

ל⊄∩⊂∩∽⁶d¢ Department of Environment Avatiliqiyikkut Ministère de l'Environnement

August 3, 2021

RE: Increase in TAH from 190 to 240 muskoxen for the Muskox Management Unit MX-10

Dear Hunters and Trappers Organizations:

In July 2017, the Department of Environment conducted an arial survey of the Kivalliq portion (Northern Kivalliq Muskox subpopulation) of the muskox management unit, MX-10. This survey estimated 3,239 adults and yearling muskoxen. The muskoxen of MX-10 appear healthy with a low prevalence of disease, and they seem to have expanded their range to the east in that region. The 2017 survey results are consistent with a stable to increasing abundance based on positive calf proportions.

The Department of Environment would like to recommend an increase of the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) from 190 to 240 tags. Although survey results did not detect a statistically significant population increase, there are factors that support an increase in the TAH of about 50 tags. MX-10 muskoxen appear healthy and there has not been any signs of disease among muskox in that management unit. The percentage of calves showed an increase to 17% from 13.2% between the 2012 and 2017 surveys. There have been stable to increasing trends observed during the same timeframe for the neighbouring muskox management units of MX-08 and MX-13. Local Inuit Knowledge and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit have been successful in observing population changes and trends in this muskox management unit, including the expansion of the geographical distribution to the east. An increased availability of muskox tags could help decrease the harvesting pressure on declining caribou herds on the mainland of Nunavut. Although there is some risk associated with an increased TAH for this Muskox Management Unis, the Department is committed to mitigate this risk with increased monitoring efforts and the ongoing use of local knowledge from the communities.

We would like to seek your feedback on the recommended increase of 50 tags for the muskox management unit, MX-10. To do so, please complete the "Government of Nunavut Wildlife Research Support Letter" and return it by September 1, 2021. I hope that our collaborative work will continue in managing and monitoring of the muskox management unit MX-10.

Sincerely,

Caugo Somich

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