)
Intervenor Status Confirmed	WRRB	February 1, 2016
Intervenor Information Requests to WRRB	All Intervenors	February 5, 2016
Round #2 Information Requests (Parties/Others/Board) (if required)	All Parties	February 2, 2016 February 8, 2016
Deadline to respond to Round #2 Information Requests (if required)	ENR & TG	February 8, 2016 February 15, 2016
Technical Sessions (if required)	All Parties	February 9 & 10, 2016
Prehearing Conference	All Parties	February 15, 2016

Deadline for Intervenor Public Hearing presentations	All Intervenors	February 19, 2016
Deadline for ENR & TG Public Hearing presentations	ENR & TG	February 19, 2016
WRRB Public Hearing	WRRB	February 23-24, 2016
Deadline for Intervenor Final Written Arguments	All Intervenors	March 8, 2016
Deadline for ENR & TG Final Written Arguments	ENR & TG	March 11, 2016
Close Record	WRRB	March 4, 2016 March 11, 2016
Review evidence and determine/recommend management actions	WRRB	April 5-6, 2016
Prepare final Reasons for Decision	WRRB	April 29, 2016
Final Board review of Reasons for Decision	WRRB	May 10, 2016
Submit final determination/recommendations along with Reasons for Decision to ENR and TG	WRRB	May 13, 2016
Final Decision from ENR Minister	ENR Minister	Up to 90 days