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February 12, 2016

To the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Regarding: Caribou Tags

After the moratorium on Baffin Caribou, Minster of Environment Johnny Mike set a limited allowable harvest of Baffin Island caribou. Our community of Pond Inlet was allocated 30 tags. With no instruction on how these tags will be managed, no start date and no end date; with no further instruction on what happens when the tags have been depleted. Our Hunters and Trappers Organization to the best of our ability set guidelines for the management of the tags and harvest for caribou.

This experience was a challenging one, it was a learning experience for sure. However it became evident that 30 tags for our community was not enough. There were many hunters that wanted to take part on a harvest and due to a very limited number tags many hunters did not get the chance to go. Hunters that did have the chance to go hunting for caribou came back reporting an abundance of caribou tracks and caribou sightings, indicating that there are many caribou in the area.

Considering the reports from the hunters, which were recorded through the harvest reports and kill return forms provided by the Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment' hunters reported that they did not travel too far from the community for successful harvests of caribou and that there were lots of caribou sightings. Sighting reports included many calves and young caribou, indicating a healthy population growth. We do not see a decline, rather we notice a quick migration resulting in caribou to be closer and easily sighted.

However, there were comments of hunters being concerned about over harvesting male caribou. For healthy growth of caribou population to continue, the female to male ratio needs to be maintained healthy. It also needs to be considered that traditionally the sex of caribou are harvested at certain times of the year, based on natural conditions and seasonality of caribou. Our Hunters and Trappers Organization backs this up completely and we urge you to consider this in future decision making of caribou harvest management.

Because we have depleted our 30 tags and caribou are in the area appearing to be healthy in population we are asking to continue harvesting caribou. In addition we would like to harvest female caribou as well. In addition, if more tags are allocated we would ask for further guidance on the management of the tags. There is a lot of overlap between what is expected from the HTO and the conservation officer.

Thank you,
Best Regards,

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Jimmy Pitseolak,

Chairman of Mittimatalik HTO