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January 04 2011

The Hon. Daniel Shewchuk Minister of Environment Box 2410 Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0 NWMB - SENT

Re: Management Plan for Musk-oxen in the Kivalliq Region

Dear Minister Shewchuk:

At Regular Meeting 66 of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) held between December 7th and 9th of 2010, the NWMB considered a request from the Kivalliq Wildlife Board for a decision on the Kivalliq Musk-ox Management Plan. After carefully reviewing all of the best available information presented, the NWMB has made the following decision:

"RESOLVED that the NWMB, pursuant to subsection 5.2.34 (d)(ii) of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, approve the 2010-2015 Kivalliq Musk-ox Management Plan and the February 2010 Action Plan on the understanding that any modification to harvesting considerations, including non-quota limitations and/or total allowable harvests requires a decision by the NWMB."

Background to the Decision

Musk ox management is an unresolved issue in the development of the Nunavut Wildlife Act Regulations; Exemption permits have had to be employed to allow for changes in the harvesting of musk ox.

The issue of musk-oxen management in Kivalliq has been on-going and was most recently discussed by the NWMB in detail at Regular Meeting 63 (April 2010) and during in-camera conference call #011 (April 2010) when the Board made a decision approving proposed changes in boundaries to musk-oxen management zones, removal of seasonal restrictions on harvesting, and an increase in total allowable harvest (TAH) in newly established management zones MX17 and MX18 (decisions which received Ministerial approval in August 2010).

The proposed Kivalliq Musk-ox Management Plan aims to protect, conserve, and manage musk-oxen in a sustainable manner in cooperation with co-management partners, communities, and government, and includes IQ, scientific and local knowledge while promoting regional involvement in decision making. An Action Plan is included as a component of the Management Plan and lists tasks that are considered essential to the sustainable management of the species. The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis as necessary.

The Plan is supported by the Government of Nunavut Department of the Environment, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

Rationale for the Decision

The main rationale for the NWMB's decision to approve the management plan for musk-oxen in the Kivalliq region was based on the following 3 factors:

- 1. The management plan proposes using the following three levels of management intensity depending on the status and trend of the population:
 - (A) core management for stable or increasing populations;
 - (B) enhanced management for declining population size; and
 - (C) critical threshold management to be implemented when the population size drops below that required to support subsistence harvesting.
- 2. The management zone boundary changes, removal of seasonal restrictions, and increase in TAH (as previously approved by the Board) are recommended when musk-ox populations are stable or increasing in size.
- 3. The Board's resolution requires NWMB approval of any changes to non-quota limitations and/or total allowable harvests.

Conclusion

The NWMB hereby forwards you, pursuant to section 5.3.8 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, its decision with respect to the approval of the proposed Kivalliq Musk-ox Management Plan.

Should you have any questions or concerns with respect to this decision or the rationale provided by the NWMB, please do not hesitate to contact the Board.

Yours sincerely,

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Willie Nakoolak

A/Chairperson of the Nunavut

Wildlife Management Board