

Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB)

Work Plan for Bluenose-East Caribou Herd Management Proposal

Dated: January 30, 2019

Purpose of the Work Plan

To outline the processes and timelines to be followed for the Bluenose-East caribou herd joint management proposal.

Background

In June and July 2018, aerial reconnaissance, composition and photo surveys were conducted on the Bluenose-East caribou herd. The final breeding female and population estimates, available on November 20, 2019, indicate that the herd has declined by 50% since 2015.

On January 14, 2019, Environment & Natural Resources (ENR), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Tłı̄chq̄ Government (TG) submitted a joint management proposal, entitled *“Joint Proposal on Management Actions for the Bluenose-East ʔekwò (Barren-ground caribou) Herd 2019-2021”*.

Scope of the Proceeding

The primary objective of this Proceeding is to determine and/or recommend management actions for the Bluenose-East caribou herd in Wek'èezhì, 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, Tłı̄chq̄ 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 Tłı̄chq̄ First Nation well-being, way of life and land-based economy (Sections 12.1.5.a and 12.1.1, Tłı̄chq̄ 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, Tłı̄chq̄ 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

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 Bluenose-East caribou herd.

Opportunities for Community Engagement

- The Board required ENR and TG to inform and engage with communities and Indigenous 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 Bluenose-East 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	(January 14, 2019)
Management Proposal deemed complete & Proceeding called	WRRB	(January 30, 2019)
Notice of Hearing	WRRB	February 4, 2019
Call for Party Status	WRRB	February 4, 2019
Round #1 Information Requests (Board only)	WRRB	February 8, 2019
Deadline for Party Status	All Parties	February 15, 2019
Deadline to respond to Round #1 Information Requests	ENR & TG	February 18, 2019
Round #2 Information Requests (Parties/Others/Board)	All Parties	February 25, 2019
Deadline to respond to Round #2 Information Requests (if required)	ENR & TG	March 6, 2019
Technical Sessions (if required)	All Parties	March 13 & 14, 2019
Prehearing Conference	All Parties	March 18, 2019

Deadline for Party Public Hearing presentations	All Parties	March 27, 2019
Deadline for ENR & TG Public hearing presentations	ENR & TG	March 27, 2019
WRRB Public Hearing	WRRB	April 9-11, 2019
Close Record	WRRB	April 18, 2019
Deadline for Party Final Written Arguments	All Parties	April 24, 2019
Deadline for ENR & TG Final Written Arguments	ENR & TG	April 26, 2019
Review evidence and determine/recommend management actions	WRRB	May 7-9, 2019
Prepare final Reasons for Decision	WRRB	May 31, 2019
Final Board review of Reasons for Decision	WRRB	June 4, 2019
Submit final determination/recommendations along with Reasons for Decision to ENR and TG	WRRB	June 14, 2019
Final Decision from ENR Minister	ENR Minister	Up to 90 days