

September 3, 2020

Karin Clark, A/Director, Wildlife  
Environment and Natural Resources  
Government of the Northwest Territories  
Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9  
Email: [Karin\\_Clark@gov.nt.ca](mailto:Karin_Clark@gov.nt.ca)

*Via Email*  
*Karin\_Clark@gov.nt.ca*

**Re: Mackenzie Wood Bison Population – Reopening Harvest**

Dear Ms. Clark:

At its recent August 2020 meeting, the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) discussed the Department of Environment & Natural Resources (ENR), Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) management proposal, entitled “*Re-opening Harvest of Mackenzie Wood Bison*”, which proposes to re-open harvesting of a limited number of male bison from the Mackenzie wood bison population.

The Board understands that the last Mackenzie wood bison population estimate was approximately 1468 animals in the late winter of 2019 suggesting an average annual growth rate of 13% since 2013. The *Mackenzie Bison Management Plan* recommends an annual total allowable harvest of 1-3% of total estimated population size, for males only when the Mackenzie population is estimated between 1000-1500 animals

As such, the Mackenzie Bison Working Group has proposed a harvest of 40 male only wood bison, starting the fall of 2020 until March 31, 2024. All harvest would require a tag. Harvest allocation would be as follows:

- Fort Providence (Deh Gah Got'ie First Nation and Fort Providence Métis Council) = 20 tags (50% of the harvest)
- Tłı̨chǫ Government = 4 (10%)
- Northwest Territory Métis Nation = 4 (10%)
- North Slave Métis Alliance = 4 (10%)
- Yellowknives Dene First Nation = 4 (10%)
- Residents, through a limited entry draw = 4 (10%)

Based upon the recovery of the Mackenzie wood bison population, planned population abundance monitoring scheduled for March 2023, and the recommendations identified in the Mackenzie Bison Management Plan, the WRRB supports the reopening of harvest of 40 male only Mackenzie wood bison and the initial allocation presented (Motion #710-27-08-2020). Further, the Board recommends that the Mackenzie Bison Working Group develop a proportional allocation (%) prior to the 2024 harvest season. This will allow for fair and simple adjustments in the future based on population estimates.

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The WRRB looks forward to continued collaboration with the GNWT and the Mackenzie Bison Working Group in the future. If you have any questions, please contact our office at (867) 873-5740 or [jpellissey@wrrb.ca](mailto:jpellissey@wrrb.ca).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Judas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Judas".

Joseph Judas  
Chair

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

Terry Armstrong, Bison Ecologist  
Environment & Natural Resources, GNWT

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault, Director  
Culture & Lands Protection, TG

Michael Birlea, Manager, Lands Protection & Renewable Resources  
Culture & Lands Protection, TG