



May 3, 2013

Manasie Audlakiak
Acting Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
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Dear Mr. Audlakiak,

Re: Request for Increase in Polar Bear Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for the Foxe Basin (FB) Population

The Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB) has recently received letters and requests from the communities of Hall Beach and Igloolik. These communities are requesting an increase in the TAH for Foxe Basin polar bears. These requests are informed by consultations carried out by the Government of Nunavut (GN) in June & July 2012, and reflect the communities' growing concerns over next year's TAH recommendations, particularly in light of the communities' defense kills.

As you are aware, last winter Hall Beach and Igloolik had 29 defense kills combined. The high number of defense kills prompted the GN's Department of Environment's Minister, James Arreak and his Deputy Minister, QWB and NTI to consult with the two communities, February 4 – 6, 2013. During these consultations, the communities were informed there would be no polar bear quota for the next two years.

While this is the case, in 2010, the GN completed an aerial survey of the Foxe Basin polar bear population. As already mentioned, the GN informed communities of the new population estimate, approximately 2,500 polar bears. The previous government estimate, from 1996, was 2,200 polar bears. In light of this information, which suggests higher polar bear numbers, and in considering how much of the communities' quota has been used as defense kills, we feel this request for an increase in TAH respects the terms of the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU states that the TAH and credits are to be reviewed when new polar bear population estimates have been produced.

QWB does not believe there is a conservation concern with this population, therefore, increasing the TAH will not harm the population. In fact, the MOU states that the target number for this subpopulation is 2,300, an estimate we know has been exceeded. Attached, you will find a

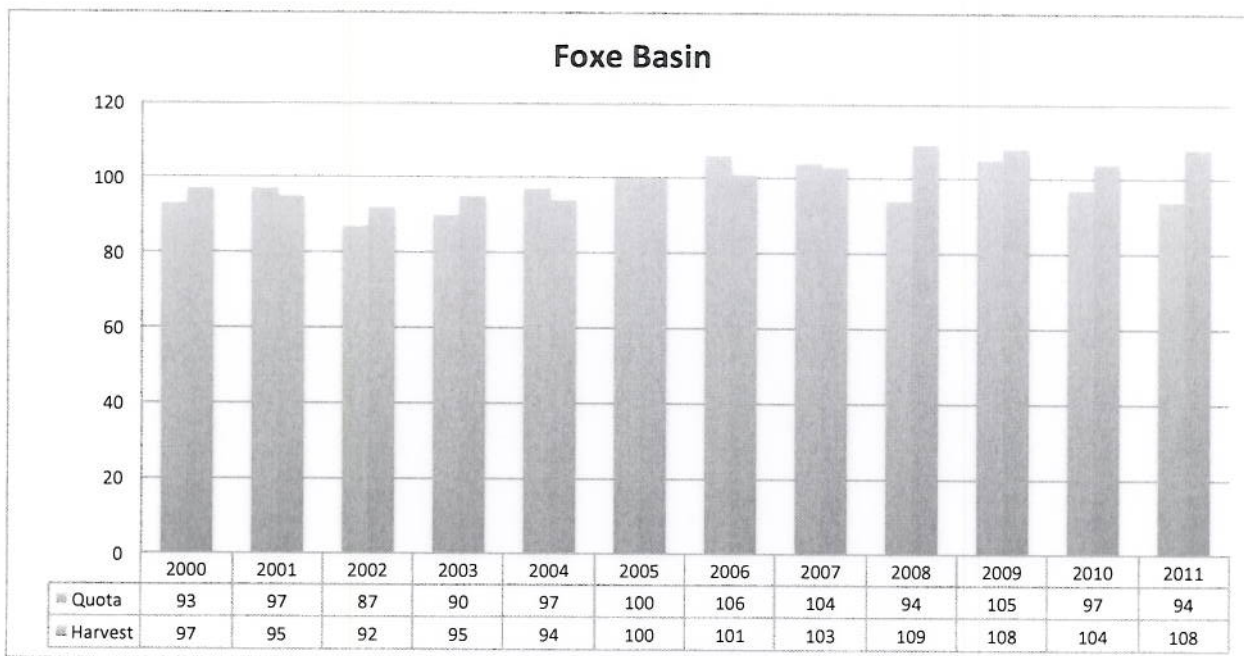


Figure 1 - Harvest recommendations and Harvest for Foxe Basin subpopulation from 2000-2011.