

September 2, 2021

Alicia Kelly
Tłıchq All- Season Road Environmental Assessment Biologist
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Government of the Northwest Territories
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Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

VIA email: Alicia_Kelly@gov.nt.ca

Wildlife Research Permit Application – Black Bear Research & Monitoring 2021-2022

Dear Ms. Kelly:

As per section 12.5.1 of the Tłıchq Agreement, the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) considers the above-mentioned Wildlife Research Permit application as a management proposal. The Board understands that the objectives of the research and monitoring program are to 1) investigate impacts of *sah* (black bear) on *tqdzı* (boreal caribou) calf recruitment, as well as predation of *eje* (wood bison) and *dedii* (moose) calves; 2) collect baseline information to determine *sah* home range sizes, habitat use and selection, and seasonal movements, which addresses Measure 6-1, Part 2 of the Tłıchq All-Season Road report of EA; 3) compare *sah* habitat use to habitat use by other species (e.g., *tqdzı*, *eje*) monitored with GPS collars; 4) contribute to a holistic understanding of food web dynamics and species interactions between *tqdzı*, *eje*, *dedii*, *dıga* (wolves), and *sah*; 5) provide information to support the GNWT to evaluate whether the current national definition of *tqdzı* critical habitat, based on the idea of disturbance-mediated apparent competition, is appropriate for the NWT; 6) collect biological samples during capture (e.g., serum, whole blood, hair) for broader-scale or future genetic, hormone, diet and other analyses; and 7) document and monitor *sah* den sites, den site characteristics, and spring emergence.

The proposed collaring deployment, scheduled from September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2022, occurring within the Mackenzie bison range and the Mackenzie and North Slave boreal caribou study areas, involves the following:

- Deployment of half of the collars this fall before denning and the other half after emergence from their dens in the spring;
- Baited culvert traps used in areas with road or trail-access, to be checked a minimum of twice daily;
- Bait stations will be set up in remote locations, in hopes of attracting free ranging *sah* to a central location for capture;
- A pole syringe (culvert traps) or a dart gun (culvert traps) will be used to immobilize the *sah*;
- Helicopter based captures and immobilization will likely be included for captures during the spring when *sah* are more visible against the vegetation greening up;

- Sah will be fitted with the collars and biological samples will be collected at the same time (serum, whole blood, and hair);
- Finally, the sah will be assessed for recovery from the chemical immobilization following the procedure and released in the same location that they were captured.

The WRRB has taken a Level 1 review, as outlined in the Board's Rule for Management Proposals. The WRRB has no concerns with the project as presented in your application and looks forward to receiving results from the upcoming field season.

The Board asks to be contacted if there is any opportunity for Board or staff involvement in your work. The WRRB requests that upon completion of the collaring program an update will be provided to the Board.

Please feel free to give us a call with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jody Pellissey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Jody Pellissey
Executive Director

Cc Karin Clark, Manager
Wildlife and Fish Division, Environment & Natural Resources, GNWT

Michael Birlea, Manager
Culture and Lands Protection, Tłı̨chǫ Government