



November 16, 2009

Eddy Erasmus
Director
Lands Department
Tł'chǫ Government
Behchokǫ, NT

Dear Mr. Erasmus:

The Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board has reviewed the *Joint Proposal on Caribou Management Actions in Wek'èezhìi* submitted by your government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT). The Board appreciates the consideration that has gone into this proposal.

There are some recommendations that originate from the Tł'chǫ body of traditional knowledge. The rationale for these recommendations would be better understood if there was permission to put the following public reports on our public registry for interveners and members of our Board to read.

- Caribou Migration and the State of their Habitat
- Monitoring the Relationship between People and Caribou

We also require the following for our public registry:

- The transcripts from the Barren Ground Caribou Regional workshop that took place in Whatì, February, 2007. We would appreciate receiving the summary as well if available.
- The transcripts of the Barren Ground Caribou Regional workshop that took place in Gametì in 2009; and the summary if available.
- List of all community meetings since 2003, during which your government discussed the barren ground caribou status, and the transcripts (and summary if available) of these meetings.

- List of community hunts conducted by Tł'chö communities since 2000. Please include the general location of these hunts, barren ground caribou harvest numbers and cost where available
- Copies of motions by the Tł'chö Government (TG) where caribou collars were considered.
- There are a number of recommendations that will be better understood if additional rationale is provided.

Please provide information on the following:

Appendix A: Proposed Management Actions to Help the Bathurst, Bluenose East and Ahiak herds to recover

- Issue 4 and 5, Reduce Harvest Pressure:
 - a) TG has recommended that there be “No restriction on female harvest”, and “No restriction on male harvest”. Please provide some rationale to answer the following questions:
 1. Why, from the Tł'chö perspective, are both male and female caribou important to the survival of the barren land caribou?
 2. How do cows contribute to the social and physical well-being of the herd? What do they do for the males and calves? What role do the cows have in leading the herd or portions of the herd?
 3. How do the bulls contribute to the social and physical well-being of the herd? Do bulls assist females and calves in any way? Do they lead the herd, or any portion of the herd?
 4. How do bulls and wolves interact? How do cows and wolves interact? How are calves protected from wolves? How are cows/pregnant cows protected from wolves?
 5. Why, from a Tł'chö perspective, should caribou be harvested and used in appropriate ways? How should caribou be used after being harvested?
 - b) ENR has recommended ‘mobile harvesting zones’ without TG’s support.
 1. Please provide TG rationale for opposing ‘mobile harvesting zones’?
- Issue 7, Compliance:
 - a) A recommendation came from GNWT that states: “ ENR to conduct weekly patrols during fall and winter in Wek’èezhìi with more wildlife officers”. TG did not agree with this action:
 1. Please explain the rationale behind rejecting this recommendation.

- b) States that a 200 meter-wide no-hunting zone on either side of the winter road should be imposed. The rationale states “Respect for animals and no carcasses/gut piles on the winter road”.
 - 1. Please explain what ‘respect’ means in this case. For example, why is spreading and leaving blood and guts on the road unacceptable?

Appendix B: Proposed Actions to Monitor

- Issue 11, Caribou collars: GNWT recommended that 30 more collars should be put on female caribou in March 2010.
 - a) Tłchǫ harvesters and elders have stated that collaring caribou is disrespectful.
 - 1. Please tell us from the Tłchǫ perspective what will happen to the caribou and the Tłchǫ people if caribou are disrespected by putting collars on them.

Additional information

- How were caribou managed – or people managed – in times of declining caribou in the past?
- Although your joint proposal does not recommend zero harvest of all herds, what would be the impact of zero harvest on Tłchǫ people?
- On page 3, the proposal states “To minimize hardship on Aboriginal hunters...ENR’s preferred option is to allow a bull harvest only on adjacent herds”.
 - c) What does the TG think about this?
- In several places where TG and GNWT are proposing different recommendations, the GNWT has rationalized their recommendation by stating that it is a “conservation measure and under the Tłchǫ Agreement”.
 - a) Does TG consider the Bathurst caribou herd numbers to be a conservation or a stewardship concern?
 - 1. Please explain what ‘conservation’ means to the Tłchǫ people and how this is different than ‘stewardship’.
 - 2. Please provide a rationale – if necessary - for Tłchǫ to be stewards and have responsibility for management of Tłchǫ people in relation to the caribou.

We will continue to review the proposal and will be reviewing all the information that comes into our office. For those reasons, we may have further questions.

We know you, as well as your Senior TK Researcher, are extremely busy, but to ensure the process progresses smoothly we require your answers to these questions no later than November 30th.

Sincerely,



Grant Pryznyk
Interim Chair

cc Fred Mandeville,
Manager of Wildlife, North Slave Region
ENR, GNWT