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 Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge

ሰላሊ 18, 2015

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Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

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December 18th, 2015

**The Honourable Catherine McKenna
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Government of Canada**

Dear Minister McKenna:

Re: Little Brown Myotis Recovery Strategy and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board engagement for species with unknown or extralimital ranges in Nunavut

At the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB or Board) December Regular Meeting (RM 004-2015) on December 1st, 2015, Environment and Climate Change Canada - Canadian Wildlife Service provided an update on the draft *Recovery Strategy for Little Brown Myotis (Myotis lucifugus), Northern Myotis (Myotis septentrionalis), and Tri-colored Bat (Perimyotis subflavus) in Canada*. The 2012 Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (Committee) Assessment and Status Report for the three bat species was unclear on the distribution of Little Brown Myotis in Nunavut. For example, the technical summary lists all Canadian provinces and territories except Nunavut as the species' range of occurrence in Canada, but also states in the document's Canadian Range section that "...it occurs in every province and territory, with occasional records in southwestern Nunavut". In addition, the range map in the Committee's report uses a '?' to indicate Nunavut records that are probable but unconfirmed or extralimital.

The Canadian Wildlife Service informed the NWMB that given the information on the distribution of Little Brown Myotis in the Assessment and Status Report, Canadian Wildlife Service emergency listed Little Brown Myotis as endangered in 2014 and drafted the proposed Recovery Strategy without conducting consultations in Nunavut. The Canadian Wildlife Service asked the NWMB to provide advice on how the Board would like to be included in the review and approval of the Recovery Strategy and how the Board would like to be engaged in the future for species with unknown or extralimital ranges in Nunavut.

The NWMB considered this request at its In-Camera Meeting (IC 007-2015) on December 2nd, 2015, and passed the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the NWMB write to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada requesting that a *Proposal for Decision* regarding the “*Recovery Strategy for Little Brown Myotis (Myotis lucifugus), Northern Myotis (Myotis septentrionalis), and Tri-colored Bat (Perimyotis subflavus) in Canada*” be forwarded to the NWMB following the 60-day public review period. The NWMB will then exercise its discretion under Section 5.2.34(d)(i) of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* to either make a

decision on the approval of the recovery strategy, or not perform its decision-making function.

Therefore, the NWMB is requesting that Canadian Wildlife Service forward the Recovery Strategy to the NWMB following the 60-day public comment period. Pursuant to Section 5.2.34(d)(i) of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, the NWMB shall in its discretion approve plans for the management, classification, protection, restocking or propagation, cultivation or husbandry of particular wildlife, including endangered species in the Nunavut Settlement Area. Thus, after reviewing the Recovery Strategy, the NWMB will exercise its discretion to either make a decision on the approval of the recovery strategy, or not perform its decision-making function.

The NWMB recognizes that with climate change, more species are likely to expand their ranges into Nunavut. Consequently, a species whose current range or habitat is near Nunavut or occasionally within Nunavut, may move further into the territory under the right conditions. Considering this, the NWMB also passed the following resolution:

FURTHER RESOLVED that the NWMB develop a Board policy regarding (i) what procedurally fair processes it will follow for its listing and management plan/recovery strategy/action plan/critical habitat decision-making functions for species or populations that currently appear to have limited or potentially even no ranges in Nunavut, and (ii) under what conditions it will decide to exercise its *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Section 5.2.34 discretion to not perform its listing and management plan/recovery strategy/action plan/critical habitat decision-making functions for such species or populations.

Therefore, in the coming months, the NWMB will be drafting a policy regarding what procedurally fair processes it will follow, and under what conditions it will exercise its *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Section 5.2.34 decision-making functions, regarding the listing and recovery documents for species or populations that currently appear to have a limited or potentially no range in Nunavut.

If you or your officials have any questions or concerns with the contents on this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,



Ben Kovic
Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

c.c. Lisa Pirie, A/Head of Eastern Arctic Section, Canadian Wildlife Service.