

Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB)

Work Plan for Dìga (Wolf) Joint Management Proposal

Dated: February 21, 2020

Purpose of the Work Plan

To outline the processes and timelines to be followed for the *Dìga* (wolf) joint management proposal.

Background

The current population estimates for the *Kqk'èetì ekwò* (Bathurst caribou) and *Sahtì ekwò* (Bluenose-East caribou) herds are the lowest estimates on record. To promote recovery of these two herds, the goal is to increase survival rates of *?ekwò* (barren-ground caribou) and overall population growth through harvest management and dīga removal by focusing on reducing the negative effects of dīga predation on the survival rates of the *kqk'èetì* and *sahtì ekwò* herds.

On January 31, 2020, Environment & Natural Resources (ENR), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Tłıchq Government (TG) submitted a joint management proposal, entitled "*Joint Proposal on Management Actions for Wolves (dīga) on the Bathurst and Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou (?ekwò) Herd Winter Ranges: 2020 – 2025*".

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 dīga management in Wek'èezhì. The WRRB will reconsider its workplan, following the completion of the technical sessions, by no later than March 27, 2020.

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, Tłıchq 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 Tłıchq First Nation well-being, way of life and land-based economy (Sections 12.1.5.a and 12.1.1, Tłıchq 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, Tłıchq 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 GNWT, 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 reduce the negative effects of diga predation on the survival rates of the kqk'èetì and sahtì ekwò herds.

Opportunities for Community Engagement

- The Board required GNWT 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 science and traditional knowledge technical session(s), if required, to address specific issues that require more focused review and discussion; 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 and the public. 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 and the public to address the proposed management actions for wolves 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 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 31, 2020)
Management Proposal deemed complete	WRRB	(February 13, 2020)
Proceeding called	WRRB	March 2, 2020
Notice of Hearing	WRRB	March 2, 2020
Public Written Submissions	Public	March 2 – April 17, 2020
Round #1 Information Requests (Board only)	WRRB	March 2, 2020
Request for Participant Identification	All Parties	March 10, 2020
Deadline to respond to Round #1 Information Requests	ENR & TG	March 13, 2020
TK Technical Session	All Parties	March 18, 2020

Science Technical Session	All Parties	March 24, 2020
Round #2 Information Requests (Parties/Others/Board) (if required)	All Parties	March 30, 2020
Deadline to respond to Round #2 Information Requests (if required)	ENR & TG	April 14, 2020
Close Record	WRRB	April 17, 2020
Deadline for Party Final Written Arguments	All Parties	April 24, 2020
Deadline for ENR & TG Final Written Arguments	ENR & TG	April 28, 2020
Review evidence and determine/recommend management actions	WRRB	May 5-6, 2020
Prepare final Reasons for Decision	WRRB	May 31, 2020
Final Board review of Reasons for Decision	WRRB	June 10, 2020
Submit Reasons for Decision to ENR and TG	WRRB	June 30, 2020
Final Decision from ENR Minister	ENR Minister	Up to 90 days