Wek'èezhìı Renewable Resources Board (WRRB)
Work Plan for Joint Proposal on Management Actions for the Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou (Sahtì Ekwǫ̀) Herd 2027-2030

Dated: November 2, 2026

Purpose of the Work Plan
To outline the processes and timelines to be followed for the 2026 Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ joint management proposal.

Background
Environment & Climate Change (ECC), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Tłı̨chǫ Government (TG) Tłı̨chǫ Government and GNWT-ECC acknowledge the central role of Indigenous communities in the stewardship of ekwǫ̀, including the strengthening of intergenerational knowledge transfer, the support of sustainable and respectful harvest practices, and the advancement of the continued recovery of the Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ herd. The 2025 abundance estimate for the Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ herd, of about 29,000 ekwǫ̀, is lower than the 2023 estimate but higher than the 2021 estimate. Collectively, the community-based and scientific observations and monitoring results are consistent with an increasing trend.

On July 17, 2026, ECC-GNWT and TG submitted a joint management proposal, entitled *"Joint Proposal on Management Actions for the Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou (Sahtì Ekwǫ̀) Herd 2027-2030"* ("the Proposal") to the WRRB, outlining proposed management actions for Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ in Wek'èezhìı. Following an initial assessment of the Proposal, the WRRB has determined that a **Level 2 review** is appropriate, as per its Rule for Management Proposals. Therefore, on August 27, 2026, the Board established the 2026 Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ Management Proceeding and an online public registry.

Scope of the Proceeding
Based on the WRRB's Rule for Management Proposals, the Board deems a Level 2 Proceeding to be sufficient to serve the public interest. The primary objective of this Proceeding is to recommend management actions for Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ management in Wek'èezhìı for 2027 to 2030.

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);

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- The management proposal process shall be carried out in a timely manner;
- The Board will review the Proposal and consider potential management actions based on evidence and rationale submitted by GNWT, TG or any other Party; and,
- The Board will review the Proposal and consider potential management actions in order to meet the Board's mandate (mission) and applicable policies.

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 promote conditions that will allow for continued growth of the Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ herd and enable sustainable ekwǫ̀ harvesting that meets the needs of all Indigenous communities across the herd's range.

Opportunities for Community Engagement

- The Board required GNWT and TG to inform and engage with communities and Indigenous organizations regarding the Proposal submission;
- The Board will include a notification(s) regarding the management proposal process in the newspaper, community radio (Cabin Radio, CBC, True North FM, CKLB Radio), Board website, including public registry and social media (Facebook), and community bulletins; 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, with Staff assistance, will review all evidence filed by the Parties and the public. These efforts are intended to identify issues or concerns which must be addressed in the Proposal and to resolve them, if possible, before the close of the Proceeding. This process allows Parties and the public to address the proposed management actions for Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ in their written submissions to the Board and to prepare arguments setting out their positions with respect to these provisions at the close of the Proceeding.

The Board will make its decision at the close of the Proceeding on the basis of all evidence and arguments filed by all Parties.

ALL identified dates are subject to change.

Task	Responsible Party	Due Date (Date Completed)
Management Proposal Submitted	GNWT & TG	(July 17, 2026)
Management Proposal posted to Management Proposal page for initial public review	WRRB	(July 17, 2026)
Initial public review closed	WRRB	(August 13, 2026)

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Management Proposal deemed complete (Level 2)	WRRB	(August 16, 2026)
Proceeding (Level 2) called	WRRB	(August 27, 2026)
Notice of Proceeding (Level 2)	WRRB	(August 27, 2026)
Public Written Submissions (Level 2)	Public	~~August 27 to October 1, 2026~~ (August 27 to October 30, 2026)
Submission of 2025 Sahtì Ekwǫ̀ Calving Ground Survey Report	GNWT & TG	(September 9, 2026)
Request for Participant Identification (Level 2)	All Distribution List	(September 11, 2026)
Information Requests (Participants/Others/Board) (if required) (Level 2)	All Parties	(September 18, 2026)
Deadline to respond to Information Requests (if required) (Level 2)	GNWT & TG	(October 9, 2026)
Technical Session – Traditional Knowledge (Level 2)	WRRB	~~October 27-28, 2026~~ ~~October 20-21, 2026~~ (October 29-30, 2026)
Technical Session – Science (Level 2)	WRRB	~~October 20-21, 2026~~ (October 27-28, 2026)
Close Record (Level 2)	WRRB	November 6, 2026
Deadline for Participant Final Written Arguments (Level 2)	All Participants	~~November 10, 2026~~ November 17, 2026
Deadline for ECC & TG Final Written Arguments (Level 2)	GNWT & TG	~~November 12, 2026~~ November 19, 2026
Review evidence and determine/recommend management actions (Level 2)	WRRB	~~November 24, 2026~~ December 3, 2026
Final Board review of Reasons for Decision (Level 2)	WRRB	December 15-16, 2026
Submit final determination/recommendations along with Reasons for Decision to ECC and TG (Level 2)	WRRB	January 15, 2027
Final Decision (Level 2) from ECC Minister	ECC Minister	Up to 90 days

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