

September 4, 2020

Robert Mulders, Wildlife Biologist, Carnivores/Furbearers  
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Government of the Northwest Territories  
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*Via Email*  
***Robert\_Mulders@gov.nt.ca***

**RE: Wildlife Research Permit Application – Request to Amend Wildlife Research Permit  
#WL500830 – Wolf Collaring**

Dear Mr. Mulders:

The Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) has reviewed your above entitled Wildlife Research Permit (WRP) Application and understands that the objectives are to 1) provide data useful for understanding how *Dìga* (wolves) travel among caribou on their winter ranges, 2) provide insight into patterns of movement of individual *dìga* between *ʔekwò* (barren-ground caribou) herds, 3) serve to identify active den sites and document fidelity to dens, and, 4) improve understanding about *dìga* and support management actions through the collar data collected. The wolf collaring locations will be on the *Kòk'èeti ekwò* (Bathurst caribou) and *Sahtì ekwò* (Bluenose-East caribou) herd winter ranges as well as the Beverly/Ahiak *ekwò* herd winter range when distributed in the North Slave Region.

The proposed research, scheduled between August 2020 and August 2025, involves the following:

- Deploy up to 30 Telonics satellite collars (10 collars each associated with the *Kòk'èeti*, *Sahtì*, and Beverly/Ahiak *ekwò* herds on their winter ranges);
- Collaring will occur from January to April, June, late summer and the fall of each year;
- Collaring will be conducted by a helicopter capture crew using a net gun, and potentially chemical immobilization, with handling time to be between 15-21 minutes per *dìga*, as per the Wildlife Care Committee Wolf Standard Operating Procedures;
- Confirmation of sex and age as well as body and health condition sampling will be conducted during the collaring process; and,
- New or refurbished collars will be deployed each year in cases where collars are lost to *dìga* mortality or collar failure, in order to maintain a full contingent of 30 collars to support long-term monitoring.

The WRRB understands that the WRP Application is tied closely to the “*Joint Proposal on Management Actions for Wolves (dìga) on the Bathurst and Bluenose-East Barren-ground Caribou (ʔekwò) Herd Winter Ranges: 2021 – 2024*” that the Board received on August 25, 2020. However, it is noted that there is a lack of consistency with respect to the objectives. For example, the *Dìga Revised Joint Management Proposal* states that collared *dìga* will be used to located removal crews in the general vicinity of wolves, but there is no mention of this in the WRP Application. Further, the Board is concerned that the WRP Application lacks much of the detail that would allow an

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assessment of the effectiveness of collaring relative to d̄iga management, including a field summary of the 2020 collaring program where there were d̄iga mortalities. It is possible that improvements will be needed for the collaring work to be appropriately integrated into the monitoring portion of the D̄iga Revised Joint Management Proposal, and that efficiencies will be required to improve the ability of the collaring program to meet the objectives of d̄iga management more generally.

As such, until the Board is able to undertake the process of reviewing and providing recommendations on the D̄iga Revised Joint Management Proposal, the WRRB cannot provide support or non-support on the WRP Application to collar d̄iga on the central barrens at this time (Motion #708-26-08-2020). The Board recommends submitting a revised Wildlife Research Permit Application following the completion of the WRRB's review period of the D̄iga Revised Joint Management Proposal.

If there are any questions about the Board's position, please contact our office at (867) 873-5740 or [jpellissey@wrrb.ca](mailto:jpellissey@wrrb.ca).

Sincerely,



Joseph Judas  
Chair

Cc Erin Kelly, Deputy Minister  
Environment & Natural Resources, GNWT

Brett Elkin, A/Assistant Deputy Minister  
Environment & Natural Resources GNWT

Karin Clark, A/Director  
Wildlife Division, Environment & Natural Resources, GNWT

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault, Director  
Culture and Lands Protection, T̄ich̄q̄ Government

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